

October 2005

European Safety Week



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This years theme for European Safety Week is 'Noise in the Workplace', and the week runs from the 24th - 28th October 2005.

Hearing damage from exposure to loud noise is a significant, but preventable problem in many workplaces. Noise related hearing damage can occur in any workplace, but it is particularly prevalent in construction, farming, mining, manufacturing and transportation.



So What is the Problem with Noise?

Sounds and noise are an important part of everyday life, and in small amounts are harmless. However, loud noises can cause problems and noise related hearing damage is permanent and incurable. Hearing related problems range from sounds appearing to be muffled to total deafness. Permanent and temporary 'tinnitus' or ringing in the ears can also be caused.

In recognition of the seriousness of noise related hearing damage, the HSE introduced specific health and safety legislation to combat the problems of occupational noise in the form of 'The Noise at Work Regulations 1989'.

How to Determine if There is a Problem with Occupational Noise in the Workplace

Generally if you have to shout or raise your voice to be heard by someone standing as little as 2m away, or if you have a ringing in your ears during or after work, then it is likely that you have a noise problem in your workplace.

What are my Responsibilities as an Employer?

All employers have a legal duty to protect the health and safety of their staff and those affected by their activities from noise related hazards. All employers should carry out a risk assessment to determine the actual and potential risks and hazards associated with their activities. This may involve carrying out noise measurements. Based on the risk assessment, a programme of measures can be established to:

- Where possible, eliminate sources of noise altogether
- Control noise at its source, ie: use quieter equipment or provide acoustic enclosures/screens
- Limit the duration of each workers exposure to excessive noise levels ie: where levels exceed 85dB(A)
- Provide hearing protection and where applicable establish mandatory hearing protection areas

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PPE, First Aid Kits,
Posters & More

Did you know that our online shop now stocks a range of high quality, essential health and safety products and equipment at low, low prices?

Our current range includes first aid kits, PPE, accident books & posters, other supplies are available on request. Visit our website for more information.

Be Safe NOT Sorry!!

Have you noticed how every year there tends to be more and more health and safety legislation being introduced which UK businesses and organisations must comply with? This year alone has already seen the introduction of the Working at Height Reg's; the Control of Vibration at Work Reg's; the Hazardous Waste Reg's; the Oil Pollution Reg's; and amendments to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Reg's. Other legislation due to be introduced or amended in the near future includes the Noise at Work Reg's, the Construction Reg's and the Corporate Manslaughter Bill.

The reality is that many small and medium sized organisations feel overwhelmed by the volume of new safety legislation and are failing to get to grips with the requirements and duties being placed upon them. Worse still is the fact that failing to comply with the requirements of such legislation can be very expensive and costly to an organisation, as the proprietor of a Cambridge Contracting Company recently discovered after failing to comply with the new Working at Height Regulations. The HSE prosecuted the company, just 7 days after the introduction of the regulations, for failing to provide a safe system of work whilst working on a roof. However, the costs incurred by the company during the HSE investigation and subsequent court case, are likely to have far exceeded the fine imposed by the judge, whilst the future loss of work and damage to the companies reputation can not be easily assessed!

If you feel you need access to **competent Health and Safety advice and guidance**, please contact us and we will advise you on the best route forward for your organisation. With the costs of our comprehensive Safety Advisory Service starting at £350.00, can you afford to take a chance?

Safety Services Direct Ltd

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**RECORD £15M H&S
FINE FOR TRANSCO**

An Edinburgh High Court jury has returned a guilty verdict in the case brought against Transco after the death on 22 December 1999 of a family of 4 in a massive explosion at a house in Carlisle Road, Larkhall, Lanarkshire.

Investigation by HSE officials found holes in the 250mm medium pressure ductile iron pipe that ran through the front garden of the house. It is believed leaking gas entered the under-floor void, and subsequently the kitchen of the property, where it ignited.



Workplace Risk Assessments

Building on the popularity and success of our Construction Risk Assessments package, Safety Services Direct Ltd are pleased to announce the launch of our **Workplace Risk Assessments** package. The **Workplace Risk Assessments** package has been specifically developed to help and assist UK based organisations to comply with and understand their statutory duties under **UK Health & Safety Legislation**. The software offers over 115 pages of comprehensive guidance/information and generic Risk/COSHH Assessments, all of which have been professionally prepared by our health and safety experts. The software includes:

- General information and background data on why risk assessments are required; the legal requirements; when, how and who should carry out risk assessments
- Blank Risk Assessment and COSHH Assessment forms for subsequent completion by the software user
- 30 completed generic Risk Assessments for key activities carried out within most workplaces
- 10 completed Preliminary COSHH Assessments for common substances used within the workplace
- All of the assessments can be edited and amended to suit the specific requirements of your workplace
- Each assessment assesses the risk, specifies control measures and provides reference to additional guidance information

For more information, or to purchase your **Workplace Risk Assessments** package, please visit: www.SafetyServicesDirect.com or call us on: **08453 66 99 33**

New Oil Storage Reg's

The new oil storage regulations have been designed to reduce the risk of oil spills, and apply to anyone who stores more than 200 litres of oil in tanks or containers outside and above ground. The regulations affect businesses, schools, hospitals, churches, hospitals, museums, offices, warehouses, banks and others who store substantial quantities of oil for central heating or other reasons. Domestic oil users are exempt unless they are storing 3,500 litres or more of oil. Failure to comply with the regulations could result in a fine of up to £5,000 and if oil is actually spilled the polluter could be fined up to £20,000 at a magistrate's court. A recent report from the Oil Care Campaign found that three of the top four causes of oil and fuel pollution incidents were tank failure, pipe failure and the overfilling of oil tanks.

The risk from all of these can be reduced by making sure that the storage of oil meets with the requirements of the new regulations. The Environment Agency and Oil Care Campaign have published a checklist outlining some of the major issues that should be considered by those responsible for the storage of oil, these include:

- Storing oil in suitable containers which are kept out of harms way.
- Using secondary containment big enough to hold 110% of the oil stored in tanks or 25% of oil in drums.
- Ensuring secondary containment systems are leak-proof.
- Storing all ancillary equipment within the secondary containment when not in use.
- Locking all taps and valves.
- All pipe work must be protected from damage by impact and corrosion, and underground pipes should be tested for leaks.

NEW Hazardous Waste Regulations

The Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005 came into full effect in England on 16 July 2005, doing away with the Special Waste Regulations 1996. The new Regulations have been designed to simplify the procedure for tracking the movement of hazardous waste by removing the need to pre-notify the Environment Agency (EA) about individual consignments. However, the Regulations do require:

- Sites producing more than 200kg of hazardous waste a year (for removal, treatment or disposal) to be registered with the EA;
- No more mixing of different types of hazardous waste at producing sites; and
- Producers to maintain company registers of their hazardous waste.

The Hazardous Waste Regulations have been issued at the same time as changes to the classification of these wastes. The legislation requires that many more wastes, such as **fluorescent tubes and some batteries** are classified as 'hazardous' for the first time, using the European Waste Catalogue as a guide. The hazardous classification of these and other waste products were confirmed, when the list of Wastes (England) Regulations 2005 also came into force on the 16th July.

Some of the changes will affect health and safety on-site. New layouts and site movements, the need to protect staff and others from stored materials and substances, and the need to prevent or control spillages are all important factors for consideration.