

News from



Award Health & Safety Ltd

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Speak Up, Stay Safe - British Safety Council campaign

A new campaign from the British Safety Council asks young people to take responsibility for their own health and safety. Julie Nerney, British Safety Council chief executive says: "**Every 40 minutes in the UK a young person is seriously injured in the workplace.** We think this position is wholly unacceptable. By highlighting to young people that they need to be aware of their environment and speak up if they feel unsafe we hope to significantly reduce this number."

The campaign supports young people to feel confident talking to their work supervisor, parent, teacher or friends if they feel that they are in an unsafe situation. No young person should feel pressurised to work in an environment where there is a risk of injury or death.

Neal Stone, head of policy and public affairs for the British Safety Council says: "In 2009, 3,200 young people between the ages of 16-19 were seriously injured while in work. In the past 10 years, 66 young workers have been killed in the workplace. These numbers show how important this campaign is, not just for young workers but to those around them - their parents, family members, friends and teachers".

Safety bodies back focus on maintenance precautions

The HSE has kicked off the UK's participation in a Europe-wide campaign to raise awareness about the importance of safe maintenance.

The European Healthy Workplaces **Campaign on Safe Maintenance 2010-2011** is coordinated by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), and is being taken forward in the UK by the HSE, along with organisations representing employers, workers and other interested bodies, including the TUC and EEF – the manufacturers' organisation.

It is estimated that between 25 and 30 per cent of all manufacturing industry deaths in Britain result from maintenance activity, with fatalities and major injuries often linked to falls from height, or a failure to properly isolate machinery so that it doesn't restart during repair work.

In order to reduce the number of incidents attributed to maintenance work, the European initiative aims to raise awareness among businesses and their workers, and to help them implement simple precautionary measures. Launching the UK leg of the campaign at a special event on 21 June, **HSE chair Judith Hackitt said:** "Maintenance work is often seen simply as a disruption to normal service, but it is fundamental to the integrity of every system and to the health and safety of workers and the public.

Workers are often under pressure to complete jobs quickly, but there is no excuse for putting themselves and others in danger by taking shortcuts. The UK drive includes a new safe maintenance section on the HSE website, featuring a checklist to assess how good current maintenance practices are, and offering pointers on how to improve. Free downloadable fact sheets, posters, and information on how organisations can get involved are also available.

For more information, visit www.hse.gov.uk/safemaintenance

High voltage shock lands stationery firm with fine

A stationery manufacturer has been fined after admitting exposing a worker to a high voltage shock that left him permanently disabled.

The man was investigating a fault on a plastic welding machine at Chart Design Ltd in Wembley in June 2007 when his fingers came into contact (or very close contact) with components carrying several thousand volts.

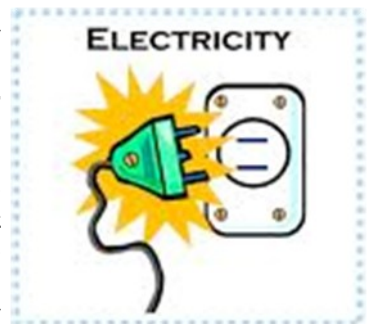
The shock severely burned his right hand and forearm, and damaged several muscles. He was hospitalised for 14 days and has since had to undergo skin grafts. He has not regained full use of his right hand and has been unable to return to work.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation into the incident revealed that guard panels which should have prevented access to live circuits had been removed. Inspectors discovered that no record of maintenance checks was kept for any of the machines at the factory.

The company also had no first aiders.

Chart Design Ltd - of Luxton Close, Dury Way, Wembley - pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 at the City of London Magistrates' Court. It was fined £4,000 and ordered to pay costs of £6,330.

HSE Inspector Kerry Williams said: "A man's life has been turned upside down because of entirely preventable and basic safety failings. It is the responsibility of all managers to make sure that all maintenance work is properly planned and recorded and that adequate guards are fitted to all machinery when it is in use.



Court of Appeal upholds £400,000 fine for New Look Store

Retailer New Look's appeal against its record **£400,000** fine for fire safety breaches at its Oxford Street store was dismissed yesterday, with the Court of Appeal saying the fine was not excessive in view of the company's "lamentable" performance of fire safety duties.

In a significant judgement for responsible persons under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the court decided that the level of the fine was not excessive in relation to the seriousness of the offences, the size and nature of the company, and the risk to the public which New Look ran. The court also held that the fine was not out of kilter with those for offences under general health and safety legislation where there was a risk of death or serious injury. The Court of Appeal concluded that while it accepted that the fire itself was not caused by the retailer's breaches of duty, (the cause of the fire has never been established) the offences were serious enough to create a magnitude of risk in which death and serious injury in the fire was avoided by luck.



The appeal judges also agreed with the trial judge that a starting point for a fine in these circumstances was **£600,000**. This was rightly reduced to **£400,000** in view of nobody being killed or injured, the company pleading guilty and co-operating with the investigation at the earliest opportunity, and the company demonstrating that it had taken significant steps to remedy fire safety shortcomings across its stores.

In a statement issued after the judgement, the retailer said: "New Look is committed to putting the health and safety of customers and employees first. Although the appeal against the fine was unsuccessful, we note that the original 35 alleged breaches of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) were reduced to 2 offences and at no time has it been alleged that the company was either responsible for the fire, or that its breaches of the RRFSO caused the fire."

Award Open Course to all, book now.....

Award Health & Safety Ltd are running an open course:

- ◆ **Asbestos Awareness Course** in the afternoon on 30th of July in Portsmouth only 3 places left

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Aston Villa fined for training ground fall

Premier league football club Aston Villa has been fined for breaching the Work at Height Regulations after a worker fell through a fragile roof light at its training ground near Sutton Coldfield.

Two workers employed by the club's contractor Mechanical Cleansing Services were helping to drain rooftop fuel tanks during demolition of an old building at the Bodymoor Heath complex. As one of them headed towards a ladder to climb down off the roof, he plunged three metres through a nearby rooflight. He broke bones in his heels and was off work for more than six months. Both he and the football club failed to inform workers of the dangers or instructed them how to avoid the risk of falling through fragile lights.

"If the internal ladder had been used, then this incident would not have happened," said HSE inspector Carol Southerd.

"A simple conversation with the club was all it would have taken to arrange for the blocked ladder to be cleared." Stratford-on-Avon magistrates fined Aston Villa £1350 and ordered it to pay £1610 costs after the club pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 9(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005, which requires dutyholders to ensure that workers do not pass across or near fragile surfaces where it is reasonably avoidable. Magistrates also fined Mechanical Cleansing Services £1000 plus £1610 costs after it admitted failing to record the significant findings of a risk assessment, contrary to Regulation 3(6)(a) of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

Myth of the month

Myth: Health and safety risks stop children playing 'pin the tail on the donkey'

The reality

We recently read that the traditional party game 'pin the tail on the donkey' is allegedly under threat because parents consider it a health and safety risk.

Not trusting children with drawing pins seems a little over-protective to us. After all, millions of children have been playing traditional party games like this for years without any problems. Was this just a marketing ploy to drum up sales of party games?

