

Safetyline 48

H & S UPDATE DECEMBER 2004

The Fire Service is to introduce a new policy aiming to **reduce the number of false alarms** from remotely monitored fire alarm systems. From April 2005 building owners with poorly performing systems will be required to apply for a "Unique Reference Number" (URN) from their fire service to continue to receive an immediate response to their fire alarm. This will become mandatory for all non-domestic systems by April 2007. The Fire Service already requires the University to formally report on every alarm activation to which they respond. Reduction in the number of false alarms is vital if we wish to retain the current level of response by the Fire Service.

Over the next few months, the University will be training selected staff (and students where applicable) to use "**Evac Chairs**", which are designed to help those unable to evacuate by their own unaided effort, to evacuate a building with help in an emergency. Staff in the Main Library, in Accommodation & Catering Services, Portering & Security and in relevant departments will be trained, which takes around an hour to do. Evac Chairs will be located in all tall buildings and where a need is anticipated.

The University has produced a policy on **eyesight tests for DSE users**, which can be found on the Safety Services web pages in the Guidance Section.

The **number of people killed at work** rose in 2003/04 to 235, up 4% on the previous year. Falling from height continues to be the most common cause of death at work (67 in 2003/04) and 44 people died after being struck by a moving vehicle. The biggest single incident was the death of 21 cockle-pickers in Morecambe Bay in February 2004.

Information and advice on the **impact of a "prolonged" power cut** is now available on the Safety Services web pages at www.shef.ac.uk/safety/guidance/PowerOutageAdvice.pdf

The TUC has produced a number of **information sheets in construction and maintenance health and safety issues**, e.g. asbestos, electrical safety; vehicle safety; welfare provision; falls from height. To find out more about all TUC construction sheets visit: www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-8704-f0.cfm

Derby College are offering free vocational training. The "**Certificate in Health and Safety in the Workplace Level 2**" is modular and requires those participating to apply the principles learned in their own workplace to aid understanding. If you are interested, e-mail d.g.thomas@sheffield or c.cockayne@sheffield by 16th December following which a meeting will be arranged between Derby College and those interested. (See flyer www.sheffield.ac.uk/safety/derbycolflyer.pdf)

In 2002/03 there were almost 1,000 major accidents in the workplace involving **injuries to eyes**. For those who suffer an eye injury life can change beyond recognition in an instant. Eye injuries occur in a range of activities from professional sports and heavy manufacturing to outdoor work, working with substances, fireworks, high pressure water or gases, lasers, etc. It is in everyone's interests to ensure that they check controls designed to protect your eyes work satisfactorily, and if necessary to wear the appropriate protection to protect eyes from hazards.

The Shell Oil Company has issued a warning after 3 incidents in which mobile phones ignited fumes during fuelling operations. All 3 relate to car drivers in petrol stations. They have issued "**Four Rules for Safe Refuelling**" 1) Turn off engine. 2) Don't smoke. 3) Don't use your mobile phone - leave it inside the vehicle or turn it off. 4) Don't re-enter your vehicle during refuelling.

The HSE has published a report on **home-working** providing a series of good practice case studies, which with existing guidance offers practical assistance for employers and home-workers. The report can be downloaded from www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr262.htm