



Northern Ireland Safety Group

The committee needs



YOU!

JOIN THE COMMITTEE

Following retirements, the January AGM will see new members being elected to the Executive Committee. Could this be you? Would you have an interest?

All Committee Members are volunteers. They come from many different industry sectors and do a very valuable job for the Group. All are Health and Safety professionals and believe that serving on the committee further promotes accident prevention in the wider Safety Community.

Meetings are held before the main Group meeting.

If you would like to join the Committee, or want any further information before you decide, please contact Ernie Spence on

028 9336 8928
info@nisg.org.uk contact and he'll explain the process.

SAFE & SOUND

The Newsletter of the NISG

www.nisg.org.uk

Vol.10 Issue 1 January 2010

Can your drivers see into the future?

Until now, there has been no legal imperative for employers to make sure drivers complied with minimum sight requirements.

As long as drivers were able to pass the mandatory sight test during their driving test (the ability to read a number plate from 20.5m), they are never required to prove the fitness of their eyesight ever again.

However, this situation could be about to change, as the EU is considering introducing uniform standards of vision for employees that drive during the course of their work.

Legislation, passed in the EU Parliament in 2006 (Directive 2006/126/EC of the European Parliament and of the council of 20th December 2006 on driving licence), is set to be introduced to member states in 2011. The current proposal is that holders of commercial licences will have to have their eyes tested every five years, and holders of private licences every 10-15 years. Each member state has until 2013 to translate the directive into national law.

It is understandable that employers feel it should be the individual employee's responsibility to ensure they are road safe but this may be a risky strategy,



estimating that up to a third of all road traffic accidents involve somebody who is driving for work at the time.

Firms can improve their employees' chances of staying safe on the road by insisting that business drivers have regular checkups, at least every two years by an optometrist.

An ideal situation would perhaps involve fleet managers establishing eyesight criteria when they take on new staff. A sight test could be part of the interview and recruitment process, especially in light of the requirements imposed on firms by the Corporate Manslaughter Act.

For anyone who employs drivers, it is essential to make sure that anyone who climbs behind a wheel on behalf of their company can see clearly enough to be safe on the road.

Article by Rachel Scott of Rachel A Scott Optometrist 028 9047 1654

NISG WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS



WATCH OUT FOR THE 2010 SAFETY AWARDS

Details of how to enter the 2010 Awards plus any changes in the rules since this year's Awards will be covered by David Cooke & Heather McKinstry in the February meeting.

In the meantime if you require advanced information contact the Secretary—info@nisg.org.uk

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HSENI UPDATE/HSENI UPDATE

Myth: You can't throw out sweets at pantos

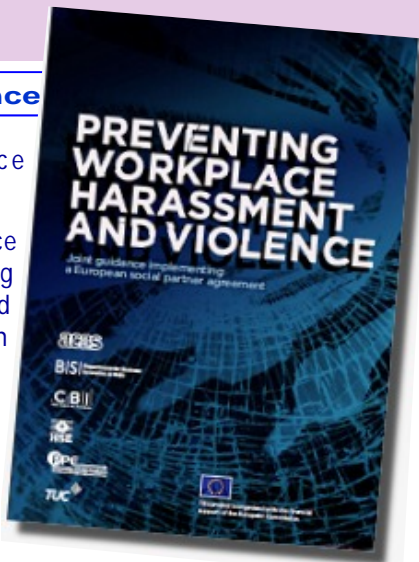
The reality

Health and safety rules were blamed when a panto stopped throwing out sweets to the audience. In fact they were worried about the cost of compensation if anyone got hurt.

If you're unsure about an event you're organising, you might want to talk to your insurer to check that you've got the right cover and you've managed any risks effectively. It can help to make sure that trivial risks don't cause too much concern.



Realistically, if a panto throws out sweets the chances of someone being seriously hurt is incredibly low. It's certainly not something HSE worries about - as far as we're concerned, this is a case of 'Oh yes you can!'



This document represents their commitment to ensuring that the risk of encountering harassment or violence whilst at work are properly assessed and prevented or controlled.

For more information go to the website:

<http://www.workplaceharassment.org.uk/>

Northstone (NI) Ltd Prosecution

On Friday 20th November 2009 at Dungannon Crown Court, Northstone (NI) Ltd was fined a total of £60,000 for three breaches of health and safety legislation. One of their sub-contractors, Gerard Hayden, was also fined. The case against the principal contractor and the sub-contractor was brought by the HSENI.

The cases relates to an incident that occurred on 28th February 2006 during a road resurfacing project at Bellanaleck, Co Fermanagh when Mr Martin McKay, a sub-contractor, died when he touched the side of a lorry as it came into contact with overhead electricity cables. Subsequent enquiries by HSENI revealed that the principal contractor for the site, Northstone (NI) Ltd, who had overall responsibility for the construction work, failed to ensure a safe work area near overhead power lines. The company had not identified the presence of overhead lines by placing suitable warning devices to alert approaching construction traffic. Consequently, Northstone (NI) Ltd pleaded guilty to a breach of Article 5 of the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978, for failing

to ensure the safety of their sub-contractors, and was fined £20,000. They also pleaded guilty to a breach of Regulation 3 of Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000 for failing to complete a suitable risk assessment and fined £20,000. They were also fined £20,000 for a breach of Regulation 16 of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (NI) 1995 for failing to ensure that subcontractors adhered to health and safety procedures. Gerard Hayden, the driver of the tipping lorry, was fined £300 for a breach of Regulation 3 of Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000.

After the hearing Mr Kevin Campbell, an Inspector with HSENI said, "*It is vital that all construction companies properly identify the location of electricity power lines before starting the work. Where it is not possible to avoid working close to these power lines, systems must be implemented to minimise and control the risks. These systems need to be communicated to the workforce, implemented, and maintained.*"

Barnsley company fined after staff exposed to hazardous mist

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is warning employers who work with metalworking fluids to ensure they take the correct safety precautions after an entire workforce at a Barnsley company were exposed to metalworking fluid mist.

Koyo Bearings (Europe) Ltd, were fined £20,000 and

ordered to pay £15,280 costs at Barnsley Magistrates Court.

The court heard that between 12 December 2007 and 8 May 2008, employees at the company were exposed to a metal working fluid mist, which was being emitted from more than 100 metal work machines.

Article from HSE website

Group member Dunbia gains recognition as an IOSH Accredited Training Centre



Dunbia, an established red meat supplier with two facilities in Northern Ireland has become accredited as an IOSH Training Centre. The Company who have a great reputation for supplying product to many of the UK's leading retailers view this as an integral part of their development.

Commenting on the accreditation Joy McFarland, Dunbia's Group Safety Manager said;

"We're delighted to have received IOSH accreditation. The Company places a strong emphasis on the safety and health of

our 2500 workforce and we view this as a positive reaffirmation of the commitment we have to them".

"Our first IOSH training programme is due to commence in January 2010, will be for all our managers and will be tutored by myself".

"However we don't want to stop within the factory walls so to speak and would be delighted to offer IOSH accredited training to any local companies wishing to avail of it".

Article by Joy McFarland, Dunbia - 028 87 723350.

Fully-loaded skip crushes man's leg

West Midlands Ambulance Service had to airlift a man to hospital after a fully-loaded skip fell on his leg at a Herefordshire industrial estate.

The accident occurred at the Southern Avenue Industrial Estate, Leominster. An ambulance service vehicle, an ambulance crew and the Midlands Air Ambulance from Cosford were called to the scene.

The man, in his 30s, was taken to Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham for treatment to a

serious injury to his right leg.

"The skip had been lifted off the man's leg by other workers at the site. Crews lifted the patient into the helicopter. He had a serious injury to his right leg and was in a stable condition. He was flown to Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham for further assessment and treatment.

"Considering the weight of a fully loaded skip, it is fortunate the leg injury wasn't even more serious."

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Ladders - pre use checks - things to look for

Every time you use a ladder you should do a pre-use check beforehand to make sure that it is safe for use.

A pre use check should be carried out by:

The user;

At the beginning of the working day; and

After something has changed i.e. ladder dropped or moved from a dirty area to a clean area (check state or condition of feet)

The benefit of conducting daily pre-use checks is that they provide the



opportunity to pick up any immediate/serious defects before they cause an accident.

Article + images of faults from HSE website - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/falls/preusechecks.htm?ebul=sli ps/dec-09&cr=4>

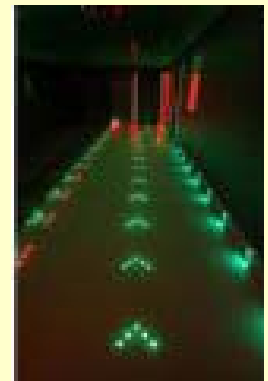
INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Northern Ireland Company in the thick of it in the U.S.

Florida Tech brought together national, state and local officials, military, agencies and companies for a daylong National Conference on Preparedness.

The event now called the Conference on Global Preparedness lets various government, law enforcement and other agencies share information on preparedness to protect assets around the world from natural and manmade disasters.

The conference brought together dozens of experts to share and discuss health, safety and security issues from terrorism, to hurricanes, to earthquakes and practices to maintain infrastructure for disaster preparedness.

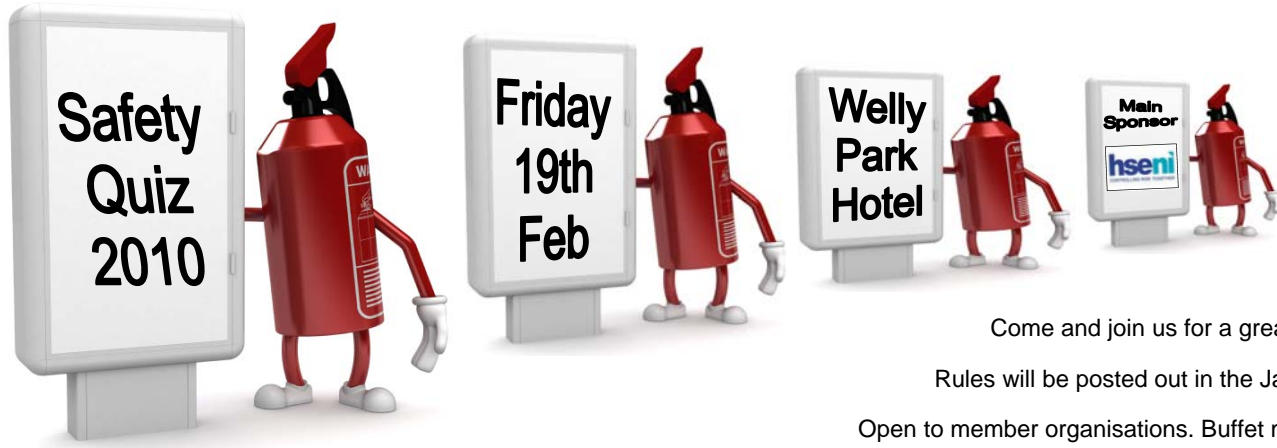


Light Step, a company from Northern Ireland, showed its computerised evacuation system, designed to help people escape from a building during a disaster, such as a terrorist attack or a major fire. It's a system of lights that helps guide people to safety through the use of green or red lights. It's also designed to be seen through smoke.

Article from Florida Today.com

Preventing harm to cleaning workers

http://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/factsheets/en_86.pdf



Come and join us for a great nights craic,
 Rules will be posted out in the January Mailing
 Open to member organisations. Buffet meal after quiz

To reserve places for your team contact the Secretary info@nisg.org.uk

Would you like to become a sponsor - no offer refused, ballot prizes needed . Contact the Secretary

Electrocuted worker 'went against instructions'

A SCOTTISH engineer who died in Co Down after being electrocuted had been acting against instructions he had been given earlier that morning, an inquest has heard.

Michael Ross MacKenzie, 35, from Bonarbridge, Sutherland, died in Annalong on July 9, 2003 after he received an electric shock from a live cable he had been attempting to earth in preparation for refurbishment works.

He had been living and working in Ballynahinch as an electrical engineer for Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) sub contractor AC Powerlines.

A post mortem examination concluded he had been electrocuted when a wire from his belt touched a live wire.

On the second day of the inquest at the Old Town Hall in Belfast, it was revealed Mr MacKenzie had received written instructions that he could not start work before 10am in advance of being sent with a colleague to work on the electric pole close to Glasdrummon Lodge in Annalong.

But Mr MacKenzie started climbing the wooden pole at around 9.30am. The inquest heard yesterday from a local man who witnessed the horrifying scenes as Mr MacKenzie died after receiving an enormous shock from the cables which carried 11,000 volts.

Article from www.newsletter.co.uk (Johnston Press).

£150K fine for major chemical fire

An international waste management company has been fined £150,000 for health and safety breaches following a major chemical fire in Preston which closed two motorways.

Sections of the M6 and M55 were shut for several hours during the morning commute on 2 July 2007 while 66 firefighters tackled the blaze at the Red Scar Industrial Estate on Longridge Road in Preston.

Veolia, which has its headquarters on Pentonville Road in North London, pleaded guilty to two offences at Preston Crown Court on 9 December. As well as the fine, the company was ordered to pay costs of £90,000.

The court heard that the fire started just after 6am in an open area of the site, which is used to store drums of chemicals. Firefighters reported seeing drums rocketing into the air and off the site after setting alight.

Emergency services closed the industrial estate and sections of the M6 and M55 while they tackled the blaze, due to fears that

smoke and fumes would travel if the wind changed direction.

The fire was extinguished by mid-afternoon after more than 132,000 litres of chemicals were set alight. HSE inspectors believe it was caused by lithium batteries igniting nearby waste materials.

Linda Murray, HSE Principal Inspector for Lancashire, said:

"Our investigation showed that Veolia didn't do enough to make sure that the dangerous chemicals on its site in Preston were stored safely. The company also failed to provide adequate training for its staff."

"Any businesses that have flammable substances on their premises need to take appropriate measures to minimise the risk of fires or explosions. Veolia clearly could and should have done more."

Article from HSE website

Health and Safety Conference 2010:

"Changing attitudes, changing cultures"

Ramada Hotel, Shaw's Bridge, Belfast
 21 April 2010 Detailed programme available Jan 2010

HOT OFF THE PRESS

In the Alan Butler Awards entry for 2009 the Group received a Commended Award for Best Communication

