
EDITOR'S NOTES

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The variety of issues in this newsletter - from tallescopes to risk assessments for trees via lampposts, legionella and local better regulation office (LBRO) - shows that Health and Safety is a very wide ranging topic.

However, I would like to start with a fundamental change to HSE/LA working. There is an update on one of the most important developments to come out of the commitment to Partnership Working - Flexible Warrants. It has to be a more efficient and better use of resource if we can start to break down the artificial demarcation between areas covered by HSE and those covered by LAs. The world of work is changing and the organisation of H&S Regulators must also change to reflect this. Changes in legislation appear to be more and more frequent and HSE is holding a number of free briefing sessions in March for LA Inspectors on the Work at Height (Amendment) Regulations 2007, (WAH(A)R). As HSE is limited in the amount of resource it can allocate, LAU are planning future training on LA enforcement of the Construction (Design and Management)

Regulations. If there are areas of training you think LAs need, please contact your local Partnership Manager. One area where funding is available is for Science and Technology support. This has proved very successful and a reminder of how to obtain funding is in the newsletter.

Changing attitudes to H&S is often a slow process, but the work in relation to dermatitis and hairdressing and other related areas appears to be picking up speed, especially with initiatives such as that developed by Torfaen Council. Finally, if you thought you knew everything there is to know about Display Screen Equipment, try the quiz. You never know, you could win a prize!

Richard Wilson

Please feel free to comment on the Newsletter by writing to our dedicated e-mail address with your contributions, comments and suggestions: lau.newsletter@hse.gsi.gov.uk or Tel: 0151-951-3114

FOR INFORMATION

New Asbestos Regulations

Amendment to January 2007 Newsletter article

Please refer to [the new Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006](#) included in last month's Newsletter, the references to the two associated Approved Codes of Practice (ACoP) were incorrect. The reference to the ACoP "Work with materials containing asbestos" should have been to L143 (not HSG143), and the reference to the ACoP on Regulation 4 (the duty to manage asbestos) should have been to L127 (not HSG127). Apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused.

For further information contact either:

Liz Standen, Asbestos Licensing Unit
Tel: 01224 252500
Email: liz.standen@hse.gsi.gov.uk

Kevin Walkin, Asbestos Policy
Tel: 0207 717 6298
Email: kevin.walkin@hse.gsi.gov.uk

Alternatively, go to the [HSE asbestos homepage](#).

Tallescopes - Request for information on accidents

HSE Entertainment and Leisure Sector are anxious to **gather information on accidents involving tallescopes**. Those local authorities with entertainment and warehouse premises, for example, may have experience of this type of wheeled access equipment with a telescopic ladder fixed to a mast, providing access to an enclosed working platform, commonly referred to as 'the basket.'

The previous article in the [LAU May 2006 Newsletter](#) reiterated the view of the manufacturers' of this equipment and also that of HSE, that tallescopes should not be moved with personnel and/or materials in the basket.

This issue is frequently raised by the entertainments industry (one of a number of industries which use tallescopes) and also by enforcement officers. Those in the entertainment industry have now picked up on the previous article, and are anxious that we should reconsider our stated position on the use of tallescopes.

We are keen to gather information relating to accidents involving tallescopes, please provide details.

If you are able to help, or require further information contact:

Sarah Jardine
Tel: 0115 971 2813
Email: sarah.jardine@hse.gsi.gov.uk

South West Regulator's Forum (SWeRF)

Towards the end of 2006 the South West Regulator's Forum met to discuss a common agenda. This Forum consists of representatives of all the regulators in Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO) listed below:

- Health & Safety Executive (HSE)
- Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Trading Standards (TS)
- Environmental Health (EH)
- Office of Fair Trading (OFT)
- Environment Agency (EA)
- Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), (we hope we can find a representative soon)

After comparing 'mutual issues' notes, the meeting concluded a regional group would benefit, and SWeRF should meet again.

A main issue pinpointed:

- the Retail Enforcement Pilot (REP). SWeRF will be making an offer to REP to help with regional co-ordination of any Phase 2 pilots in the South West.

The other main issue:

- a concern to raise the regulator's profile with stakeholders, especially elected members. The group will explore the possibility of a single document which represents all issues regulators enforce for communities and the economy in the South West.

The next meeting is in February - updates will appear in future LAU newsletters. We hope to welcome representatives from LBRO/ BRE and Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACoRS) in future meetings.

For further information contact:

Max Walker

Tel: 0117 988 6095

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Merthyr Tydfil Installs Wales's First Lamppost Safety System

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council has become the first Council in Wales to install a revolutionary, and potentially life-saving, emergency alert system on lampposts – helping to create a safer County Borough for all its citizens.

Known as 'Amberwatch', the Council is piloting the initiative in two test locations in Merthyr Tydfil, namely at Merthyr College Car Park and Castle Car Park, both within the town centre.

Created by 247 Outdoor Ltd, this emergency alert system allows urgent safety messages to be relayed instantly into the heart of local communities – an important tool for emergency services.

The two-line LED messaging system could also allow Police to post missing person alerts, or let emergency planners pass vital information to members of the public.

Councilor Bill Smith, Cabinet Member for Environment said: "This is a fantastic opportunity to trial an innovative system that could save lives. Merthyr Tydfil is proud to be the first Council in Wales to use these lamppost installations. Apart from emergency situations, this system will also help the Council provide useful information to our customers on a daily basis."

Mike Thomas Head of Environmental Services said: "The system will help to make Merthyr Tydfil a safer place. It is also completely self-funding, thanks to the installation's ability to carry advertising – and could even generate useful income for the County Borough".

Installations are supplied completely free of charge to councils, and generate funding back to the Council through advertising revenue gained from sheet posters, which are sited above the emergency messaging display.

Over two years 247 Outdoor Ltd has been developing the Amberwatch Initiative in close partnership and consultation with local councils, lighting engineers and police officers.



Neil MacKinnon, Managing Director of 247 Outdoor Ltd, said: "We are delighted with the reaction from Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council on our first installation. We have worked hand in hand with council officers to bring this exciting new development to the local community in Merthyr Tydfil. Amberwatch can be used by the Council to pass a wide variety of information to the general public".

The Council is interested in hearing from members of the public as to how useful are the signs are viewed.

Comments to:

Email: Corporate.Communications@merthyr.gov.uk

or

Corporate Communications, Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN

For more information contact:

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Tel: 01685 725483

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HSL facilities available to support proactive LA programmes until March 2009

This is a reminder about a source of funding available to local authorities (LAs).

The Panel overseeing the Local Authorities Science & Technology (S&T) Initiative agreed in early 2006 to a 'Campaigns Procedure' that would run in 2006-07. This procedure would enable an individual LA, or small group of LAs working together, to obtain S&T assistance from HSL, if needed, to support a proactive programme or campaign of targeted visits. This was announced in the April 2006 LAU Newsletter, and all LAs were sent details of how to apply for funding in June 2006.

The link [Campaigns Procedures 2007](#) takes you to the HELex page explaining the process, how to apply, and what sort of work is covered.

The Panel has agreed that this procedure should remain available for the last two years of the Initiative, until March 2009.

For more information contact either:

Mark White - HSL
Tel: 01298 218816
Email: mark.white@hsl.gov.uk

Graham Bell - HSE
Tel: 0151 951 3705
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Your local Partnership Manager

- Scotland: Peter Dodd, 0131 2472132, peter.dodd@hse.gsi.gov.uk
- Yorkshire and North East: David Cole, 0191 202 6312, david.cole@hse.gsi.gov.uk
- North West: Bernadette Cadman, 0161 952 8245, bernadette.cadman@hse.gsi.gov.uk
- Wales: Steve Coppell, 02920 263029, steve.coppell@hse.gsi.gov.uk
- South West: Joy Jones 0117 988 6000, joy.area06.jones@hse.gsi.gov.uk
- Midlands: Ray Cooke, 0121 607 6270, ray.cooke@hse.gsi.gov.uk
- East and South East: David Bryant, 01233 653920, david.bryant@hse.gsi.gov.uk
- London: Janet Francis, 0207 717 2161, janet.francis@hse.gsi.gov.uk

Health experts test legionella plans



Greater Manchester health professionals held a mock 'Legionella infection outbreak day' at Bolton Arena to test the areas joint investigation and control plan, and protocols, ensuring the region is ready for any disease emergencies.

The test involved a practical exercise - with various case information leading to identification of a spa pool as the infection source.

Enforcement officers from each of the 10 Greater Manchester local authorities were joined by colleagues from the Health Protection Agency

(HPA), Regional Laboratory, Health and Safety Executive, Greater Manchester Health Protection Unit and private companies who would be involved in sampling and analysis.

Feedback indicated that proposed actions would have controlled the outbreak in time to save a fifth case.

There were presentations on sampling of spa pools, spa pool chemistry, spa pool design and a review of a recent survey of spa pools in Bolton.

Judith Chaloner, Health Protection Agency consultant said: "The event has been a very positive exercise and we now have the opportunity to review the protocol following its practical implementation. Spa pools are known to be the third most common cause of legionnaires' disease after cooling towers and hot water systems, and we were fortunate to have the co-operation of staff at the venue, who made their health suite available for the exercise."

Councilor Ismail Ibrahim, Bolton Council's Executive Member for Adult Services added: "I would like to pay tribute to the work that is ongoing across Greater Manchester and encourage all businesses with cooling towers, evaporative condensers, spa pools or air scrubbers to be aware of the risks, and ensure they carry out risk assessments and appropriate maintenance."

The workshop was organised jointly by the Greater Manchester Health Protection Unit, Greater Manchester Public Protection Managers Group and HPA North West Laboratory Service.

For more information contact:

Barry Whitehead, Bolton Council
Tel: 01204 336534
Email: Barry.Whitehead@bolton.gov.uk

Bright future for Flexible Warrants

Since the initial trial of flexible warranting started in Hampshire and Isle of Wight in autumn 2005, the successful operation of local schemes has developed to the point where a national system is now required.

Purpose of the schemes

- Flexible warrants allow local authorities (LAs) to appoint suitably qualified Health & Safety Executive (HSE) inspectors to undertake work within the LAs field of responsibility, and for HSE to appoint suitably qualified LA inspectors to undertake work in the HSE field of responsibility.

Objectives

The use of warrants has four main objectives:

- Increase the flexibility and responsiveness of health and safety regulators to situations of significant risk
- Remove inefficiencies in administration that result from the prescription of the Enforcing Authority Regulations
- Improve communication and co-operation between Health and Safety regulators
- Facilitate the collective use of resources to increase the effectiveness of the regulatory system

Current schemes

At present, flexible warrant schemes operate in the following areas:

- Hampshire and Isle of Wight
- Yorkshire and the North East
- Western Isles and Central Fife and Tayside
- Medway
- Gatwick Airport - HSE and Crawley Borough
- Suffolk

Evaluation of current schemes

Evaluation of their operation suggests that the schemes offer the following advantages:

- Timeliness of interventions
- Increased confidence and utilisation of relevant skills for LA officers
- Staff development opportunities
- Sharing of good practice and improved communications
- Tangible increase in trust between LA and HSE staff
- Strengthening of LA/HSE partnership
- Access to HSE expertise and equipment
- Hampton-compliant approaches to business

Challenges ahead - The Task and Finish Group

There remain significant challenges, however, for the future of the flexible warrant. For this reason a small group of officers from LAs, HSE, Chartered Institute of Environment Health (CIEH) and Local Authorities Coordinator of Regulatory Services (LACoRS) has been convened to explore and develop a single national scheme. The work of this group will include:

- Addressing the issues identified in the pilot schemes
- Development of a new national scheme for introduction in April 2007 - perhaps in the form of a basic model with additional options
- Resolving the question of whether 'one size can fit all'
- Development of authorisation processes that are quicker and easier
- A new standard framework for the Memorandum of Understanding
- Exploring the potential of warrants for improvements in delivery such as, team investigations

Flexible warranting is already proving its worth and has great potential for new approaches to regulation in the future.

For more information contact:

Gerry Kasprzok
Tel: 01603 828046
Email: gerry.kasprzok@hse.gsi.gov.uk

Fight against dermatitis

Hairdressers, barbers and beauticians in Torfaen are targeting a campaign to help prevent dermatitis. Dermatitis is a debilitating skin disease, which leaves hands dry, red, flaky, itchy, cracked and blistered, making normal activities very difficult. It is estimated that 10% of workers in these occupations will have their career ended because of dermatitis.

The campaign is a partnership between Torfaen Council, Coleg Gwent, the National Hairdressing Federation (NHF), the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Hairdressing and Beauty Industry Authority (HABIA) and South Wales Fire and Rescue Service. (South Wales Fire and Rescue Service are involved to assess the fire safety criteria of the Health and Safety award scheme). The campaign targets occupational work groups within the enforcement responsibility of local Councils (e.g. hairdressers, barbers and beauticians).

It is part of the national 'Bad Hand Day' campaign, which started November 2006, running until April 2007. Its aim is to reduce the number of nationwide cases of dermatitis by 10% by 2008.

Councilor Glyn Caron, Executive Member for Planning and Public Protection, said:
"Torfaen Council has started a new hairdressing health and safety award scheme which will equip hairdressers with the information they need to make dermatitis a thing of the past. We are showing them that they can take simple steps to avoid it, and protect themselves as well as their customers. Hairdressers must protect the tools of their trade, their hands. They have the right to work in a healthy environment, so we are working to raise awareness of this and other health and safety issues."

Environmental Health officers from Torfaen Council have given a series of talks to over 100 students at Coleg Gwent's Pontypool campus. The campaign will be supported by shop inspections by Torfaen Council officers over the next few months, promoting 'dermatitis is not an acceptable occupational hazard.' Sixty two businesses, having at least one member of staff undertaking their career via vocational on the job training will receive a visit. Staff members will be given a 'goodie bag' containing hand cream, advice leaflets and a pair of non-latex gloves.

Following these five simple steps can prevent dermatitis:

1. Wear disposable non-latex gloves when rinsing, shampooing, colouring, bleaching etc.
2. Dry your hands thoroughly with a soft cotton or paper towel.
3. Moisturise after washing your hands, as well as at the start and end of each day.
4. Change gloves between clients.
5. Check skin regularly for early signs of dermatitis.

In support of the *Bad Hand Day campaign*, HSE, HABIA, the NHF are urging anyone visiting a salon to think about his or her hairdresser's health. Many hairdressers believe their clients do not want them to wear gloves. If you see your hairdresser wearing gloves, they are protecting their hands so they can keep doing what they do best.

For further information regarding the award scheme contact:

Liz Vann or Kholy Khan

Tel: 01633 648470

Email: liz.vann@torfaen.gov.uk / kholy.khan@torfaen.gov.uk

NEW GUIDANCE

New material published on the HSE website / Local Authority Unit section of the HSE website

The following material has been published on the HSE Website:

- The worker involvement project
<http://www.hsenews.com/2006/12/14/the-worker-involvement-project/>
- LACORS Working together annual report
<http://www.hsenews.com/2006/12/14/lacors-working-together-annual-report/>
- Safer community updates
<http://www.hsenews.com/2006/12/15/safer-community-updates/>
- Health and safety offences and penalties
<http://www.hsenews.com/2006/12/19/health-and-safety-offences-and-penalties/>
- Legionnaire's disease at chemical sites
<http://www.hsenews.com/2006/12/21/legionnaires-disease-at-chemical-sites/>
- Better regulation portal launched
<http://www.hsenews.com/2006/12/21/better-regulation-portal-launched/>
- Keep up to speed with health and safety
<http://www.hsenews.com/2006/12/21/keep-up-to-speed-with-health-and-safety/>
- Don't mix it!
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/04/dont-mix-it/>
- Occupational guidance on BSE
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/05/occupational-guidance-on-bse/>
- Use of protective gloves to control dermal exposures
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/08/use-of-protective-gloves-to-control-dermal-exposures/>
- Workplace transport hazards
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/08/workplace-transport-hazards/>
- Woodworking safety and health awareness day
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/12/woodworking-safety-and-health-awareness-day-2/>
- Nanotechnology
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/15/nanotechnology/>
- Liverpool city centre crane collapse
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/16/liverpool-city-centre-crane-collapse/>
- Spring into safety seminar
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/17/spring-into-safety-seminar/>
- Isocyanates guidance posters
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/17/isocyanates-guidance-posters/>
- Workplace health and safety survey programme
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/18/workplace-health-and-safety-survey-programme/>

- Arb news - January 2007
<http://www.hseneews.com/2007/01/22/arb-news-january-2007/>
- Worker consultation and involvement
<http://www.hseneews.com/2007/01/22/worker-consultation-and-involvement/>

**Briefing sessions for LA Inspectors on the
*Work at Height (Amendment) Regulations (WAHR) 2007***

Does your job involve enforcement, advice or inspection in the adventurous activities sector? If it does, then you will want to know that HSE plans to hold a small number of briefing sessions, during March, for LA Inspectors on the Work at Height (Amendment) Regulations 2007, (WAH(A)R).

The introduction of the WAHAR, in April 2007, will see the removal of the existing exemption for those providing leadership and instruction to those working at height. It will provide instruction to one or more person engaged in the caving or climbing by way of sport, recreation, team building or similar activities in Great Britain.

HSE has organised a small number of half-day briefing sessions to ensure inspectors are clear on the enforcement expectations for these regulations. The aim of these briefing sessions is to familiarise LA inspectors with the changes introduced by the WAH(A)R.

Date	Venue
12 March 2007	PGL Dalguise, Dalguise, Dunkeld, Perthshire, PH8 0JX
13 March 2007	Ingleborough Hall Outdoor Education Centre, Clapham, North Yorkshire, LA2 8EF
15 March 2007	Plas-y-Brenin The National Mountain Centre, Capel Curig, Conwy LL24 OET
21 March 2007	Hindleap Warren Outdoor Centre, Wych, Forest Row, East Sussex RH18 5JH
22 March 2007	The Foundry Adventure Centre, 45 Mowbray Street, Sheffield S3 8EN

There will be speakers from HSE and the sector at these events.

Interested?

There is no charge for attending the events, but places are limited to one attendee per LA. Refreshments and lunch will be provided.

For a registration form contact:

Gloria Birchall
Tel: 0207 717 6361
Email: gloria.birchall@hse.gsi.gov.uk

Registration confirmation will be sent two weeks before the event.

Your comments sought by 28 February 2007

Managing risks from damaged and unhealthy trees

– Draft guidance to inspectors –

Earlier this year HSE identified the need to provide both HSE and Local Authority inspectors with support and guidance on the application of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSW Act) to this issue. The average risk from falling trees is extremely low and is certainly not

a priority during routine inspections. However, inspectors are occasionally required to investigate the death of someone who has been struck by a tree. Concerns about differentiating between standards of tree management, expected by best practice, or by other legislation, such as the Occupiers Liability Acts 1957/1984, and the minimum standard required by the HSW Act were recognised. Developing advice for inspectors on the application of *HSW Act Section 3: Enforcement* to tree management has commenced. This advice has been strongly guided by the HSC/E's principles of sensible risk management, in particular:

- It is based around the concept that sound standards for managing the environment will also manage health and safety acceptably;
- It reflects HSE's current approach of seeking duty holders to focus attention on those trees which represent a higher than the average very low risk of falling;
- It encourages tree management, not tree felling;
- Its emphasis is on keeping bureaucracy to an absolute minimum.

Since we started, parliamentary and media interest has increased the need for this advice.

Given the interest and concern amongst stakeholders, it would be helpful to share the draft advice with LAs for comment, before it is finalised. The guidance, which is for inspectors and relates solely to compliance with HSW Act, Section 3, is in the form of a draft Sector Information Information (SIM), please click on the link below:-

[Tree Management Draft SIM](#)

Comments are invited on substantive points' only, particularly on the approach outlined in the first three pages of the document. Views on how this guidance fits with current systems used for tree management are also invited.

All comments **by 28 February 2007** to:

Frances Hirst
Tel: 024 7669 8357
Email frances.hirst@hse.gsi.gov.uk

GOOD PRACTICE

Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Forum

DSE Forum - Competition Issue!

To start the New Year on a high note a bit of audience participation might be in order. Here are a few topical questions to test your brains, although an element of discussion is allowed in your answers:

1. A DSE user arranges their own eye test and then goes to their employer and asks them to pay the optician's bill for the test. Is the employer obliged to pay?
2. Is the use of Satellite Navigation (Sat Nav) equipment covered by the DSE Regulations - and why?
3. Does sharing computer equipment or workstations (as in "hot desking") increase the risk of catching diseases?
4. For a user doing full-time intensive computer work with no opportunities for non-DSE work, which of the following would be an acceptable schedule of rest breaks?
 - a. 10 - 15 minute break every two hours
 - b. One hour for lunch and two 15 minute comfort breaks

- c. 5 minutes every hour
- d. Variable short breaks at the user's discretion
- e. Six hours sleep in every 24 hours.

Answers will be discussed in a future issue of DSE Forum. At the judges' discretion there may be a small prize for the best set of answers we receive - and you will also have the honour of having your name mentioned!

If we get a good response, an occasional quiz may become a regular feature. So we are happy to receive any suggestions you may have for challenging and educational questions about DSE health and safety.

Please send your answers by **15 March 2007** to:

Email: lisa.jewell@hse.gsi.gov.uk