

Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter for all your health and safety updates.

SMOKING BAN IMPLEMENTED WITHIN WORKPLACES & PUBLIC PLACES

From 1st July 2007 it has been illegal to smoke within all enclosed workplaces and public places

The ban also covers smoking within workplace vehicles where these are shared or where passengers may be carried.

What are the requirements placed on businesses as a result of the Health Act 2006:

- Smoking is banned within all enclosed workplaces and public places.
- No smoking signs must be displayed on all entrances to premises. The signs must be at least A5 size, displaying the no-smoking symbol and containing wording or similar wording to "No-Smoking. It is against the law to smoke in these premises".
- Smoking within shared vehicles is banned including vehicles used generally by an individual but who on occasions may pick

up clients or provide lifts to colleagues.

- Signage must be displayed in all such vehicles. Such signage should display the no-smoking symbol.
- There is no legal requirement to provide a smoking shelter within a workplace.
- Where shelters are provided the total enclosed space must be less than or equal to 50% of the total structure.

ENFORCEMENT & FIXED PENALTIES

Local councils will enforce the new law and will have the power to appoint enforcement officers such as environmental health officers, trading standards or local community support officers.

Smoking in a smoke free premises or work vehicles will mean a fixed penalty notice of £50.00 on the person smoking this can be up to a maximum fine of £200.00 if



prosecuted and convicted in court.

Failure to display no-smoking signs will lead to a fixed penalty of £200.00 for the person who manages or occupies the premises or vehicle, up to a maximum fine of £1000.00 if prosecuted and convicted in court.

Failure to prevent smoking in a smoke free environment will lead to a maximum fine of £2500.00 on whoever manages or occupies the premises or vehicle if prosecuted and convicted in court. For further information on the smoking ban or company smoking policies or for free information leaflets on Smoking Shelters or Smoking in Workplace Vehicles please contact the office on 01604 654 111.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

BENEFITS FOR EVERYONE

Banning smoking within the workplace benefits both the employer and employees. This can include:

- Ensuring a healthier and safer working environment for all employees, contractors and visitors.

- Having a cleaner corporate image.
- Having a healthier workforce with less time lost through sickness.
- Reduction in staff turnover.
- Lower cleaning costs and less need for redecorating on a regular basis.
- Clothes and furniture are free

from the smell of tobacco smoke.

- Avoids any confusion as to smoking and non-smoking areas within the workplace.

For further information on the Health Act 2006 please contact the office on 01604 654 111



IOSH WORKING SAFELY 1 DAY COURSE

Positive Steps are pleased to announce that we have been approved to run the IOSH Working Safely course.

This course introduces a completely new approach to health and safety training.

This IOSH training course is designed for people at all levels within a business who are looking to gain an understanding of health and safety, the difference with this course to usual health and safety courses is it is designed to be fun and informative without lecturing.

This one day course is split into five modules covering the following topics:

- Introduction to working safely.
- Defining hazards and risks.
- Identifying common hazards.
- Improved safety performance.
- Protecting the environment.

Each module uses practical examples and genuine work and everyday situations to engage delegates in understanding the importance of health and safety whilst maximising interactivity.

BENEFITS TO EMPLOYERS

This course provides a range of benefits to employers:

- It is a nationally recognised and respected certificated training course.
- Training is carried out only by consultants who are members of IOSH and who have been approved to run the course.
- This is an all inclusive one day course which means less disruption to the working day.
- Assessments are carried out during the course, work books and certification is included within the fee.
- Working safely meets the Governments guidelines for introductory health and safety training and is a 100% match to the HSE's passport syllabus.

WHO ARE IOSH?

IOSH stands for the Institution of Occupational Health and Safety and they are Europe's leading body for Health and Safety Professionals.

Anyone who is competent and qualified in health and safety in general will be a member of IOSH.

INTERESTED?



If you are interested in this one day course please contact the office for more information on 01604 654 111.

We are currently running a promotion on this course valid until April 2008. Please contact Paul Sewell for details of individual places on our public courses or for discounts on group bookings.

Please note there is a choice of accreditation for persons who complete the written and practical assessments. Either an IOSH working safely certificate or an IOSH passport card (passport shown below)



HEAVIER WORK FORCE AFFECTING THE BOTTOM LINE



As work becomes more sedentary the global workforce is becoming fatter, sicker and less productive owing to chronic conditions such as heart disease and Type 2 diabetes.

According to a new report published by Pricewaterhouse Coopers chronic diseases are growing and a costly threat to corporations and their workers.

Risk factors such as poor diet, lack of physical activity, stress and smoking are the biggest contributors to chronic disease.

The study called 'Working Towards Wellness' found that approximately 2% of capital spent on the workforce is lost to

disability, absenteeism and persons coming to work who are sick.

The study did find that corporate wellness programmes were shown to have provided a three to one return on investment.

A full copy of the report can be downloaded from www.pwc.com/workwellness

RECENT CASE LAW IN BRIEF

NHS Hospital fined for not ensuring the safety of members of the public.

South West London and St George's Mental Health Trust were fined after an elderly man fell on an unmaintained pavement.

Mr Durrant and his wife had been visiting their daughter at Springfield University Hospital on 18th December 2005 when Mr Durrant fell and fractured his hip on an unmaintained path leading up to the hospital.

The court heard that Mr. Durrant and his wife walked in the dark down a rough, unlit tarmac path that had not been signposted as unsafe to access the main entrance of the hospital.

Whilst a "preferred route" was provided by the trust, it was not sign posted and the route itself was actually a longer route to the main entrance of the premises.

The accident occurred when Mr Durrant fell into a pothole full of leaves which had been created by a post that had been knocked down before the incident.

Mr. Durrant fell and fractured his hip and wrist and developed bronchial pneumonia in hospital from which he subsequently died one month later.

The Trust's mitigation was given that they had previously pleaded guilty and that the site was a complex one that had grown organically. The Trust had put in a preferred route and it had a reactive regime in place whereby when faults were reported they repaired them.

The Trust were fined £7,500 and ordered to pay costs to the HSE of £3,694 for failure under the following piece of legislation:



- S3 (1) Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 for failing to ensure the safety of members of the public.

The HSE Inspector who investigated and prosecuted the case said "This case is a sad reminder to the NHS of the importance of applying a properly thought-out and effective maintenance regime for its properties to ensure the safety of staff, patients and the visiting public alike. The case was brought not simply because of a hole in a path but on a more global charge of not managing a site safely. Our overall message is "think about your site and ensure it is maintained".

This case highlights the seriousness of not being proactive in managing health and safety. By ignoring health and safety hazards or only repairing those when they are reported increases the likelihood of accidents and incidents within a workplace.

In order to reduce the likelihood of such incidents appropriate risk assessments should be carried out on a regular basis and action taken on any findings. Daily walk around inspections should also be carried out therefore making health and safety proactive and not reactive as in the case highlighted above.

For further information on risk assessments or promoting a positive health and safety culture within your business please contact the office on 01604 654 111.

Q & A: WHAT IS THE LEGAL MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE WITHIN A WORKPLACE?

There is no maximum workplace temperature currently set within the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. Exceptionally hot weather has not been legislated for, but employers still have a duty to protect workers against heat stress.

Employers and employees must be aware of how to work safely in the heat, the factors which contribute to heat stress and how to reduce the risk of it occurring.

Employers must carry out a risk assessment which considers:

- Work rate – the harder someone works the greater the body heat generated.
- Working climate this includes air temperature, humidity, air movement and the effects of working near a heat source.
- Worker clothing and respirator equipment – this may impair the efficiency of sweating and other means of temperature regulation.
- Workers age, build and medical factors may affect an individual's tolerance.

CONTROL MEASURES TO REDUCE HEAT STRESS

The following are examples of ways to reduce heat stress in the workplace:

- More frequent rest breaks.
- Provision of cool drinking water and isotonic drinks.
- Relaxed clothing where possible and if it does not impair safety.
- Provision of portable air conditioning units or installation of fixed air conditioning units.
- Provision of mechanical aids to reduce the work rate.

For more information on heat stress please contact the office

POSITIVE STEPS UPDATES

RECRUITMENT

Positive Steps are pleased to announce that we have appointed a new Office Manager.

OFFICE MANAGER

Sue Turner joined Positive Steps in January 2007. Sue previously worked as a Funding and Audit Manager for a Further and Higher Education College.

Sue is responsible for undertaking the smooth running of the office and developing internal management systems which will benefit all of our clients.

Sue is a qualified trainer and a master instructor in Word and Excel. Having worked with Sue for the last 8 months she is an absolute asset to the company and many of our clients will agree.

NEW CORPORATE BROCHURE



Positive Steps are pleased to announce that we have a new corporate brochure available a copy of which is enclosed with the newsletter. The brochure details our range of services available to our clients and our

key areas of expertise which include:

- Health and Safety Services.
- Fire Safety Services.
- Disability Access Services.
- Display Screen Equipment Services.
- Health and Safety Management Plan.
- Health and Safety Policy Services.
- Training Services.
- Health and Safety Solutions for Property Managers.

If you know a client or customer who may be interested in our services then please contact our Office Manager Sue Turner on 01604 654 111 or e-mail sue@positive-steps.net

Further information on our services is available at our website at www.positive-steps.net

We would like to thank Matrix Print Consultants Limited in Desborough (01536 713811) for their assistance in the production of this brochure and our newsletters.

EFFECTIVE HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT STARTS WITH A POSITIVE STEP...

Positive Steps was founded on the basis that health and safety should help, not hinder the growth of a business. By understanding your company's aims and objectives we can identify workable solutions to meet your everyday and long term health and safety goals.

Our service based approach will enable your company to make the welfare of employees, contractors and clients a core part of your business aspirations.

We offer a comprehensive range of safety management services some of which are detailed below:

- **Access to Chartered Health & Safety Practitioners**
- **Health and Safety Risk Assessments**
- **Fire Safety Risk Assessments**
- **Disabled Access Audits**
- **Company Health and Safety Policy**
- **Display Screen Equipment Assessments**
- **Health & Safety Audits**
- **Health and Safety Training, including basic health and safety, fire safety awareness and fire warden training, disability awareness training, manual handling and DSE assessors training.**
- **Method statements**
- **Contractors Approval Scheme**

For further information on any of our services, please call **01604 654111** or e-mail office@positive-steps.net, one of our consultants will be happy to assist.



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