

Inside this issue:

<i>HSE Safety Alert</i>	1,2
<i>Working At Height Slips, Trips & Falls</i>	1 2
<i>Corporate Manslaughter & Homicide Act</i>	2
<i>Woodworking Industry Noise Control</i>	2
<i>HSE Asbestos Awareness Campaign</i>	3
<i>December H&S Myth</i>	4
<i>K.S. Safety Group Contact Details</i>	4

Specialist Interests:-

**New Publication -
Warehousing and
Storage—Keep It Safe**

Health and Safety Executive
HSE Books, 2007.
(INDG412)
Published 11.2007
This publication provides
guidance for those involved
in warehousing and storage
to reduce the number of
injuries and cases of occupa-
tional ill health.

**New Workplace
Transport**

Health and Safety Executive
HSE Books, 2007.
(Information Sheet WPT01)
Published 09.2007
This information sheet pro-
vides advice on basic princi-
ples for working at height,
which apply equally to work-
ing at height from a vehicle.

Contact us for further
Information (01501) 749500

HSE safety alert on quick hitches

Date of Issue: 14 December 2007

HSE is issuing a safety alert to users of excavators fitted with quick hitch devices. There have been a number of serious incidents in the construction industry, including four fatalities since December 2006. This alert outlines the precautions which should be taken when relying on these devices.

Background

A quick hitch on an excavator is a latching device that enables attachments to be connected to the dipper arm of the plant and changed quickly. Quick hitches

are in common use throughout the construction industry and, when properly designed, maintained and used can save a great deal of time when working with excavators. They allow operators to quickly use plant for a wider range of tools than just buckets, such as mechanical diggers and piling drills. The four fatal incidents in the last 12 months involved semi-automatic quick hitches, but there have been other incidents involving both manual and automatic types in the past. There are many differ-

ent types of quick hitch but the common theme through all of these fatal incidents was a missing retaining pin or bar. The pin holds the attachment in place against the quick hitch and insures against accidental release. A quick hitch may still operate for some time without the retaining pin in place and then suddenly, without warning will swing open or fall completely off. If this happens when lifting over / close to a person then the result is likely to be fatal.
/Cont. pg 2

Working At Height

In 2005/06 a total of 46 workers died and a further 3351 employees suffered major injury as a result of a fall from height in the workplace. Preventable deaths and injuries still occur and it is vital that such tragic incidents are used as a reminder to review existing arrangements and precautions.

7 December 2007: HSE has warned construction companies to take the safety of their employees working at height seriously. The warning follows HSE's prosecution of a Liverpool construction company for failing to implement safe systems of work for working at height after repeated warnings.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/press/2007/gnnnw13207.htm?ebul=cons/dec-07&cr=04>

HSE safety alert on quick hitches

/Continued from page 1

Action by users of quick hitches

Those in control of work should ensure that adequate precautions are in place. The precautions to be taken should be identified by a comprehensive risk assessment and should include:

- Excavator operators should be adequately trained on the use of quick hitches in general;
- Excavator operators should be competent to use the specific hitch on the machine they use;
- The manufacturer-supplied retaining pin must be available on the machine;
- Operators should only use pins which have been designed for this specific use;
- There should be a system for checking that the pin is in place on the hitch before starting the work and every time a different attachment is fitted;
- Operators should be instructed not to use the machine unless they are satisfied that the quick hitch is secured in place. If the operator cannot see from the cab of the vehicle due to poor weather then s/he must visually check from the ground; Those in control of sites should undertake random checks to ensure the precautions are being implemented.



**K.S. Safety Ltd provide on-site construction safety audits.
Please contact us for further details (01501) 749500**

The Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007

In July this new Act reached Royal Assent and will come into force on 6th April 2008.

It sets out a new offence that allows a corporate body to be prosecuted where there is a gross failing by an organisation's senior manager(s) to take reasonable care for the safety of their employees or members of the public, which causes death.

Slips, Trips And Falls

Slips, Trips and Falls injuries remain stubbornly high. The HSE has decided to run a new publicity campaign in February-March 2008. The campaign will focus on slips, trips and falls, and will run in national newspapers, commercial radio and the web. There will be a co-ordinated effort in 2008 by HSE's field inspectors to develop and extend the effect of the campaign.

Wood Working Industry - HSE Noise Control Programme 2007-2008

HSE has launched an inspection programme on control of noise. During the year inspectors will visit woodworking premises and will expect to see evidence that noise risks have been eliminated or reduced to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable. Where noise risks remain, inspectors will be looking for evidence that the risks are being well managed and that suitable health surveillance is in place. Remember, hearing protection is normally the last line of defence – where possible, it is always better to control noise at source.

Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006

The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 came into force on 13th November 2006.

Training Is Now Mandatory for maintenance activities, non-licensed works, as well as licensed works.

Exemptions from this requirement would apply only where the employer can demonstrate that work will be carried out in or on a building free of asbestos containing materials

Training must be provided to all demolition workers and those workers in the refurbishment, maintenance and allied trades where it is foreseeable that their work will disturb the fabric of the building because ACM's may become exposed during their work.

HSE is planning an asbestos campaign, with a launch date of 27th February 2008 to coincide with Mesothelioma Day. It pilots a number of approaches which build on the evaluation of work undertaken in 2006 - 07. The HSE aim to take into account the key messages learnt from various pieces of research it has had commissioned to look at the impact of the 2 previous campaigns.

For the 2008 campaign the HSE want to target a primary audience of maintenance workers (i.e. trades people including electricians, plumbers and carpenters) and a secondary audience comprising duty holders. The main objectives of the planned campaign are as follows:-

Primary (in order of priority)

- Highlight to tradesperson workers the very real risks (to them) of the presence of, (ie. proximity to) and potential exposure to asbestos in buildings. That is, to raise their awareness of the risks of exposure, and their relevance to them, and to convey a sense of 'immediacy' regarding these potential risks by communicating the central take-home message of **'you're more at risk than you think'**.
- That they (workers) have a right to know (from their employer and/or the building owner) if asbestos is present in a building (and where it is) before they start work
- Building owners/managers have a duty to manage any asbestos in their building and must inform workers.

Secondary

- Plug knowledge gaps – inform them what materials could contain asbestos – help with recognition (i.e. what they look like)
- Highlight the factors that indicate the presence of asbestos.
- Reduce the risk of exposure to asbestos.

The target audience is tradespeople (particularly electricians and plumbers) because they account for 1000 of the 4000 deaths each year from asbestos related diseases. The proportion of deaths from the traditional industries is decreasing, where as that for tradespeople is increasing. This group know asbestos is dangerous, but generally don't think it's a relevant risk for them. It is for this reason that the HSE work is being split into two stages, this years campaign focuses on making asbestos a relevant issue to tradespeople. The next focus will be educating them about asbestos.

K.S. Safety Ltd recognised by the HSE as an asbestos training provider. Training provided frequently.
Contact us for further details and course dates. (01501) 749500

Polkemmet Business Park
Dixon Terrace
Whitburn
West Lothian, EH47 9LW

Office: 01 501 749500
Mobile: 0780 375773
Email: office.ks-safety@tiscali.co.uk

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www.ks-safety.com

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Myth: Every Possible Risk Needs A Safety Sign

The reality

Using too many signs just guarantees no one will read any of them. Safety signs are useful when there's a significant risk which can't be avoided or controlled in any other way. But that doesn't mean you should add a sign for every possible risk, however trivial.

Where there are serious risks in your workplace, don't just rely on signs - take practical steps to deal with them. If you do need a sign, make sure it has the right symbol and is clearly visible

K.S. Safety Ltd provide on-site health & safety inspections & reports

Please contact us for further details (01501) 749500



K. S. Safety Ltd is a Consultancy providing a wide ranging Health, Safety and Hygiene Service to assist you in meeting the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act and its associated legislation. We are committed to giving you, our customer a high quality and professional service whatever the size of the assignment or circumstances.

You will find us to be adaptable, flexible and practical in our approach and you can be sure that we shall work closely with you so that you will obtain maximum benefit from our service.

Perhaps you would like to become a member of the **K.S. Safety Group**, where for a nominal annual fee you

- are updated regularly with respect to changes in legislation,
- will have the benefits of the readily available advice & guidance of a health & safety professional,
- benefit from a 10% discount on all of our course fees
- benefit from a reduced on-site hourly rate, from that of non-members