

Newsletter October 2017



The Association has a web site: - www.hgsafety.co.uk

HSE Web Link <http://www.hse.gov.uk/>

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Topics

- **External Traffic Management**
- **On site traffic management**
- **Task lighting**
- **Welfare**
- **Icy conditions and winter weather**
- **Firm fined £95,000 over failure to assess and protect workers at height**
- **Picture Gallery**

With the winter quickly approaching the hazards associated with darker mornings/evenings need to be assessed and measures put in place to reduce the risks of accidents/injuries.

This newsletter will give advice on the following areas:-

1. Traffic management into site i.e. deliveries
2. Traffic management on site i.e. segregation of plant from machinery and to be seen
3. Task lighting for individual trades on site/welfare
4. Icy conditions and winter weather

External Traffic Management

We would ask all members to ensure that deliveries to site are planned when possible to reduce the risk of vehicles having to temporarily park on the highway. There for not only causing a hazard to other motorist, but also to pedestrians having to pass on pavements etc, these accesses often are not lit and have restricted visibility.

As we often find the best laid plans of asking delivery companies to telephone prior to delivering does not always happen, leaving vehicles obstructing highways, pavements and site entrances.

Therefore try to ensure you have a trained banksman available who can be seen by all i.e. high vis clothing to escort vehicles into site to a non-obstructive area.

On Site Traffic Management

It is very important that we address the darker mornings and evenings in respect to traffic inside construction sites.

The whole ethos of high vis clothing was brought into construction many years ago, accidents occurred due to the construction operatives not being seen by vehicles reversing/plant operating and being hit and in some cases killed.

We would ask all members to ensure segregated/barriered pedestrianized walkways are provided to ensure safe access can be achieved from site entrance to welfare/offices, safe access from welfare to working environment including cross over points.

Also ensure the hazard of tradesmen parking close to where they are working is assessed and whenever possible to use designated car parking on or off site, to reduce risk of excessive vehicle/plant movement.

With recent high winds in the country please ensure the correct selection of barriers are selected, the nettings with steel pins will only highlight the hazard and will not act as protection of fall, the Chapter Eight plastic barriers will as we are sure you've seen blow over into traffic routes etc.

The ultimate barrier protection for everyone is the steel crowd barriers inter linked and no easily moved.

Task Lighting

Adequate task lighting must be provided and be specific to all trades and have adequate lighting, safe access and egress in and around site, helping to see and avoid potential hazards.

The lighting should be fit for purpose and placed in such a way as to avoid creating a trip hazard from trailing cables and legs of tripods.

Particular attention should be made to ensure emergency routes are well lit and backup lighting installed where required.

Welfare Facilities

With winter rapidly approaching and site working conditions becoming more difficult through the winter months, the need for adequate toilet and washing facilities is never greater.

In general welfare facilities should be kept clean, heated, adequately lit and ventilated as necessary and kept in a good state of repair.

Facilities must include:

- Suitable and sufficient toilet facilities
- A supply of hot (or warm) and cold water preferably from a main supply.
- Soap or other cleansers and a means for drying

Suitable and sufficient rest facilities must be made available (such as site canteen) including sufficient table and chairs separated from the working environment.

Facilities should also provide provision for drying clothing when wet.

Icy conditions and winter weather

Slip and trip accidents increase during the Autumn and Winter season for a number of reasons: there is less daylight, leaves fall onto paths and become wet and slippery and cold weather spells cause ice and snow to build up on paths. There are effective actions that you can take to reduce the risk of a slip or trip. Regardless of the size of your site, always ensure that regularly used walkways are promptly tackled.

Issues to consider during the winter months.

Lighting

Is there is enough lighting around your workplace for you and your workers to be able to see and avoid hazards that might be on the ground? The easiest way to find out is to ask your staff. Another way is to shadow your employees for a couple of days, walk the main internal and external routes that they use throughout their working day. It is important to do this both inside and outside of the workplace, as the effect of light changes during the day. If you can't see hazards on the ground you will need to improve the lighting (e.g. new lights or changing the type of bulb).

Wet and decaying leaves

Fallen leaves that become wet or have started to decay can create slip risks in two ways, they hide any hazard that may be on the path or they themselves create a slip risk.

Put in place a procedure for removing leaves at regular intervals; you might even consider removing the offending bushes or trees altogether.

Rain water

In dealing with rainwater:

- When fitting external paved areas ensure that the material used will be slip resistant when wet.
- Discourage people from taking shortcuts over grass or dirt which are likely to become slippery when wet. Consider converting existing shortcuts into proper paths.
- On new sites, before laying paths, think about how pedestrians are likely to move around the site. Putting the path in the right place from the start may save you money in the long term.
- Many slip accidents happen at building entrances as people entering the building walk in rainwater. Fitting canopies of a good size over building entrances and in the right position can help to prevent this.
- If a canopy is not a possibility, consider installing large, absorbent mats or even changing the entrance flooring to one which is non-slip.
- Ice, frost and snow
- To reduce the risk of slips on ice, frost or snow, you need to assess the risk and put in a system to manage it.
- Identify the outdoor areas used by pedestrians most likely to be affected by ice, for example: - building entrances, car parks, pedestrian walkways, shortcuts, sloped areas and areas constantly in the shade or wet.
- Monitor the temperature, as prevention is key.

- You need to take action whenever freezing temperatures are forecast. Keep up to date by visiting a weather service site such as the [Met Office](#) or the [Highways England](#).
- There are also smart signs on the market, available to buy at low cost, which display warning messages at 50 and below.
- Put a procedure in place to prevent an icy surface forming and/or keep pedestrians off the slippery surface;
 - Use grit (see separate article below for more detail) or similar, on areas prone to be slippery in frosty, icy conditions;
 - Consider covering walkways e.g. by an arbour high enough for people to walk through, or use an insulating material on smaller areas overnight;
 - Divert pedestrians to less slippery walkways and barrier off existing ones.
- If warning cones are used, remember to remove them once the hazard has passed or they will eventually be ignored.

Gritting

The most common method used to de-ice floors is gritting as it is relatively cheap, quick to apply and easy to spread. Rock salt (plain and treated) is the most commonly used 'grit'. It is the substance used on public roads by the highways authority.

Salt can stop ice forming and cause existing ice or snow to melt. It is most effective when it is ground down, but this will take far longer on pedestrian areas than on roads.

Gritting should be carried out when frost, ice or snow is forecast or when walkways are likely to be damp or wet and the floor temperatures are at, or below freezing. The best times are early in evening before the frost settles and/or early in the morning before employees arrive. Salt doesn't work instantly; it needs sufficient time to dissolve into the moisture on the floor.

If you grit when it is raining heavily the salt will be washed away, causing a problem if the rain then turns to snow. Compacted snow, which turns to ice, is difficult to treat effectively with grit. Be aware that 'dawn frost' can occur on dry surfaces, when early morning dew forms and freezes on impact with the cold surface. It can be difficult to predict when or where this condition will occur.

Firm fined £95,000 over failure to assess and protect workers at height

West Hill Projects Ltd has been fined £95,000 after a workman fell some 3.3m through an opening in December 2016.

Hammersmith Magistrates heard that the workman was working next to the large opening of the building in London. when he fell to the ground below and suffered four fractured vertebrae, a fractured rib and a scalp wound.

He was unable to work for several months following the incident.

Simple edge protection required

HSE investigator found that the company failed to take any measures to prevent people on site falling through the opening.

People had been working in the area in the days beforehand and the company had not properly planned the project.

- **West Hill Projects Ltd** – of Seymour Road, London pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 6(3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company was fined £95,604.80 and ordered to pay costs of £988.80.

Speaking after the incident HSE Inspector Owen Rowley said:

“The [risks associated with work at height](#) are well known throughout the construction industry. West Hill Projects Ltd failed to control the risk on site and one of its workers suffered serious injuries as a result.

It is vitally important that those in control of work at height implement suitable and sufficient measures to prevent falls.

The simple step of installing edge protection around the opening could have prevented this incident from occurring.’



Picture Gallery



Correct selection?



Aiming high!



2017?



Oop's!