

Safetyline 106

H & S UPDATE OCTOBER 2009

The **Portable Appliance Testing Team** is being relocated to 40 Victoria Street and will from the end of September, be managed by Safety Services. Please direct any communication regarding the team or any requests to Bev Gouldsbrough on 27466 or b.gouldsbrough@sheffield.ac.uk

~~~~~  
*A year ago I reported that a care worker had successfully sued her Local Authority after she was injured using a ramp at a private home but not installed by the Council she worked for. The House of Lords has now overturned this ruling which means that employers should not be held liable for equipment not supplied by them particularly when it is not on their own premises. The ruling held that the ramp was not “**work equipment**” as it had been installed by others; the Council had neither the ability nor the right to maintain it; it was mostly used by people not employed by the Council and it was a permanent ramp which was part of the patients’ home.*

~~~~~  
A paper to be published in the September issue of European Respiratory Journal describes a number of cases (including two fatalities) of pulmonary fibrosis in young female workers in a Chinese paint spraying workshop. The authors attribute the development of this condition to exposure to polyacrylate **nanoparticles**. A recent item in Nature News includes comments by Ken Donaldson, a respiratory toxicologist at the University of Edinburgh and Anthony Seaton, an emeritus professor in environmental and occupational medicine at the University of Aberdeen suggesting that it is not the nanoparticle issue itself that is key to these cases of illness - link attached: <http://www.nature.com/news/2009/090818/full/460937a.html>

~~~~~  
*The European Chemical Agency has named 7 chemical substances as “**substances of very high concern**” (SVHC) and recommended they should not be used without specific authorisation as they are so hazardous to health, and likely to be the first to be subject to the tightest controls under REACH. They are: musk xylene; 4,4'-diaminodiphenylmethane (MDA); short chained chlorinated paraffins (SCCP's); hexabromocyclododecane (HBCDD); bis(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate (DEHP); benzylbutylphthalate (BBP); and dibutylphthalate (DBP). Chemicals identified as SVHC cannot be placed on the market or used unless a company is granted an “authorisation” if it can be shown that the risk from the use of the substance is adequately controlled.*

~~~~~  
The University subscribes to the “**Academic Support Program**” developed by the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety. This gives access to a huge library of MSDS's, a Registry of Toxic Effects of Chemical Substances (RTECS) and comprehensive health and safety information on pure chemicals (CHEMINFO). You can access this by clicking on the following URL <http://www.ccohs.ca/>, click on the arrow in “Web Info Service” in the left hand side bar, and then click on “Academic Support program” from the drop-down list.

~~~~~  
*The Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) has launched **ChemSpider**, an online chemistry search engine designed to collect together and index chemical structures and their associated information published on the Internet into a single searchable resource. It is free to use, available to all and boasts a database of over 20 million chemical structures from over 200 different data sources, including open access and commercial databases. A quick search for a chemical structure by name returns the compound's ChemSpider record, which has links to all the original data sources. Click <http://www.chemspider.com/>*

~~~~~  
Changes to the **First Aid Regulations** will be covered in the November's Safetyline.

~~~~~  
*The **H&S Induction package** is now available for all new staff starting at the University. [It will not be available from 12.01am to 07.00am on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October due to a server relocation].*

~~~~~  
Fire drills for all our buildings start on 5th October and will continue over 3 weeks this year.

Safety Services - working to make your University safer