

*Friendly, professional,
down to earth
Health and Safety advice*

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SMSTS Refresher 1st & 2nd February

Site Management Safety Training Scheme

7th 8th 14th 15th 16th Feb

28th Feb 7th 14th 21st 28th March

Health & Safety Awareness 22nd February

Fire Warden 9th Feb

Emergency First Aid 10th February

Manual Handling: 25th January

Asbestos Awareness: 25th January

If you would like to book onto a course please call
the office or e-mail Sam@hcssafety.co.uk

*Don't forget—member clients receive a 15% off ALL
training booked with us!*

Annual Safety Reviews

It is hard to believe that a year has passed since we started our membership scheme.

Zoe will be in touch with those of you that had your first meeting in February and March last year to make appointments for this year's review. We will be aiming to update training records during the meeting and also hoping to further simplify the safety policies and make them more specific still to your company.

We still have the "to-do" lists that we made together and will be bringing these to the meetings also; so it will be good to see how we have all done!

See you soon...

First Workshop of the Year:

SILICA AND FIT TESTING

Q: Who should attend?

A: Employers of bricklayers, groundworkers, roofers, ceramic tilers and anyone else who could inhale silica dust as part of their job, ALL Principal Contractors

Date: 17th February

Time: 7.30 for breakfast

8.00 start

10.00 finish

This workshop will contain all you need to know about Silica, its effects and what to do about it. We will include a session on fit testing and there will be the opportunity to "have a go" at a fit test.

Book up now folks—it's going to be a popular one!

Safety News

January 2011

Preventing slips on ice and snow

Contrary to some tabloid rumours, we are very unlikely to get sued for clearing up snow and ice. We would have to do something truly daft like "melting" it with water to make it worse rather than better!

Many sites will have limited work going on due to the cold weather, as there are temperature limits for mortar and concrete products.

However, some sites will still have peo-

ple who need to get about, and those who work in your company offices will need to negotiate car-parks and pavements. Here are a few top tips for preventing slips:

*** Clear the snow or ice early in the day**

It's easier to move fresh, loose snow rather than hard snow that has packed together from people walking on it. So if possible, start removing the snow and ice in the morning. If you remove the top layer of snow in the morning, any sunshine during the day will help melt any ice beneath. You can then cover the path with salt before nightfall to stop it re-freezing overnight.

*** Prevent Black Ice**

You can prevent black ice by spreading some salt on the area you have cleared. You can use ordinary table or dishwasher salt - a tablespoon for each square metre you clear should work.

*** Run out of salt?**

If you don't have enough salt, you can use sand, pea shingle or ash. These won't stop the path icing as well as salt, but will provide good grip under foot.



Look after yourself in the cold weather.

*** Wear the right clothing!**

Sort yourself out with a good base layer—thermal underwear is ideal of course. Then layer up with several thin layers, rather than one thick one. Wear natural fibres such as wool (it keeps sheep warm!), cotton and fleecy synthetic fibres. A cheap high vis site coat will not keep you particularly warm—it's what's underneath it that counts.

*** Cold hands—warm heart**

In the cold weather, the body prioritises the blood flow to keep your core temperature up, so we tend to get cold on our extremities (that's hands and feet, boys!).

*** Think about your feet...**

There is a lot to be said for some really good quality socks. If you are sporting a pair of dodgy nylon socks, you are pretty much guaranteed to have cold feet. Thick wool or cotton are the best, and you need enough room in your boots to be able to wiggle your toes.



*** Hands are important**

If you can wear gloves to do your job, then get a pair that extends past your wrists if possible. The cold will dry skin so you could be more at risk of dermatitis. If you are using vibrating equipment, the cold will make you more vulnerable to damage because the blood vessels have less blood inside them to act as a cushion.

*** Keep Dry!**

If you are expected to work in wet weather, there should be a drying room on site. Getting wet is a guaranteed way to get really cold as well—so please do use the facilities provided.

*** Warm inside:**

There is a reason why sites have to provide means of heating food—it's all about keeping your core temperature up. Make sure you have hot drinks and something hot to eat at lunchtime. It doesn't matter if it's a pasty or leftovers from last night's dinner—heat it up and it will keep you warm! Remember to give the microwave a clean up now and again, though...



Driving in the cold:

Top up with windscreen washer. Plain water will freeze, screen wash will not. Struggling to see in the dark? Your headlights will become far less effective when covered with a layer of salt spray. Give them a clean off before you set out. How's your battery? They don't last forever and they work hard in the winter running heaters, lights and windscreen wipers.

Give yourself enough time to clear the windows before you set off. A tiny gap in the ice is no good.

If you are out and about in the daylight, the low sun can dazzle. Make sure windscreen and windows are clean as the dirt will obscure your vision.

Just in case... Blanket, fully charged phone, torch, first-aid kit, tow rope, warm coat and boots, jump leads, bottle of water, shovel, warning triangle, an old sack or rug (to put under the wheels if you do get stuck) and water repellent spray (such as WD40)

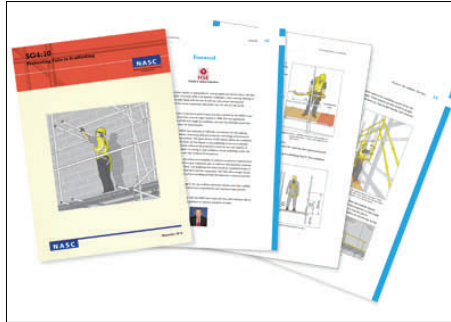


Safety News

SG4:10 NEW Guidance for scaffolders is now available from the NASC

Since its introduction in the mid-nineties Safety Guidance Number 4 (SG4) from the National Access and Scaffolding Confederation (NASC) has become the established minimum standard for fall prevention in the scaffolding industry. SG4 rose to prominence following the major revision in 2000 (SG4:00) as it represented a significant change and challenge to the established methods of working that had been practiced for decades.

The new SG4:10 - 'Preventing Falls in Scaffolding' - will see more emphasis on the creation of a 'Safe Zone' by scaffolders covering a variety of safe methods. This revision will also see the removal of the practice of the 'unprotected traversing element' from the tunnelling principle. The initial impact to the Industry to implement these new measures will be significant for those who have **not** yet embraced the systems of work pro-



moted by SG4:05 and Appendix A. Those who have fully embraced these new methods will only see a small change in working practices.

HSE VIEW:

"This revision represents a step change in the way scaffold contractors should erect their scaffold structures. The guidance is straightforward and comprehensive and

represents best practice within the industry. The HSE will no longer accept the unprotected traversing element of the tunnelling principle that featured in previous versions of the guide" Phillip White, Head of Construction, HSE

Essentially, the new guidance makes it a requirement that advance guardrail systems are used which will effectively remove the unprotected traversing element of scaffolding work. This will not totally remove the need to wear harnesses, but it should reduce the reliance on this form of protection. If this affects you there is a video toolbox talk presentation on the NASC's website which explains the changes very clearly. It is less than 10 minutes long and is ESSENTIAL viewing for scaffolders:

www.nasc.org/sg4

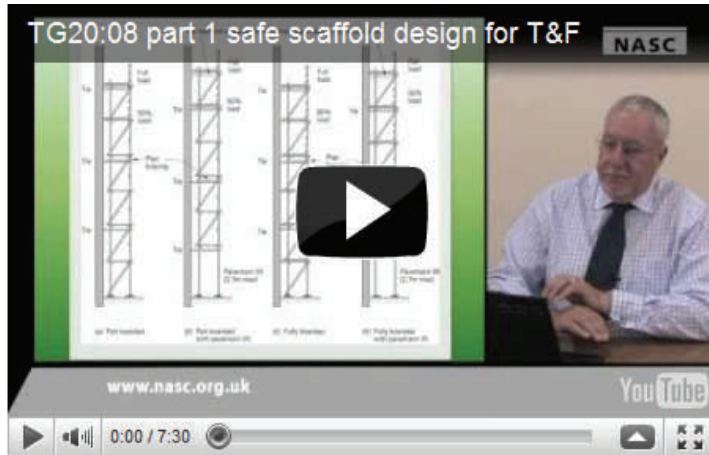
Jan 2011: The Deadline

Yes, more scaffolding news...

The standard is BSEN 128-11-1, the guidance on implementing that standard is TG20:08. As of January 1st 2011, ALL tube and fitting scaffold structures must be designed to the TG20:08 guidance.

For more information on this, there is another friendly toolbox talk video presentation on the NASC's website:

www.nasc.org



Inspections

Persons who carry out scaffold inspections should be familiar with the requirements for basic scaffolds as defined by TG20:08

HSE's Plan of Action for 2011

The HSE regularly publishes its plans for the forthcoming year. Their intentions are made public for all to see and are based on the information that they receive through RIDDOR reports and observations on site during their visits.

HSE operational activities will target the following sectors:

- * **Asbestos removal licence holders (inspection of licensed work)**
- * **Small sites**
- * **Refurbishment**
- * **Homebuild**
- * **Major projects**

Five issues that will be considered at all sites are:

- * **Provision of welfare facilities**
- * **Site transport**
- * **Work at height**
- * **Asbestos risks**
- * **Good Order**



RIDDOR Changes proposed

Lord Young's recommendation to increase the period before a workplace injury or incident needs to be reported from three to seven days is to be taken forward by the HSE, which has announced its intention to publish a consultation document on the proposed change next month.

Currently, when an employee is absent from work for more than three days following an incident or injury at work, employers are required to report the incident to the HSE.

The proposed amendment increases this 'over-three-day' period to over seven consecutive days (including rest days, excluding the day of the incident)

We will, of course keep you posted on any changes when they occur.

In the Courts: a round-up of recent prosecutions

BT will appeal against £300,000 fine for ladder fatality

British Telecom has been fined £300,000 for failing to create a safe system-of-work for an employee who fell to his death while carrying out installation work.

Power construction engineer David Askew, 52, was installing distribution boards and running cabling at London's Canonbury Telephone Exchange, when the incident took place, on 27 October 2006.

During the work he fell more than

four metres from a nine-step ladder and suffered serious head injuries. He died in hospital 18 days later.

The HSE commented: "The fact that this incident was entirely avoidable makes Mr Askew's death all the more tragic.

The dangers posed by work at height are well known, yet BT failed to ensure this task was carried out safely and the appropriate access equipment was used. Employers have a responsi-

bility to ensure that work at height is properly planned and organised."

In addition to the fine it was ordered to pay costs of £196,150.



One tiler killed and two injured by overturning forklift

Banbury Crown Court heard that Linden Ltd was the principal contractor during the construction of 18 residential properties in Broughton Road, Banbury, Oxfordshire. On the morning of 11 January 2008, three ceramic tilers who were working at the site, Michael Whateley, his brother Robert Whateley, and Paul Keen, were waiting in a car for the building plot to be unlocked.

Keith Payne, who was a sub-contractor at the site, was carrying out routine checks on a telescopic materials handler. As part of the tests he raised and then fully extended the 12-metre unloaded boom of the telehandler, which was parked on unstable ground and on a slope. This caused the truck to overturn

and the forks at the end of the boom landed on the workers' car, crushing the roof of the vehicle.

Michael Whateley died at the scene from serious head injuries. Robert Whateley suffered fractures to his spine, and a brain injury. Paul Keen suffered neck and spinal injuries, a broken ankle, broken ribs and a fractured breastbone.

The HSE's investigation found that Payne had not positioned the vehicle on suitable ground before operating the vehicle. It also identified that Linden Ltd had failed to properly maintain the machine, and the tyre pressures were too low

HSE inspector James Powell said: "This was an horrific accident that was totally avoidable. Construction sites have inherent risks, and even rough-terrain lift trucks have strict operational limits that need to be observed. With competent operation and suitable maintenance, tragedies like this should not happen.



Refurb Company Prosecuted for lack of Asbestos Training

The owner of a refurbishment company has appeared in front of magistrates for failing to provide employees with asbestos awareness training.

Neil Brown, trading as High View Services, was contracted by North Tyneside Council to make repairs during the refurbishment of a council house in Killingworth in January 2009. An upgraded heating system had been installed at the property and Brown's firm was repairing surfaces that had been damaged during the installation.

On 6 January 2009, a council employee

identified asbestos materials in debris, which had been placed in a wheelie bin outside the property. The HSE was notified and its investigation found that Brown had failed to provide asbestos awareness training for any of his employees who were working inside the property.

HSE inspector Graham Watson told SHP that it was foreseeable that the workers might come across asbestos and Brown should have equipped his employees to recognise the dangers. He said: "Any employer who conducts work, which may result in their em-

ployees coming into contact with asbestos, must make sure they receive adequate information, instruction and training to help control not just the risks to themselves but others who may also be exposed."

Brown appeared at North Tyneside Magistrates' Court on 5 November and pleaded guilty to breaching reg. 10(1)(a) of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006, for failing to provide employees with asbestos awareness training. Owing to his lack of means, magistrates fined him £360 and ordered him to pay the same amount towards costs.