

Health and Safety

Bulletin

Winter driving

Articles in this newsletter:

- Winter driving
- HSE focused inspections
- Case law update
- Tackling long-term economic inactivity

Useful contacts:

HSE website
www.hse.gov.uk

HSE Books:
PO Box 1999
Sudbury
Suffolk
CO10 2WA
Tel: 01787 881165

Environment Agency
website:
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

As the weather starts to get chillier and the date on which the clocks go back at the end of October is fast approaching, it's a good time to think about preparing for driving in wintry weather.

What activities can help us prepare?

It's not always practical to have your vehicle serviced, but there are some checks we can do ourselves, such as:-

- Keeping the lights clean and testing that they are working regularly
- Making sure the windscreen wipers are working effectively and the washer bottle is topped up with windscreen washer (at the correct concentration to avoid freezing)
- Inspecting the tyres (including the spare if you have one) to check they have the right depth of tread and are inflated to the right pressure
- Checking you have enough deicer, windscreen wash and anti-freeze to last the winter months

Preparing for the journey

In terms of health and safety (and the environment), it is always better to use public transport, but if you need to use your personal vehicle it's especially important to prepare for vehicle journeys undertaken during winter:-

- Are you aware of the weather forecast? If the conditions are very bad and avoiding travel is recommended, it's worth considering postponing the trip or being prepared to change your plans if conditions become extremely poor. Only you can decide whether your journey is "essential", but try to be pragmatic
- If there is the potential of extreme weather and you must travel, consider taking an emergency kit such as a shovel, first aid kit, torch, blanket, warm clothes
- Always take a fully charged mobile 'phone. Studies have demonstrated that using a hands-free phone creates significant risk due to mental distraction. However, if you get stuck, being able to contact someone is vital
- Let someone know about your journey – what is your destination, when are you expected to arrive. They can then raise the alarm if you get stuck and can't contact anyone
- Make sure your mirrors and windows are fully clear before you start off

Conclusion

Some people see risk assessment as a tool that's used to stop activities. It's not. We should use it on a day to day basis to help us recognize and react to changes and manage the risks.

Being aware of the risks associated with driving in winter, allows us to prepare for the worst – hopefully you will never need your emergency kit or to 'phone for help, but it's better to have the option!

Recently issued health and safety information:

- HSE new podcast: [New podcast: Controlling Dust in Construction - Work Right to keep Britain safe](#)
- Acas podcast: [Mental health at work: reasonable adjustments - The Acas Podcast | Acast](#)
- Worksafe New Zealand: [Respiratory Protective Equipment videos | WorkSafe](#)
- Worksafe New Zealand: [Setting up a healthy workstation when working from home | WorkSafe](#)
- ILO Experiences of violence and harassment at work: A global first survey [Experiences of violence and harassment at work: A global first survey \(ilo.org\)](#)
- UKLA Metalworking Fluid Product Stewardship – videos handling and using metalworking fluids [UKLA Metalworking Fluid Product Stewardship group](#)

HSE focused inspections

The HSE has announced two inspection campaigns

- Construction – construction sites are being targeted as part of their 'Work Right Construction: Your health. Your future' campaign, with the focus of moving and handling materials. This campaign started in early September and will run for eight weeks
- Metalworking fluids – this campaign is focusing on businesses that use the fluids as coolants or in machining using CNC machines. In their launch material they have highlighted that most non-compliance is associated with lack of local exhaust ventilation, failure to complete regular fluid quality checks and failure to complete relevant occupational health surveillance. This inspection campaign will last until March 2024

Case Law update

This issue focuses on cases that involve metalworking fluids

An engineering company was sentenced for breaching HASAWA after workers were exposed to metal working fluid (MWF). An investigation by HSE found that a water mix MWF was being used in the majority of machines including saws, machine centres and milling machines. None of these machines had local exhaust ventilation (LEV) and some door seals and sump contents were observed to be

in poor condition. The sumps contained fines, swarf and/or tramp oil. The company was fined **£15,000** with **£7,500** in costs.

A manufacturer of ejector seats has been fined £800,000 after some workers developed debilitating lung conditions. Three skilled CNC machine operators developed extrinsic allergic alveolitis after at least three years of exposure to metal working fluid mist; symptoms include coughing, shortness of breath and joint pain. The workers had served with the company for more than 20 years. One worker has been so severely affected

they have become virtually paralyzed by the illness, another will never be able to work with metal working fluids again. The company pleaded guilty to breaching HASAWA and COSHH. They were fined **£800,000** with costs of over **£36,000**

Employees of an engineering company were found to have been exposed to metal working fluid while working on conventional machines such as lathes and milling machines. The company pleaded guilty to breaching COSHH Regulation 7(1) and were fined **£20,000** and ordered to pay costs of **£4,447.46**

About Clwyd Associates...

We are a management consultancy, focusing on health and safety, and SAP based in the Midlands.

In business since 2000, we employ consultants with at least 15 years practical experience backed up by recognized professional and academic qualifications - ensuring our clients receive first class service.

Clwyd Associates Ltd
www.clwydassociates.co.uk



Tackling long-term economic inactivity

This project is a priority for the Government, supporting both disabled people and people with long term health conditions back to work. As part of the project, they are currently running a consultation aimed at increasing employers use of Occupational Health (OH) Services, specifically to look at:-

- Introducing a national standard to provide a baseline quality for OH provision
- Developing an expert OH workforce
- Reviewing best practice from other countries that enable employers to provide OH support to their workforce

The consultation is aimed at employers, OH professionals, OH service providers and service users. Those who are interested in participating are asked to contact oh.consultation@DWP.GOV.UK with any comments or questions.

Clwyd Associates Ltd
www.clwydassociates.co.uk



Orton House
Overton Close
Leicestershire
LE67 8FY

PHONE/FAX:
01530 837477

E-MAIL:
enquiries@clwydassociates.co.uk