

December 2014

HSE Safety Cornerstones Newsletter

A newsletter of practical compliance and safety tips provided by:

Crendon Insurance Brokers Ltd

IN THIS ISSUE

Revamped Lorry Designs Could Help Curb Rising Percentage of Fatal Crashes

These new designs may be the key to reducing fatal crashes.

The HSE Routinely Sees These Common Health and Safety Mistakes

Protect your employees and your business from these basic but easily preventable mistakes.

Recent HSE News and Prosecutions

Read about a South London waste firm's dismal safety record, a scheming furniture store and a lazy delivery driver.

Revamped Lorry Designs Could Help Curb Rising Percentage of Fatal Crashes

Revamped lorry designs could help curb the rising percentage of fatal crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists, according to a recent report by Loughborough University. The report advocates for a 'direct vision' design concept in order to increase the field of vision for lorry drivers and to help protect drivers and pedestrians when they are in front of and to the side of lorries. In an effort to minimise blind spots, the report's authors improved the cab design, reduced the cab height and added extra windows. The proposed new lorry model has a cab extended by 80 centimetres, with a rounded nose, smaller dashboard, expanded windows and a lower driver position which broadens the field of vision from behind the wheel. Existing lorry designs place drivers high above the engine in boxy cabs that limit panoramic vision.

The proposed design comes in the wake of recent statistics which show a rising percentage of fatal crashes involving lorries. The statistics from the Campaign for Better Transport, which tracks fatal road accidents involving Heavy Good Vehicles (HGVs), are sobering:

- More than half (52 per cent) of fatal accidents on motorways involve HGVs, despite HGVs only making up 10 per cent of the traffic on motorways.
- On A-roads, HGVs are involved in 20 per cent of fatal crashes, a percentage that has worsened over the previous five years.
- On minor roads, an HGV is five times more likely to be involved in a fatal accident than other traffic.

Pedestrians and cyclists do not fare better—according to the Loughborough report, lorries are responsible for more than half of all cyclist deaths in London and one-third of all cyclist deaths across the United Kingdom. The report analysed 704 accidents involving HGVs and found the following:

- Thirty-one per cent of road fatalities were caused by drivers pulling away.
- Twenty-five per cent were caused by drivers reversing.
- Nineteen per cent were caused by left turns.
- Seven per cent were caused by right turns.

Vehicles changing lanes were responsible for half of all accidents, but no fatalities.

The report stresses that blind spots caused by the current lorry model's boxy shape cannot be eliminated with the addition of driver mirrors. The time lapse between checking mirrors, observing the scene and then pulling away from a junction is too long—in that time, a driver could easily run over a pedestrian without realising it until it is too late.

Remind any lorry drivers that you employ to be extra cautious by double-checking mirrors before they pull away and reverse—and remind them to stay aware of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians around them at all times.



**Crendon
Insurance
Brokers**

The HSE Routinely Sees These Common Health & Safety Mistakes

The HSE regulates, researches and enforces health and safety across Great Britain. To further its mission, the HSE visits millions of businesses. Unfortunately, as HSE inspectors travel from business to business, certain health and safety mistakes pop up again and again. These mistakes devastate lives, cause suffering and grief, and cost society billions of pounds every year through lost working days.

In the course of its work, the HSE has identified the following nine basic health and safety mistakes as the mistakes that are most crippling to British industry:

1. **Poorly maintained or misused ladders** – Almost one-fifth of reportable falls from height in the workplace are from ladders. Maintain your ladders and periodically train your employees on safe ladder procedures.
2. **Dangerous work at height** – About 1 in every 12 recordable injuries in Britain's workplaces is the result of a fall. Ensure your employees know the difference between safe and unsafe work at height.
3. **Inadequate safety guards on machines** – Just one simple machine guard can prevent mutilation and save countless lives.
4. **Badly organised workplace transport** – Institute simple rules in order to safeguard employees, such as keeping people away from moving vehicles.
5. **Exposure to deadly asbestos fibres** – Asbestos is still a threat that your employees should know how to avoid.
6. **Exposure to toxic paint vapours** – Proper extraction and suitable masks can slash your workers' risk of developing asthma from paint vapours.
7. **Creating clouds of silica dust** – Implement dust control measures to save employees from irreversible lung disease.
8. **Damage caused by vibrating power tools** – Identify measures to eliminate or reduce the risk of hand-arm vibration syndrome.
9. **Unhygienic or non-existent welfare facilities** – Workers need access to clean facilities such as toilets and kitchen areas. Filthy facilities breed germs and diseases and result in subsequent fines for the employer.



Safety Cornerstones Newsletter

Crendon Insurance Brokers Ltd

11 Greenfield Crescent
Birmingham, West Midlands, B15 3AU

0121 45 45 100

www.crendoninsurance.co.uk

Recent HSE News & Prosecutions

South London waste firm fined for dismal safety record

A south-east London waste firm was fined £6,000 and ordered to pay £1,287 in costs for a litany of health and safety offences extending through the past five years. The waste firm repeatedly endangered their employees by neglecting to service heavy machinery and leaving it in a dangerous condition. The most serious breaches related to defects in machines. For instance, in October 2013, an annual inspection found several defects in a loading shovel, including extensive damage to the bolts fixing the front bucket to the machine, which could have led to the bucket falling off and crushing anyone nearby. The firm was advised not to use it until it was repaired, but ignored the recommendation and continued using it until an HSE visit in January 2014. Several days later, the HSE identified an excavator in use without left- or right-side mirrors, which restricted driver visibility.

Furniture store said customers could not collect furniture

A Newport furniture store told a customer's wife that she could not collect any furniture her husband purchased (a foot stool in this case) due to health and safety reasons, although the item fit perfectly well in her car. The store stated that it had to be delivered, which costs about £30. The HSE Myth Busters Panel decided that there are not health and safety regulations prohibiting members of the public from collecting items from retail stores and taking them home themselves. The store may have been trying to schedule a costly home delivery while hiding behind the spurious excuse of 'health and safety', as many other stores in the area offer in-store collection.

Online delivery driver no longer able to carry shopping upstairs

The online delivery driver at a chain supermarket's Glasgow location told a customer he could no longer carry shopping upstairs due to 'health and safety issues'. The customer was sympathetic until the driver stated that this new rule allowed him to carry out more deliveries. The HSE Myth Busters Panel investigated and found that the supermarket chain made clear that this change in service was a limited trial and in no way prompted by health and safety concerns. The driver should have made it known that the company was undergoing a trial process, and he should have asked for the customer's feedback rather than immediately refusing the request and offering a bogus excuse.

Contains public sector information published by the HSE and licensed under the Open Government Licence v2.0.

Design © 2014 Zywave, Inc. All rights reserved. This publication is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be exhaustive nor should any discussion or opinions be construed as compliance or legal advice. In relation to any particular problem which they may have, readers are advised to seek specific advice. Further, the law may have changed since first publication and the reader is cautioned accordingly.