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MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDERS

[AGA Ltd are strong advocates of having Mental Health First Aiders in the workplace](#)

A recent evidence review found employees who had received MHFA training had increased knowledge of mental health issues, including signs and symptoms, and confidence to offer support to those with a mental health problem. They also had a better understanding of where to find information and professional support.

The researchers cite a study conducted in Denmark, which found that “positive changes were sustained six months after the training”, including improved positive attitudes and reduced stigma towards people with mental health problems.

There is consistent evidence that MHFA training raises employee awareness of mental ill-health conditions.

Summary of the Evidence on the effectiveness of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training in the Workplace is based on the examination of 29 research studies and reviews of such research published between January 2000 and July 2017, and the analysis of UK-based MHFA training providers.

SCAFFOLDING FAQ'S

How often should scaffold be inspected?

A scaffold used for construction should be inspected before it is used for the first time and then every 7 days, until it is removed. It should also be inspected each time it is exposed to conditions likely to cause deterioration e.g. following adverse weather conditions or following substantial alteration.

Who is allowed to carry out a scaffold inspection?

All scaffolding inspection should be carried out by a competent person whose combination of knowledge, training and experience is appropriate for the type and complexity of the scaffold he is inspecting. Competence may have been assessed under The Construction Industry Scaffolders Registration Scheme (CISRS) or an individual may be suitably experienced in scaffolding work and have received additional training under a recognised manufacturer/supplier scheme for the specific configuration he is inspecting.

A non-scaffolder who has attended a suitable scaffold inspection course and has the necessary background experience would be considered competent to inspect a basic scaffold (ie a site manager).



Must I use scafftags?

No, it is not a legal requirement to use scafftags, but using a visible tag system to supplement inspection records is one way of recording that the scaffold has been checked before use.

How high should the guardrails on a scaffold be?

For construction work, the top guardrail should be a minimum of 950mm above the working platform and any gap between the top rail and the intermediate rail should not exceed 470mm. The Regulations also require toe boards to be suitable and sufficient to prevent people or materials from falling.

Do I need a design drawing for my scaffold?

A scaffold must either be erected to a recognised standard configuration, such as those in National Access and Scaffolding Confederation (NASC) document TG20 Volume 1 for tube and fitting scaffolds, or the manufacturers' guidance for system scaffolds, or it must be designed by calculation to ensure it has adequate strength and stability.

What training is required to put up a Tower Scaffold?

Anyone erecting a tower scaffold should be competent to do so and should have received training under an industry recognised training scheme eg Prefabricated Access Suppliers' and Manufacturers' Association (PASMA) or under a recognised manufacturer or supplier scheme.

What is the maximum height a tower scaffold can be erected to?

You must refer to the manufacturers' instructions when erecting a tower scaffold. This information will be stated there.

How can I prevent falls when putting up scaffolding?

You can prevent falls during the erection of a scaffold in a number of different ways, including, the use of advanced guardrails, special tools and equipment or safe methods of work. The National Access and Scaffolding Confederation (NASC) document SG4 gives details of the different methods that can be used to prevent falls when erecting, altering and dismantling scaffolding.



SCAFFOLD COLLAPSE

COMPANY FINED AFTER SCAFFOLDING COLLAPSES AT SCHOOL

A scaffolding company has been fined after scaffolding it had erected collapsed onto a neighbouring primary school. Cardiff Magistrates' Court heard Swain Scaffolding Limited had erected scaffolding 7m high and 8m long at the gable end of a residential property in Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan. On 5 May 2017 at approximately 1.30pm, the scaffold collapsed landing on a single storey roof adjacent to the playground of a neighbouring school.

At the time of the collapse, a group of nursery children were in the playground only a few metres away and minutes before the collapse the playground had been full of children playing after their lunch break.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the scaffolding was not designed or installed to withstand foreseeable loads. It was not tied to the adjacent building, nor did it have adequate bracing or rakers and was essentially a freestanding structure.

The investigation found that it was almost inevitable that the scaffolding would collapse, even in unremarkable weather conditions. Swain Scaffolding Limited of Heol Y Nant, Rhiwbina, Cardiff was found guilty of breaching Regulation 19(2) of the Construction Design and Management Regulations and was fined £24,000 and ordered to pay £3,452.50 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Gemma Pavey commented: "Failure to adequately design and install scaffolding, so that it can withstand foreseeable loads, creates risk to workers and members of the public who could be injured by an uncontrolled collapse.

"Companies should be aware that HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards."



SCAFFOLDING COMPANY SENTENCED

DORSET BASED SCAFFOLDING COMPANY SENTENCED AFTER SERIOUS INJURY TO WORKER

A scaffolding company from Poole in Dorset has been sentenced after a worker sustained serious, life changing injuries having fallen five metres through a skylight whilst at work. Poole Magistrates' Court heard how on 10 April 2017 49 year-old Paul Norris, was working for Solar Scaffold Services Limited to erect the scaffolding. Solar Scaffold Services Limited were contracted to erect an access tower and guard rails around the roof of industrial units in Christchurch during April 2017.

After completing work on the access tower, Mr Norris went to assist colleagues with the guard rails, gaining access to these via the roof. He fell through a skylight approximately five metres to the floor below and suffered numerous serious fractures to his pelvis, wrists, ribs, elbow and arm. Mr Norris remained in hospital for three weeks undergoing several operations and still requires ongoing physiotherapy. As a result, he has now been registered disabled, has had to move to an adapted flat and cannot return to work. His wife has been forced to give up work in order to care for him.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Solar Scaffold Services Limited, as an employer, failed in their duty to ensure the work at height was properly planned, supervised and carried out safely. Insufficient measures were taken to prevent a fall through the fragile roof whilst the building was being worked on.

Solar Scaffold Services Limited of Church Road, Poole pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(1) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. They have been fined £10,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3666.80. Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Caroline Penwill said: "Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related fatalities and injuries in this country and the risks associated with working at height are well known. "Mr Norris's injuries were life changing for both him and his family. He could have easily been killed. This serious incident could have been avoided if the work had been properly planned to reduce risk."



CANCER RISK FROM WELDING FUME EXPOSURE

New scientific evidence from the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), which has found that exposure to even mild steel welding fume can cause lung cancer and possibly kidney cancer, has prompted the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to raise its control standards.

The Workplace Health Expert Committee (WHEC), which was set up to provide the HSE with independent, authoritative and impartial expertise on workplace health, has endorsed the reclassification of mild steel welding fume as a human carcinogen and prompted the regulator to issue a safety alert STSU1 – 2019, which ramps up the HSE's enforcement expectations.

The HSE has informed employers that regardless of duration, it will no longer accept any welding undertaken without any suitable exposure control measures in place because there is no known level of safe exposure. The stricter enforcement measures come after the IARC evidence showed that general ventilation does not achieve the necessary control.

Control of the cancer risk will require suitable engineering controls for all welding activities that take place indoors, which includes local exhaust ventilation (LEV). The HSE has also called on employers to use extraction as this will also control exposure to manganese, which is present in mild steel welding fume and can cause neurological effects.

The regulator has also warned employers that where LEV alone does not adequately control exposure, they should supplement it with adequate and suitable respiratory protective equipment (RPE) to protect employees from the residual fume.

Appropriate RPE should be provided for welding outdoors, the HSE adds, and welders should be suitably instructed and trained in the use of these controls.

Businesses have been told that risk assessments should reflect the change in the HSE's expected control measures.

AGA TOP TIPS ON SITE

TOP TIPS FOR GREAT HEALTH AND SAFETY CULTURE

BUILD AWARENESS

Make sure every person within your company is aware of the hazards that exist on a construction site, before they enter it. This applies to customers and contractors too. A lack of awareness of the issues is the biggest danger that any industry faces and ignorance can easily put experienced workers at risk. By understanding the risks, dangers and potential perils, each individual can maintain the necessary level of alertness to danger.

TRAIN EVERYONE FULLY

All construction workers should be given full training on safety before they work on a construction site. There are plenty of resources available to help new workers get up to speed with the latest health and safety standards. E-Learning and on-site training is also available. More experienced employees should also attend regular refresher training.

DOCUMENT EVERYTHING

All certification evidence should be provided before dangerous activities take place. This must happen before employment. All work carried out on the site must also be recorded. This will help to mitigate any future legal risks.

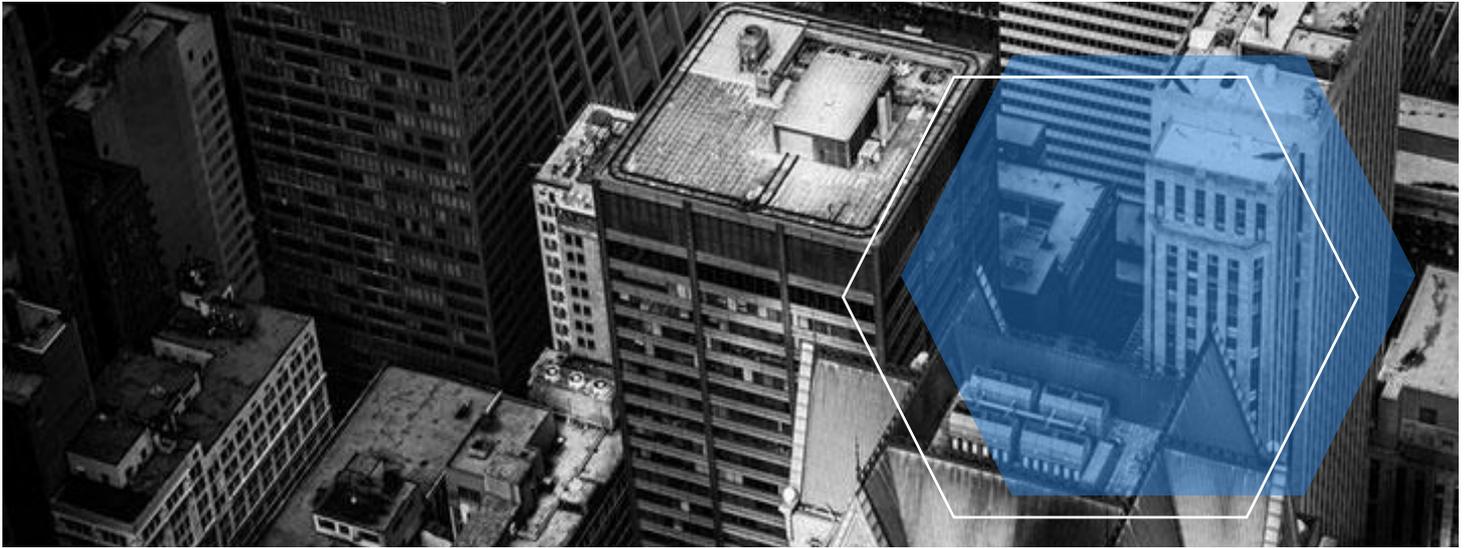
SUPERVISE EVERYTHING

The manager's job is to ensure that every task on the construction site is carried out safely and to the necessary standards - every single time. Good foremen must constantly keep an eye on every on-site worker and ensure that errors are handled according to procedures. Train your managers well.

ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY

Accidents are minimised when firms go above and beyond to invest in the resources that their workers need to be safe. Listen to teams working on site and ask for their input on what would make their jobs safer. Once you have a clear steer, be prepared to invest in order to reduce risks and to run a safe, healthy and well-managed business.





E-LEARNING

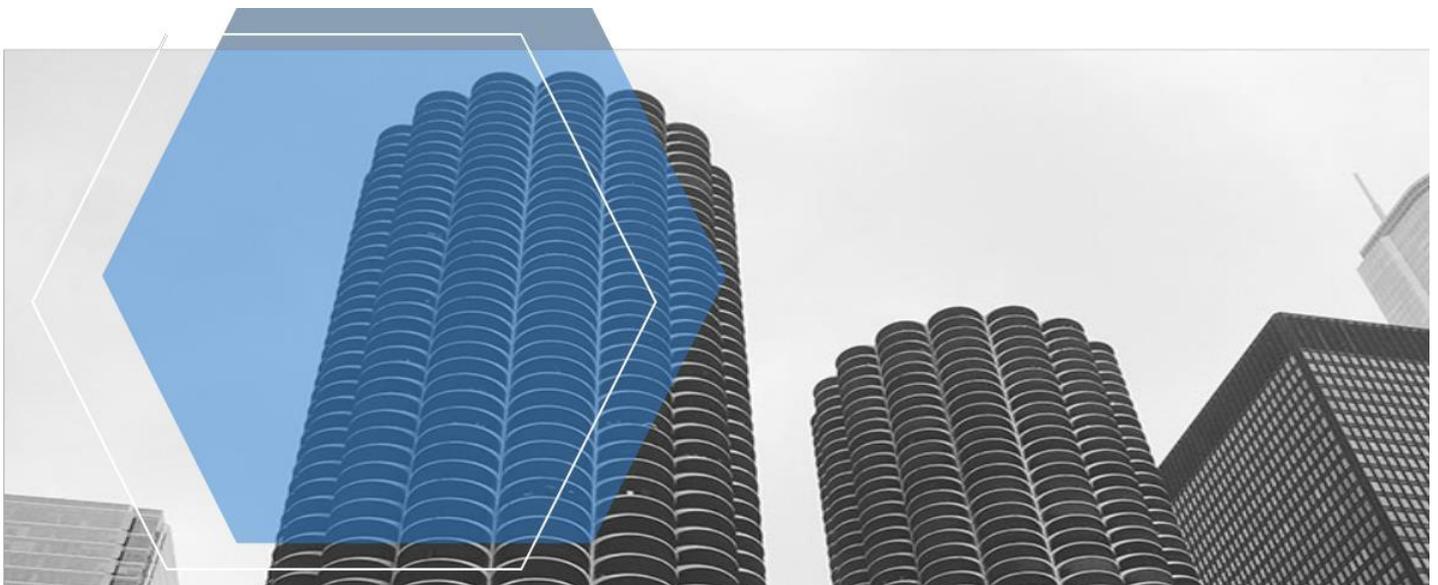
[CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR OUR WHOLE RANGE OF NEW ONLINE COURSES](#)

Whether you're looking to improve your own knowledge, or provide training to employees, AGA Ltd's new e-Learning portal will allow you to book easy to follow e-learning courses in a number of areas. Each course is followed by a short test to clarify your understanding regarding that topic, which after successful completion, you will be issued with a certificate. Get up to date, specialist training in Control of Substances Hazardous to Health, Fall Prevention, the Construction Design & Management Regulations 2015, Risk Assessments Manual Handling, Fire Safety and many more.

FREE CDM ADVICE

[CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL](#)

Do you need help understanding the CDM Regulations 2015? Not sure if you are complying with your duties correctly? We offer a free CPD consultation to keep you up to date. One of our experienced CDM Consultants will attend your offices or a location of your choosing and provide up to the minute, competent advice. We cover everything from Duty Holders to Design Risk Management and welcome any questions or scenarios you need help with. Please get in touch if this would be of interest to you.



DIDCOT INVESTIGATION CONTINUES

The HSE's science division analysing 870 tonnes of evidence three years after Didcot collapse



A statement from Thames Valley Police (TVP) on the third anniversary of the disaster said 870 tonnes of evidence are being forensically analysed at the site in Buxton, Derbyshire.

In addition, manslaughter charges and offences under the Health and Safety at Work Act are still being investigated.

Four men died on 23 February 2016 when part of the boiler house at the disused power station in Oxfordshire gave way during demolition work.

TVP assistant chief constable Jason Hogg said TVP and the HSE “remain committed to obtaining answers and justice for those who have been affected”.

He added: “A team of experts from HSE and Thames Valley Police, supported by independent scientific experts, continue to analyse thousands of exhibits and work through complex technical data which takes significant time to analyse and interpret.

“Further detailed interviews of both witnesses and potential suspects are also planned to further progress the investigation.

“Due to the complexity of the investigation we are working closely with the Crown Prosecution Service to make sure that all appropriate lines of enquiry are fully explored.”

Sarah Jardine, head of operations at the HSE's construction division, said the regulator was “working tirelessly” alongside the police and remained “committed to getting to the truth of what happened for the families”.

“The investigation will reveal if any criminal offences have been committed and it seeks to learn any wider lessons for the industry to help prevent anything like this happening again. More details of our investigation will be shared as and when we are able to do so,” she said.

The four victims – Michael Collings, Ken Cresswell, Christopher Huxtable and John Shaw – were employed by Coleman and Company, the demolition contractor responsible for decommissioning the site when the structure came down.

IOSH Magazine reported last year that Coleman and Company said its own investigations “clearly show” how the accident happened.

After a pre-inquest hearing at Oxford Coroner's Court in January 2018 the firm's director James Howard said: “We commissioned our own investigations which, in our view, clearly show why and how units one and two of the boiler house collapsed. We believe the findings highlight industry-wide practices that need to be challenged and reviewed.

“We now consider it essential to share this learning as a matter of urgency, so that immediate steps can be taken within the industry to prevent future loss of life and so that the families can begin to understand what caused this dreadful accident.”



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