

HEALTH AND SAFETY MATTERS

Foreman Jailed For 18 Months

A foreman at a recycling plant, who crushed his best friend under the wheels of a 20 tonne shovel loader has been sentenced to 18 months in prison after pleading guilty to a charge of gross negligence manslaughter.



James Johnston had overloaded the bucket of the machine and was driving with the bucket raised, thus obscuring his view. He admitted that he was driving by “sheer instinct” when he ran over David Liddle and killed him. It was estimated that Johnston had driven unsighted for 25 metres. It was also discovered that he had very poor eyesight and had ignored occupational health advice to visit an optician two years before the accident.

Although the trial judge concluded that the main cause of the accident was the behaviour of Mr Johnston, he also fined the recycling company £15,000 for failing to provide pedestrian walkways and manage traffic safety. A risk assessment for site transport had not been carried out.

The judge told Johnston “... *the main blame for this tragic accident must lie with you driving when your view was almost totally obscured by the raised bucket and the timber protruding above it.*”

All workplaces must be properly risk assessed, including transport arrangements for staff, visitors, delivery vehicles and mobile plant and equipment. Pedestrian and vehicle routes must be clearly identified and, wherever reasonably practicable, segregated from each other.

If you would like further information about transport risk assessments and traffic management plans, please contact these offices and we will be pleased to assist.

Forthcoming Training with SWSC

Since Paul Firman joined our organisation and we gained accreditation for more of our training courses, the demand for places has outstripped availability. Consequently, we have added additional courses and dates to try and accommodate everyone.

We have arranged another “*Health and Safety for Directors*” course, to take place on 30th July at St Mary’s Golf Club, Pencoed and have a half day “*Asbestos Awareness & Manual Handling*” course taking place on 10th July, at Llandarcy Academy



of Sport. We have also been able to make additional places available on our forthcoming SMSTS, SSSTS and refresher courses.

If you would like further details of these and other courses available, then please contact these offices or take a look at our website.

CONTRACTOR FINED FOR POOR SLEEPING AND WELFARE ACCOMMODATION

A building contractor has been fined £1000 for allowing five migrant workers to use part of his site for sleeping accommodation.

He allowed the Polish workers to bed down, even though the area was strewn with flammable materials and had a dangerous electrical system. The risks were made worse because

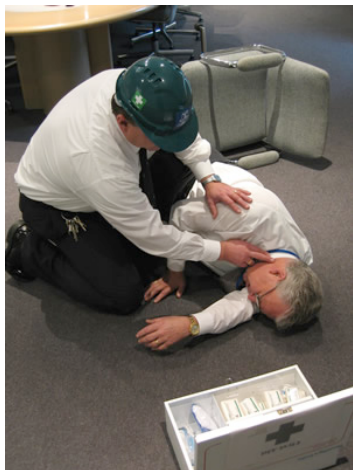


the workers were allowed to drink and smoke on site. Had a fire occurred, there was no way for the workers to escape or raise the alarm.

The employer had not prepared a construction phase plan or fire risk assessment, which would have highlighted the fire risk and unsafe electrics.

CHANGES TO FIRST AID TRAINING

October 1st sees the introduction of new requirements for training under the Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations.



There will be three different levels, although the full "First Aid at Work" (FAW) course can now be completed in three days rather than the old four day course.

A new category of training will be the one day "Emergency First Aid at Work" (EFAW) course. The third category is that of "Appointed Person" (AP), for which no formal training is necessary, although it would obviously be beneficial.

Annual refresher training is recommended for all grades.



The number and type of first aid personnel required will depend on the nature of the work

being carried out and the amount of people employed. A first aid risk assessment must be carried out for each workplace, to ensure that the correct provision can be made.

SUNBURN SEASON

It seems that we may be in for a long, hot summer. Whilst this is good news for most of us, it will not be so good for the significant number of people who will contract skin cancer this year.



Employers

have a duty to protect their employees whilst at work - and this includes not allowing them to be exposed to harmful solar radiation.

For more information about protecting your skin against sunburn, download the free leaflet available on our website.

www.swsconsultancy.com/SWS_2008/Downloads.html

BOOM TIMES FOR SWCSG

The South Wales Construction Safety Group has reported big increases in membership and attendance at their meetings. Members say that the varied nature of the talks are as important to the popularity of the group as the opportunities for networking with others in the construction industry.

The meetings are often attended by HSE Inspectors, who are always happy to deal with general questions and learn the opinions of the members in an informal setting.

If you would like to know more about SWCSG, particularly their forthcoming "Mock Trail" to be held at the new Cardiff City Stadium, please visit: www.constructionsafetygroup.org

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In Brief

HSE TO NAME WORKPLACE VICTIMS

The HSE has announced that it will publish the names and ages of people killed in workplace accidents. They will also publish dates, locations and the circumstances of the incidents.

Commenting on the change, the HSE Chief Executive said: "Publishing these details will really bring home the human impact of



work-related incidents. Behind every fatality is a family who have lost a husband or wife, father or mother, son or daughter and they are in our thoughts." The information is published at: www.hse.gov.uk/foi/fatalities/in-year-names.htm