Welcome to this edition of the Occupational Health and Safety Information Service News Brief

This edition of our News Brief continues the inclusion of content from our partners at the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) and Sheila Pantry Associates.

The CIEH is a registered charity and the professional voice for environmental health. They provide information, training, evidence and policy advice to public health, health and safety, environmental management regulators and practitioners in the public and private sectors. For more information about the CIEH please visit uk.ihs.com/about/cieh.html

From Sheila Pantry Associates we have the latest prosecutions, and training and conference events.

We are keen to hear your feedback on the content and if you have any suggestions for how we can further enhance the News Brief for you. To provide your feedback please email marketing@ihsmarkit.com and title your email ‘OHSIS News Brief’.

Please share this newsletter with your colleagues and keep them up-to-date with the latest news.
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A packaging manufacturing company was sentenced after a worker was injured by an automated transfer vehicle.

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EVENTS TIMETABLE: November 2019 – December 2019

Welcome to the second part of the Occupational Health and Safety Information Service News Brief.

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Editorial Advisory Board

Sheila Pantry OBE - OSH Consultant Strategic Editor
sp@sheilapantry.com

Acoura, Health and Safety Consultancy Support
info@acoura.com

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PROSECUTIONS

Electrician Prosecuted For Illegal Gas Work
A self-employed electrician has been prosecuted after carrying out gas work without being Gas Safe registered.

Manchester Magistrates’ Court heard that Robert Parker had carried out gas work between March and August 2017 and installed a boiler on 24 October 2017 at a domestic property in Rossendale despite not being Gas Safe registered.

Following notification of installation defects by the occupiers of the property, Gas Safe inspectors inspected and found the work was at risk and not to current standards. The boiler was deemed to be immediately dangerous as there was no flue connected.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), found that Robert Parker was not Gas Safe registered and was not qualified or competent to undertake gas work.

Robert Parker of Burnley, Lancashire pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 3(1) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. He was given a 26 week suspended sentence to 12 months, 150 hours unpaid work and ordered to pay costs of £2298.20.

HSE inspector Sharon Butler said after the hearing ‘Mr Parker undertook gas work which he knew he was not registered to do. All gas work must be done by registered Gas Safe engineers to ensure the highest standards are met to prevent injury and loss of life.’

Chemical Company Fined £120,000 After Employee Suffered A Serious Injury
Vertellus Specialties UK Limited has today been fined after an employee fell two metres from a ladder and suffered a serious elbow injury.

Carlisle Magistrates’ Court heard that on 6 June 2018, at the company’s site in Northside, Workington, an employee was using a ladder to inspect a steam leak at height when the ladder failed and the employee fell to the ground.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had failed to ensure that work at height was properly planned and managed. The company also failed to ensure that equipment provided for use at height was inspected at regular intervals and was fit for use.

Vertellus Specialties UK Limited of St Ann’s Wharf, Newcastle-upon-Tyne pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £120,000 with £5155.80 in costs.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Carol Forster said: ‘Work at height accidents are one of the main causes of occupational injury and death. Employers should consider if working at height can be avoided and, if work at height is undertaken, it should be properly planned and managed appropriately and all equipment should be fit for purpose.’
Company Fined £60,000 After Worker's Leg Crushed By Machinery
A packaging manufacturing company was sentenced after a worker was injured by an automated transfer vehicle.

Teesside Magistrates’ Court heard that on 5 September 2017, the employee of Saica Pack UK Limited was walking along the factory floor when his leg became trapped between an automated vehicle and a conveyor at the company site in Hartlepool. The vehicles, known as transfer cars, are used to move product around the factory and onto a conveyor system.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that although the company purchased the Hartlepool site in 2008, it had failed to assess the risk of injury from contact with the transfer cars until nine years later, only a month prior to the incident. An assessment which was carried out by an external consultant and given to the company in August 2017, highlighted several areas where remedial action was required and made it clear how far short the site was from compliance with the company's own ‘group wide’ material handling system standard. The company had failed to ensure that the standard was adopted at the Hartlepool site and very little had been done to control the risks associated with the transfer cars.

Saica Pack UK Limited of Oakesway Trading Estate, Hartlepool, Cleveland pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and was fined £60,000 with £1512.89 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Jonathan Wills said: ‘A worker was left with serious life-changing injuries because of this incident. Injuries which could have very easily been avoided, had the recommendations made in the assessment been acted upon.’

Port Operator Sentenced And Fined £300,000 After Worker Seriously Injured During Loading Operation
A Liverpool port operating company has been sentenced after a worker was struck by a load falling from two fork lift trucks (FLTs) at the Port of Liverpool in Seaforth.

Liverpool Magistrates’ Court heard that on 28 May 2015, three agency workers performing work for the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company were loading bundles of rebar onto HGV trailers for onward transfer. The injured employee was acting as banksman whilst his two colleagues were operating their FLTs as part of a tandem lift manoeuvre. During the loading procedure a single bundle of rebar weighing 1,924 kg, suspended on the forks of the two trucks, was struck by the reversing HGV’s headboard causing it to fall onto the employee stood on the far side by the HGV’s cab.

Following the incident, the operative sustained multiple fractures, lacerations, scarring and abrasion, ligament reconstruction to his left knee and has undergone four operations which resulted in the amputation of two toes of his left foot. He has been unable to return to work since the incident.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found no suitable risk assessment relating to the hazards arising from loading bundles of rebar onto reversing flatbed trailers had been carried out. The tandem FLT lifting operation was also not properly planned, supervised or carried out in a safe manner.

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company Limited of Maritime Centre, Port of Liverpool pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £300,000 and ordered to pay costs of £7,593.55.
After the hearing HSE inspector Rohan Lye said: ‘Those in control of work have a responsibility to ensure they provide safe methods of working and a safe working environment. If suitable controls had been in place the serious physical injuries sustained by this worker could easily have been prevented.’

**Fitter Prosecuted For Illegal Gas Work**
A gas fitter from Bolton has been sentenced after carrying out defective gas work whilst no longer being gas safe registered.

Bolton Crown Court heard how Anthony Lord, trading as Lord HBA, carried out work on gas fittings at two premises in Bolton, Gilnow Chippy and Hamzah Sweets and Bakers, between 1 and 28 March 2017. A Gas Safe inspector visited Gilnow Chippy on 7 July 2017 and detected a gas escape which he identified as immediately dangerous as well as numerous faults on ventilation and extraction systems that were deemed ‘at risk.’

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Anthony Lord’s gas safe registration had ended approximately 12 months prior to carrying out the work. The registration was not renewed resulting in him illegally carrying out the gas work. He had also continued to use his previous employer’s registration details on gas inspection paperwork, which he was not entitled to use.

Mr Anthony Lord of Sevenoaks Drive, Bolton pleaded guilty to breaching Regulations 3(3), 3(7) and 5(3) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. He was sentenced to a 10-month custodial sentence suspended for two years, 210 hours of unpaid work and 20 days of rehabilitation activity.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Ian Betley said: ‘Anthony Lord undertook gas work which he knew he was not registered to do and pretended to be Gas Safe registered. All gas work must be done by registered Gas Safe engineers to ensure the highest standards are met to prevent injury and loss of life.

‘HSE will not fail to take the appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards.’

**Agricultural Company Fined £226,000 And Ordered To Pay Costs Of £11,564.10 After Employee Seriously Injured By Machinery**
An agricultural company based in Hereford has been fined after an employee was seriously injured when working on a bio-chopper machine.

Telford Magistrates’ Court heard that on 6 October 2017 an employee of the company sustained fractures to her left lower arm when she was pulled into the machine at the site on Homme Farm in Ross-on-Wye.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that due to damage to the guard on the Bio-Chopper the company had devised a system of work which involved feeding a sheet of material into the machine. The machine was not adequately guarded, there was no safe system of work and no suitable training for the injured worker.

E C Drummond (Agriculture) Limited of Homme Farm, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and has been fined £226,000 and ordered to pay costs of £11,564.10.
Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Steve Richardson said: ‘This injury could have been easily prevented, and the risk of injury should have been identified.

‘Employers should make sure they properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery.’

**Tree Service Company Sentenced After Employee Suffers Finger Amputation**

Josh Noon Tree Services has been sentenced today after a worker suffered serious hand injuries when his hand was caught in a log splitting machine.

Exeter Magistrates’ Court heard that on 29 December 2017, 33-year-old tree surgeon Darren Gillespie was working with another employee on the log splitting machine at the company’s site at Lapford, Crediton.

Mr Gillespie was placing logs in the splitter and then removing the split logs and throwing them into the log store while another employee would operate the log splitter. His hand became trapped whilst working on the machine and when he pulled away he found his right-hand index finger had been completely severed along with the tip of the middle finger.

The court heard that even after surgery, Mr Gillespie still suffers from pain the incident has significantly impacted his ability to continue to work as a tree surgeon.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that due to a lack of guarding or two-handed controls, the machine involved in the incident presented a foreseeable risk of serious injury to operators. The inclusion of a second person loading logs onto the splitter increased the likelihood that a serious injury would occur.

Joshua Mark Noon of Highfield Close, Lapford, Crediton, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 3(2) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, he has been fined £3100 and ordered to pay costs of £6019.90.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Paul Mannell said: ‘This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures for machinery guarding and safe working practices.

‘Employers should make sure they properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery.’

**Director Of Waste Company Convicted**

The director of a waste management company has been ordered to carry out unpaid work after an employee was critically injured.

Poole Magistrates’ Court heard that on 18 April 2017 Justin Tinsley, then aged 33, had only been employed by Mike Toon Ltd for a few weeks when he was trapped between a telehandler and a gate post at the company yard on Dawkins Road in Poole. Mike Toon Ltd processed and recycled builders’ waste and soil at the yard.

Justin was struggling with a manoeuvre and the machine became stuck. With the engine running and the door blocked Justin climbed out through the window to allow Mr Toon to free the machine.
However, the machine moved unexpectedly, and Justin was crushed between the machine and a gate post. Justin was unconscious in hospital for some weeks and has never fully recovered from his crush injuries.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found Justin was being trained to drive a telehandler by the company owner and director Michael Toon. The investigation found several serious long-term faults with the telehandler including some relating to braking.

Michael Toon of Poole Road, Bournemouth pleaded guilty breaching section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974; that being a director of Michael Toon Ltd he failed to discharge his duty under section 2(1), the offence being committed with his consent or connivance or being attributable to his neglect. He was given a 120 hours unpaid work community order and ordered to contribute to costs of £1500.

HSE inspector Ian Smart said: ‘Michael Toon was well aware of the unsafe condition of the telehandler yet allowed it to be used by an inexperienced employee.

‘HSE promotes safe-stop procedures where drivers should apply the parking brake and turn off the ignition before exiting any mobile machinery. Justin could not do this as the telehandler was in such poor mechanical condition. The law requires mobile machinery to be in safe working order at all times. Maintenance is not optional. This accident could easily have been prevented.’

**Roofing Company And Director Prosecuted After Skylight Fall**

A roofing and building company, and its director, have been sentenced after an employee fell through a skylight.

North East Derbyshire and Dales Magistrates’ Court heard that on 26 March 2018, an employee was carrying out replacement work on the fragile roof of a stable block when he fell through a skylight at Owler Lee Farm, Dronfield. He had stepped from newly fitted metal sheets onto a Youngman board on the skylights. The lower end of the board went through the skylight and he fell around 15 feet to the floor below, resulting in fractures to his knee, elbow and wrist.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Mr Ian Wilkinson, the director of Weathervane Roofing and Building Limited, did not adequately plan the work at height, which meant there was no safe system of work in place for removal and replacement of the fragile roof of the stable building. As a result, there were inadequate measures in place for preventing falls through the fragile roof, or from one of the roof edges, and there was nothing in place to catch the operatives and prevent them from hitting the ground in the event of a fall.

Weathervane Roofing and Building Limited of Vicarage Close, Holmesfield pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation, 6(3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company has been fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1,125.70.

Mr Ian Wilkinson of Vicarage Close, Holmesfield pleaded guilty to breaching Section 37(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was sentenced to a 12-month community order with 160 hours of unpaid work. He was ordered to pay costs of £1,125.40.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Laura Royales said: ‘Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work related fatalities in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known. Whilst the injuries sustained by the operative in this case were serious, it is
only by chance that they were not fatal. Those in control of work at height must ensure that the work is properly planned and that suitable measures are implemented for preventing falls, or for mitigating the effects of a fall.’

**Company Director Fined After Worker Impaled On A Spike**

Hafeez Ghafoor, formerly a director of the now-dissolved landscaping company R K United Ltd, has been sentenced for safety breaches after a worker suffered life changing injuries.

Leeds Crown Court heard that on 25 August 2016, an employee of R K United Ltd was using a lorry loader crane to deliver a load of soil to a new house on Otley Road, in Leeds. As he brought the crane arm down, his left arm was impaled on a spike which was protruding from the control system. The impact caused several bones in his arm to be shattered.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the crane had severe defects, including a disabled safety system, and part of the safety guard around the controls had been cut off, leaving the spike on which his arm was impaled. In addition, the worker had not received appropriate training to operate the lorry loader crane.

Hafeez Ghafoor of Park Road, Crosland Moor, Huddersfield pleaded guilty to breaching Section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. Mr Ghafoor was given a 12-month prison sentence suspended for two years and ordered to complete 200 hours of community service.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Yolande Burns-Sleightholme commented: ‘This injury was easily preventable, and the risk should have been identified.

‘The lorry loader crane should have been properly maintained, regular inspections carried out, and a thorough examination taken place every twelve months. The disabled safety system would have been found during the examination, ensuring that this incident could not have occurred.’

**Roofing Contractor Company Fined £60,000 After Fatal Ladder Fall**

An Aberdeen based roofing contractor has been fined after an employee fell to his death from a ladder while exiting a scaffold at Jute Street in the city.

Aberdeen Sheriff Court heard that on 21 September 2016, Joseph Kane, an employee of Henderson and Aitken Limited fell from the top rungs of a ladder when it slipped sideways on the scaffold. Mr Kane died of multiple injuries.

The scaffolding had been erected by Henderson and Aitken Limited employees and the ladder was tied, using a blue nylon cord, to the scaffold ledger at only the left stile.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) specialist inspector that carried out the investigation estimated the lateral movement of the ladder due to the lack of fixity was approximately 20cm.

HSE found a Henderson and Aitken Limited employee had erected the scaffold even though he was not a qualified or competent scaffoldor. He had been asked to do this by the company director who was aware he was unqualified. The director then allowed three people to access the scaffold. The scaffold was not erected to the correct standard.
Henderson and Aitken Limited of 6 Balmoral Terrace, Aberdeen, AB10 6HH pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4 of Work at Height Regulations 2005 and Section 33(1)(c) of HSWA and was fined £53,000.

Speaking after the hearing HSE Principal Inspector Niall Miller said: ‘Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related fatalities in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known.

‘This tragic and preventable death highlights the need for those undertaking work at height to ensure that it is carried out safely, that industry guidance is followed and that the relevant regulations are complied with. It is vitally important that those planning and arranging for such work give sufficient regard to the risks posed to workers and members of the public through their actions.’

**Engineering Company Fined After Wooden Bearer Causes Fatal Injury To Employee**

An engineering company has been fined following the death of an employee who was struck on the head by a wooden bearer in the yard of a fabrication workshop.

Hamilton Sheriff Court heard how, on 7 September 2017, James Longair, 62 was helping a colleague who was operating a side loader at IODS Pipe Clad Limited in East Kilbride, moving pipes from one part of the yard to another by lifting the pipes on the forks. The men decided that the pipe should be lifted at one end using a side loader. Once the pipe had been lifted at one end it rolled off the forks and struck the deceased on the leg before falling onto a wooden bearer. This sent the bearer into the air, striking the deceased on the head.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) identified that the work method used to lift and move the pipes was unsafe. There was no method to secure the pipe on the forks when lifted, which meant when the pipe began to roll along the forks the operator had no control over it. The pipe subsequently fell off the end of the forks, ultimately leading to Mr Longair's fatal injury.

IODS Pipe Cad Limited of Singer Road, East Kilbride pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and were fined £60,000.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Martin McMahon said: ‘This tragic incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.’

‘Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards.’

**Lancashire Furniture Manufacturer Fined After Worker Injured By Machinery**

A furniture manufacturer, A and L Furnishings Ltd, has been fined after an employee was injured whilst operating unguarded machinery.

Preston Magistrates' Court heard that on 19 March 2018, the employee had been using a horizontal drilling machine to make parts for a chair at the company site in Leyland when the fingers of his left hand came into contact with unguarded counter-rotating drill bits and became entangled. The incident caused extensive damage to his left hand, resulting in the amputation of two fingers.
The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found that it was possible for employees to reach the dangerous parts of the horizontal drilling machine when it was in operation as A and L Furnishings Ltd had failed to provide a suitable guard for the machine.

A and L Furnishings Ltd of Leyland, Lancashire pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 11(1) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and has been fined of £14,000 and ordered to pay costs of £5500.85.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Anthony Banks said:

‘The dangers of unguarded machinery are well-known. If A and L Furnishings Ltd had ensured that suitable guarding was in place, then this incident would have been avoided.

‘Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take enforcement action when the required standards are not met.’

Man Sentenced After Illegal Gas Work In Cornish Home
A self-employed builder has been found guilty and sentenced today after conducting gas work he was not registered or competent to do and leaving it in a dangerous condition.

Plymouth Magistrates’ Court heard how in March 2018 Christopher Finley, sole director of Centreline Building Services Ltd, quoted for a kitchen re-fit which included the installation of a Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) hob at a property in Cornwall. He undertook this work and installed a new LPG gas hob. There was no paperwork left with the customer.

When the client found faults with the hob, she attempted to make contact with Mr Finley and requested the gas safety certificate, but no response was received. A properly registered gas engineer later inspected the work and found it to be of poor standard and classed it as ‘At Risk’. It was found that Mr Finley had left the LPG hob that he fitted in a dangerous state. He had failed to change the injectors from those fitted for natural gas to those required for LPG. There was therefore too much gas being supplied at the hob which could have resulted in a fire and explosion.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Mr Finley was not and never has been a member of Gas Safe Register. He was not registered or competent to undertake gas work. He should have used a registered gas engineer to undertake the gas work element of the kitchen re-fit.

Christopher Finley of Crockington Lane, Wolverhampton was found guilty of breaching Regulations 3(1), 3(3) and 26(1) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. He has been given a six month suspended sentence on each breach, ordered to do 160 hours unpaid work and ordered to pay costs of £7505.40.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Simon Jones said: ‘Mr Finley undertook gas work which he knew he was not registered to do.

‘All gas work must be done by a registered Gas Safe engineer to ensure the highest standards are met to prevent injury and loss of life.’
BP Exploration Operating Company Limited Fined £400,000 After An Oil Leak

BP Exploration Operating Company Limited has been fined following an uncontrolled release of fluids at the Sullom Voe Terminal, Mossbank, Shetland.

Lerwick Sheriff Court heard that on 13 December 2012 work was being carried out by BP Exploration Operating Company employees to drain a surge relief line connected to the Ninian pipeline system, within Sullom Voe Terminal Complex. During this procedure a hose was connected to single valve on the pipe and put, unfixed into a manhole. After draining out the water, unstabilised crude oil at high pressure flowed through the hose, which came out of a man-hole resulting in a ‘loss of containment’. This was not noticed for about 30-40 minutes. During this time approximately 3.8 tonnes of extremely flammable, unstabilised crude oil spilled on to the ground.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that between 12 November and 13 December 2012 BP Exploration Operating Company Limited had failed to take all measures necessary to prevent major accidents and to limit their consequences to persons and the environment. They failed to identify and assess the hazards and risks arising from the under-taking of a non-routine job, namely the task of draining water from a drain valve on a surge relief line.

BP Exploration Operating Company Limited, Chertsey Road, Sunbury on Thames, Middlesex pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4 of The Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 1999 and Section 33(1)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc 1974. The company was fined £400,000.

Speaking after the hearing HSE principal inspector Greg Haywood said: 'This incident could so easily have been avoided by simply carrying out correct control measures and safe working practices.

'Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards.'

Groundworks Company Fined £10,000 After Security Guard Suffers Life Changing Injuries

A groundworks company has been fined after a security guard suffered serious hand injuries.

Bristol Magistrates’ Court heard how on 17 November 2017 at the site on Ableton Lane in Avonmouth, a plant driver employed by APK Earthmoving Limited requested the assistance of a security guard working for a separate company to remove a trailer from a bulldozer whilst the machine was operated by the driver. The security guard’s right hand was trapped between a metal post and the bulldozer resulting in the amputation of his middle and ring fingers, and loss of movement in his index finger of his right hand.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that APK Earthmoving Limited had failed to conduct its undertaking, the hire of mobile plant and driver services, in such a way that people not in its employment were exposed to risks to their safety.

APK Earthmoving Limited of Oxfordshire pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company has been fined £10,000 and ordered to pay costs of £1297.00.

The injured person said: ‘I was off work for seven months and I still have a lot of pain in my hand. As I am right-handed my injuries have affected my writing, and there are many tasks at work and at home
that I need help with. I tend to keep my hand in my pocket because I’m concerned it will affect people if they see my injuries.’

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Berenice Ray said: ‘This injury could have been easily prevented if a safe system of work had been followed, with the bulldozer ignition turned off before anyone was allowed close to remove the trailer.

‘Employers should make sure they properly assess risks and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from their machinery operations.’

**Partners Of Roofing Company Bowled Over For Unsafe Work**

Both partners of a roofing company have been sentenced following out unsafe work on a Bowls Club in Salisbury.

Swindon Magistrates’ Court heard how between 23 April and 7 May 2018 workers of CB Roofing were seen working on the roof with unsafe access, no edge protection and nothing to prevent falls through the fragile roof material.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the partners failed to ensure that the work at height was properly planned, appropriately supervised and carried out safely.

Philip Robert Stanley Spring of Blyth Way, Salisbury pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4 (1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and has received a six-month custodial sentence, suspended for 12 months, in which time he must undertake 250 hours unpaid work. He was also ordered to pay costs of £1836.31.

Christopher James Barham of Hughendon Manor, Salisbury pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4 (1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and has received a six-month custodial sentence, suspended for 12 months, in which time he must undertake 250 hours unpaid work. He was also ordered to pay costs of £1836.31.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Sue Adsett said: ‘Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related injuries in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known.

‘Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards.’

**Company And Sub-Contractor Fined £225,000 With £8,000 Costs After Worker Falls From Height**

Two companies, P.D.R. Construction Limited and Metcalfe Roofing and Building Services Limited, have been fined after a worker fell through a fragile mesh roof whilst carrying out work at height.

Teesside Crown Court heard how, on 21 July 2016, the injured person had been in the process of installing a roof on a new KFC Drive Thru in Coulby Newham. Whilst moving materials on the roof, he stepped backwards onto an adjacent fragile mesh roof that was not loadbearing, falling approximately three metres and suffering multiple fractures of his lower left back.
The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found that in failing to prevent access to the fragile roof area, the roofing contractor, Metcalfe Roofing and Building Services Limited, had failed to plan and carry out the work at height in a safe manner. The investigation also found the principal contractor, P.D.R. Construction Limited, had failed to plan, manage or monitor an aspect of the construction phase without risk to safety.

P.D.R. Construction Limited of Salisbury House, Priory Park West, Hessle pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 13(1) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and was fined £225,000 with £8,000 costs.

Metcalfe Roofing and Building Services Limited of Sandgate Industrial Estate, Hartlepool, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and was fined £2,000.

After the hearing, HSE inspector John Heslop said: ‘This incident highlights the importance of thorough risk assessment, appropriate planning and adhering to a safe system of work that is regularly monitored and managed by those in control of that work.’

**Man Sentenced Following Gas Concerns At Caravan Site**

One of the individuals with management responsibility of a static caravan site has been sentenced for failing to have gas appliances properly maintained and inspected and failing to safely store Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders.

Nottingham Crown Court heard that concerns were raised in April 2016 by North East Derbyshire District Council relating to Felix Rooney who rented out caravans at Blackbridge Caravan site.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Mr Rooney had no Landlord’s Gas Safety Certificates for the gas appliances in the caravans rented out, some of which were found to be immediately dangerous and had to be disconnected. The LPG cylinders not being used were stored unsafely presenting a risk of fire and explosion.

HSE ensured that all the caravans on the site were inspected by a competent person (a Gas Safe registered engineer) to ensure the gas appliances and fittings were safe.

Felix Rooney of Brandon Lane, Coventry pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and was sentenced to an eight-month prison sentence suspended for two years. He was also instructed to pay full costs of £22,235.00.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Lindsay Bentley said ‘This case highlights the importance of not only looking after your employees but members of the public too. Gas safety is so important and regular inspections of the gas fittings and equipment in the caravans, by a Gas Safe registered engineer, would have ensured that they did not deteriorate to a condition where they endangered lives.’

**Two Workers Killed On Coke Oven Demolition Site**

The company that won a tender for a steelworks demolition job where two workers died last week had agreed do the job for significantly less than the official valuation for the work. The deceased men are understood to have been working in a cherry picker when they were engulfed in flames following an explosion on 19 September. The John F Hunt team was retained to demolish old ammonia washers at the former Redcar SSI coke oven site following its closure in 2015. One of the victims worked for John F Hunt and the other for Nationwide Platforms.
A John F Hunt company statement said the incident ‘has resulted in two fatalities and we are currently engaging with the HSE, client and emergency services to thoroughly investigate and ascertain the circumstances surrounding this heart-rending event.’ Nationwide Platforms said: ‘It is with deep regret and shock that we confirm that a much-loved Nationwide Platforms employee died as a result of yesterday’s explosion at the former SSI steelworks site in Redcar.’

The coke oven plant closed in 2015 following the collapse of SSI UK. The site remains under the control of the Official Receiver. John F Hunt was awarded the contract by the South Tees Site Company on 14 May. South Tees Site Company is the government-owned ‘arm’s length’ company set up to oversee the management of the former SSI land, including keeping the site safe. The work had been valued at £150,000-200,000, but the firm agreed to do it for £100,257, documents show.

Anna Turley, the Labour MP for Redcar, said: ‘They must leave no stone unturned to find out how on earth this could have happened,’ adding: ‘There must be total accountability and a complete review of what is happening on the site.’
EVENTS

5-7 November 2019, Bullying And Harassment At Work
Copenhagen, Denmark

Based on the most recent research, the course will update the participants' knowledge on the causes and consequences of bullying and harassment at work. Special focus will be on the prevention and management of bullying and harassment including the assessment or investigation of cases, the implementation of bystander interventions as well as therapeutic interventions with targets of bullying. The course also has special focus on sexual harassment, including the #Metoo movement, as well as cyberbullying.

The course will also give the participants a forum and an opportunity to explore and discuss the issue with researchers and practitioners who work in the area of prevention and management of bullying and sexual harassment.

Further details are available here:
https://niva.org/course/eight-international-course-on-bullying-and-harassment-at-work

5 November 2019, Hazardous Area Classification For Gases And Liquids
Buxton, UK

The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR) require that areas where accidental releases of dangerous substances could occur are identified and classified according to the likelihood of the formation of a flammable atmosphere. Within classified areas sources of ignition should be controlled. This course is designed to provide delegates with the knowledge to carry out straightforward hazardous area classification in accordance with commonly used standards or to act as an intelligent customer when contracting others to deliver this role.

This course is suitable for all those who may be asked to carry out hazardous area classification as part of a DSEAR assessment including process safety and electrical engineers and health and safety practitioners.

Further details are available here:

6-8 November 2019, Mechanical Services Explained
London, UK

Engineering services in buildings are complex and often account for more than 40% of the capital cost of a building. Increasing demands to conserve energy and improve environmental performance mean that good design, efficient operation and reliable maintenance of services have never been more important.

This course looks at heating and cooling systems, how to use them efficiently, and how they fit within a building.

Further details are available here:
https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001YqwMM
6-8 November 2019, Polymers And Textiles Conference 2019
Massachusetts, USA

This conference will cover manufacturing and innovations, advancements in materials and fibers, workforce development, advanced textiles applications, business developments for advanced materials and products and aspects of sustainability.

Further details are available here: www.aiche.org/conferences/polymers-and-textiles-conference/2019

7 November 2019, Managing Asbestos In Domestic And Non-Domestic Premises
Buxton, UK

This one-day course gives you the knowledge to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises to the standards required by Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR 2012). The course information is also applicable to the management of ‘domestic premises’, such as landlords' duties for rented accommodation.

Many people now dying from asbestos-related diseases are tradesmen - people who work on and maintain buildings. Also, building operators and their management systems are under increasing scrutiny from enforcing authorities, their own staff, and the public.


Orlando, USA

Organized by AIChE’s Society for Biological Engineering (SBE), the 1st Conference on Engineering Cosmetics and Consumer Products (ECCP) will offer scientists, engineers, and academic researchers a window into the latest technologies and approaches for manufacturing, packaging, and engineering cosmetics and related consumer products.

The two-day ECCP Conference aims to foster innovation through sessions devoted to process engineering, product engineering, package engineering, safety, sustainability, open innovation, and regulatory and compliance issues. Attendees will enjoy ample networking opportunities, pitch new technologies, and gain fresh insights from experts.

Further details are available here: www.aiche.org/conferences/conference-on-engineering-cosmetics-and-consumer-products/2019

9-10 November 2019, Industrial Water Use And Reuse Workshop 2019
Orlando, USA

This workshop would be aimed at understanding the current status of water usage, treatment, and recycling in the oil and gas sector, a review of current and prospect technologies for water usage, and a review on sustainability.

Further details are available here: www.aiche.org/ifs/conferences/industrial-water-use-and-reuse-workshop/2019
11 November 2019, Gas Safety Regulations (Designing For Compliance)
London, UK

This training course will cover the background and stated requirements of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (1998).

As well as a thorough overview the trainer will cover the interpretation and application of the Regulations, as detailed in the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Approved Code of Practice Document L56, as well as the function of HSE and the Gas Safe Register.

Further details are available here:
https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001Yqwz6

12-14 November 2019, Managing Environmental Noise To BS 4142: Competent Persons Course
Scarborough, UK

The Environmental Noise Assessment Competent Persons Training Course covers current Guidance, Standards and Legislation regarding noise in the environment; local authority guidelines and the impact of excessive noise; principles of noise and hands on experience with environmental sound meters and how to analyse data and report the findings.

If you are an environmental professional or have a responsibility for environmental issues with regard to the impact of noise, then this course is designed for you. This will apply equally if you work in industry, local authority, construction or consultancy.

Further details are available here:
www.castletrainingacademy.com/environmental-noise-course.php

12 November 2019, Overview Of Current Fire Legislation And Guidance
London, UK

This course examines and interprets the current Fire Legislation in the UK and explores its impact on employers and those in charge of premises.

The implication of building regulations on fire precautions is examined and there will also be a discussion on the fundamental pre-requisites for a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment.

Further details are available here:
https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001Yqx2A

13 November 2019, Energy Surveys
London, UK

This course will help you understand how to carry out energy audits and surveys that will lead to deeper energy savings in existing buildings.

After completion for the course you will be able to carry out your own audits and/or draw up a specification for others to carry out the task.

Further details are available here:
https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001YqxZ6
14 November 2019, Innovation In Battery Technology: Safely Enabling The Industrial Strategy
London, UK

The Industrial Strategy sets out how we are building a Britain fit for the future - how we will help businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the United Kingdom with investment in the skills, industries and infrastructure of the future. It ensures that our country and its citizens can embrace and benefit from the opportunity of technological change.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is responding to these challenges by hosting Innovation in Battery Technology - Safely Enabling the Industrial Strategy.

Partnership and collaboration will be key in developing an evidence base that can underpin future health and safety systems for battery technology and this inaugural conference will unite keynote speakers from industry, government, research and standards-making to share knowledge, insight and current thinking so that together we can overcome the health and safety challenges of innovating and regulating this growing area of new technology.

Further details are available here:
www.hsl.gov.uk/health-and-safety-training-courses/innovation-in-battery-technology

14 November 2019, NEBOSH HSE Certificate In Health And Safety Leadership Excellence
Buxton, UK

This qualification is specifically aimed at individuals currently in a position of senior leadership, e.g. Board Director, H&S Director, Operations Director, HR Director, Finance Director, as well as others in senior leadership positions, or those who are aspiring to become a senior leader.

The course covers financial and legal reasons for good health and safety leadership and also focuses on how leaders can become better advocates and influencers in relation to health and safety.

Further details are available here:

14 November 2019, NEBOSH HSE Introduction To Incident Investigation
Buxton, UK

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) have jointly developed a new one day qualification that shows how non-complex incidents can be investigated effectively. By learning lessons and making improvements, organisations can avoid similar incidents occurring in the future.

A practical assessment is completed at the end of the course. You will be provided with a pack of evidence and shown a video of three witness interviews. You will be asked to review the evidence, evaluate each interview and produce an action plan that will help prevent a recurrence of an incident.

Further details are available here:

14 November 2019, Pressure Systems Awareness
Buxton, UK

Pressure systems have been synonymous with industry since the age of steam. Today it is almost impossible to name an industry sector that does not make substantial use of pressure systems in
some way or other. From tyre inflators through refrigerators to full blown industrial processes, pressure systems have become as indispensable to industry as the electricity that powers them.

This informative and experiential course is aimed at raising awareness of the hazards associated with pressure systems as well as the relevant regulatory frame work. This course will offer delegates the unique opportunity to learn from real life case studies and forensic investigations into pressure systems failures, providing a first hand perspective of what can go wrong and why. Delegates will also benefit from a substantial afternoon session with the HSE Inspector responsible for the current revision of the Safety of Pressure Systems Regulations, during in which delegates will be able to discuss both general and specific issues directly with the regulator in an open forum setting.

Further details are available here:

14 November 2019, Waste Policy In Wales: Towards Zero Waste, Extended Producer Responsibility And Developing A Deposit Return Scheme For Wales
Cardiff, UK

This seminar will be a timely opportunity to consider the progress and next steps for waste policy in Wales - with the Welsh Government setting a recycling target of 70% for municipal waste and reducing landfill waste to 5% in the next decade.

The seminar will be an opportunity to examine new elements of the Towards Zero Waste strategy (TZW) - including the implementation of the Welsh Government's recently launched £6.5m Circular Economy Fund, which will offer grants to businesses seeking capital investment to increase their use of recycled materials.

Further details are available here:
www.policyforumforwales.co.uk/conference/waste-policy-in-Wales-19

15 November 2019, Designing Water Efficient Hot And Cold Supplies
London, UK

Water supply systems in the UK have changed a lot in the past few decades, but many of the infrastructure systems were installed during Victorian times, so we have an interesting history and resulting systems.

In this one-day course the different sources of water and types of water that can be used in a building are examined and the importance of wholesome water will be looked at. Water Regulations and Byelaws are covered along with water related Building Regulations and Standards.

Further details are available here:
https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001Yqwvi

19-21 November 2019, Audiometric Screening For Businesses: Competent Persons Course
Scarborough, UK

The Industrial Audiometry Competent Person Training Course covers audiometric testing for people and companies who need to carry out hearing tests for employees. The course gives practical training on carrying out hearing tests as well as covering the theory and information about noise and acoustics for hearing tests so results can be analysed and understood.

This course is designed specifically for people who are responsible for or who run audiometric testing programmes in industry. Organisations require such programmes to be run by a competent person.
19 November 2019, Climate Adaptation In The UK: Latest On Developing Resilient Infrastructure, Channelling Investment And Environmental Protection
London, UK

This seminar will be a timely opportunity to discuss priorities for climate change adaptation - including discussion around resilient infrastructure, environmental governance and the impact of policy developments.

Following the announcement that the Government will legislate a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050, and the CCC’s 2019 Progress Report on Reducing UK emissions, and with the Environment Bill expected to be released early next parliament, delegates will examine how to tackle the challenges for delivering such significant change.

Further details are available here:
www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/conference/climate-change-in-the-UK-19

19 November 2019, HSE Inspectors’ Guide To Electrical Safety
Buxton, UK

This workshop will be delivered by current and former Specialist Electrical Inspectors with extensive industry experience including giving guidance to duty holders, experience with serious incident investigations and enforcement action. The workshop is based on HSE's practical enforcement experience which arises out of the businesses it inspects, generally those in the higher risk industries but also those where although the hazards can be high, the risks are thought to be well-controlled.

The workshop will give you a practical understanding of what HSE inspectors are looking for in the control of general electrical safety risks, including the risk and appropriate controls. You will review known high risk electrical safety issues together with the appropriate controls based on HSE's investigation experiences and understand the practical application of HSE's Enforcement Management Model.

Further details are available here:

19-21 November 2019, Labour Inspection In The Age Of Digitalization
Stockholm, Sweden

Due to digitalization, many jobs are becoming increasingly complex and abstract. Workers are expected to handle large quantities of information, learn new things, adapt to changes and use digital tools. Another aspect of digitalization is the disappearing boundaries of time and space, as work can be performed anytime and anywhere – work without boundaries. This course looks into cognitive and other aspects of the digitalization of work with specific focus on the roles of labour inspection services and employers in contributing to sound work environments.

The course will be based on lectures and presentations divided into 50% theory given by researchers and other experts on various aspects, 50% practical examples given by persons involved in the labour inspection services of different countries. There will also be time for the participants to discuss various issues and, if they like, present relevant examples from their own organization or country.

Further details are available here:
20-22 November 2019, Building Services Explained
Manchester, UK

This three-day course covers building services found in commercial buildings. The course looks at heating and cooling systems, how to use them efficiently and how they fit within a building.

Electrical and renewable systems are also covered allowing the delegate to understand how they can have a considerable impact on the buildings energy use.

Further details are available here:
https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001YqwtN

20-21 November 2019, Control Of Substances Hazardous To Health (COSHH) Training: Practical Assessment And Control
Buxton, UK

Many people tasked with COSHH assessments are unsure what is required or where to get information. Once the initial assessment is complete, they are often uncertain on how to approach control, and how to judge when control is adequate. This course aims to give that knowledge and those skills.

Day one covers assessing exposure and risk and includes case studies and the chance to work through examples. Day two moves on to implementing exposure controls that are effective and reliable, and includes practical demonstrations. The focus for both days is on practicality and effectiveness.

Further details are available here:

21 November 2019, Biodiversity And Species Protection: Net Gain, Governance And Local Approaches
London, UK

This seminar will discuss the next steps for promoting and protecting biodiversity across England.

Delegates will examine the impact of potential changes emerging from the Agriculture and Environment bills including the introduction of public goods and the evolving regulatory system.

Further details are available here:
www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/conference/species-protection-2019
Buxton, UK

Not all risks can be engineered out of the work environment. Even with the best plans, procedures and systems in place, individuals at work still take short cuts and make mistakes. Sometimes risk-taking behaviour is intentional, for whatever reason. In other cases, risks may be taken due to a lack of understanding about a particular hazard, associated controls or inadequate training. To individual workers, such risk-taking can result in injury, ill-health and fatalities. To the organisation, some of the many costs can include lost time, damage to machinery, litigation, and prosecution. If unchecked, these costs can escalate.

This course, delivered by HSL psychologists, will provide you with an understanding of the many factors that influence both workers’ and managers’ behaviour. It will also highlight the strengths and weaknesses of traditional behaviour modification strategies for correcting unsafe and unhealthy behaviour, highlighting why such approaches may have limited impact.

Further details are available here:  

26-28 November 2019, Electrical Services Explained
Manchester, UK

Gain a better appreciation of many of the issues associated with design, installation and maintenance of electrical systems.

This course will allow you to develop your own engineering judgments and confidence when dealing with electrical issues.

Further details are available here:
https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001Yqx38

26 November 2019, Noise At Work
Scarborough, UK

Assessing the risk of Noise in work is mandated by law. This course is dedicated to educating responsible persons to a level where they can effectively comply with the Control of Noise Regulations 2005.

This course is designed for anyone with ‘Safety’, ‘Health’ or ‘Environment’ in their job title or description.

We have a proven record that in these three short days we will not only make your job easier, but also the work that you carry out more effective. Helping you provide a safer workplace at less risk of claims and Local Authority intervention.

Further details are available here:
www.castletrainingacademy.com/noise-in-a-day.php

26-28 November 2019, Psychosocial Occupational Epidemiology
Helsingør, Denmark

This course introduces participants to the concept, methodology, application and challenges of psychosocial epidemiology in general and psychosocial occupational epidemiology in particular. We
will address psychological, social, and organizational factors at work that may affect workers’ health, will examine how these factors can be appropriately measured and analyzed and will discuss what can be done to protect and improve workers’ health.

Upon completing the course, participants will understand the concept and the methodologies of psychosocial occupational epidemiology and will be able to use psychosocial epidemiological thinking in their own research and practice.

Further details are available here:
https://niva.org/course/psychosocial-occupational-epidemiology

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26 November 2019, The National Landscape Of CCTV Surveillance And Facial Recognition
London, UK

The regulatory obligations behind how we use CCTV and Surveillance to tackle crime and protect society is constantly evolving. The establishment of the National Camera Surveillance Strategy in 2017 has triggered the launch of new biometric technologies, including facial recognition. Despite the successes in strengthening privacy safeguards to help CCTV operators adhere to their guidelines, raising concerns regarding the use of this data continues to exist.

Join Westminster Briefing this November to join the discussion and hear about successful practices in ensuring surveillance systems used to uphold public safety while respecting citizens rights to privacy.

Further details are available here:

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27 November 2019, Dangerous Substances And Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR): Controlling Dust Explosion Risks
Buxton, UK

The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR) regulate the presence and use of flammable substances in the workplace. The list of potential dangerous substances includes gases, liquids and flammable solids in the form of a finely divided dust which, if dispersed in the air, could lead to a serious fire or an explosion.

However, flammable dusts pose their own unique risks that differ from those posed by flammable gases and liquids. This course provides advice on how to understand the hazards from flammable dusts and how the risks from storing and using the dusts can be managed so as to comply with DSEAR.

Further details are available here:

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27 November 2019, Practical Controls For Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Systems
London, UK

This course will provide an insight into different systems and how these are required to work to meet performance requirements. The monitoring of these systems, through Buildings Energy Management systems, will also be covered in order for you to understand how your energy is used and allow fine-tuning and improvements within your own company.
Occupant wellbeing is increasingly being seen as an important component in the delivery of any high performing business with people at its heart. This course will demonstrate the controls that can deliver good internal environments that are fundamental in creating the modern workplace.

Further details are available here: https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001Yqwua

28 November 2019, Fire Sprinkler Systems: Design To BS EN 12845
London, UK

Properly installed and maintained automatic fire sprinkler systems help save lives. Because fire sprinkler systems react so quickly, they can dramatically reduce the heat, flames and smoke produced in a fire.

This course covers sprinkler system components; hazard classification; design requirements; water supplies; types of sprinkler; spacing and location of sprinkler heads; piping layout and sizing.

Further details are available here: https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001YqwzG

2 December 2019, Air Conditioning And Cooling Systems
London, UK

This course introduces the fundamental principles of refrigeration systems and considers the optimisation of these systems for the purpose of energy efficiency.

Frequently encountered problems and their associated solutions are examined and explained with illustrated examples.

Further details are available here: https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001Ywwb

2-6 December 2019, NEBOSH HSE Certificate In Process Safety Management
Buxton, UK

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) have collaborated to develop a new specialist Occupational Safety and Health Qualification specifically for process industries. The qualification combines the advanced technical 'high hazard' expertise of HSE with NEBOSH's ability to deliver strong vocational OSH qualifications.

The course focuses on the prevention of catastrophic accidents and near misses associated with loss of containment of energy or dangerous substances such as chemicals and hydrocarbons.


3 December 2019, Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Risk Management
London, UK

This course, delivered by experienced HSL ergonomists, will provide you with an understanding of DSE risks and approach to risk management and with the documentation to provide your employer with risk assessments.
The course covers the key elements for office DSE risk assessment and management and provides the information and techniques required to enable anyone to become a DSE assessor. We also discuss risk management for less common DSE issues such as hot-desking and dual screens, and mobile technology such as tablet pcs, smartphones and laptops. Guidance on how to set up a computer workstation in the office is mirrored for home activity or when you are on the move with DSE.

Further details are available here: www.hsl.gov.uk/health-and-safety-training-courses/display-screen-equipment-(dse)-risk-management--london

3-5 December 2019, Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) Training: Competent Persons Course
Scarborough, UK

This Hand Arm Vibration (HAVS) Vibration Training course covers Hand-Arm Vibration and Whole Body Vibration with a 3 day residential course. Covering the most up to date legislation and standards; practical use of vibration meters and vibration measurement theory, you will leave this training course (subject to successful completion of all three modules) as a Competent Person.

If your workforce operate hand held power tools or vibrating plant and machinery, then it's likely that vibration exposure is a potential issue within your organisation. This course is ideal for Health and Safety professionals, works managers, engineers or simply the individual(s) responsible for safety within your organisation.

Further details are available here: www.castletrainingacademy.com/havs-vibration-training.php

3 December 2019, Heat Networks In The UK: Regulation And Market Frameworks, Innovation And Investment, And Decarbonisation And The Relationship With Customers
London, UK

This seminar will examine key developments in heat networks in the UK including:

- The development of market frameworks and regulation for the sector; and
- Next steps for incentivising investment, innovation and establishing a self-sustaining market.

It will be an opportunity to assess priorities with the Government expected to be consulting stakeholders following its policy paper on creating a market framework for the heat sector.

Further details are available here: www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/conference/heat-networks-in-the-UK-19

3 December 2019, Management Of Hand Arm Vibration In The Workplace: An Introduction
Buxton, UK

The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005 is designed to protect workers from injury resulting form exposure to hand-arm vibration. To manage the risks from hand-arm vibration exposure and to comply with the regulations you will need to assess, control and monitor exposures, you will also need to ensure that workers understand the risks and have any necessary training. If workers are at risk you will also need a health surveillance programme to monitor any progression of injury and to provide feedback on the effectiveness of your exposure controls. This course provides an overview of
your duties under Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005 and practical guidance on how you can control and manage hand-arm vibration risks in your workplace.

This course will review the risks from hand-arm vibration exposure and introduce you to the requirements of the current regulations. It will provide practical advice and examples of how to carry out assessments of vibration risks, how to develop vibration control action plans, providing information instruction and training and what to expect from health surveillance.

Further details are available here: 

3 December 2019, Reducing Avoidable Plastic Waste: Incentives, Targets, And Policy Priorities
London, UK

This seminar will be an opportunity for stakeholders and policymakers to discuss:

- Progress in England’s Resources and Waste Strategy, which sets the Government’s approach to eliminate avoidable plastic waste by 2050; and
- Priorities for the ongoing Courtauld Commitment 2025 and UK Plastics Pact.

Further details are available here: 
www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/conference/achieving-zero-avoidable-plastic-waste-19

4-6 December 2019, Building Services Explained
London, UK

This three-day course covers building services found in commercial buildings. The course looks at heating and cooling systems, how to use them efficiently and how they fit within a building.

Electrical and renewable systems are also covered allowing the delegate to understand how they can have a considerable impact on the buildings energy use.

Further details are available here: 
https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001Yqwtc4

4 December 2019, Health And Social Care Quality In Wales: Governance And Transparency, Workforce Development, And Next Steps For Inspection, Regulation And Legislation
Cardiff, UK

This seminar focuses on key issues for raising the quality of health and social care in Wales.

Delegates will discuss the future for inspection and regulation - and recruitment, development, and support of the workforce.

Further details are available here: 
www.policyforumforwales.co.uk/conference/health-and-social-care-Wales-19
5-6 December 2019, 2019 Food Innovation and Engineering (FOODIE) Asia Conference
Singapore

The 2019 FOODIE Asia conference will offer a chance for people from multiple disciplines (including food engineers, scientists, neurobiologists, physiologists, members of the supply chain, and more, e.g. chefs, restauranteurs, and foodies alike) to network and share ideas to improve the food world.

The FOODIE Asia Conference will address emerging technologies for food production, analyse strategies to connect industry and cuisine, and navigate methods to fit the consumer market.

Further details are available here:
www.aiche.org/ifs/conferences/food-innovation-and-engineering-asia-conference/2019

5-6 December 2019, Food-Energy-Water Nexus
New York, USA

How do we provide and maintain the food, energy and water supplies in urban environments as the population continues to increase?

Obstacles and initiatives are the focus of this conference, and attendees will leave with new ideas and new collaborators to focus on this imminent issue.

Further details are available here:
www.aiche.org/ifs/conferences/food-energy-water-nexus/2019

5 December 2019, Manual Handling For Assessors
London, UK

Prevention and control of work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) is a major priority and as such HSE have published a simple but effective risk assessment method called the MAC tool. This enables risk identification of key manual handling risk factors so that these can be eliminated or managed in the most cost effective way.

This course will equip you with the knowledge to help recognise, assess and reduce manual handling risks in your organisation. It is suited to employers and employee representatives who intend to begin the process of manual handling risk assessment and control within their companies. It will also benefit those already involved in manual handling risk reduction who require more formal or in-depth training in this subject, including training in the use of specific manual handling assessment tools.

Further details are available here:
www.hsl.gov.uk/health-and-safety-training-courses/manual-handling-for-assessors---london--

5 December 2019, Next Steps For Smart Electricity Networks In The UK: Regulation, Innovation And Market Development
London, UK

This seminar focuses on the next steps for developing smart electricity networks in the UK.

The conference is bringing together industry stakeholders and policymakers, with the UK Government’s commitment to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050 and in anticipation of an Energy White Paper.

Further details are available here:
www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/conference/smart-and-flexible-electricity-networks-19
8-10 December 2019, 2019 Food Innovation And Engineering (FOODIE) Conference
Philadelphia, USA

The Food Innovation and Engineering Conference (FOODIE), hosted by AIChE’s Food, Pharmaceutical and Bioengineering Division (Division 15), will offer a chance for people from multiple disciplines (including food engineers, neurobiologists, physiologists, members of supply chain, and more, as well as chefs, restauranteurs, and foodies alike) to network and share ideas to improve the food world.

The FOODIE Conference will discuss emerging technologies for food production, analyze strategies to connect industry and cuisine, and navigate methods to fit the consumer market. This three day conference will bring together leaders in the field of food technology, science, and industry, where attendees will have ample opportunities to network and foster innovation.

Further details are available here: www.aiche.org/conferences/food-innovation-and-engineering-conference/2019

10 December 2019, Construction (Design And Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015): An Introduction To The Role Of The Principal Designer
Buxton, UK

CDM 2015 creates a new role of the Principal Designer (PD) - a designer or design organisation appointed from the existing project team with duties to plan, manage and monitor the pre-construction phase and coordinate matters relating to health and safety during the pre-construction phase. A significant part of the course is intended to increase awareness and understanding of how construction risks can be mitigated through design and exchange of information.

This event provides an introduction to this new role and is aimed at designers, clients, contractors and/or individuals who may take on the pre-construction phase coordination role for the first time, or simply want to understand the PD function for small to medium size projects. It is not aimed at former CDM-Cs. The course will be delivered by an HSE Principal Inspector with over 30 years' experience.


10-12 December 2019, Electrical Services Explained
London, UK

Gain a better appreciation of many of the issues associated with design, installation and maintenance of electrical systems.

This course will allow you to develop your own engineering judgments and confidence when dealing with electrical issues.

Further details are available here: https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001Yqx3c

10-11 December 2019, Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)
Buxton, UK

Research commissioned by HSE suggests over 1 million people continue to be exposed to high levels of vibration in the workplace. The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations came into force in the UK in 2005. HSE’s Guidance on the Regulations requires all occupational health professionals to undergo training in the recognition and management of workers with hand-arm vibration syndrome. The
syllabus for the training and the quality of training is overseen by the Faculty of Occupational Medicine.

This comprehensive and highly rated course is designed for occupational health nurses, occupational physicians, GPs with an interest in occupational health and hand surgeons. It will set out the key areas of HAVS assessment and provide guidance on how to examine and manage cases of HAVS. Time has been set aside for question and answer sessions.

Further details are available here: www.hsl.gov.uk/health-and-safety-training-courses/hand-arm-vibration-syndrome-(havs)

**11 December 2019, Environmental Planning: Preparing And Responding To Climatic Change Locally**
London, UK

Climate change is undoubtedly the greatest long-term challenge facing people and wildlife – its impact will be felt nationwide for generations to come. Recent planning policy developments such as the Revised NPPF, Biodiversity Net-gain principle and others have highlighted strategies to ensure environmental benefit through planning.

With the pressure now on stakeholders across the sector to commit to tackle climatic change, and tougher legislative criteria to do so expected through the forthcoming Environment Bill and other planning legislation, now is the time that planners understand the realities of climate change, and the built environment sector is prepared and responsive to inevitable geographical and environmental changes.

Further details are available here: www.westminster-briefing.com/Environmental_Planning

**11 December 2019, HSE Inspectors’ Guide To Risk Assessment**
Buxton, UK

This workshop will be delivered by a senior HSE inspector with more than 25 years of experience, and is a rare opportunity to understand your regulator by seeing the world through an inspector's eyes.

You will learn: how HSE examines and uses employers' risk assessments; the common errors that HSE finds in the risk assessment process; and how to use this information to manage risks more effectively and avoid enforcement action.


**11 December 2019, Lighting Design: Principles And Application**
London, UK

This course will explain the principles behind the process of the art and science of lighting design, the ethos behind good lighting and how to deliver sustainable solutions though design and use of appropriate lamps, luminaires and controls.

Further details are available here: https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001Yr4IH
**11 December 2019, NEBOSH HSE Certificate In Health And Safety Leadership Excellence**  
Buxton, UK

This qualification is specifically aimed at individuals currently in a position of senior leadership, e.g. Board Director, H&S Director, Operations Director, HR Director, Finance Director, as well as others in senior leadership positions, or those who are aspiring to become a senior leader.

The course covers financial and legal reasons for good health and safety leadership and also focuses on how leaders can become better advocates and influencers in relation to health and safety.

Further details are available here:  

**11 December 2019, Women In The Workplace: Returnships, Intersectionality And Reassessing The Gender Pay Gap**  
London, UK

This seminar focuses on the next steps for policy and organisational practice in breaking down barriers for women looking to enter or re-enter the workplace, and for closing the gender pay gap.

The conference will bring out latest thinking on key developments in workplace gender equality.

Further details are available here:  
[www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/conference/women-in-the-workplace-19](http://www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/conference/women-in-the-workplace-19)

**12 December 2019, Air Conditioning Inspection For Buildings**  
London, UK

This one-day training course will provide you with the understanding of how to undertake required inspections of simple and complex air conditioning systems, according to the Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations 2007.

This course will cover the requirements set out within CIBSE's Technical Memorandum: Inspection of Air Conditioning Systems (TM44) and the National Occupational Standards for Air Conditioning.

Further details are available here:  
[https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001YqwR7](https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001YqwR7)

**12 December 2019, Energy Policy In Wales And Enabling The Transition To A Low Carbon Economy: Priorities For Cutting Emissions, Infrastructure And Investment, And Supporting The Economy**  
Cardiff, UK

This seminar examines the next steps, practicalities and likely impact for cutting emissions in Wales, looking at:

- The transition to a low carbon economy and meeting Wales' first carbon budget; and
- Infrastructure priorities to support both environmental aims and growth in the Welsh economy.

Further details are available here:  
[www.policyforumforwales.co.uk/conference/energy-policy-in-Wales-19](http://www.policyforumforwales.co.uk/conference/energy-policy-in-Wales-19)
12 December 2019, HSE Inspectors’ Guide To Risk Assessment
Buxton, UK

This workshop will be delivered by a senior HSE inspector with more than 25 years of experience, and is a rare opportunity to understand your regulator by seeing the world through an inspector’s eyes.

You will learn: how HSE examines and uses employers’ risk assessments; the common errors that HSE finds in the risk assessment process; and how to use this information to manage risks more effectively and avoid enforcement action.

Further details are available here:

12 December 2019, Managing Ageing Assets: Creeping Changes, Data Trending And Experience From Incidents
Buxton, UK

Managing ageing assets is becoming an ever more important issue as the UK’s industrial base ages; this has been highlighted by HSE’s inspection programmes of ageing plant both onshore and offshore.

This course addresses managing ageing assets in the high hazard industries, and any other industry that relies on equipment or technology.

Further details are available here:

12 December 2019, NEBOSH HSE Introduction To Incident Investigation
Buxton, UK

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) have jointly developed a new one day qualification that shows how non-complex incidents can be investigated effectively. By learning lessons and making improvements, organisations can avoid similar incidents occurring in the future.

A practical assessment is completed at the end of the course. You will be provided with a pack of evidence and shown a video of three witness interviews. You will be asked to review the evidence, evaluate each interview and produce an action plan that will help prevent a recurrence of an incident.

Further details are available here:

12 December 2019, Supporting UK High Value Manufacturing: Innovation And Investment, Skills And Partnerships, And The Future For International Trade
London, UK

This conference will be an opportunity for stakeholders and policymakers to discuss key issues for supporting the UK high value manufacturing sector.

Areas for discussion include:

- Industrial strategy sector deals - progress and next steps;
• Managing uncertainty - at a critical time for the future of the UK’s relationship with trading partners;

• Investment, innovation, efficiency and sustainability - priorities for government and for the sector; and

• Developing the sector’s skills base and attracting young people and under-represented groups.

Further details are available here:
www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/conference/high-value-manufacturing-19

13 December 2019, Commercial Drones In The UK: Regulation, Airspace Management, And Future Use Cases
London, UK

This conference will discuss UK drones policy, the future regulatory system, and opportunities for commercial application of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) in the UK.

In the context of the Government’s recently published Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill, now making its way through Parliament, we expect discussion to focus on current and future regulatory developments affecting commercial and civil drone operations in the UK.

Further details are available here:
www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/conference/commercial-use-of-drones-19

16-18 December 2019, Mechanical Services Explained
London, UK

Engineering services in buildings are complex and often account for more than 40% of the capital cost of a building. Increasing demands to conserve energy and improve environmental performance mean that good design, efficient operation and reliable maintenance of services have never been more important.

This course looks at heating and cooling systems, how to use them efficiently, and how they fit within a building.

Further details are available here:
https://cibse.force.com/eventapi__router?event=a1E0O00001YqwO3

16-18 December 2019, Sustainable Packaging Symposium 2019
California, USA

Sustainable Packaging Symposium (SPS ’19) will focus on Innovative Technologies and Life Cycle Approaches for Packaging Sustainability in a Circular Economy World. It is co-organized by the AIChE Institute for Sustainability and the American Center for Life Cycle Assessment (ACLCA).


Further details are available here:
www.aiche.org/ifs/conferences/sustainable-packaging-symposium-sps/2019
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<td>NEBOSH HSE Introduction To Incident Investigation</td>
<td>Buxton, UK</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hsl.gov.uk/health-safety-training-courses/nebosh-hse-introduction-to-incident-investigation">www.hsl.gov.uk/health-safety-training-courses/nebosh-hse-introduction-to-incident-investigation</a></td>
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<td>Waste Policy In Wales: Towards Zero Waste, Extended Producer Responsibility And Developing A Deposit Return Scheme For Wales</td>
<td>Cardiff, UK</td>
<td><a href="http://www.policyforumforwales.co.uk/conference/waste-policy-in-wales-19">www.policyforumforwales.co.uk/conference/waste-policy-in-wales-19</a></td>
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<td>Designing Water Efficient Hot And Cold Supplies</td>
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<td>Scarborough, UK</td>
<td><a href="http://www.castletrainingacademy.com/in">www.castletrainingacademy.com/in</a> dustrial-audiometry.php</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.policyforumfonwales.co.uk/conference/health-and-social-care-Wales-19">www.policyforumfonwales.co.uk/conference/health-and-social-care-Wales-19</a></td>
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<td>London, UK</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hsl.gov.uk/health-and-safety-training-courses/manual-handling-for-assessors---london-">www.hsl.gov.uk/health-and-safety-training-courses/manual-handling-for-assessors---london-</a></td>
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Welcome to the second part of the
Occupational Health and Safety Information Service News Brief

This part of the News Brief contains news articles and prosecution summaries in the field of environmental health and health and safety from the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH).

Areas that they will be focusing on include; noise pollution, food safety, air quality, occupational health issues and relevant industry prosecutions.

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The Government has introduced an Environment Bill to Parliament, signalling a historic step change in the way we protect and enhance our natural environment.........................................................45

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The Menopause is a Workplace Issue is aimed at supporting employers to create a working environment where female staff feel supported. This UNISON guide highlights how symptoms are an occupational health issue and can have a significant effect on staff ........................................49

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The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued new guidance to the US public on vaping. This follows growing numbers of reports on ill health associated with vaping, and widespread public anxiety........................................................................................................54

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Researchers from the New York University School of Medicine exposed the mice to an aerosol of nicotine dissolved in isopropylene glycol and vegetable glycerin, a common vehicle for vaping liquids ........................................................................................................................................55

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The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) is calling upon interested parties to submit evidence and information on the use of lead in gunshot outside of wetlands, bullets in any terrain and in fishing tackle ........................................................................................................................59
PHE Calls For Action To End Rough Sleeping

Published by Public Health England (PHE), the latest edition of Health Matters focuses on the scale of rough sleeping in England, the causes and consequences of rough sleeping (including the links with poor physical and mental health, prevention and effective interventions) and relevant calls to action.

Nurses Can Make Healthcare More Sustainable

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has published a statement of how it intends to help tackle the climate change crisis. It stresses the negative consequences of global warming on people’s health and says these will be catastrophic if urgent action isn’t taken.

Newer EU Member States Expect More Working Weeks Per Year

According to a report published by Eurofound, workers in Member States that joined the EU after May 2004 were expected to work close to three full working weeks per year more than those in ‘older’ Member States in 2018.

Taxi Drivers Face More Exposure To Black Carbon Compared To Other Professional Drivers

Professional drivers working in congested cities are exposed to black carbon levels that are on average a third higher than would be experienced at a busy roadside, according to research presented at the European Respiratory Society International Congress recently.

Living Close To The Sea May Produce Better Mental Health

Living close to the sea could support better mental health in England’s poorest urban communities, finds a new study.

Landlady Fined £40K For Dangerous And Unlicensed HMO

The City of Lincoln Council has secured the imposition of its second largest fine on a rogue landlady, after she was found guilty of letting out a dangerous and unlicensed House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). The case was brought to the magistrates’ court on 23 September 2019.

FSA Aims To Further Protect People With Food Allergies And Intolerances

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) Board has confirmed a series of measures to protect those with food allergies and intolerances. This comes after the conclusion of the inquest into the death of Owen Carey, who died after an allergic reaction to milk at a London restaurant.

Sleep Deprivation And Exercise Can Make People With Peanut Allergies More Sensitive

An Addenbrookes’ Hospital research team found that exercise and sleep deprivation each significantly reduce the threshold of reactivity (the amount of peanut needed to trigger a reaction) in people with peanut allergy, putting them at greater risk of a reaction.

Genomics In Regulatory Food Safety Testing In Canada

Experts say Canada has become a world leader in preventing illness and saving lives by tracking down the source of dangerous bacteria and other pathogens that invade the country’s food supply.

Cancer The Leading Cause Of Death In Higher Income Countries

Heart disease has long been the leading cause of death. However, a new global study has shown - in higher income countries, at least - that cancer is now twice as likely to cause death as heart disease.

Actions Promised At UN's Climate Action Summit 2019

The recent Climate Action Summit convened by UN Secretary-General António Guterres pledged a surge of engagement to reduce emissions and protect people against increasing impacts of climate change.

Environment Agency To Review Bio-Waste Sector Sites

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Carbon Monoxide Poisoning .......................................................................................................... 74

Cases of suspected carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning have increased by a third over the past five years a report by campaign group Project SHOUT has revealed ........................................................................................................... 74
Fracking For Shale Gas In England

Fracking for shale gas is the subject of media, public and Parliamentary interest. This National Audit Office (NAO) descriptive report sets out the Government’s plans to support shale gas development to help Parliament consider whether taxpayers’ interests are being protected effectively. It covers:

- an overview of fracking, and what activity has taken place to date (Part One);
- Government's objectives (Part Two);
- managing the risks from fracking (Part Three); and
- the costs to taxpayers (Part Four).

This summary deals with part Three.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) leads Government policy for shale gas development, which is regulated by three independent bodies:

- Oil and Gas Authority (OGA)
- Environment Agency (EA) and
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

They consult with other public bodies in carrying out their functions, including local planning authorities, the British Geological Survey (BGS), Public Health England, and the Coal Authority.

The regulatory system mainly relies on statutory self-reporting by operators. When the NAO reviewed the regulatory framework for the packaging recycling obligation in 2018, they found that a self-reporting approach itself presented risks. This was also a source of concern for several environmental groups NAO spoke to. EA inspects sites to check monitoring equipment and review operators’ data. Since 2016, EA has conducted 71 visits to four sites with shale wells, 40 visits of which were to Cuadrilla’s Preston New Road – the site of the most recent fracking activity.

In 2014 Public Health England found that if shale gas operations are properly run and regulated, the potential risk to public health is low. It warned against inferring from the public health impacts shale gas extraction has had in other countries because of the differences in the regulatory environment and underlying geology compared with that of the UK.

All oil and gas exploration and production present risks to the environment, including greenhouse gas emissions and groundwater pollution. For shale gas exploration, there is an additional risk of earthquakes brought on by the fracking process.

In 2012, the then Department of Energy and Climate Change set the earthquake threshold at 0.5 ML after commissioning three academics to determine a safe precautionary level to mitigate this risk and holding a public consultation. The OGA is responsible for ensuring operators manage this risk and that they adhere to the ‘traffic light monitoring system’ while fracking is taking place. If fracking activity triggers earthquakes of 0.5 ML or above, a ‘red light’ is triggered and the operator must pause fracking while it works with the OGA to determine whether it is safe to restart. Cuadrilla suspended its fracking operation in August 2019 after fracking-induced earthquakes of up to 2.9 ML, which released 4,000 times more energy than the 0.5 ML threshold. Operators told the NAO that the current threshold hinders their ability to determine the viability of shale gas in their sites. In 2012, the then Secretary of State said the level could be adjusted upwards as knowledge of fracking operations increased. However, in May 2019 ministers said they had no intention of reviewing the traffic light monitoring system.

A fracking operator can retrieve the water it needs for fracking from the ground or local water mains or reuse fracking fluid from the well. EA recognises there is a potential risk of strain to local water
resources, as fracking a well can use up to a total of 30,000 cubic metres of water. It relies on industry figures suggesting shale gas production would use less than 1% of total water use nationally. As wells are likely to be clustered, the impact on local water supplies is likely to be more significant. EA says the regulations that cover water abstraction prevent operators from retrieving water if the EA considers it will have an impact on local water supplies.

Groundwater protection is also discussed - there are three main ways that the fracking fluid could reach groundwater:

- leakages during storage or transport
- a well leaking into an aquifer
- if fractures in the fracked rock were to link into nearby aquifers.

In 2012, the Royal Society and the Royal Academy of Engineering concluded that the risk of water contamination is very low provided shale gas extraction occurs at least 1,000 metres below the surface. Aquifers and water sources are typically found at depths of up to 250 metres.

EA has identified three risks that could affect air quality:

- the release of gas from wells containing volatile organic compounds and naturally occurring radioactive gases
- exhaust emissions from equipment and vehicles
- dust released from handling the sand used in the fracking fluid.

In 2018, the independent Air Quality Expert Group, which advises the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, published a review of evidence associated with the impact of air emissions from shale gas development. It found that the impacts on local and regional air quality could be substantially higher than national-level impacts, as shale gas wells are likely to be highly clustered.

EA is responsible for regulating the fugitive emissions from natural gas facilities. Where practical, operators are required to burn (‘flare’) methane to dispose of it, a process that produces carbon dioxide. They cannot vent waste gas into the atmosphere except for safety reasons or where EA agrees it is not feasible to flare.


**Government Requested To Take Stronger Action On Buildings Failing Fire Safety Standards**

Since the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017, London Fire Brigade (LFB) has been calling for ministers to implement key changes to building regulations to prevent future disasters. This includes reviewing fire safety in residential buildings and calling for Government changes to building regulations, including a complete ban of combustible cladding and a change for sprinklers to be fitted in a wider range of buildings, including blocks of flats.

Of some concern since the tragedy at Grenfell has been the ‘stay put’ strategy used to inform the operational tactics of fire and rescue services across the UK in buildings where it is assumed the design and construction will stop fire spreading - compartmentation.

Buildings designed to have a ‘stay put’ strategy, which included Grenfell Tower, are not designed and built to facilitate mass emergency evacuation during a fire. For example, many have a narrow staircase and no common alarm system. New research is now needed into what the public and firefighters should do when a building fails.
Since the fire, the Brigade has taken steps to provide guidance for its firefighters in the event of a building’s fire safety measures failing, which includes putting in place interim advice for incident commanders to assist an emergency evacuation or mass rescue operation in the event of rapid or abnormal fire spread. However, there are considerable challenges in any change from the stay put strategy, which is why the Brigade are calling for urgent research.

Details of how lessons are being learnt and all the actions taken by the Brigade are contained in a progress report published and discussed today by the London Assembly’s Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning committee.

These include:

- **Internal learning and improvement:** The Brigade established the dedicated Grenfell Tower Investigation and Review Team (GTIRT), which is undertaking comprehensive evaluation to identify further lessons to be learnt and to ensure they are implemented.

- **Pre-Determined Attendance:** The standard response to a high-rise fire was changed in 2017 to five fire engines and an aerial appliance following the fire. Where the Brigade receives multiple calls and cladding fire has been reported, this increases to 10 fire engines and an aerial appliance.

- **New firefighting equipment:** New fire escape hoods are being used to protect residents from toxic smoke, drones to provide an aerial view of incidents, new extended height aerial appliances with turntable ladders of up to 64 metres, and Urban Search and Rescue WASP devices (Warning Alarm for Stability Protection) for structural monitoring of buildings.

- **Training:** Incident command training has been enhanced, with all officers requiring Level 1 and Level 2 incident command training by the end of 2019-20. There will also be incident command revalidation courses, which must be undertaken every two years.

- **Control improvements:** The Brigade has restructured the management of its 999 control room and Control staff have undertaken Fire Survival Guidance refresher training.

- **Information gathering:** The Brigade is overhauling the way it gathers, records and shares operational risk information across the organisation. This work has included firefighters ensuring that electronic information plates are available for more than 2,300 high rise premises and the Brigade’s Fire Safety Inspecting Officers conducting 1,238 visits to buildings with identified risks.


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**Safety Of School Fixtures And Fittings**

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is highlighting the need for schools to ensure that furniture and equipment such as shelving, display boards, cupboards and lockers are maintained in good condition and are secured to prevent them falling or toppling and causing injury.

When assessing the risks associated with furniture and equipment, school duty holders should consider how the item is likely to be used and foreseeable behaviours.

Furniture requiring fixing should be secured in accordance with relevant manufacturer’s instructions and capable of withstanding foreseeable loading and the condition of any fixings and fastenings should be monitored at appropriate intervals to ensure that they remain effective.

Arrangements and safeguards should be checked where classrooms have been refurbished, where new equipment has been provided or where furniture and equipment has been moved.
Additional consideration should be given to drama and sports facilities, specialist classrooms, including laboratories technology facilities and pupil referral rooms.

It is particularly important to ensure that benches used in science laboratories are secure and stable and the worktops properly attached. The potential for excessive movement can damage the gas supply pipework. (This was one of the top 10 hazards found during school science audits reported by CLEAPSS).

HSE has published a health and safety checklist for classrooms, which can be used by class teachers, teaching assistants, premises staff or department heads. Whilst the checklist covers the most common areas of concern/risk in ordinary classrooms, it is not exhaustive and does not cover drama or sports facilities, specialist classrooms (laboratories), art, IT, design and technology facilities or pupil referral rooms.

The checklist is free to download from:

**Government Introduces Environment Bill**

The Government has introduced an Environment Bill to Parliament, signalling a historic step change in the way we protect and enhance our natural environment.

The Environment Bill will enshrine Environmental principles in law and measures will be introduced to improve air and water quality, tackle plastic pollution and restore habitats. The legislation will create legally-binding environmental improvement targets and a new independent Office for Environmental Protection will be established to scrutinise environmental policy and law, investigate complaints and take enforcement action against public authorities, if necessary, to uphold environmental standards.

The Office’s powers will cover all climate change legislation and hold the Government to account on its commitment to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

The Bill will:

- ensure the environment is at the heart of all government policy making and that this and future governments will be held to account if they fail to uphold their environmental duties. Such duties include meeting net-zero by 2050, and wider long-term legally binding targets on biodiversity, air quality, water, and resource and waste efficiency established under the Bill

- improve air quality by tackling pollution. This will be achieved by setting a legally-binding target to reduce fine particulate matter - PM2.5, and by increasing local powers to address sources of air pollution, enabling local authorities to work with families to cut harmful pollution from domestic burning by using cleaner fuels. The government will also be empowered to mandate manufacturers to recall vehicles when they do not meet the relevant environmental standards

- restore and enhance nature through ‘biodiversity net gain’ and by ensuring that any new houses which are built are delivered in a way which protects and enhances nature, helping to deliver thriving natural spaces for local communities. Natural habitats will have improved protection via a Nature Recovery Network, to be established by Local Nature Recovery Strategies

- transform the way waste is managed through powers to ensure that producers take responsibility for the waste they create, introducing a consistent approach to recycling, tackling waste crime, introducing bottle deposit return schemes and more effective litter enforcement. Powers to introduce new charges will minimise the use and impacts of single use plastics
• protect precious water resources by increasing sustainable water management through securing long-term, resilient water and wastewater services. Powers to direct water companies to work together to meet current and future demand for water will make planning more robust.

MPs will next consider the Bill at a Second Reading, the date for which has not yet been announced.

Environment Bill 2019-20:
https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/environment.html

**Higher Air Pollution Days Trigger Cardiac Arrests And Hospitalisations**

New data released by King’s College and UK100, a network of local government leaders, indicates that hundreds of children and adults are suffering out-of-hospital cardiac arrests or being sent to hospital for strokes or severe asthma attacks on days when air pollution levels are higher in nine major cities across England. Days where air pollution is more prominent typically occurs on hot, sunny days with little wind, because air pollution stays concentrated and closer to the ground.

In total, higher air pollution days trigger an additional 124 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests, 231 hospitalisations for stroke and 193 children and adults hospitalised for asthma.

The data shows that in:

- **London**: Higher air pollution days are responsible for 87 more out of hospital cardiac arrests and 251 children or adults being hospitalised for asthma or strokes.
- **Birmingham**: higher air pollution days are responsible for 12 more out of hospital cardiac arrests and 53 children or adults being hospitalised for asthma or strokes.
- **Bristol**: higher air pollution days are responsible for 4 more out of hospital cardiac arrests and 18 children or adults being hospitalised for asthma or strokes.
- **Derby**: higher air pollution days are responsible for 0 more out of hospital cardiac arrests and 16 children or adults being hospitalised for asthma or strokes.
- **Liverpool**: higher air pollution days are responsible for 4 more out of hospital cardiac arrests and 24 children or adults being hospitalised for asthma or strokes.
- **Manchester**: higher air pollution days are responsible for 6 more out of hospital cardiac arrests and 28 children or adults being hospitalised for asthma or strokes.
- **Nottingham**: higher air pollution days are responsible for 3 more out of hospital cardiac arrests and 16 children or adults being hospitalised for asthma or strokes.
- **Oxford**: higher air pollution days are responsible for 6 more out of hospital cardiac arrests and 4 children or adults being hospitalised for asthma or strokes.
- **Southampton**: higher air pollution days are responsible for 2 more out of hospital cardiac arrests and 14 children or adults being hospitalised for asthma or strokes.

The King’s College research also suggests cutting air pollution by a fifth would decrease incidents of lung cancer by between 5% and 7% across the nine cities surveyed.

The data is a subset of material which will be published in an upcoming report: Personalising The Health Impacts of Air Pollution, to be published in November 2019.

The initial report is now available at:
www.erg.kcl.ac.uk/Research/home/projects/personalised-health-impacts.html
Overview Of Air Quality In Europe From 2000-2017

Published by the European Environment Agency (EEA), a new report presents an updated overview and analysis of air quality in Europe from 2000 to 2017. The report reviews the progress made towards meeting the air quality standards established in the two EU Ambient Air Quality Directives and towards the World Health Organization (WHO) air quality guidelines (AQGs). It also presents the latest findings and estimates of population and ecosystem exposure to the air pollutants with the greatest impacts.

The Air Quality in Europe — 2019 Report shows that almost all Europeans living in cities are still exposed to air pollution levels that exceed the health-based air quality guidelines set by the World Health Organisation (WHO). This new EEA analysis is based on the latest official air quality data from more than 4,000 monitoring stations across Europe in 2017.

This updated 2019 report presents new information, including:

- updated 2017 data on air pollutant emissions and concentrations
- updated information on the status of reporting of PM$_{2.5}$ (particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 μm or less) speciation, ozone precursors, total deposition of heavy metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (both concentrations and total deposition)
- estimates of the exposure of urban (2017) and total (2016) populations and the exposure of ecosystems (2016) to air pollution
- updated assessments of air quality impacts on health (for 2016)
- a health benefit analysis of the PM$_{2.5}$ WHO air quality guideline value applying everywhere in Europe
- a special focus on heavy metals, with a more detailed analysis of the health and environmental risks associated with exposure, an overview of the legislation implemented for control, and more thorough analyses of the available information on the status and the development of their emissions, atmospheric concentrations and deposition in Europe.

Poor air quality continues to damage Europeans’ health, especially in urban areas, with particulate matter (PM), nitrogen dioxide (NO$_2$) and ground-level ozone (O$_3$) causing the greatest harm.

According to the EEA analysis, fine particulate matter (PM$_{2.5}$) alone caused about 412,000 premature deaths in 41 European countries in 2016. About 374,000 of those deaths occurred in the European Union (EU).

As well as damaging health and reducing life expectancy, poor air quality also causes economic losses, for example, through higher health care costs, reduced yields from agriculture and forestry, and lower labour productivity.

Despite persisting pollution, the new EEA data confirms that binding regulations and local measures are improving Europe’s air quality with positive health effects. For example, fine particulate matter caused about 17,000 fewer premature deaths in the EU in 2016, compared with 2015. Even though weather differences between years can affect pollution levels and their impacts, the reduction is consistent with the EEA’s earlier estimate that the number of premature deaths caused annually by PM$_{2.5}$ in Europe have been reduced by about half a million since 1990.

Compared with the WHO guidelines, long-term fine particulate matter concentrations were too high at 69% of monitoring stations across Europe in 2017, including at least some monitoring stations in all reporting countries, except Estonia, Finland and Norway.
Compared with the EU limit values, fine particulate matter concentrations were too high in seven EU Member States in 2017 (Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Italy, Poland, Romania and Slovakia). In addition, four EU Member States, (Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) have not yet met the EU’s 2015 target for the three-year average exposure for fine particulate matter.

Air pollution also damages vegetation and ecosystems, leading to environmental impacts, which affect vegetation and fauna directly, as well as the quality of water and soil and the ecosystem services they support. The most harmful air pollutants in terms of damage to ecosystems are O₃, ammonia and nitrogen oxides (NOₓ).

The latest estimates of vegetation exposure to O₃ indicate that the EU target value for protection of vegetation from O₃ was exceeded in 2016 in about 15% of the agricultural land area of the EU 28, and in 19% of all the European countries considered. The long term objective for the protection of vegetation from O₃ was exceeded in 73% of the EU 28 (77% of all European) agricultural area. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Long range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP) critical level for the protection of forests from O₃ was exceeded in 62% of the EU 28 (63% of all European) forest area in 2016.

It is estimated that about 62% of the European ecosystem area and 73% of the EU 28 ecosystem area remained exposed to levels of NOₓ, leading to exceedances of critical loads for eutrophication in 2016.

Finally, exceedances of the critical loads for acidification (driven by atmospheric nitrogen and sulphur compounds) occurred over 5% of the European ecosystem area and 7% of the EU 28 ecosystem area.


Eye Protectors Marketed For Use With Laser And Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) Sources
Published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), this research report describes market surveillance testing of nine laser eye protector and nine IPL eye protector models available on the UK market.

Laser and Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) sources are commonly used for medical and cosmetic procedures in the UK. The purpose of this study was to examine eye-protectors marketed for use with these light sources. The markings on the eye-protectors and the information provided with them were examined and compared to the relevant standards: EN 207 for laser eye-protectors; ISO 12609-1 or EN 166/EN 169 for IPL eye protectors. Only the markings and information were examined; no performance testing was conducted. All eye-protectors were purchased from suppliers in the UK. Based on a visual inspection, all of the eye-protectors purchased for this study were found to be in good condition and undamaged.

Products sold as laser eye-protectors
Of the nine eye-protectors purchased for this project, five had markings that were consistent with the relevant standard (EN 207), and the majority of the information required by EN 207 was provided. The following issues were identified with the remaining four eye-protectors:

- One had markings consistent with EN 207, but no information provided. Without the manufacturer's information, the potential for misuse of the eye-protector is increased.
- One had markings that were consistent with EN 207, but the markings were on a sticker that was easy to peel off. If the markings became detached, the user would have no way of knowing if the eye-protectors were suitable for their task.
• Two had no markings and no information provided with them. If they are laser eye-protectors, they lack crucial information required by the user in order to use them safely. It is also possible that they are not laser eye-protectors, but were mis-sold as laser eye-protectors.

**Products Sold As IPL Eye-Protectors**

Of the nine IPL eye-protectors purchased for this project, five had markings consistent with a relevant IPL eye-protector standard (EN 166/EN 169 or ISO 12609-1), and the majority of the required information was provided. The following issues were identified with the remaining four eye-protectors:

• One had markings consistent with the relevant standard, but the information provided was for laser eye-protection. The performance characteristics and marking of laser eye-protectors and IPL eye-protectors are different, and some of the information provided was therefore incorrect (for example, the explanation of the markings).

• Two had markings on the oculars that were consistent with EN 166 and EN 169, but no relevant markings on the frames (EN 166 requires markings to be present on both ocular and frame). The information provided was for laser eye-protectors, not IPL eye-protectors (see above).

• One referenced EN 166 in markings on the frame, but was not marked according to EN 166 on the ocular. There were no markings to identify the filtering capability of the eye-protector. Some information was provided, but this did not include anything about the capability of the eye-protector. There was insufficient information for a user to determine whether this eye-protector would be suitable for their task.

The research report: RR1148: Market surveillance of eye-protectors for lasers or intense pulsed light in the cosmetic industry is available free to download from: [www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrpdf/rr1148.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrpdf/rr1148.pdf)

**Guidance On Menopause In The Workplace**

The Menopause is a Workplace Issue is aimed at supporting employers to create a working environment where female staff feel supported. This UNISON guide highlights how symptoms are an occupational health issue and can have a significant effect on staff.

Statistics show that around 1 in every 3 women has either experienced or is currently going through the menopause. Around 8 in every 10 women will experience noticeable symptoms and of these 45% will find their symptoms hard to deal with.

Some women may cope well with the physical and emotional changes, but for others they may cause particular difficulties both in and out of work. According to UNISON, many women are being driven from the workplace because they find that adapting problematic symptoms around inflexible work expectations is just too difficult. Others may find that managing symptoms mean they miss out on promotions and training, reduce their hours, lose confidence in the workplace and see their pay levels drop, all contributing to a widening gender pay gap.

The average age for a woman to reach the menopause in the UK is 51. This may also coincide with a stage of life when women experience difficulties, not least with increasing caring responsibilities, and the onset of age related health conditions. Further, they may well be feeling that they are not valued in the workplace.

The Menopause is a Workplace Issue has been sent to UNISON branches and union reps and covers topics including awareness training for line managers, flexible procedures for sickness absence, and encouraging employers to introduce a workplace menopause policy.

The guide also outlines examples of good practice. These include the Norfolk and Suffolk police forces which have developed a ‘menopause passport.’ This helps staff identify their own symptoms, and is useful for those who struggle to discuss the issue with line managers.
Chronic Disease In EU Workplaces And The Extent Of Workplace Adjustments

Individuals with a chronic disease have reduced employment and earnings prospects, partly because they are more likely to leave the labour market early or because they find it more difficult to re-enter employment after an absence. According to data from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), while 74% of healthy individuals aged 50–59 are in employment, this declines to 70% among those with one chronic disease and falls as low as 52% for people with two chronic conditions.

Published by Eurofound, this policy brief examines chronic disease in EU workplaces: its prevalence, the impact on ability to work, the extent that workplaces are making adjustments for workers with chronic disease and the effect of that on job quality. It finds that most workers with a chronic disease that limits their ability to work do not benefit from workplace accommodation or adaptation. It also finds that such adaptations can have a positive impact on the quality and sustainability of work.

The policy brief uses data gathered by Eurofound and Eurostat to set out:

- the prevalence of chronic disease in the EU workforce
- the extent to which workers with chronic disease have limitations in their daily activities, including the ability to work
- the extent to which workplaces have accommodated the needs of these workers
- whether such accommodations have made their work more sustainable

The policy brief also highlights where differences exist between Member States, as well as differences according to sociodemographic and work-related factors, such as gender, age, sector and occupation.

Key findings

- A quarter of the EU working population reports having a chronic disease. This share increased by 8 percentage points between 2010 and 2017. The upward trend is set to continue as the population ages, since workers over the age of 50 are more than twice as likely to have a chronic illness as workers under 35. However, among younger workers (aged 16–29) the share of those reporting chronic illness is also high and rising – from 11% in 2010 to 18% in 2017.

- Chronic conditions vary in their severity and the impact they have on the individual’s work and private life during different phases of the development of the condition. Among workers with a chronic disease, over half indicate that they are limited in their daily activities because of their condition.

- Having a chronic illness has implications for the sustainability of work, with affected individuals more likely to exit the labour market and become inactive. Over 40% of workers who say they are limited by their condition also say that they will not be able to work up to the age of 60.

- Workplace accommodation of the needs of workers with chronic disease can have an important impact on their job quality and the sustainability of work. This accommodation can be material (such as accessible workstations and voice-recognition software) or immaterial (such as working time adjustment and remote working). Working time flexibility is one of the most common forms of workplace accommodation.
• One-fifth of workers with a chronic disease report that their workplace or work activity has been adapted to accommodate their health problem. Among those whose daily activities are somewhat or severely limited, 30% have benefited from workplace accommodation. This leaves a high share of workers with a limiting health condition who are not being supported in this way.

• Over 40% of individuals with a limiting chronic disease who have had their workplace adapted believe that further accommodation will be required in the future, demonstrating that a one-off adaptation is often likely to be insufficient, and workers’ requirements need to be kept under review.

• Workers with low educational attainment and those in low-skilled occupations are more likely to have a chronic disease and experience limitations in their daily activities. At the same time, they are also less likely to benefit from workplace accommodation, which raises the issue of fairness in the workplace.

• Workers with a limiting illness whose needs have been accommodated at work have better job quality than those with a limiting illness whose needs have not been accommodated. Workplace adaptations are associated with improved career prospects for those with a limiting illness. Such workers also report lower levels of work intensity, lower stress levels and better work–life balance, all of which contribute to greater work sustainability and performance.

• Workplace size appears not to be a factor determining whether workplaces are likely to make adaptations. In addition, supportive workplace adaptations are more likely in workplaces where individuals feel they can voice their concerns and where they experience high levels of support from managers and colleagues.

A number of policy pointers are thus made, including:

• Without policy intervention, the high and rising incidence of chronic disease in the workplace is likely to impact on productivity, through sick leave as well as early exit and the associated requirements to recruit replacement staff.

• Since poor health is one of the main reasons for early labour market exit, a holistic life cycle policy approach is needed to support prevention of disease and to ensure effective retention and reintegration of individuals affected by chronic disease in the labour market. This should encompass health, occupational health and safety, social protection and employment policy, as well as labour and non-discrimination legislation.

• Making accommodations for the needs of workers with chronic disease will impact on the quality and sustainability of their work and contribute to preventing the development of further health problems such as those arising from stress.

• Particular attention needs to be paid to ensuring fairness in access to workplace accommodation for individuals on different contractual arrangements.

• One-off interventions are likely to be insufficient. A need for further adaptation in the future points to the need for approaches that keep the requirements of affected workers under regular review.

• Awareness-raising around the issue of workplace accommodation should highlight that very simple changes relating to working time flexibility can often have a significant impact on the ability of those living with chronic disease to stay in employment.

• Activities could be developed to increase employees’ sensitivity and awareness of chronic disease and its very individual implications, to generate enhanced support and understanding among colleagues.
• More data and research are needed to better understand the significant differences in the share of self-reported chronic disease in the wider population and among workers.

How to respond to chronic health problems in the workplace?

**Overhauling Policies On Housing, Transport And Education To Help Young People**

Independent UK charity the Health Foundation has urged the government to overhaul policies across housing, transport and education and adopt a whole government approach to secure the future health of today’s young people.

The recommendations for action include calls for a consistent approach to discounted and free public transport for students across the UK and a review of the impact the current testing regime in schools has on mental health. The call came at the conclusion of the Health Foundations’ major two-year inquiry into young people’s future health.

The charity’s new report: A healthy foundation for the future summarises the work of the inquiry and introduces the policy analysis that has taken place. It concludes that factors such as: a fragmented approach to spending and investment in young people across multiple government departments; a challenging housing market where more young people are living longer in poor quality, shorter term rental properties and priced out of long term homes; and a job market where young people struggle for secure rewarding work are putting the UK’s 12-24-year-olds at serious risk of ill health later in life.

The inquiry has found that it is harder for today’s young people to access the things necessary for future health, that is: a place to call home, potential for secure and rewarding work, and supportive relationships with their friends, family and community.

The Health Foundation and its nine partner organisations, who are publishing detailed analysis alongside the report, recommend that young people’s needs are put at the centre of government policy making. They are proposing a series of wide-ranging policy recommendations to give young people a better start in life including:

• a government review of the impact of the exam system and the ‘teach to test’ culture on the mental health of young people

• significant reforms to the private rental sector including developing minimum standards for landlords and greater support for ‘build to rent’ schemes so that young people can put down roots and feel a sense of ‘home’

• ending the postcode lottery in access to discounted and free transport for students and young people seeking employment.

Detailed policy recommendations for each sector will be published by the expert organisations within the next few weeks.

The final report from the Young people's future health inquiry: A healthy foundation for the future is available free to download from:
European Food Safety Agency Consults On Sweeteners
The European Food Safety Authority’s (EFSA’s) Panel on Food Additives and Flavourings (FAF Panel) has launched an open consultation on the draft Protocol for the exposure assessment as part of the safety assessment of sweeteners under the food additives re-evaluation programme conducted in the framework of Regulation (EC) No 257/2010. In accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 257/2010, the re-evaluation of all approved sweeteners in the EU prior to 20 January 2009 shall be completed by 31 December 2020.

Sweeteners are food additives which are used:

- to impart a sweet taste in foodstuffs
- as table-top sweeteners

As for all food additives, sweeteners are regulated substances which are subject to safety evaluation prior to market authorisation. In the EU, the European Commission, Parliament and Council regulate the use of food additives and the Commission and Member States decide which additives can be used in foods and at what levels. All food additives are included in the ingredient lists on product labels which must identify both the function of the food additive in the finished food (i.e. sweetener) and the specific substance used either by referring to the appropriate E number or its name (e.g. E 954 for ‘Saccharin’).

This consultation is intended to gain inputs from the interested parties and the scientific community on the proposed approach to assess the exposure to sweeteners that are being re-evaluated by EFSA in the context of the re-evaluation programme of food additives.

Comments on the consultation should be received by 22 November 2019.

Draft protocol for the exposure assessment as part of the safety assessment of sweeteners under the food additives re-evaluation programme:

Research And Innovation Platform On Food Safety
The European Commission has launched a call to develop a research and innovation platform on food safety. It will make it easier for national food safety authorities, EU agencies, policy-makers, the scientific community and civil society to coordinate research efforts. Recent consumer concerns on the transparency of the process of safety assessment of our foods as well as technological developments and innovations have shown that there is a need to reflect on the EU food safety system of the future. The challenge requires fostering coordination and integration among different food safety stakeholders in order to ensure that the science and infrastructures needed to support evidence-based policies of the future will be timely available.

Proposals shall aim at developing a research and innovation platform for collaboration and coordination across food safety stakeholders in Europe. Actions shall engage key stakeholders such as National Food Safety Authorities, relevant EU Agencies, Commission Services, policy makers, scientists and civil society with the objectives to:

- map the state of play in food safety research and innovation in the different Member States and Associated Countries
- strengthen research and innovation capacity to ensure that Europe continues to be the global leader on food safety standards
- exchange of knowledge and data across the scientific community and policy actors including relevant EU Agencies
- improve coherence and reduce the overlap between national and EU funding in Food safety research

- develop innovative approaches to communicate both on food safety research and innovation as well as on risk assessment procedures in the area of food safety in a manner that citizens are properly informed and engaged in taking into account gender aspects, thus contributing to boosting consumers' confidence on the evidence-base for food safety systems and

- explore avenues for long-term science-policy-society interfaces.

It is anticipated that the platform will facilitate new approaches to communication on food safety.

The deadline for applications is 22 January 2020.

Supporting the food safety systems of the future:

**Outbreak Of Lung Injury Associated With E-Cigarette Use In USA**

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued new guidance to the US public on vaping. This follows growing numbers of reports on ill health associated with vaping, and widespread public anxiety.

CDC recommends refraining from using e-cigarette products, particularly those containing THC. It also confirms:

- If you are an adult who used e-cigarettes containing nicotine to quit cigarette smoking, do not return to smoking cigarettes

- If you have recently used an e-cigarette or vaping product and you have cough, shortness of breath, or chest pain, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, or diarrhea, fatigue, fever, or weight loss see a healthcare provider.

Regardless of the ongoing investigation:

- Anyone who uses e-cigarette, or vaping, products should not buy these products (eg, e-cigarette or vaping products with THC or CBD oils) from informal sources (eg, friends, family members) or ‘off the street,’ - should not modify or add any substances to these products that are not intended by the manufacturer

- Youth and young adults, and Women who are pregnant should not use e-cigarette products

- THC use has been associated with a wide range of health effects, particularly with prolonged heavy use. The best way to avoid potentially harmful effects is to not use THC, including through e-cigarette products.

The current US position is:

- As of 8 October 2019 1,299 lung injury cases associated with the use of e-cigarette, or vaping, products have been reported to CDC from 49 states, the District of Columbia, and 1 US territory.

- Twenty-six deaths have been confirmed in 21 states

- All patients have reported a history of using e-cigarette products
Most patients report a history of using THC-containing products (tetra hydro cannabinol or THC, a psychoactive component of the marijuana plant). The latest national and regional findings suggest products containing THC play a role in the outbreak.

- Approximately 70% of patients are male
- Approximately 80% of patients are under 35 years old
- 15% of patients are under 18 years old
- 21% of patients are 18 to 20 years old.

More details are available at: www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html

Study Finds Exposure To E-Cigarette Smoke Causes Lung Cancer In Mice

Researchers from the New York University School of Medicine exposed the mice to an aerosol of nicotine dissolved in isopropylene glycol and vegetable glycerin, a common vehicle for vaping liquids. A further group of 20 mice were exposed to the same aerosol without nicotine, while a third group of 20 mice spent their time in a room with filtered air.

Led by Moon-Shong Tang, the researchers found that 9 of 40 mice (22.5%) exposed to E-cigarette smoke with nicotine for 54 weeks developed lung adenocarcinomas. None of the 20 mice from the study exposed to the same E-cigarette smoke without nicotine developed cancer. The study also found that 23 of 40 mice (57.5%) exposed to E-cigarette smoke developed bladder hyperplasia, genetic changes that make cells more likely to multiply, and abnormal tissue growth seen in cancer. Only 5.6 % of mice in the control group that breathed filtered air developed lung tumours, and none had growths in their bladders.

Only one of the 17 mice exposed to the zero-nicotine E-cigarette smoke developed hyperplasia.

Tang acknowledges the study's limitations, including that it was conducted in a relatively small number of mice susceptible to developing cancer over their lifetime (one-year study period designed to offset age-related cancer).

It should be noted that the mice in the study did not inhale smoke as a human would, but were subject to whole-body exposure.

Tang's team had shown in a February 2018 study that E-cigarette smoke induces DNA damage in the mouse lung and bladder, and that nitrosation in cultured human lung and bladder cells converts nicotine into derivatives that increase DNA code changes (mutations) with the potential to transform normal cells into cancer cells.

The current study results confirm that nicotine from E-cigarette smoke can cause cancer in the lungs, and precancerous growth in the bladders of mice.

According to the researchers, the results support the argument that the nicotine-derived DNA adducts are likely the main causes for carcinogenesis in mice exposed to E-cigarette smoke. The next step will be to expand the number of mice studied, to shorten and prolong E-cigarette exposure time, and to further investigate the genetic changes caused by E-cigarette smoke.

Moon-Shong Tang, Xue-Ru Wu, Hyun-Wook Lee, Yong Xia, Fang-Ming Deng, Andre L. Moreira, Lung-Chi Chen, William C. Huang, Herbert Lepor:

Electronic-cigarette smoke induces lung adenocarcinoma and bladder urothelial hyperplasia in mice
Musculoskeletal Health Of Hairdressers

A newly-published medical reference document has been developed within the framework of the EU’s ‘ErgoHair’ project. It provides the hairdressing sector with guidelines for developing a healthy work environment.

The objective of the project: Development and promotion of a healthy and safe working environment through the design of ergonomic workplaces and work processes in the hairdressing sector (ergoHair) is the uniform implementation of the core proposals contained in the social partners’ agreement regarding the development of a healthy and safe work environment in the hairdressing sector.

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are common in the working age population and are conditions that affect passive (bones, joints) and/or active structures of the body (muscles, tendons, ligaments, peripheral nerves).

MSDs are highly prevalent in manual-intensive occupations such as manufacturing, construction or services, including hairdressers, whose working ability and health condition may be affected by specific occupational activities.

Researchers carried out a daily task analysis which showed that experienced hairdressers spend on average 29% of their time cutting, 17% dying, 10% blow-drying and 8% washing hair. These activities required frequent sagittal or lateral bending and twisting of the back (e.g. washing hair at the sink), static postures and long-standing periods.

Repetitive tasks have also been observed during client-related activities and results from posture analysis revealed that hairdressers spend 9-13% of their total working time with arms elevated over 60°. Working with elevated arms above shoulder level is considered a major risk factor for clinically verified shoulder disorders or persistent severe pain. The relatively high force exertion and wrist velocity – combined with prolonged exposure – may account for a higher rate of hand/wrist pain, especially in female hairdressers.

To understand the impact of MSDs on hairdressers requires quantification of prevalence, disability or injury, the identification of potential risk factors for these health consequences, combined with effective preventive or rehabilitative measures. This is the first attempt to map the current state of research on these aspects by using empirical, measurement-based or interventional studies in hairdressing.

The document has the following chapters:

- Section 1 contains a description of the hairdressing sector in Europe and the general approaches taken by both the European Union and partners from within the industry to strengthen the protection of occupational health and safety.

- Section 2 is dedicated to the anatomical structure and functions of the musculoskeletal system and work-related MSDs. The prevalence of work-related MSDs, multifactorial risk factors and the cost of this health problem are presented in detail. The economic benefits of preventive measures to counter MSDs at work are discussed.

- Section 3 presents a systematic literature appraisal (scoping review), and in line with the aims of the project, the collated studies provide the scientific basis for the initiative. The epidemiological insights delivered by these studies allow conclusions to be drawn about the occupational and health-related stresses and strains encountered by hairdressers and clearly indicate that there should be a stronger focus on steps to protect occupational health and safety both at work and in educational settings.
Section 4 compiles further research results that were presented at workshops in Hamburg and Paris.

Section 5 presents suggestions and recommendations for promoting healthy and safe working conditions for hairdressers by designing ergonomic workplaces and work processes.


Resources To Help Local Authorities Regulate Rogue Landlords And Letting Agents

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has published further resources to help local authorities enforce against rogue landlords and letting agents.

The resources complement the Ministry’s refreshed publication earlier in 2019 and comprise an interactive learning module and a knowledge bank of technical questions and answers. The interactive learning tool contains:

1. a knowledge check section which helps enforcement officers to quickly assess their existing awareness of enforcement guidance and legislation on rogue landlords
2. a scenario section which enables enforcement officers to apply their knowledge to a range of different cases, such as when dealing with overcrowding or houses in multiple occupation
3. a guided exercise aimed at supporting local authority officers to implement their enforcement strategy in a practical way
4. further information on guidance and policy support available to local authorities regarding enforcement issues.

The knowledge bank is comprised of detailed answers to questions raised by local authority enforcement officers, to include premises advertised on Airbnb and for which a number of pieces of legislation are applicable, namely:

- Section 44 of the Deregulation Act 2015 amends the Greater London Council (General Powers) Act 1973. Where residential accommodation is situated in Greater London and is provided as temporary sleeping accommodation, such as an Airbnb, the number of nights in the same calendar year exceeds ninety and the person providing the sleeping accommodation is liable to pay council tax, constitutes a material change of use for which planning permission is required
- If Airbnb accommodation meets the test for an HMO then failure to license the HMO is enforceable by the local authority
- Where the management regulations apply the local authority can enforce breaches of the management regulations under the 2004 Act
- Where the accommodation does not meet housing standards under the HHSRS then the environmental department of the local authority can exercise any of its powers under Part 1 of the 2004 Act
- If as a result of the numbers of persons occupying the Airbnb the property is overcrowded then the local authority can enforce against the owner under the Housing Act 1985 and the Housing Act 2004.

EFSA Consults On Aflatoxins In Food
The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has launched a public consultation on the risks to public health related to the presence of aflatoxins in food. Aflatoxins are mycotoxins produced by two species of Aspergillus, a fungus found especially in areas with hot and humid climates. Aflatoxins are known to be genotoxic (capable of damaging DNA) and carcinogenic.

Aflatoxin B1 is the most common in food and among the most potent genotoxic and carcinogenic aflatoxins. It is produced both by Aspergillus flavus and Aspergillus parasiticus. Aflatoxin M1 is a major metabolite of aflatoxin B1 in humans and animals, which may be present in milk from animals fed with aflatoxin B1 contaminated feed.

Most human exposure comes from contaminated grains and their derived products. Additionally, aflatoxin M1 can be found in milk.

The Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain (CONTAM Panel) has concluded that the dietary exposure of the European population to aflatoxins raises a possible health concern.

In 2018, a statement from the Panel covered the effect of a possible increase of the maximum level for aflatoxin total in peanuts and such processed products, intended for direct consumption or use as an ingredient in foodstuffs.

Comments on the consultation should be submitted by 15 November 2019.

Public consultation on the draft scientific opinion on the risks to public health related to the presence of aflatoxins in food:

Market Effects Of Reducing Household Food Waste
According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO UN), food waste costs a global annual average of US$2.6 trillion ($2.34 trillion) (3.3% of global GDP). Halving food waste by 2030 is one objective of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to create a sustainable future for communities and ecosystems worldwide.

Estimates of per-capita household food waste vary greatly in EU studies, but range up to nearly 92 kilograms per year. The EU is taking steps to reduce this via its Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP), which includes food waste as one of its priority areas. Significant progress has been achieved in this area in the last few years, for example by the revised waste legislation and the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste.

However, it remains a priority to better align EU policy with food practices and supply chains and to improve regulatory and legal frameworks in order to facilitate measures such as better food handling and widespread donation networks.

This study examined the market impacts of reducing EU household food waste, using a multi-regional model and data to simulate how the EU economy would react to various economic, biophysical and policy drivers up to 2030.

The researchers selected recent estimates of physical food waste from the European Commission, which split EU household food waste by commodity: vegetables (26%), fruits (19%), meat (19%), sugar, cereals, and fish (12% each) and dairy (8%).

The study uses satellite data to characterise social, biophysical and environmental indicators and includes factors involved with agricultural food supply that would be affected by increasing compliance costs e.g. increased spending to meet new legal requirements.

The model explored four food-waste-reduction scenarios, accounting for two fundamental market drivers: demand (food-waste reductions of 25 and 50%); and supply (the hypothesised per-unit
compliance costs needed to trigger behavioural changes in EU food consumption: 1% and 5% of the relevant sales-flow values).

The researchers found that reducing household waste can bring a minor macro-economic impact, while having positive effects on environmental indicators such as land usage, greenhouse gas emissions and water abstraction.

The macroeconomic impact ranged from -0.1 to -0.5% (as a percentage of GDP change) across the scenarios, three of which saw annual household savings, with a maximum of 93 Euros and a minimum (an increase) of -23 Euros. The effect on food prices remains ambiguous, given the opposing forces of supply and demand driven by rising per-unit production costs and reductions in household waste, respectively.

Levels of agri-food production decreased in all scenarios, with production contracting to meet reduced demand. Horticulture and meat saw the largest decreases, with dairy and fish also showing notable declines. This is accompanied by agri-food job losses of up to 7%.

Regarding sustainability, the study found food-waste reductions to cause agricultural land-use savings of up to 9,554 kilometres squared, (0.5%) of EU agricultural land. The largest savings came from sectors that contribute more to household waste, such as vegetables, fruits and meat. Greenhouse gas reductions ranged from 7 (-1.6%) to 16 (-3.5%) million tonnes, largely driven by agriculture. For water abstraction, food-waste reductions drove water savings of between -121 million cubic metres and -316 million cubic metres - between 0.2% to 0.6% of the baseline and largely driven by horticulture.

According to the researchers, these positive environmental effects would have a beneficial impact on ecosystem services, and demonstrate the importance of policy that pushes towards an economy in which waste and resource use is minimised. The study also notes that food waste could offer an additional resource for economic activity e.g. as a source of biomass; highlights the importance of improved food packaging, given that up to 25% of household food waste is thought to be related to packaging issues (such as a widespread misunderstanding of 'best before' dates); and calls for better collection of food-waste data and the introduction of awareness campaigns to positively influence consumer attitudes.

The researchers thus found that reductions of up to 50% by 2030 would lead to household cost savings, a shrinking agri-food sector, a mild negative macroeconomic impact and desirable reductions in environmental pressures.


Waste not, want not: A bio-economic impact assessment of household food waste reductions in the EU.

Resources, Conservation and Recycling

**Call For Evidence On Restriction Of Lead In Shot, Bullets And Fishing Tackle**

The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) is calling upon interested parties to submit evidence and information on the use of lead in gunshot outside of wetlands, bullets in any terrain and in fishing tackle. The call is intended for companies, trade associations, hunting, fishing or sports shooting organisations, scientific bodies and any other stakeholders or Member States holding relevant information, including hunters and fishers and all others with an interest in this issue. Military uses, however, fall outside the scope of the call.

ECHA's intention is to prepare a restriction proposal which has now been added in the Registry of Intentions.
Lead is a non-essential (ie, having no biological function) heavy metal that is toxic to humans and wildlife. It affects most body systems, having negative effects on general health, reproduction and behaviour. It differs from many contaminants in that there is no evidence for a safe threshold for a number of critical end points, including developmental neurotoxicity and nephrotoxicity.

This means that there is no level of exposure below which effects in humans are not expected. According to its hazard classification, lead may damage fertility or the unborn child, causes damage to organs through prolonged or repeated exposure, may cause cancer, may cause harm to breast-fed children and is very toxic to aquatic life, with long lasting effects.

The focus of ECHA’s investigation is on the risks posed by lead to the environment and wildlife as well as risks to humans through consumption of game meat. The Agency is specifically looking for information on:

- The quantities of lead used or released to the environment and the resulting human health or environmental impacts;
- Current best practice to minimise lead exposure to humans or the environment during use;
- Alternatives to lead shot, bullets and lead in fishing tackle; and
- Other socio-economic impacts on society with regard to a possible restriction, such as costs and/or benefits to any affected stakeholders.

The information provided will be used to determine if any derogations would be necessary in the event that a restriction was proposed. However, derogations cannot be proposed without adequate information on risk and socio-economic information, including alternatives.


**PHE Calls For Action To End Rough Sleeping**

Published by Public Health England (PHE), the latest edition of Health Matters focuses on the scale of rough sleeping in England, the causes and consequences of rough sleeping (including the links with poor physical and mental health, prevention and effective interventions) and relevant calls to action.

Since 2010, official estimated numbers of people who experience rough sleeping have creased by 165% to 4,677 people on a single night in England.

Rough sleeping is unevenly distributed across the country, with trends showing that it has increased in many different areas. The largest increases since 2010 have been in urban areas, with rural areas and some seaside towns seeing smaller increases.

In the 2018 counts and estimates, 84% of people experiencing rough sleeping were men, while 14% were women, and 80% were aged over 25 years.

People who experience rough sleeping over a long period face a higher likelihood of dying prematurely compared to the general population. The average age at death of people who experience homelessness was 44 years for men and 42 years for women, compared to 76 years for men and 81 years for women in the general population.

In 2017, over half of all deaths of people experiencing homelessness were due to 3 factors:

- Accidents, including drug poisoning, accounted for 40%
- Suicides accounted for 13%
Diseases of the liver accounted for 9%

A University College London study found that a third of deaths among people experiencing homelessness were due to conditions such as tuberculosis and gastric ulcers, which are amenable to timely and effective health care.

People who sleep rough experience some of the most severe health inequalities and report much poorer health than the general population. Many have co-occurring mental ill health and substance misuse needs, physical health needs, and have experienced significant trauma in their lives.

Ill-health can be both a cause and consequence of homelessness, although it is not always identified as the trigger of homelessness. For example, ill-health may contribute to job loss or relationship breakdown, which in turn can result in homelessness.

The poorer health outcomes that homeless people experience compared to the general population are related to:

- Exposure to poor living conditions
- Difficulty in maintaining personal hygiene
- Poor diet
- High levels of stress
- Drug and alcohol dependence.

Access to primary care is also a major issue, with many people sleeping rough reporting being unable to register with a GP practice because they have no fixed address.

Evidence has also shown that, compared with the general population, common mental health conditions (such as depression, anxiety and panic disorder) are over twice as high among people who experience homelessness, and psychosis is up to 15 times as high. Of the people seen sleeping rough in London in 2017 to 2018, 50% reported mental health needs.

Substance dependence can also be both a cause and consequence of homelessness. Those who are dependent on drugs or alcohol may struggle to retain accommodation due to financial difficulties, problems with behaviour or family relationship breakdown. Homelessness can also be a route to substance dependence.

Published in 2018, the government’s Rough Sleeping Strategy commits to halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it completely by 2027. The strategy states that achieving this ambition will require central and local government to work collaboratively and innovatively with business, communities, faith and voluntary groups and the general public.

At local level, leaders in health and social care systems have an important role to play in improving health outcomes and reducing health inequalities amongst people who are experiencing rough sleeping.

Health Matters: Rough Sleeping
**Nurses Can Make Healthcare More Sustainable**

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has published a statement of how it intends to help tackle the climate change crisis. It stresses the negative consequences of global warming on people’s health and says these will be catastrophic if urgent action isn’t taken.

The statement says nurses have a duty to protect and promote public health in the face of threats posed by climate change but that the health care sector, as a major contributor to global warming, must also play its part. Over the next six months, the RCN will consult with members and stakeholders to develop a climate change strategy. This will focus on several approaches including identifying and sharing practical ways in which members can develop sustainable initiatives in their workplaces and lobbying for more sustainable procurement of items used by nurses to deliver care.

According to RCN Professional Lead for Sustainability Rose Gallagher, as the largest profession delivering health care, nursing is uniquely placed to advocate, educate and lead action to mitigate the risks associated with global temperature increases.

The RCN is already taking steps to help nursing staff and their employers reduce avoidable waste through initiatives such as Glove Awareness Week, which aims to educate nursing staff about appropriate glove use.

[www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-007878](http://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-007878)

**Newer EU Member States Expect More Working Weeks Per Year**

According to a report published by eurofound, workers in Member States that joined the EU after May 2004 were expected to work close to three full working weeks per year more than those in ‘older’ Member States in 2018.

Throughout the EU, the average collectively agreed annual working time was approximately 1,714 hours in 2018. However, Eurofound’s analysis shows that for older Member States the average was 1,687 hours, and for newer Member States it was 1,803, a difference of 116 hours, or the equivalent to three working weeks.

Eurofound’s latest biennial review of working time charts developments in a range of working time issues in the EU and Norway in 2017–2018. It finds that while the average collectively agreed working week across the EU remains unchanged since 2016 – at 38 hours – there was a slight decrease in the past two years in the 15 Member States that joined the EU before 2004 (EU15). Workers in newer Member States (EU13) work longer, a trend which is increasing in all sectors analysed, except for banking where working time decreased in newer Member States and stayed stable in the EU15.

At national level, the EU’s longest annual collectively agreed working hours are in Estonia (1,848 hours), where collective bargaining does not play a significant role in defining working time standards. The shortest annual working hours are found in France (1,602 hours), followed by Denmark, Sweden and Germany. This means that in 2018, according to the collectively agreed hours, workers in Estonia were supposed to work approximately 246 hours (or six weeks) more than their counterparts in France.

The trend observed in 2017-2018 of increasing actual working hours in newer Member States, while hours in older Member States remain stable, combined with differences in entitlement to annual leave, means that there is currently a reversal of the process of convergence in working time that has been taking place in recent years. This is likely to be an issue of policy concern, as ensuring convergence across various aspects of working life, including working time, is a priority for the EU.

Taxi Drivers Face More Exposure To Black Carbon Compared To Other Professional Drivers

Professional drivers working in congested cities are exposed to black carbon levels that are on average a third higher than would be experienced at a busy roadside, according to research presented at the European Respiratory Society International Congress recently.

The research was carried out by King’s and Queen Mary University of London has found that taxi drivers in London experience the highest exposures to black carbon compared to other professional drivers such as couriers, truck drivers, waste removal and emergency service workers. Black carbon is the sooty black material emitted predominantly from diesel engines in the urban environment.

In the recent study, the researchers recruited 140 professional drivers from a range of different occupations working in the heart of London. The drivers were asked to carry black carbon monitors for 96 hours, which were linked with GPS trackers. The monitors measured exposure levels once every minute. Drivers were also asked about the type of vehicle they drive, their working hours and whether they drive with their windows down or air vents open.

On average, the results showed that professional drivers were exposed to 4.1 micrograms of black carbon per cubic metre of air (µg/m³) while driving, around four times higher than their exposure at home or levels experienced in offices. During the same period, researchers found that pollution levels at Marylebone Road were 3.1 µg/m³ on average and, away from the roadside, the average level in London was 0.9 µg/m³.

The results suggest that professional drivers are exposed to high levels of traffic pollution while at work. Because these levels are higher than those we find at the roadside, this suggests that being inside a vehicle doesn’t necessarily offer any protection, in fact the opposite may be true: that air pollution can get trapped inside the vehicle for extended periods of time.

From the study group of 140 drivers from different professions, taxi drivers had the highest levels of exposure on average (6.5 µg/m³). Emergency services workers had the lowest levels of exposure on average (2.8 µg/m³).

The results also showed that keeping car windows closed halved the levels of black carbon for professional drivers, while the type of vehicle and choice of route could also lower exposure.

Next steps in this research include investigating possible strategies for protecting drivers, such as the use of air filters.


Living Close To The Sea May Produce Better Mental Health

Living close to the sea could support better mental health in England’s poorest urban communities, finds a new study.

Researchers from the University of Exeter used survey data from nearly 26,000 respondents in their analysis, which marks one of the most detailed investigations ever into the wellbeing effects of being beside the sea. After taking other related factors into account, the study revealed that living in large towns and cities near to England’s coastline is linked with better mental health for those in the lowest earning households.

Approximately one in six adults in England suffer from mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression, and these are far more likely in people from poorer backgrounds. The findings suggest that access to the coast could help to reduce these health inequalities in towns and cities close to the sea.
The research used data from the Health Survey for England and compared people’s health to their proximity to the coast; from those living less than 1km away, to those more than 50km away. Its findings add to the growing evidence that access to blue spaces—particularly coastal environments—might improve health and wellbeing.

The research suggests that people in poorer households living close to the coast experience fewer symptoms of mental health disorders. When it comes to mental health, this ‘protective’ zone could play a useful role in helping to level the playing field between those on high and low income.

This is the first time the benefits of coastal living have been demonstrated at such a detailed level according to income, and comes as Natural England prepares to open access to all of England’s Coast Path by 2020. With 630 miles of the South West Coast Path already free to access, initiatives like this may provide one way for communities to harness the wellbeing benefits of living near to the sea.

The paper: Coastal proximity and mental health among urban adults in England: The moderating effect of household income is available at: www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1353829219300607?via%3Dihub

Landlady Fined £40K For Dangerous And Unlicensed HMO
The City of Lincoln Council has secured the imposition of its second largest fine on a rogue landlady, after she was found guilty of letting out a dangerous and unlicensed House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). The case was brought to the magistrates’ court on 23 September 2019.

Julie Churchill of Newport, Lincoln was responsible for an unlicensed HMO at 135 Monks Road, Lincoln, a property which was deemed dangerous by magistrates as it failed to comply with the requirements of the Housing Act 2004.

The council reported that the property had no fire doors to the bedrooms, ground floor lounge or kitchen, no working fire alarms on the ground floor, and one of the bedroom doors had a large gap which would allow smoke to escape in the event of a fire. Three of the bedroom doors could be locked by a padlock which if in use, would not allow for a quick exit.

The court heard that if a fire had broken out within the building, inadequate fire warning systems and lack of fire containment measures would have put the tenants at extreme risk.

An investigation revealed that the stairs were painted gloss black and had no slip resistance in the event of a tenant falling, and the kitchen did not provide the seven tenants living in the property with adequate facilities. Further, one of the occupied bedrooms was below the legal minimum size for an adult.

The court was told that the repair of these defects would have cost Ms Churchill as little as £6,000 to remedy.

The council received a complaint in July 2018 from a member of the public, alleging that the property was overcrowded, following which, it was inspected by the council’s Private Housing Officers who found a number of safety defects.

Under the belief that the property was being unlawfully let as a HMO, it was further inspected by Private Housing Officers and the police under a magistrates’ court warrant on 23 January 2019 to find that it was occupied by seven unrelated eastern European and sub-Saharan immigrants in four bedrooms.

It was subsequently discovered that Ms Churchill was collecting up to £1,480 per month in rent, giving her a potential income of approximately £35,520 over the two years she had owned the property.
Officers said the tenants spoke little English and were unaware of their rights, had no tenancy agreement, rent book or rent receipt. Indeed, only two of the seven tenants knew the landlady’s name.

Ms Churchill was found guilty and fined £40,000.


FSA Aims To Further Protect People With Food Allergies And Intolerances
The Food Standards Agency (FSA) Board has confirmed a series of measures to protect those with food allergies and intolerances. This comes after the conclusion of the inquest into the death of Owen Carey, who died after an allergic reaction to milk at a London restaurant.

The measures were discussed as part of the quarterly Board meeting on Wednesday 18 September in Belfast.

The actions include:

- issuing a clear and easy to follow aide-memoire for enforcement officers (Environmental Health Officers and Trading Standards Officers) which is focused specifically on the action they should be taking within business in relation to food allergies
- publishing an urgent update of the highly-regarded ‘Safer Food Better Business’ guide, including a review of on the allergens information included
- at the end of the year, launching of an awareness campaign to remind businesses and consumers about how to keep people with food allergies safe
- implementing a pilot project to develop better reporting of allergic reactions
- focusing on the concerns raised by Owen’s case at the next Industry Leadership Forum on food hypersensitivity in November
- meeting with Byron and their local authority to discuss the detail of Owen’s case and lessons learned
- once all information is available, commission a full root cause analysis of this specific incident to ensure that lessons are shared.

The Board stressed their commitment to supporting food businesses to keep consumers safe, and to develop a greater understanding of food allergens through further research, which would make a significant improvement to people’s lives in this area.

www.food.gov.uk

Sleep Deprivation And Exercise Can Make People With Peanut Allergies More Sensitive
An Addenbrookes’ Hospital research team found that exercise and sleep deprivation each significantly reduce the threshold of reactivity (the amount of peanut needed to trigger a reaction) in people with peanut allergy, putting them at greater risk of a reaction.

More than 126 peanut allergic individuals took part in the trial. Participants were given a peanut challenge where they were given increasing amounts of peanut flour to eat until they developed an allergic reaction which was treated quickly. This challenge was repeated when they were exercising and when they were sleep-deprived.
Led by the allergy research team at Addenbrooke's, and funded by The Food Standards Agency (FSA), the study is significant, as one in every 100 adults and one in every 50 children have peanut allergies - the most common cause of fatal allergic reactions.

Allergies remains an under-researched subject and the FSA has targeted support for projects which aim to progress knowledge in this area. These findings will pave the way for better food labelling and greater understanding of the factors that can lead to allergic reactions.

The work, which could be applied to other foods, reveals that exercise, sleep deprivation or stress significantly reduce the amount of peanut required to cause an allergic reaction. It provides cut-off levels appropriate for the UK population which longer-term could help regulators and the food industry develop accurate evidence-based food labelling.

‘The effect of extrinsic factors on food allergy’ is free to download from: www.food.gov.uk/print/pdf/node/1242

Genomics In Regulatory Food Safety Testing In Canada

Experts say Canada has become a world leader in preventing illness and saving lives by tracking down the source of dangerous bacteria and other pathogens that invade the country's food supply.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency can now do that work faster and more conclusively by decoding the genetic information of organisms such as Salmonella, Listeria and E. coli. Genomics is a term used to describe the science of decoding genetic information in an organism's DNA. It looks at how genes function and interact with each other and influence growth and development.

According to the Inspection Agency's website, four million Canadians are made ill as a result of eating contaminated food every year. The Agency's goal is to identify contaminated food responsible for making people sick and remove it from sale as quickly as possible.

A process known as whole genome sequencing helps identify the organism responsible for causing illness. The technique allows the Agency to determine the complete DNA sequence of an organism's entire genome. Once determined, scientists know what kind of illness a particular organism can cause and can use its own DNA to track it.

If an organism present within the food is also inside a person and possesses the same DNA, then scientists can infer that particular organism made the person unwell. This helps food safety investigators identify the food vehicles that are making people sick while also identifying sources of contamination in the food manufacturing environment.

Whole genome sequencing also provides the Agency with far more information than previous tests and can be completed much faster. The old techniques of identifying an organism took days or even weeks, as samples had to be transported between different laboratories.

In the five years the Agency has been doing this work, its scientists have sequenced 10,000 different bacterial pathogens including salmonella, Listeria and E. coli.

These methods have already changed the way food is processed in Canada. Along with other investigative techniques, the Agency was able to use whole genome sequencing to track the source of Salmonella to raw breaded chicken products, including chicken burgers and chicken strips. By way of remedial action, the Agency implemented new regulations requiring all manufacturers to reduce Salmonella levels to below detectable amounts in breaded chicken products packaged for retail sale.

Catherine D. Carrillo, Adam Koziol, Neil Vary, Burton W. Blais:

Applications of Genomics in Regulatory Food Safety Testing in Canada
Cancer The Leading Cause Of Death In Higher Income Countries

Heart disease has long been the leading cause of death. However, a new global study has shown - in higher income countries, at least - that cancer is now twice as likely to cause death as heart disease.

In the USA, heart disease has traditionally topped the list as the leading cause of death for both men and women and is currently responsible for around 1 in 4 deaths. However, experts have been wondering when cancer will overtake it.

Now, in a new study, researchers discovered that cancer is responsible for around 55% of deaths among middle aged people in higher income countries, whereas heart disease causes just 23%. They say that this is due to improved efforts to prevent and treat heart disease in more prosperous countries.

The surveillance, epidemiology and end results programme (SEER) Cancer Statistics Review for 2018 noted a 26% drop in cancer-related deaths in the USA between 1991 and 2015.

Although this shows progress, there is still much work to be done, according to the National Cancer Institute. For example, the number of people smoking may have declined, but obesity is on the rise and the U.S. population is ageing, all of which will impact on cancer statistics.

The researchers conducted their study in 21 countries across five continents. Over 9.5 years, the team followed 162,534 adults, ages 35–70, from:

- high income Canada, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, and the United Arab Emirates
- middle income Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Columbia, Iran, Malaysia, Palestine, the Philippines, Poland, Turkey, and South Africa
- low income Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

The researchers revealed that although heart disease is no longer the biggest killer in higher income countries, it remains the most common cause of death worldwide.

In middle income countries, heart disease was responsible for 41% of deaths, and in lower income countries, it was responsible for 43% of deaths. This is despite the risk factors that wealthier populations have.

Cancer ranked second most common, at 26%. However, although cancer was responsible for 55% of deaths in high income countries, this dropped to 30% in middle income countries and 15% in lower income countries.

When the team removed cancer from the findings, overall mortality was highest in the low income countries (13.3%) and lowest in high income countries (3.4%), the former of which the researchers put down to reduced access to quality healthcare.

Prof Gilles R Dagenais et al:

Variations in common diseases, hospital admissions and deaths in middle-aged adults in 21 countries from five continents (PURE): a prospective cohort study

https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(19)32007-0
**Actions Promised At UN's Climate Action Summit 2019**

The recent Climate Action Summit convened by UN Secretary-General António Guterres pledged a surge of engagement to reduce emissions and protect people against increasing impacts of climate change. Prior to the event, the UN Secretary warned leaders that they must present concrete plans for cutting harmful greenhouse gas emissions, and consider strategies for carbon neutrality by 2050.

The UN estimates that the world would need to increase its efforts between three- and five-fold to contain climate change to the levels dictated by science - a 1.5°C rise at most - and avoid escalating climate damage already taking place around the world.

Many countries used the Summit to demonstrate next steps on how by 2020 they will update their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) with the aim to collectively reduce emissions by at least 45% by 2030 and prepare national strategies to achieve carbon neutrality by mid-century.

France announced that it will no longer enter into trade agreements with countries whose policies run counter to the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement; Germany committed to carbon neutrality by 2050 and China said that it will cut emissions by over 12 billion tons annually.

Getting out of coal is a priority. The Powering Past Coal Alliance expanded to include 30 countries, 22 states or regions, and 31 corporations committed to stopping the building of new coal power plants in 2020 and rapidly transitioning to renewable energy.

Nations made financial commitments to the Green Climate Fund, the official financial mechanism to assist developing countries in adaptation and mitigation practices to counter climate change and new initiatives were launched to protect people from the impacts of climate change.

The Summit focused on nine interdependent tracks, with the aim of boosting ambition and accelerating action to implement the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement:

- Enhancing climate mitigation of major emitting countries
- Social and political drivers, such as health, gender and security
- Youth and public mobilisation, streamlining youth participation across all related topics
- Energy transition, including boosting renewables, energy efficiency, and storage
- Industry transition, creating stronger commitment from emission-heavy sectors such as steel and cement
- Infrastructure, cities and local action, to scale up ambitious commitments on low-emission and climate-resilient infrastructure
- Nature-based solutions, focusing on areas such as forests, smart agriculture and oceans
- Resilience and adaptation, focusing on integrating climate risks into public and private decision-making
- Climate finance and carbon-pricing, directing finance towards climate resilient development, with low greenhouse gas emissions.

**Environment Agency To Review Bio-Waste Sector Sites**

The Environment Agency (EA) is to launch a review of permitted waste sites within the bio-waste sector, which includes composting, anaerobic digestion and mechanical biological treatment.

The review will embed recent changes to legislation, including the requirement of the Industrial Emissions Directive, to ensure compliance with best available techniques and emission limits.

The review will also ensure all bio-waste operations are regulated in a consistent manner and that the objectives of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan are met.

It seeks to improve the quality of recovered material and improve the performance of the sector, securing a regulatory framework that is fair and achievable, whilst providing the best possible protection for people and the environment.

A standard rules consultation will be published in the early Autumn - there have already been several consultations on the revised standards and proposed changes for bio-waste. The Agency said these have provided operators with the opportunity to influence and raise concerns which have been taken into account in final proposals.

The review will begin with bespoke Installations permits and with sites presenting the highest risk or poor performance being prioritised.

The EA will shortly formally request information from operators on their process and pollution control measures to assess against new best available techniques. Waste operations permits will undergo a similar process, which is due to start in the late Autumn 2019.

[www.gov.uk/environment](http://www.gov.uk/environment)

**Gap Between Real-World And Type-Approval Emissions Undermines Cleaner Car Incentives**

Incentives to promote fuel-efficient cars have not always resulted in expected emission reductions, due to the growing gap between real-world and type approval emissions. However, according to a new European Environment Agency (EEA) briefing, incentives that boost the uptake of electric vehicles considerably reduce greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions.

The EEA briefing ‘Fiscal instruments favouring electric over conventional cars are greener’ sums up evidence on the effect of financial schemes to promote the uptake cars with lower carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions in seven European countries.

The main findings presented within the briefing include:

- Countries that actively promote zero- and low-emitting cars, such as battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and plug-in hybrid vehicles (PHEVs), have significantly reduced CO2 emissions.

- There have also been other environmental benefits in these countries: emissions of air pollutants such as NOx and PM have decreased as a result of the uptake of electric vehicles.

- The effects of tax incentives promoting low-emitting conventional cars on CO2 emissions are less clear. Measures of emissions are based on officially reported ‘type-approval’ emissions, which are lower than ‘real-world’ emissions. The gap between type-approval CO2 emissions and real-world emissions increased over the period 2010-2017. Therefore, the average real-world emissions of new passenger cars have decreased at a rate significantly slower than that predicted by trends based on type-approval emissions.

It should be noted that this study focused on emissions related to only the use phase of vehicles.
The briefing shows that European countries that have actively promoted electric vehicles have significantly reduced the average CO2 emissions from new cars. This has also resulted in other clear benefits, such as reduced emissions of air pollutants, including nitrogen oxides (NOx) and particulate matter.

However, the effects of tax incentives that promote conventional fuel-efficient cars are less clear, the briefing states. These incentives are based on type-approval emissions tested in the laboratory, which are lower than the real-world emissions on the road. As the gap between type-approval CO2 emissions and real-world emissions has increased, the real-world emissions of new cars have decreased significantly less than expected.

**DEFRA Report On Plastic Food And Drink Packaging**

Plastic pollution of the marine environment, of which food and drink packaging is a significant contributor, has captured public interest over the past two years and the Government has set out its ambitions to eliminate all avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042.

In the backlash against plastic, other materials are being increasingly used as substitutes in food and drink packaging. There are some concerns that such actions are being taken without proper consideration of wider environmental consequences, such as higher carbon emissions. Further, compostable plastics have been introduced without the right infrastructure or consumer understanding to manage compostable waste.

According to the Committee, the Government is not placing enough emphasis on reducing plastic food and drink packaging in the first place. Reduction is far more important than recycling and a fundamental shift away from single use packaging, plastic or otherwise, is now necessary. Parliament should lead by example, with the ambition to remove single use packaging from all its catering facilities. The Committee has also called on the Government to conduct a review of reusable and refillable packaging systems to determine what works and where Government intervention might be appropriate.

In 2018, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) published its waste strategy: Our waste, our resources: a strategy for England - followed in early 2019 by consultations on a plastic packaging tax, Deposit Return Scheme (DRS), consistency in recycling collections and reforms to the packaging producer responsibility system.

These consultations all focused on improving domestic recycling rates and capacity and the Committee’s key conclusions are:

- The Government does not know how much plastic packaging is placed on market in the UK, nor how much is actually recycled. The Committee has called for the de minimis threshold that determines which businesses must report on packaging, to be significantly lowered.

- The plastic packaging tax would apply to packaging with less than 30% recycled content. This threshold is too blunt an instrument and the tax should be modulated, so that there are lower fees for higher levels of recycled content. In addition, imported, filled packaging should not be exempt from the tax, as the Treasury has proposed.

- Local authorities should be required to collect an agreed core set of dry materials for recycling. This should make it easier for packaging to be labelled, telling consumers whether that packaging is recyclable or not, thus boosting recycling.

The Committee pledged its support the introduction of a DRS, but the Government must monitor the financial impact on local authorities as material is diverted away from kerbside recycling.

The Committee also supports extended producer responsibility (EPR) so that producers pay the full costs of managing packaging waste. The financial benefits of this should help local authorities to...
manage other changes, such as increasing consistency in recycling collections and the introduction of a DRS.

https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmenvfru/2080/208002.htm

**Environmental Audit Committee Publishes New Report: Our Planet, Our Health**

The Environmental Audit Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to consider to what extent the policies and programmes of government departments and non-departmental public bodies contribute to environmental protection and sustainable development; to audit their performance against such targets as may be set for them by Her Majesty's Ministers; and to report thereon to the House. In this new report, the Committee considers the effects of environmental change on human health and sets out its recommendations.

The Government’s Environmental Audit Committee is concerned that the NHS and the pharmaceutical industry is not sufficiently resourced to deal with projected changes: non-communicable diseases (NCDs) kill 41 million people each year, equivalent to 71% of all deaths globally.

Current rates of extinction are at 100–1000 times more than what is considered natural biodiversity loss, and the Government’s progress towards meeting the Aichi targets by 2020 falls woefully short. By way of mitigation, the Environment Bill must therefore include a framework for legal nature restoration and biodiversity targets and the Government should set out the principles behind the design of the new environmental land management schemes.

Our food contributes up to 30% of total greenhouse gas emissions in the UK and we waste 10 million tonnes of food every year. The EAT-Lancet Commission recommended a ‘Great Food Transformation’ - to normalise healthy diets from sustainable food systems. The Government thus has a responsibility to raise public awareness of its Eatwell Guide, identify ways to promote the consumption of healthy diets that are sustainably produced and ensure the public sector leads by example in reducing meat and dairy consumption. The Government has begun working on a National Food Strategy and should establish a National Council for Food Policy to advise on transforming our food system.

The World Bank estimates that 83% of the UK’s population lived in urban areas in 2017. Cities are responsible for 70% of global emissions. City designs and lifestyles contribute to poor outdoor and indoor air quality, with issues ranging from asthma to diabetes, and causing over 40,000 deaths a year.

Air quality legislation should be introduced as soon as possible if we leave the EU.

Integrated urban planning is essential to ensure better planetary health outcomes. The transport sector relies heavily on unsustainable fossil fuel energy and is a contributor to sedentary lifestyles. Poor quality housing and city design has significant harmful impacts on public health, mental health and life expectancy. The Government’s review of the building regulations must take an integrated approach to ensure that sustainability and public health are properly reflected in any new code. The National Planning Policy Framework needs to be updated to promote opportunities for active travel, ambitious green space targets, and access to healthy, sustainable food in planning authorities’ local plans.

Improving public health in the UK while improving the environment will require significantly better data sharing and cross-departmental working. There should be a single point of accountability for planetary health at both ministerial and senior civil service levels. The Government should also establish a joint unit to manage planetary health across Government. The Chief Scientific Advisers, Public Health England and the Chief Medical Officer all have a major role to play and the UK Government should highlight planetary health at forthcoming international meetings.

The Government is due to publish an updated UK Food Security Assessment by the end of 2019. The Committee recommends that the Government accepts the advice from the Committee on Climate
Change about food security risks and set out how it plans to maintain UK food security in a changing climate. Government should publish immediately, in advance of the food security assessment due by the end of 2019, all information relating to food security and cost risks associated with no-deal Brexit.

The National Food Strategy and other Government policy actions relating to food and diets, must place equal emphasis on the importance of healthy diets produced sustainably and national food security. Public Health England’s Eatwell Guide should be revised to emphasise foods with lower environmental footprints and make clear recommendations to help the public choose healthy and sustainable diets. To deliver the transformational changes necessary in UK diets the Government should establish a National Food Council as part of its upcoming Environment (Principles and Governance) Bill and should take the lead on the roll out of the National Food Strategy.

Our Planet, Our Health is available free to download from: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmenvaud/1803/180302.htm

**BSI Guidance on Risk Management – Risk Assessment Techniques**

The British Standards Institution (BSI) has published BS EN IEC 31010:2019 Risk management – Risk assessment techniques to give guidance on how to select and apply risk assessment techniques in a wide range of contexts.

Businesses have a legal and moral duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees and others who may be affected by the acts or omissions of the employer. They also need to identify risks to planned or existing products, processes, procedures, systems, equipment, projects, their organisation’s objectives and the organisation itself. Risk assessments are a tool that enables employers to take the measures necessary to manage hazards and risks.

This standard provides guidance on the selection and application of techniques to help employers and risk managers to make decisions that improve the way uncertainty is accounted for. It provides information about particular techniques, comparing their possible applications, benefits and limitations.

The standard is a technical revision which replaces BS EN 31010:2010 Risk management - Risk assessment techniques and has been updated to provide more detail on the process of planning, implementing, verifying and validating the use of the different techniques.

It is applicable for those responsible for carrying out risk assessments for compliance or conformance purposes; commissioning or evaluating risk assessments; understanding the outcomes of assessments; and choosing assessment techniques to meet organizational needs.

The standard includes the following significant technical changes:

- More detail is given on the process of planning, implementing, verifying and validating the use of the techniques
- The number and range of application of the techniques has been increased

The concepts covered in BS ISO 31000 Risk management (which is a normative document) are no longer repeated in this standard.

**French Employees Pushed To Work ‘Very Fast’**

The results of the SUMER 2017 survey were presented in France early in September 2019. SUMER is the acronym for the French surveillance médicale des salariés aux risques professionnels - the medical monitoring of employees’ exposure to occupational risks. The current survey maps the main work-related risks. Previous surveys were performed in 1994, 2003 and 2010 in such a way that a comparison of the results provides important information on the evolution of working conditions in France over a period of more than 20 years.
SUMER is one of the widest surveys on working conditions conducted at national level and the 2017 survey was conducted between April 2016 and September 2017. Participating on a voluntary basis, 1,243 occupational health doctors randomly selected 33,600 employees. A total of 26,500 questionnaires were usable, 98% of which were accompanied by a self-assessment questionnaire. Respondents were representative of France’s 25 million employees.

As with the previous surveys, SUMER reveals major differences among private sector employees. For instance, shift work affects just 2.8% of managerial staff, but 22% of unskilled workers. 1.7% of managerial staff are exposed to at least three chemical products, compared to 32.7% of skilled workers.

Looking at the general trends, it was found that more than 1.8 million employees are still exposed to at least one carcinogenic product (some 10% of all workers). This percentage dropped significantly between 2003 and 2010 (dropping from 13.8% to 9.4%). Since then however, it has remained at the same level or even increased slightly, though there is a major increase in the construction sector. While exposure to the majority of physical risks has gone down (with the exception of noise), work intensity remains high, with 66% of employees stating that they are called on to work very fast, 35% stating that they have excessive workloads and 30% saying that they do not have sufficient time to do their work properly.

As regards the factors defining work intensity, there are constraints facing workers, who claim they see themselves less controlled directly by line management and more by IT systems. The lack of autonomy is also worrying. In 2017, 42% of employees said that they had no influence over imposed deadlines, against 35% in 2003.

As of 2010, SUMER also includes questions on prevention practices in companies. The results show that the majority of employers are not complying with basic prevention rules, a situation directly related to the absence of workplace democracy. Of all employees working in the private sector, around one-half benefit from a health and safety committee. In companies with less than ten employees, the existence of an elected staff representation body is the exception, with just 14.5% of employees concerned mentioning such.

Looking at all companies, 27.7% of employees state that a prevention plan has been implemented on the basis of a risk assessment, down four percentage points against 2010 figures. Where a health and safety committee exists, the proportion of employees with a risk assessment compiled or updated within the past twelve months is much higher (66%) than when there is no such committee (16%).

The SUMER DARES report is available (in French only) at: www.etui.org/content/download/37270/373911/file/dares_analyses_evolution_expositions_professionnelles_salaires_sumer_2017.pdf

Consultation On Cumulative Risk Assessment Of Pesticides
The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is carrying out a public consultation on its pilot assessments of the risks posed to humans by residues of multiple pesticides in food.

Interested parties have until 15 November to submit comments on two assessments: one of which considers chronic effects on the thyroid system and the other which considers the acute effects on the nervous system.

Risks to consumers from the presence of pesticide residues in food are currently estimated on a substance by substance basis. However, a number of pesticides have similar effects and their impact on human health could be greater in combination than individually.

EU regulations on pesticides in food and feed stipulate that cumulative and synergistic effects of pesticides should be considered for dietary risk assessment when the appropriate methodologies are available. They also state that residues of pesticides should not have any harmful effects on human health, taking into account known cumulative and synergistic effects.
The overall draft conclusion for both assessments is that consumer risk from dietary cumulative exposure is below the threshold that triggers regulatory action for all the population groups covered.

The substances considered in the assessments were identified by EFSA’s pesticide experts using a methodology specially devised for classifying pesticides into ‘cumulative assessment groups’ (CAGs). The methodology rests on the assumption that pesticides causing the same specific effects can produce cumulative toxicity.

The EU regulation on maximum levels of pesticides in food (MRLs) stipulates that decisions on MRLs should take into account cumulative effects of pesticides as and when the methods to assess such effects become available. In addition, the regulation covering the placing of pesticides on the market stipulates that pesticides should have no harmful effects – including cumulative effects – on humans.

Public consultation on the draft EFSA scientific reports on a cumulative dietary risk characterisation of pesticides that have acute effects on the nervous system and chronic effects on the thyroid:


Bio-Based Materials For Use In Food Contact Applications

Bio-based food contact materials (BBFCMs) are made from biological, renewable resources. They are a popular alternative to fossil fuel-based materials because they come from sustainable sources and are generally biodegradable or compostable.

An increasing number of BBFCMs are coming onto the market and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) commissioned a review of evidence relating to potential risks and other unintended consequences of replacing oil-based plastic food packaging and other food contact materials with BBFCMs.

The report, produced by the Food and Environment Research Agency (FERA), found that BBFCMs can exhibit properties similar to traditional oil-based plastics, enabling comparable shelf-life performance and consumer protection. It also suggested that current risk assessment processes for establishing contaminant chemical transfer from packaging to food would be appropriate for BBFCMs.

However, the report also found that in many areas limited research has been undertaken into BBFCMs and that there is little information available on these new materials, for example the potential risk of allergens present in these bio-based materials transferring to food. It suggested that additional studies may be required to help contribute towards our understanding of these novel FCMs, ensuring future food safety and consumer protection.

There is a comprehensive system in place to keep food and packaging safe, including legislation specifying what chemicals can and cannot be included for materials such as plastics, and a rigorous risk assessment process. The legislation requires that chemicals must not migrate into foods at levels which harm health.

The report: Bio-Based Materials for Use in Food Contact Applications is available to download from:


Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Cases of suspected carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning have increased by a third over the past five years a report by campaign group Project SHOUT has revealed.

Data from the UK Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) shows that cases rose steadily from 2450 incidents in 2014 to 3249 in 2019. The FRS is usually one of the first emergency services on the scene in the event of a CO leak.
Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas that is produced when fuel doesn’t burn properly, usually from badly fitted or poorly maintained appliances. Sources of CO are gas and oil boilers, gas hobs and fires, log burners, open fires and BBQ’s.

Common symptoms include dizziness, tiredness, headaches, nausea and generally feeling unwell. CO poisoning is often mistaken for something else such as a hangover, a common cold and the flu. The elderly and the very young are particularly vulnerable.

Alarms are the only way to detect carbon monoxide. With an estimated two-thirds of homes unprotected by an alarm, around 40 million people are at risk.

The worst affected regions include:

- South East up 415%
- East Anglia up 200%
- West Midlands up 50%
- North West up 50%
- Northern Ireland up 47%
- East Midlands up 45%
- North East up 42%
- South West up 26%
- London up 20%
- Yorkshire up 6%

http://projectshout.com/effects-of-carbon-monoxide-poisoning/