

Safetyline 115

H & S UPDATE JULY 2010

The HSE has kicked off the UK's participation in a Europe-wide **campaign to raise awareness about the importance of safe maintenance**. The European Healthy Workplaces Campaign on Safe Maintenance 2010-2011 is coordinated by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work and is being taken forward in the UK by the HSE. It is estimated that between 25 and 30 per cent of all manufacturing-industry deaths in Britain result from maintenance activity, with fatalities and major injuries often linked to falls from height, or a failure to properly isolate machinery so that it doesn't restart during repair work. In order to reduce the number of incidents attributed to maintenance work, the European initiative aims to raise awareness among businesses and their workers, and to help them implement simple precautionary measures. The UK drive includes a new safe-maintenance section on the HSE website, featuring a checklist to assess how good current maintenance practices are, and offering pointers on how to improve. Free downloadable fact sheets and posters are also available. www.hse.gov.uk/

*Safety Services are arranging for South Yorkshire Ambulance Service to run a 3 day **First Aid at Work course** at 40 Victoria Street during the second week of September 2010. The course will be offered to staff who work full time, or nearly fulltime and if you wish to attend this course please let Anne Willcox (a.willcox@sheffield.ac.uk or extn 26100) or Debbie Fisher (d.l.fisher@sheffield.ac.uk or extn 27466) know as soon as possible. A letter will be sent to DSO's shortly*

Trimethylsilyl Diazomethane – the report in the attached URL indicates that this substance can be lethal if inhaled in any significant quantity. It is reported that two chemists have died over the past few years following work with this substance. If you use this substance in your laboratories, review risk assessments as soon as possible. <http://www.canadaeast.com/front/article/666039>.

*The NHS has launched a new campaign to warn people of the unseen damage that regular **alcohol consumption** can cause to health. As well as advertising on TV, a new website has been launched which illustrates the hidden damage alcohol can cause through video clips and interactive animations. There is also advice on how to cut down on alcohol with links to NHS tools such as an alcohol tracker phone "app" and a unit calculator. See www.drinking.nhs.uk*

REACH update – Downstream Users (that includes the University) can now check whether any substances we rely on are likely to be registered in time to meet the December 2010 deadline. The ECHA website provides information on what to do if a substance that should be registered in 2010 is not on the list. Check whether any high volume and hazardous substances you need are included at http://echa.europa.eu/chem_data/list_registration_2010_en.asp. Lower volume and less hazardous substances do not have to be registered this year.

*We've recently received a report that a Cookworks KE 7507 **cordless kettle failed its PAT test** because the cable was too light-duty for the power load and got warm when a full kettle of water was boiled. Visually the diameter of the cable is much thinner than that fitted to other similar kettles.*

You may have seen an email currently circulating about a house fire which the subsequent investigation concludes, allegedly, was probably caused by an **overheating, plug-in, room air freshener**. The story goes on to say that such devices have been the cause of many such fires. We have no evidence that the email is true or false, but pass it on for your information.

*Please remember it is both illegal and **unsafe to prop open fire doors** even if it is to improve ventilation during warm weather. Safety Services do carry a small stock of electronic door openers which can be used legally if required, but there is a small charge to cover the cost.*

Safety Services - working to make your University safer