

Safetyline 52

H & S UPDATE APRIL 2005

The Education and Skills Secretary, Ruth Kelly, has announced that detailed **guidance on outdoor learning (trips and activities)**, covering the fair treatment of staff, will be published this summer. The guidance will make it clear that staff who take reasonable care and follow employee guidelines are, in the event of any unfortunate incident, protected by law, and, by carrying out straightforward compulsory safety checks, school staff can protect both pupils and staff on a school visit and minimise the risk of litigation. This follows NASUWT advice to its members not to run such trips for fear of legal action.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (Amendment) Regulations 2004 **prohibits the supply or use of cement with a Chromium IV concentration of more than 2 ppm**. This restriction also applies to cement products such as mortars, grouts, tile adhesives etc. These restrictions came into force on 17th January 2005 and are being introduced to help prevent allergic contact dermatitis from skin contact with wet cement containing Chromium IV.

Domestic electrical installation work in England and Wales has been brought under the legal framework of the Building Regulations (Part P) and came into force in January 2005. This places a legal requirement for safety for electrical installations in dwellings, although the IEE Wiring Regulations should have already been applied. Part P imposes specific requirements for a) the design, installation, inspection and testing of electrical installations, in order to protect persons from fire or injury, and b) to ensure sufficient information is provided so that persons wishing to operate, maintain or alter an electrical installation can do so with reasonable safety. The new legislation requires that electrical work is only undertaken by persons who are competent to prevent danger and injury whilst carrying it out, or who are appropriately supervised, and that the design, construction and suitability of equipment is "fit for purpose".

The European Agency has published a **fact sheet on workplace safety for people with disabilities**, focusing on ensuring health and safety without falling foul of disability legislation. This can be found on: - <http://agency.osha.eu.int/publications/factsheets/53/en/index.htm>

We have received reports from one University, about dangerous electrical equipment being sold in the UK. Essex University recently bought a **SONOPLUS HD 2070 Sonicator**, manufactured by BANDELIN Electronic (Berlin) who may also trade under the name "SONOREX". The equipment is supplied through Progen Scientific of Mexborough. The equipment failed its electrical safety check because almost none of the exposed metal was earthed, its 3 pin UK plug was incorrectly wired and fitted with an over-rated fuse. It is believed that the combination of faults could prove fatal if a simple single fault were to occur. If you have such equipment you should remove it immediately from use and get it tested by a competent electrician.

Research by DailyDiet-Tracker.co.uk has found that levels of **salt in bread** may be contributing to high blood pressure in the UK. They found that eating only five slices of one leading brand every day led to a 5g intake of salt – 83 per cent of the recommended daily intake for adults and 100 per cent of a child's recommended daily intake when aged between seven and 10. Salt is implicated in 200,000 deaths in Britain every year, mainly caused by strokes associated with high blood pressure. An average slice of bread contains 0.2g of sodium, which is the equivalent of 0.5g of salt. Some thick-sliced brands, such as Hovis' Extra Thick white, however, can contain as much as 1g of salt per slice. The Salt Manufacturers' Association said salt was "vital to life" and healthy people had no need to worry about their levels. However, Professor Graham MacGregor from St George's Hospital in Southwest London said that, if people stuck to the maximum recommended amount of 6g per day for adults, 35,000 lives would be saved each year.

Gas Safety UK indicate that the pressure ratings for stainless steel and brass **Flashback Arrestors for Hydrogen Services** are changing to 9 barG and 3 bar G respectively.