



Safetyform Monthly Newsletter - April 2020

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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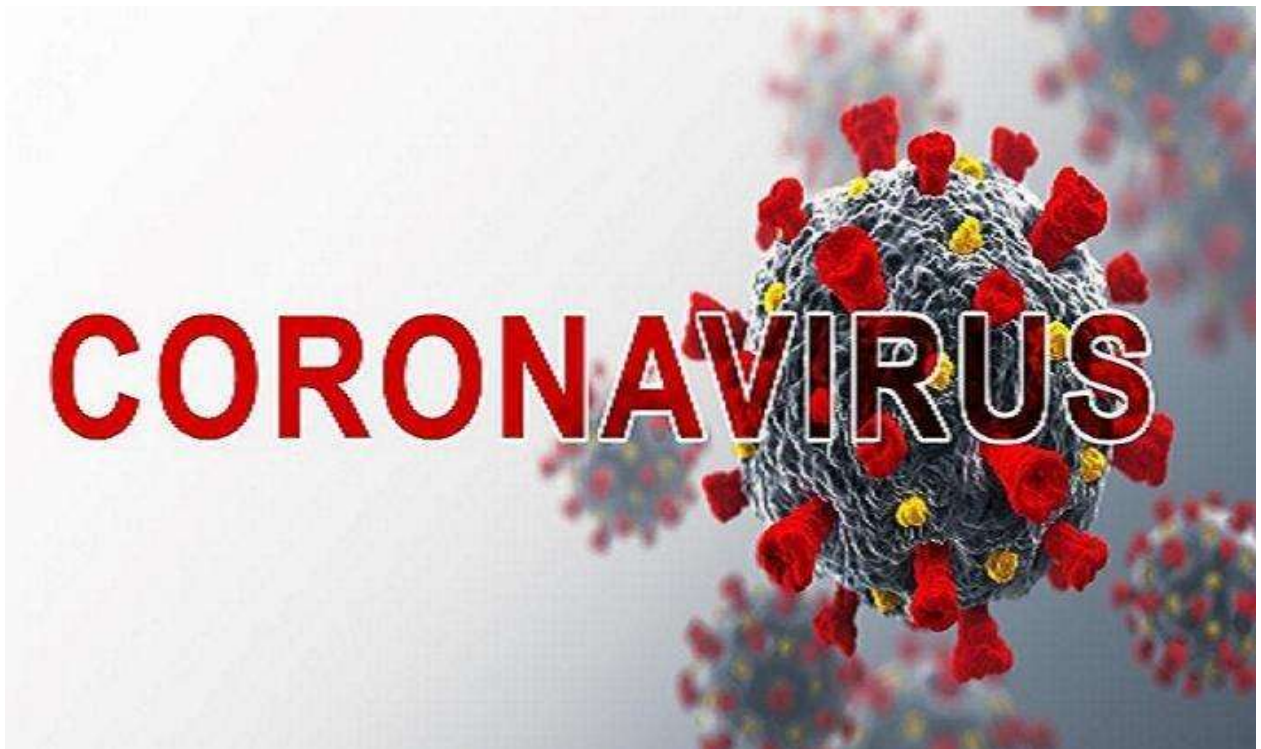
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Post Lockdown Return to Work Risk Assessment



As we prepare to return to work following the lockdown, is your organisation ready for the changes required to STAYSAFE?

Safetyform are currently working to keep organisations open in compliance with government guidance within their workplace.

Social Distancing

Can your organisation continue to work whilst complying with the government guidance on social distancing?

Hygiene

Are your welfare facilities equipped with sufficient sanitising equipment to reduce the risk of spreading the virus?

Workplace Changes

Changes may be required to your workplace to ensure compliance with government guidance.

PPE

The introduction of personal protective equipment may be required to reduce the risk further.

The team at Safetyform are more than happy to discuss your needs, please contact Gavin@safetyform.co.uk¹ or 02922 677182

What's in the News?



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Coronavirus: A joint statement between HSE, the TUC and the CBI



This is an extremely worrying time for firms and workers. We know many workers, union reps and employers have questions and concerns about safe working – especially for those continuing to work away from home.

This joint statement between the Health and Safety Executive, the TUC and the CBI is intended to clarify the position. The health and safety of workers remains paramount. Employers must continue to provide workers with information about risks to their health and the actions their employers must take.

Social distancing is a key public health measure introduced by Public Health England to reduce the spread of infection. Most employers are going to great lengths to ensure social distancing wherever possible. The HSE, CBI and TUC wish to publicly support these efforts. Firms that can safely stay open and support livelihoods should not be forced to close by misunderstandings about government guidance.

But If it comes to the HSE's attention that employers are not complying with the relevant Public Health England guidance (including enabling social distancing where it is practical to do so), HSE will consider a range of actions ranging from providing specific advice to employers through to issuing enforcement notices, including prohibition notices.

Where a worker has a genuine concern about health and safety which cannot be resolved through speaking with their employer or trade union, they should contact the relevant enforcement agency – either their local authority, or the HSE through [https:// www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm)²

For firms who are unsure about the guidance, please visit [https:// www.hse.gov.uk/news/social-distancing-coronavirus.htm](https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/social-distancing-coronavirus.htm)³

²https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm?utm_source=pressrelease&utm_medium=hse.gov.uk&utm_campaign=coronavirus&utm_term=pressrelease&utm_content=jointstatement-tuc-cbi

³https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/social-distancing-coronavirus.htm?utm_source=pressrelease&utm_medium=hse.gov.uk&utm_campaign=coronavirus&utm_term=pressrelease&utm_content=social-distancing

HSE advises on the importance of fitting RPE correctly



The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is advising healthcare workers currently using respiratory protective equipment (RPE) on the importance of ensuring it is fitted correctly. A respirator that is incorrectly fitted will not protect the wearer.

Tight-fitting respirators rely on having a good seal with the wearer's face. It is vital that before using a respirator for the first time, or before using a different brand of respirator, wearers pass a fit test⁴ for the model and size of respirator they are going to use. This is to make sure the equipment fits to their particular facial characteristics.

In these unprecedented times, to protect front line health care workers and reduce the risk of transmission during the coronavirus outbreak, if support is required in carrying out a fit test, it should be done following government advice on social distancing⁵. This means making sure instructions are delivered verbally and observations are made from a distance of two metres (6ft) where possible. If closer observation is required, those being fitted should keep their respirator on to minimise the risk of transmission.

Once the wearer has been fit tested for the model of respirator they intend to use, they must ensure they have put it on correctly to protect themselves and others. Wearers should follow three simple steps: R-P-E

Read the guidance

⁴https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/face-mask-ppe-rpe-coronavirus.htm?utm_source=pressrelease&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=coronavirus&utm_content=rpe-press-release

⁵https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others?utm_source=pressrelease&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=coronavirus-hse&utm_content=rpe-press-release

HSE has step-by-step guidance⁶ on the correct way to fit the respirator and carry out a fit check. Wearers must familiarise themselves with the guidance and follow the manufacturer's instructions when fitting their equipment.

Put your respirator on using a mirror

When fitting a respirator, wearers must make sure the straps are in the correct place and are not twisted or crossed over. The easiest way to do this is using a mirror.

Ensure your own safety

Dr David Fishwick, Chief Medical Adviser for HSE and respiratory physician said: "Before entering the workplace, wearers must carry out a fit check to ensure their respirator is on correctly. This allows the wearer to check they are experiencing no leakage around the face seal, and that they have put the respirator on correctly."

Andrew Curran, Chief Scientific Adviser for HSE said: "Ensuring RPE is put on correctly is crucial. Any gaps between the wearer's face and the mask face seal, whether through incorrect moulding of the nose clip or by facial hair, will compromise the protection of the wearer.

"Users must ensure they have been fit tested for the size and model of respirator they are going to use, and that they carry out a fit check each time RPE is used."

€100,000 fine handed down following asbestos exposure



A fine of €100,000 has been imposed on McAleer and Rushe Contracts UK Ltd, a UK- registered construction company, following an earlier guilty plea to a charge under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Exposure to Asbestos) Regulations 2006 and 2010.

The case arose following the exposure of a number of workers to asbestos fibres at a construction site under the control of McAleer and Rushe Contracts UK Ltd in Dublin city centre on 23 June 2016.

⁶https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/face-mask-ppe-rpe-coronavirus.htm?utm_source=pressrelease&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=coronavirus&utm_content=rpe-press-release

The construction project involved the conversion of Findlater House, a six storey high 1970's building, into a hotel. On 23 June 2016, ceiling boards containing asbestos were taken down, broken up and thrown into large black bins, thereby generating asbestos containing dust. An investigation by the Health and Safety Authority concluded that the workers involved in this activity were exposed to asbestos, a known carcinogen.

McAleer and Rushe Contracts UK Ltd pleaded guilty to a charge under Regulation 7(a) of the Asbestos Regulations⁷, in that they failed to carry out a risk assessment as to whether the ceiling boards contained asbestos material, prior to their removal.

Mark Cullen, Chief Inspector with the Health and Safety Authority said: "Exposure to asbestos fibres can lead to fatal diseases many years after exposure. It is a key requirement of the 2006 and 2010 Asbestos Regulations that all employers, particularly in construction and demolition work involving older buildings, identify the presence of asbestos containing materials. This should be done in advance of any works commencing, thereby allowing appropriate measures to be implemented to prevent exposure to asbestos by workers or anyone else who could be affected."

Contractors injured doing maintenance work



An electricity power station company has been prosecuted after three contractors were injured by a sudden release of water and sludge while carrying out maintenance work at a Cheshire power station.

On 18 January 2018, three workers contracted by Keadby Generation Limited, were removing a recirculation pump for maintenance in the Flue Gas Desulphurisation area of Fiddlers Ferry Power Station in Warrington. Approximately 38.5 metres cubed of diluted slurry and associated stored energy was released while the pump was being removed, resulting in the contractors being knocked off the concrete plinth where they had been working. The trio sustained multiple fracture injuries.

⁷<https://www.shponline.co.uk/tag/asbestos/>

The HSE's⁸ investigation found that the pressurised contents of the pump and associated pipework had not been discharged prior to work commencing due to the drain pipe being blocked. This resulted in the release of stored energy during the removal of the pump instead of during the isolation process. Keadby Generation Ltd had failed to undertake a suitable and sufficient assessment of the hazards and risks associated with the work and had not implemented a safe system of work.

Keadby Generation Limited, of Keadby Power Station, Trentside, Keadby, Scunthorpe, pleaded guilty to breaching sections 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974⁹ and was fined £200,000 with costs of £7,163.20.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE Inspector Jane Carroll said: "This incident could so easily have been avoided if the company had identified and managed the risks involved and put a safe system of work in place."

Company director sentenced after ignoring notices



The former director of a construction company has received a suspended prison sentence after failing to comply with Prohibition Notices and for carrying out unsafe work at height during roofing work on a new build house.

The HSE¹⁰ reports that, between July and December 2018, Imtiaz Hussain, former director of Bradford Builders (UK) Ltd, was the person in control of the work at a construction site of two semi-detached houses in Hollins Road, Oldham. Site inspections in July and August 2018 by HSE resulted in Prohibition and Improvement Notices being issued for multiple health and safety failings, including unsafe work at height.

On 6 December 2018, an HSE site visit took place following a report of unsafe roof work the previous week. Roof work was being carried out from a scaffold at the rear of the building. Two further

⁸<https://www.shponline.co.uk/legislation-and-guidance/health-safety-executive-hse/>

⁹<https://www.shponline.co.uk/legislation-and-guidance/health-and-safety-at-work-1974/>

¹⁰<https://www.shponline.co.uk/legislation-and-guidance/health-safety-executive-hse/>

Prohibition Notices were served on the two separate scaffolds at the site due to missing guardrails and scaffold boards and the resulting risk of falls from the scaffold.

The HSE's investigation found that Imtiaz Hussain failed to:

- Comply with Prohibition Notices issued after the HSE inspector's visits;
- Take suitable and sufficient measures to prevent falls from height during the roof work.

Imtiaz Hussain, of Richardson Avenue, Bradford, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 6(3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005¹¹ and two counts of Section 22 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974¹². He was sentenced to eight months imprisonment suspended for two years, 200 hours unpaid work in the community and ordered to pay costs of £5,000.

HSE Inspector David Norton said after the hearing: "These risks could so easily have been avoided by simply having suitable scaffolding in place put up by a competent scaffolding contractor. Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards and that failure to comply with Prohibition or Improvement Notices is likely to result in prosecution."

Contact Us



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¹¹<https://www.shponline.co.uk/construction/who-is-responsible-for-working-at-height/>

¹²<https://www.shponline.co.uk/legislation-and-guidance/health-and-safety-at-work-1974/>

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