

Safetyline 60

H & S UPDATE DECEMBER 2005

The Eyecare Trust and Optrex have offered some “quick tips” to help minimise monitor screen fatigue. These are: -

- o Take frequent breaks (every 20 minutes or so);
- o Customise screen settings by ensuring the monitor is between 32 and 60 cm from the eyes and that the centre of the screen is 10-15 cm below the user's natural; eye level;
- o Use a font size of 12pt or above and make sure the screen is clean;
- o Position documents at roughly the same distance from the eyes as the screen to avoid having to re-focus when shifting view;
- o Dim the lights slightly (the ratio of ambient light to monitor light should be around 3 to 1);
- o Minimise glare / reflection;
- o Keep blinking! (When users concentrate on the screen for long periods the blink rate is said to slow.)

~~~~~  
**Buried Services** - ROSPA's Occupational Health and Safety magazine has a very useful article on the safety checks that should be made before and during excavation work. If any Sheffield University department wants a copy please contact “[safety@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:safety@sheffield.ac.uk)”.

~~~~~  
Electrical Procedures for Academic Departments - a revised ESTA assessment form is now available on the Safety Services web site in the Guidance section, for those of you who are required to work on electrical systems and equipment. The revised form will enable us to assess individual competence for working on electrical systems and equipment to ensure that individuals work safely by only working on systems and equipment to the level of their competence, and that only those who are deemed competent to work on such systems do so. Please complete the form as fully as possible, as each form is checked by specialists who need to know what you do and don't know in order to allocate an appropriate level of competence, as defined in the Procedures. The form can be found at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/safety/guidance/ESTAform.pdf>

~~~~~  
**HSE visited the machinery workshop in Mappin** on 15<sup>th</sup> November for a familiarity session for a new trainee to recognise the types of equipment and guarding that should be present in such environments. Although not a formal inspection, the feedback received indicated that the standards of guarding and controls were good for the type and age of the equipment present.

~~~~~  
Southampton University fire. The cause is not yet determined, and the Fire & Rescue Service investigation is continuing. The facility that was destroyed is one in which microelectronics related research was carried out, including clean room facilities. The main activities related to microchip technology, optical fibres and lasers. The fire started at about 06.30 am on 30th October and the brigade attended approx 7 minutes later. At the height of the fire 20 appliances were in attendance. The fire was brought under control during the afternoon. Nobody was in the building at the time of the fire, and fortunately nobody was injured.

~~~~~  
Since September Safety Services have run **45 Out of Hours training courses** with 640 people attending and 183 not turning up when booked onto a course - a 22% drop out rate!

~~~~~  
Only **24 more fun-packed shopping days to Christmas!** Don't forget, no flammable trees and trimmings and make sure they don't obstruct emergency escape routes and doors or fall on the unwary. Pack parcels and cables tidily round the base of trees so they don't trip anyone up. Get your tree lights tested if possible, but don't use your fingers! Use an RCD for your tree lights – we don't want any Christmas martyrs this year either! If you must have a Yule log, have a chocolate one, and no roasting chestnuts, or anything else, at your desk! Any mineral water dispensers found to be full of alcoholic drink may be removed for safe keeping.

Happy reading and a Merry Christmas to you all from Safety Services