

# Safetyline 114

H & S UPDATE JUNE 2010

HSE have issued a report containing test results for 30 new pieces of footwear to its ongoing project on slip resistance. The project is to improve the likelihood that employers will procure good **slip-resistant footwear** on the basis of informed choice. The latest report incorporates previous HSL test results to cover 86 pieces of footwear. See "Monitoring the slip resistance of emerging workplace footwear" HSE RR780 at [www.lexisurl.com/HSB281](http://www.lexisurl.com/HSB281)

HP are recalling 54,000 laptops that may have a potential battery fault, if you own a HP Compaq, HP Pavilion, or Compaq Presario please follow the link to their web site for further information. <http://bpr.hpordercenter.com/hbpr/M14.aspx> & <http://bpr.hpordercenter.com/hbpr/>.

Some of you may have heard that the UK is to adopt new signage to replace the current square, orange, **warning signs indicating "Toxic", "Corrosive", "Irritant", "Flammable"** etc on containers of liquids bought at supermarkets or from suppliers of substances used at work. The HSE has web pages explaining why the change is happening and what the new signs will look like. It will probably be some months before you start to notice the new signs appearing and it is possible that some manufacturers may place both new and old signs on containers for a period. Have a look at the pages at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/ghs/index.htm>. For those of you who have an interest in this topic, read on to see what changes are proposed for the current "Risk" and "Safety" phrases with which you may be familiar.

You may recall that HSE inspected laboratories and procedures in the University in February this year, and one of their recommendations was that a formal training programme should be implemented for all new starters expected to **work with Hazard Group 1 and 2 biological agents**. A draft training programme is currently being considered by the Local Genetic Modification Safety Committee, and when agreed will be circulated to all Departments working with biological agents to incorporate into their induction training programmes for new staff and students expected to work with biological agents.

With the warmer weather on the way (we hope) please remember that it is **illegal to wedge fire doors open** to improve ventilation as these doors are the built-in protection against the spread of fire. Where magnetic hold-backs aren't present or are too costly to install, there are single door devices which can be attached to doors which are designed to release in the event of a fire alarm. If you wish to discuss this further; contact Steve Massey (27463) or Koran Brown (26202).

During recent Fire Service audits of University buildings it was noted that some store rooms were so full that the effective operation of the **smoke detectors** may be compromised. For smoke detectors to operate optimally there should be no storage or obstruction within 500mm to the side or below the detector head. Whilst we realise that storage space is at a premium in most buildings it is nonetheless important that the effective operation of alarm and detection systems is not compromised. We therefore encourage staff responsible for store rooms to check that the space around detectors is kept clear.

The **Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations** came into force in April to protect workers from harm arising from exposure to hazardous sources of artificial light. Some sources of artificial light, particularly UV radiation and light from lasers can harm the eyes and skin of workers and must be properly managed. Workers in the University are generally well protected from dangerous sources of light so the regulations will mean few practical changes for us. Common sources of light in the workplace such as office lights, photocopiers and computers are not affected by the regulations.