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## BUILDING SAFETY FUND OPENS

Registrations are now being taken for the Building Safety Fund, the £1bn pot of money pledged by the government in the March Budget announcement.

Designed to help building owners and landlords replace unsafe non-Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding on residential and mixed-use commercial buildings that stand more than 18 metres high, the Building Safety Fund is open to both private and social sectors.

The fund will meet the cost of remediating non-ACM cladding systems where building owners are unable to do so in order to address some of the barriers to remediation being carried out quickly.

In the private sector, where eligible, the Building Safety Fund will meet the capital costs of removing and replacing unsafe non-ACM cladding systems on high rise residential buildings which would otherwise be passed on to leaseholders.

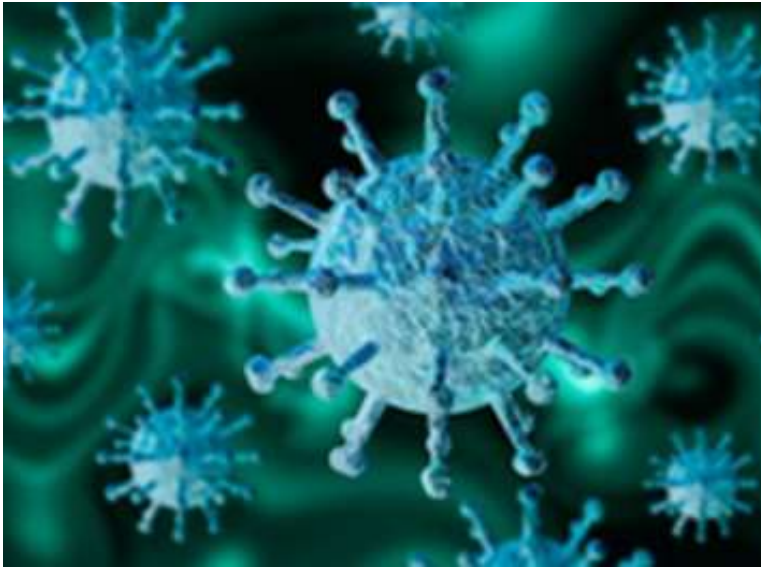
In the social sector, where providers qualify, the government will meet the capital cost of the remediation to high rise residential buildings regulated as social housing. For social providers, whose viability is not threatened by the cost of work, the government said it will open a claim process in July 2020 to meet the remediation costs which would otherwise be passed to leaseholders.

Building owners, freeholders or other responsible entities are being asked to register for the fund now to enable the program to confirm eligibility for the fund in principle, based on a technical assessment of the height of the building and an assessment of the non-ACM cladding system.

**The registration process** opened earlier this month and will remain open until 31 July 2020. Full guidance and an application process for buildings which meet the technical criteria will be available by the end of July 2020.

In January, the government announced that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) will establish a Building Safety Regulator once the new Fire Safety Bill has been enacted to implement the legislative recommendations from the Grenfell Tower public inquiry phase 1 report.

# USING AIR CONDITIONING & COVID 19



The risk of air conditioning spreading coronavirus (COVID-19) in the workplace is extremely low.

You can continue using most types of air conditioning system as normal.

However, if you use a centralised ventilation system that removes and circulates air to different rooms, it is recommended that you turn off recirculation and use a fresh air supply.

You do not need to adjust air conditioning systems that mix some of the extracted air with fresh air and return it to the room as this increases the fresh air ventilation rate. Also, you do not need to adjust systems in individual rooms or portable units as these operate on 100% recirculation.

## COMPANY FINED £1.1M AFTER WORKER INJURED IN FALL FROM HEIGHT

[A London-based relocation and refurbishment company has been fined after a worker was seriously injured when he fell from height.](#)

Luton Crown Court heard that on 5 September 2016, an engineer was testing a sprinkler system for leaks at a site in Hemel Hempstead. He climbed onto an internal roof and was inspecting the leak from an extension ladder. The ladder slipped away from him and he fell almost three metres into the gap between the internal roof and the external wall. The worker suffered severe blood loss, amounting to around half of his bloodstream. He required a blood transfusion and needed 14 stitches to his head. He also sustained a fractured vertebra and suffered soft tissue damage.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that reasonably practicable measures had not been taken to prevent a fall from the internal roof for both the engineer and other contractors working on the roof. The investigation found that Modus Workspace Limited, the principal contractor, had failed to discharge its duty to ensure those not in their employment were not exposed to risks, in particular that of falling from height.

Modus Workspace Limited of Greencoat Place, London was found guilty after a five-week trial of breaching Section 3 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The company was fined £1.1 million and ordered to pay costs of £68,116.18.

After the sentencing, HSE inspector John Berezansky, commented: "This case highlights the importance of taking reasonably practicable measures when planning and managing the risks regarding work at height within the construction industry.

"Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of work-related fatalities and injuries in this country and the risks and control measures associated with working at height are well known.

"The engineer's injuries were life changing and he could have easily been killed. This serious incident and devastation could have been avoided if basic safety measures had been put in place."

# 10 TIPS FOR A RESTFUL NIGHT'S SLEEP

## 1. SET THE SCENE

It is hard to sleep if you are not comfortable. Making sure the room is a good temperature, the light is low, and noise levels are kept to a minimum. It can help to open the window or turn on a fan to keep air moving through the room and increase your comfort levels. Blackout blinds can ensure light levels are kept low and you are not disturbed by an early summer sunrise!



## 2. RELAX

Reading a book, meditation, or other calming activities can help our brains to relax and let go of stimulating thoughts, making it easier to slip into sleep.

## 3. KEEP A ROUTINE

Our circadian rhythm is our 24-hour cycle and usually consists of around 8 hours sleep and 16 hours awake. There are many factors in our lives that can disturb these rhythms but keeping your sleep and wake times set can help to tell your body when to expect sleep.

## 4. GO TECH-FREE

The blue light emitted from screens such as phones, tablets, and even the TV can suppress the production of melatonin which is vital for sleep. The stimulation from technological devices can play havoc with our circadian rhythms and make it harder to both fall asleep and stay asleep.

## 5. MAINTAIN A HEALTHY, BALANCED DIET

Processed foods, and those rich in sugar or caffeine can act as stimulants and stop our brain from switching off. Try to reduce your caffeine intake after lunch and make sure your evening meal is a healthy one.

## 6. REDUCE SUBSTANCES

If you use tobacco in any form, quit. Nicotine makes it harder to fall asleep. Use alcohol cautiously. Alcohol depresses the nervous system, so a nightcap may help some people fall asleep. But this effect disappears after a few hours and may even lead to waking up throughout the night. Alcohol can also worsen snoring and other sleep breathing problems.

## 7. EXERCISE

Exercise is important for maintaining healthy energy levels and making our bodies tired enough to rest. Too little exercise can convince your body and mind that you are not actually tired. However, do not exercise too close to bedtime as the positive chemicals released by the brain can act as a stimulant, making you more alert for a period of time.

## 8. WRITE IT DOWN

Sometimes we just cannot let go of a thought that hounds us, or that list of things we need to do the next day. Keeping a pad and pen next to the bed will let you write down the important things so you do not have to worry about them and can relax into sleep.

## 9. SEE A PROFESSIONAL

If it is pain keeping you awake at night, and no amount of relaxation can help then it might be time to see a professional who can help to fix the physical problem and restore your sleep.

## 10. IF YOU REALLY CAN'T SLEEP, STOP TRYING

It sounds counter-intuitive but trying to force sleep when your brain and body are not ready for it can stimulate your senses and make it even harder to sleep. Go for a walk around the house, make yourself a hot drink, try relaxing in a different environment, and then try again to sleep. You might save yourself hours of restlessness.

# SITE-SAFETY GUIDANCE UNDER REVIEW AS 2M RULE REPLACED



Prime minister Boris Johnson announced on Tuesday that government guidance on always keeping two metres apart from other people is to be replaced by a “one-metre-plus” rule. Individuals are advised to stay two metres apart “where possible” but otherwise keep a distance of one metre while taking other measures such as wearing a face covering or ensuring they are not face-to-face with others.

New guidance for specific businesses is expected to be released in the coming days.

A Build UK spokesman said that the CLC is reviewing its site operating procedures and they would be updated before 4 July when the new measures come into place.

## HSE PUTTING FIRMS ON THE SPOT

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) says it carried out more than 1,000 spot checks in the first three weeks after it resumed inspections.

The safety watchdog restarted “proactive” inspections of construction and other sites in late May. Figures supplied to *Construction News* by the body for the three weeks between 26 May to 18 June show that the organisation carried out what it termed “spot checks” at 1,055 businesses across all sectors. The organisation defines spot checks to include phone calls as well as site visits. It did not break down the figures between types of sector.



Some 107 firms who were subject to spot checks were subject to follow-ups from inspectors.

A spokesman said: “HSE inspectors and local authority inspectors are visiting workplaces across a range of sectors following up reports or concerns about safety in the workplace including over COVID-19 and ensuring compliance. HSE is carrying out proactive checks to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to protect workers from COVID-19. “Putting duty holders on the spot and checking on how they are managing risks has always been part of our regulatory approach.”

# BORIS JOHNSON PROMISES THOUSANDS OF CONSTRUCTION JOBS TO BOOST RECOVERY

Prime minister Boris Johnson has confirmed his government's commitment to using construction to help rebuild the economy in the wake of the coronavirus crisis.

In a speech on Tuesday morning, he restated previous pledges to fund 40 new hospitals and provide large-scale investment in roads and rail projects.

A statement from Downing Street said the government was committed to an immediate £5bn package of capital investment in infrastructure projects, although some of those specifically named – such as a £1.2bn spend on schools – had been announced before, including in the Infrastructure and Project Authority's pipeline of planned projects two weeks ago.



Johnson said a taskforce called 'Project Speed' would be set up to "scythe through red tape" and get projects delivered faster and hinted at changes to procurement rules to speed up appointments.

He said: "With every flood-defending culvert that we dig, with every railway station, hospital or school that we build, we will of course be tackling the next wave of this crisis by helping to create thousands of high-paid, high-skilled jobs.

"Because we know in our hearts that the furloughing cannot go on forever, and as the economy recovers we also know that the jobs that many people had in January are also not coming back or at least not in that form; we know that is the biggest and most immediate economic challenge that we face."

A long-awaited National Infrastructure Strategy is due to be released in the autumn, Downing Street confirmed.

Balfour Beatty chief executive Leo Quinn welcomed Johnson's speech: "The prime minister's commitment to accelerate the UK's long-term infrastructure pipeline is a critical factor for the country's recovery. As well as stimulating regional and national economies, it will generate vast employment opportunities across the country and help provide our younger generations with employable skills. Without this, following the fallout from COVID-19, we could see widespread structural unemployment issues," he said.

But Pinsent Masons infrastructure partner Jon Hart warned that the "eye-catching" commitments lack substance. He said: "The previously announced 'pipeline' contains a number of anomalies in respect of projects that have already been announced. During such an economically turbulent time, the government needs to remove uncertainty around approaches to procurement, particularly for schools and hospitals," he added. "It will be interesting to see how tendering processes can be sped up and how the public-sector capacity gap within government for procuring schemes, when coupled with the industry's own skills shortage, is going to be addressed."

Federation of Master Builders chief executive Brian Berry called for the repair and maintenance sector not to be overlooked in government investment plans and called for a VAT cut to boost that market.

# AGA E-LEARNING COURSES

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- Basic First Aid
- COSHH
- Display Screen Equipment (DSE)
- Falls Prevention – Working at height
- Fire Safety
- Fire Warden \*Course cost is £20+vat\*
- Health and Safety Level 2 \*Course cost is £20+vat\*
- Legionella Awareness
- Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV)
- Lone and Remote Workers (Personal Security)
- Manual Handling
- Office Safety
- Risk Assessment
- Slips and Trips
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