

# Safetyline 58

H & S UPDATE OCTOBER 2005

The Staff Occupational Health Service (SOHS) are seeking to amend the current policy on **Hepatitis "B" Immunisation**, and will present the amended document to the next meeting of the University's Health and Safety Committee in November. As an interim arrangement SOHS ask that members of staff requiring Hepatitis "B" vaccinations for their work contact them, and SOHS will make appropriate arrangements for this to take place, and to ensure that personnel records are updated.

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*NHS report a **suspect scam** - senior staff are being phoned at work by a "company" claiming to have catalogues of special discounted goods for personal use, which will be sent to the recipient's home. Refusal to provide the home address results in the call being terminated abruptly. It is believed that the caller is seeking to find out who is not at home during the day.*

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The Fire Service are expressing concern over the number of **false fire alarm activations**, particularly in the Hicks Building in the past few months, although we are aware that contractors have been responsible for most if not all of them. The Fire Service are also suggesting that they may consider introducing reduced attendance at fire calls if the situation does not improve, as has been introduced in other parts of the country. It is imperative that we all play our part in reducing the potential for triggering false alarms resulting from smoke or steam, use of aerosols, raising dust or any other activity likely to create airborne particles capable of detection by smoke detectors. Development & Property Services have been asked to review Contractors activities.

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*"**Ladders are not banned - but they should be used sensibly**" was the message given by HSE on BBC's Newsnight programme on 9<sup>th</sup> September, to dispel the myth that window cleaners can no longer use ladders because they are banned by the Work at Height Regulations (WAHR). Sensible risk management is the key to securing compliance with health and safety regulations, including the WAHR. Since the introduction of the WAHR there have been rumours in various industry sectors claiming that ladders are "illegal" or "banned by HSE". A HSE spokesman stated these Regulations do not ban ladders but say they should be used only when all other safer alternatives for work at height have been ruled out. A risk assessment must show that the task is low risk and of short duration, or that there are site features that mean other equipment is not appropriate. If so, then ladders can be used."*

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The HSC has published the latest **fatal injuries statistics** which show that the number of fatally injured workers decreased by 7% to 220 in 2004/05 from 236 in 2003/04. Over half these occurred within the construction (72) and agricultural (42) industries. Falling from height is the most common cause of fatality (over 24%), with being struck by a moving or falling object, or being struck by a moving vehicle as the next highest category of fatal injury.

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*The Occupational Safety & Health Journal has an article on **risk assessing machinery** and work equipment, which would assist anyone assessing the risks from equipment or machinery used by students or staff. If anyone wants a copy of the article, please e-mail [Safety@Sheffield](mailto:Safety@Sheffield), giving your name and University address.*

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A **generic risk assessment for driving** on work business has been added to the list of risk assessments available on our web site. This can be used as a basis for your own assessments where this example does not fully satisfy your requirements or reflect the activities performed.

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***Fire Drills** will be carried out at all 160 University buildings during the two weeks commencing Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October. During this period, safety training and our normal services are likely to be affected. We ask you to bear with us during this period. Thank you.*