

Safetyline 69

H & S UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2006

In October the long awaited Regulatory Reform Order 2005 comes into force. This legislation consolidates previous **fire safety legislation** and poses more stringent requirements on employers to manage fire safety in their buildings. We will be required to manage fire evacuations better than we have in the past and discussions have started with staff in some of our buildings to set up a "Fire Marshall" regime to "sweep" a building during an evacuation to check everyone is out. In addition we will be expected to manage the evacuation of those requiring assistance where unable to evacuate unaided. For those buildings with "evacuation lifts", when the lifts and associated communication systems are fully operational, Safety Services will arrange to train those requiring assistance and relevant staff in those buildings in the use of the equipment. For buildings without these facilities, discussions will have to take place between those requiring assistance, relevant Departments and Central Services to ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for all persons, including visitors, requiring assistance from all locations they are expected to work or visit as part of their time in Sheffield.

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*Student Registration has informed us that this year new students will not be provided with a "Registration Pack" as in previous years but that the relevant website addresses will be provided for each student to enable them to obtain the information for themselves. As such we will not be able to issue a "hard" copy of the relevant **Health and Safety Code of Practice** to each student as before and will therefore e-mail the relevant web addresses to every first year student to enable them to read, and if necessary print, the relevant Code of Practice. We have a few printed copies of the full Code of Practice for science and engineering staff and postgraduates and of the Abbreviated Code of Practice for non-science, non-engineering staff and postgraduates. The full version can be obtained on-line in PDF format at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/safety/fullcop.pdf>, and the abbreviated version in PDF format at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/safety/abbrcop.pdf>.*

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New staff and postgraduate students likely to work with electrical systems should be provided with a copy of the handbook "**Electrical Safety Procedures for Academic Departments**". This can be found in electronic format on www.shef.ac.uk/safety/elecproc.pdf or hard copies can be obtained from Safety Services by contacting us on safety@sheffield.ac.uk.

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*South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue (SYF&R) have indicated that they would be unlikely to enter a building to fight a fire where their firefighters might be exposed to risks to their safety as a result of the presence of **compressed gas cylinders** which can explode when heated by fire. This stance by SYF&R implies we should be proactively seeking to reduce the potential risks to their personnel by reducing the number of cylinders inside buildings, or protecting cylinders to minimise the potential for explosion. As a first step, we have asked that Departments holding compressed gas cylinders make an inventory of rooms with identified risks which can be made available to the Fire Service, and which would inform their "dynamic risk assessment" on the day enabling them to fight a fire more effectively.*

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RoSPA have put advice tips on their web site for "**Preventing Accidents in the Home**". The site can be found at <http://www.rospa.com/homesafety/advice/index.htm#general> and several topics.

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Later this month we will be sending out the **self-audit questionnaire** to HoDS and Departmental Managers which all departments are asked to complete as accurately as possible and return to Safety Services by the end of October. This year an additional page has been added to obtain your views on the qualitative aspects of our Service Level Agreements to enable us to report to the Health and Safety Committee on our performance against these standards in addition to the quantitative aspects we already report to the Committee. I will e-mail all those who respond to answer any points or queries raised or for clarification where required. Thanks for your help