



SWS Consultancy Limited

Industrial & Occupational Health & Safety Consultants

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Beware of Fake Mail Shots

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Forthcoming changes to regulations governing work at height

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£150,000 Fine After Manual Handling Fatality

A construction company have been fined £150,000 plus £47,000 costs following an incident that led to the death of a labourer on a site in London

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Safety Awareness Training

SWSC will shortly be offering one-day safety awareness courses for those persons wishing to obtain CSCS cards



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HSE Warns of Fake Mail Shots

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) have issued a warning to companies to ignore information received from firms purporting to regulate health and safety legislation.

The companies, called “Health & Safety Enforcement Agency”, “Health & Safety Compliance Agency” and “Health & Safety Registration Enforcement Division” have written to businesses across the country asking for between £125 and £249 to ensure they comply with health and safety law. They use wording which suggests that they are official enforcement bodies, but they are not! HSE advise that anyone receiving this type of literature to ignore it. Trading standards, HSE and the police are currently liaising in the investigation of the activities of all three companies.

Similar scams have also been reported, but this time using the Data Protection Act as the reason for sending large amounts of money. It seems that once somebody has a good idea to make easy money, others will soon follow.

The Use of Ladders & Mobile Scaffold Towers Targeted by HSE

In our last newsletter, we mentioned the forthcoming changes to regulations governing work at height. Of particular interest will be the rules governing the way in which even short-duration work at height should be carried out. Generally speaking, ladders must not be used for access and/or work at height except under exceptional circumstances, e.g. ONLY where it is not reasonably practicable to provide an alternative

(MST or other). Exceptional circumstances may include working areas where:

- Risks associated with the erection or dismantling of MSTs are greater than those for ladder use.
- The work is of short duration.
- Existing features (which cannot be easily altered) result in an unsuitable or inadequate working area for the provision, erection or dismantling of MSTs.

Prior to carrying out work at height, a risk assessment must be carried out and the correct access methods considered. SWSC have examples of risk assessments which may be used as a guide and we will be pleased to fax or e-mail a copy.



(Above) Mobile Scaffold

£150,000 Fine After Manual Handling Fatality

A construction company have been fined £150,000 plus £47,000 costs following an incident that led to the death of a labourer on a site in London.

The labourer died after being struck on the head by a 190kg lintel. The deceased was part of a five-man team attempting to manually lift the lintel into place. Following the accident, a much lighter lintel (weighing less than 20% of the concrete product) was used.

SWSC comment:

Incorrect manual handling is still one of the major causes of injuries at work. Many of these injuries result in long term or even permanent disability. HSE recommend that an average, fit male should not lift more than 25kg (or 20kg for repetitive tasks). If people within your organisation are involved in activities exceeding or even approaching these suggested limits, then it is likely that mechanical solutions will be necessary.

The Manual Handling Operations Regs 1992 are quite explicit, stating that an employer must, wherever reasonably practicable, avoid the need for employees to undertake any manual handling operations at work which involve a risk of their being injured.

Only if the activity can't be avoided can the next step be taken - the preparation of a suitable and sufficient assessment and introduction of control measures. Clients involved in kerb and slab laying should also be aware of the latest HSE guidance on these operations - Before undertaking work involving use of heavy kerbs and slabs, checks must be made with the designer and/or the principal contractor to determine that alternatives have been considered (e.g. eliminating the need for kerbs and slabs at design stage, specifying lightweight products or using extruded kerbs). If the use of heavy items is unavoidable, then total mechanical solutions must be implemented. Kerbs and slabs must be handled and laid mechanically, using fork/trailer mounted or independent vacuum lifters and/or positive pressure/friction grabs involving no manual effort to lift. N.B. For further information on the latest products available, visit www.charcon.com

Safety Awareness Training

SWSC will shortly be offering one-day safety awareness courses for those persons wishing to obtain CSCS cards. The course, which is eligible for CITB grant support, will provide a good basic knowledge of health and safety and should enable delegates to pass the mandatory test. For further details, please contact our office.

We hope the above is of interest. If you need any further information on these or any other health & safety matters, you can contact us on :-

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