



Safetyform Monthly Newsletter - December 2021

Welcome to the latest edition of the Safetyform monthly newsletter, bringing you up to date with all the latest construction health & safety news.

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Safety Alert

Work-related Stress



Workers feel stress when they can't cope with pressures and other issues. Employers should match demands to workers' skills and knowledge. For example, workers can get stressed if they feel they don't have the skills or time to meet tight deadlines. Providing planning, training and support can reduce pressure and bring stress levels down.

Stress affects people differently – what stresses one person may not affect another. Factors like skills and experience, age or disability may all affect whether a worker can cope.

There are six main areas of work design which can effect stress levels. You should manage these properly. They are:

- demands
- control
- support
- relationships
- role
- change

Employers should assess the risks in these areas to manage stress in the workplace. Employers must also recognise the signs of stress, which are:

Within a team

- arguments

- higher staff turnover
- more reports of stress
- more sickness absence
- decreased performance
- more complaints and grievances

From an individual

- take more time off
- arrive for work later
- be more twitchy or nervous.

Safetyform News



Cheers to the New Year! Wishing you a Happy Holidays from everyone at Safetyform.

What's in the News?

Builder fined for unsafe removal of asbestos

A builder has been fined after disturbing asbestos and removing it without adequate precautions at a pub in Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

Salisbury Magistrates' Court heard how, on 8 September 2018, Robert Angell undertook work to remove asbestos-containing material while renovating the property.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found Robert Angell was not licensed to carry out asbestos removal work and failed to take appropriate measures to prevent the spread of

the asbestos waste while. As a consequence the work undertaken exposed employees and neighbouring areas to risks from asbestos.

Robert Angell of York Road, Calne, Wiltshire pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 16 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, together with regulations 5(1) and 8(1) of the regulations. The individual was fined £300.00 and ordered to pay £1,000 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Ian Whittles said: "The dangers associated with asbestos, including licensed asbestos, are well-known and a wealth of advice and guidance is freely available from the HSE website.

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

Construction company fined after injured worker loses sight

A Bradford-based construction company has been fined after an employee was injured at work leading to significant sight loss in his right eye.

Manchester Magistrates' Court heard how Pearl Services UK Ltd had been contracted to carry out refurbishment of a retail store in Cheetham Hill, Manchester. On the 23 February 2020 employees were erecting PVC hoarding within the store to separate the refurbishment work area from members of the public. An apprentice decorator who was helping joiners set up the hoarding, struck one of the PVC panels using a mallet causing it to splinter. A fragment penetrated their right eye, causing serious injury and loss of sight. The incident has resulted in a life-changing injury to the person who will not regain full sight in his right eye, despite a number of post-accident operations

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Pearl Services UK Ltd had failed to suitably plan, manage and monitor the project. Risk assessments and method statements had not fully identified the need to wear safety eyewear during the erection of the hoarding. In addition to this, the supervisor had failed to ensure that the documentation available on-site was communicated to the operatives before commencing work. Although safety eyewear was available on site, the wearing of it had not been made mandatory, neither were checks carried out to ensure it was worn.

Pearl Services UK Limited of Pearl House Comondale Way, Euroway Trading Estate, Bradford pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was fined £16,500 and ordered to pay costs of £5,778.40

After the hearing, HSE inspector Phil Redman commented: "This incident could so easily have been avoided by providing suitable information, instruction, supervision and training to site personnel in respect of the fitting of the PVC site hoarding.

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

Construction employee sustains multiple fractures after fall from height

Trevor Cook Construction Ltd has been fined after a roof worker fell six metres through a fragile roof sheet whilst working on a barn at a farm in Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Swindon Magistrates' Court heard how, on 22 May 2019, the employee was replacing broken roof sheets using a mobile elevating working platform (MEWP) to gain access to the roof of the barn and crawling boards to traverse the roof. The employee's foot slipped from one of the crawling boards and he subsequently fell through the fragile roof material, sustaining serious injuries including neck fractures, a collapsed lung, and a bleed on the brain.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Trevor Cook Construction Limited failed to plan the work appropriately. The company was aware of the risks and often used netting when undertaking large re-roofing projects, but made a conscious decision not to install nets for smaller jobs, which involved the replacement of individual roof sheets. The chances of falling whilst working on fragile roofs are very high and the company should have had the appropriate safeguards in place.

Trevor Cook Construction Limited of Garlands, Cadley Road, Collingbourne Ducis, Marlborough, Wiltshire pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company was fined £63,278 and ordered to pay costs of £6,721.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Stephan Axt-Simmonds 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.

"Falls through fragile roof materials are not inevitable. They can be prevented by careful planning, using trained and experienced workers with suitable equipment, and employing a high level of supervision. This incident could so easily have been avoided by using established control measures and safe working practices."

Concrete supplier fined after tyre explosion fatality

A concrete supplier has been fined after an agency worker contracted to work at its site suffered fatal injuries following a tyre explosion.

Dudley Magistrates' Court heard how the contractor suffered fatal injuries when using an air hose/compressed air to inflate the tyre of an articulated wheel loader.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident, on 28 March 2019, found that the company failed to have in place a safe system of work for inflation of the multi-piece split rim assembly wheels on the articulated wheel loader. The compressed air system had not been subject to regular and thorough examination and testing by a competent person.

Anytime Concrete (GB) Ltd of Kelvin Way, West Bromwich, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company has been fined £6,666.00 and ordered to pay costs of £4,522.40.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Karen Sweeney said: "This tragic incident led to the death of a worker. This could easily have been prevented if the company had acted to identify and manage the risks involved, and to put a safe system of work in place."

Construction company in court over inadequate health and safety standards

A national construction company has been fined after an unannounced inspection by Health and Safety Executive inspectors found poor welfare standards, dangerous electrical systems and inadequate health and safety provision on site.

Liverpool Magistrates' Court heard how concerns had been raised regarding the health and safety standards at the construction site of the former Tobacco Warehouse, Stanley Dock, Liverpool, being renovated by Abercorn Construction Limited. A site inspection found the welfare cabin used by employees to be in poor condition, containing exposed live wires and damaged electrical sockets, a mouldy dishwasher and an accumulation of rubbish both inside and outside the cabin with the potential to attract vermin.

A general site inspection found numerous uncontrolled high risks such as a damaged cable on a 400v transformer, insufficient fire alarms, a lack of fire extinguishers and signage indicating emergency routes and multiple examples of unprotected edges and openings exposing workers to risk of a fall from height. There was also inadequate pedestrian and vehicle segregation, poor order, poor lighting and the risk of exposure to live electrical conductors.

The investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company had failed to effectively plan, manage and monitor the works which had resulted in these health and safety issues arising on site. These risks had already been highlighted to the company in previous written enforcement. Despite compliance being achieved, poor standards had been allowed to develop again.

Abercorn Construction Limited of 50 Bedford Street, Belfast pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 13(1) of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and Regulation 6(3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and was fined £77,000 and ordered to pay costs of £2,025.52.

After the hearing, HSE inspector John Padfield commented: "This type of proactive prosecution will highlight to the industry that HSE will not hesitate to prosecute companies for repeated breaches of the law.

"Good management of health and safety on site is crucial to the successful delivery of a construction project and principal contractors have an important role in managing the risks of construction work and providing strong leadership to ensure standards are understood and followed"

Contact Us

Safetyform

Britannia House

Caerphilly Business Park

Caerphilly

CF83 3GG

T: 02922 677 182

E: info@safetyform.co.uk

W: www.safetyform.co.uk
