

'BE READY' CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

This week the HSE launched the first phase of their building safety campaign and its new website.

The campaign aims to help and encourage everyone affected by changes to building safety law to:

- be ready – understand what is coming and how to prepare
- step up – take ownership and manage risks
- act now – comply with new law



The campaign's first focus is on being ready for high-rise building registration, the first operational function of the BSR to come into force under the Building Safety Act, 2022. The registration process is a crucial stage in setting up the new building safety regime and registering buildings in scope will be a legal requirement.

As registration will open in April, the HSE are encouraging people who own or manage high-residential buildings to be ready and prepare now.

[Sign up to our high-rise building registration mailing list](#) and they can let you know when it's time to register and provide helpful information.

[The building safety campaign website](#) will grow to provide a helpful destination point, providing simple, digestible information and resources to help everyone prepare for their new duties and understand the different functions of the BSR as they come online.

Find out more in our [building safety campaign press release](#).

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YOUNG WORKERS' SAFETY HIGHLIGHTED DURING NATIONAL APPRENTICE WEEK

This National Apprenticeship Week (6-12 February) is a timely reminder to make sure your young workers are receiving the training and supervision they need.

Workers are as likely to have an accident in the first 6 months at a workplace as they are during the whole of the rest of their working life.

Apprentices could be facing unfamiliar risks and are more likely to be new to the workplace. The HSE website has information on [health and safety for apprentices](#).

We've got a wide range of guidance on our [young people at work website](#), including:

- [what the law says](#)
- [your duties when you employ young people](#)



£120,000 FINE FOR BUILDING FIRM FOR MULTIPLE HEALTH AND SAFETY FAILINGS



The company has been fined for a catalogue of failings that included 2 builders being lifted into the air by a raised telehandler bucket.

HSE inspectors visited the housing development and issued the firm with a Prohibition Notice for inadequate scaffolding and Improvement Notices for a lack of welfare facilities and insecure fencing.

Inspectors had visited the site 4 times between November 2018 and August 2021. Repeated breaches were found including:

- a lack of sufficient welfare
- unsuitable controls for work at height
- inadequate protection from silica dust exposure

[Read this press release](#) for more details on the incident.

A person can die from choking in less than 10 minutes.²



If CPR is used within the first few minutes of cardiac arrest, it can triple a person's chance of survival.¹



In just 30 seconds, a small flame can turn into a major fire.³



MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS IN CONSTRUCTION

Ian Whittles, an HSE construction inspector, reveals the cultural challenges in the sector, the drive behind the Work Right campaign and the musculoskeletal benefits it hopes to achieve.

In the world of construction, musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are an age-old problem. But tackling them is gaining fresh focus – particularly amid estimates that they cost construction employers £646m per year (ARMA, 2019). In September last year, the GB Health and Safety Executive (HSE) launched its Work Right Construction campaign, which saw it carry out 1000 inspections in October and November to check how workers were moving heavy or bulky materials.

Ian Whittles (pictured, above), an HSE inspector in the construction division in Bristol, is among those on the campaign trail. 'This first year [of the campaign] was spent trying to raise awareness around manual handling and MSDs generally so we can start embedding the fact that, no, it isn't acceptable. This is a proper risk that is going to be with you for life,' he says.



'We've had a lot of success with the Dust Kills campaign and that has improved enormously. You can definitely see an understanding and an improvement. So with Work Right, we are trying to say that this is a serious problem, so don't ignore it.'

The HSE estimates that around 40,000 construction workers suffer injuries to their muscles, bones, joints and nerves (HSE, 2022). 'It is historically very unreported, unfortunately,' Ian adds. 'We know people have ongoing issues. Over half of ill health cases in construction are down to MSDs [HSE, 2022]. There are so many people you meet who are complaining about their backs – they've been lifting poorly for years.'

WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY



Early intervention is necessary to reduce and prevent MSDs, says Ian. 'It needs to be thought about long before it gets to site.' With a long history of inspecting and advising on window installation, he is used to seeing the impact a lack of planning can have. 'There's an awful lot of carrying things around manually when it could be sequenced so much better. A prime example is where you have heavy pre-glazed units and people think: "I'll put two or three people on it." Well, you can't physically get them around it. But if they'd planned for it, they could either mechanise it or have it dismantled by design and then it's in sections. But you're often faced with an immediate reaction of "Well, I'm here now."'

It leads to safety risks as well as health risks, Ian adds. 'With glazing you're not always trying to lift it – you're usually supporting it – so if it slips, very large units can land on you. So it's a safety issue. But the current campaign is predominantly about health because of the repetition, when there are simple aids that workers could use.'

A lack of collaboration and foresight at the design stage is one of two key issues in tackling MSDs on construction sites. 'We need pre-construction planning and dealing with the designers, influencing them where we can and tracking back – challenging large weights of windows, block weights, plasterboard, steel – and making sure they're thinking about how to install this stuff,' he says.

OLD SCHOOL

On-site there are cultural issues at play too. 'It's a very male-dominated industry, whereby the workers will often fall back to the "old-school" way of trying to lift things, because that's the way it's always been done, when there's really no need. It's trying to change that culture and show it isn't acceptable to try to lug around big bags of cement.'

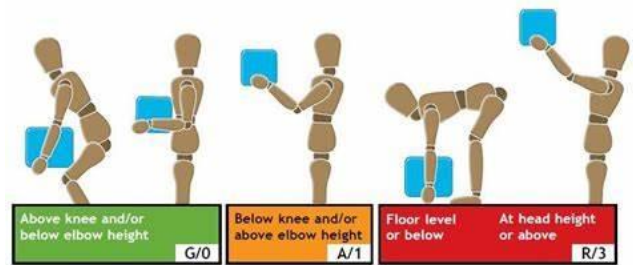
There are also barriers to assessing MSD risks effectively. 'You never quite know what you're walking into,' Ian says. 'You're there at different stages of the project, so sometimes you're faced with a situation in which poor design means something has been missed, and you're having to deal with the immediate situation on-site.'

The use of manual handling aids has the potential to make a huge difference, Ian says. 'We're getting a lot of positive responses to some of the simple handling aids that we're promoting, such as a little inflatable pump-up door lift – it's genius, it costs almost pennies, and it supports the door so while you're hanging it you can just fix it in place.'

But who's responsible for adopting and normalising risk-reducing measures? It's a two-way street, Ian suggests. 'The self-employed subcontractors need to look after themselves, but the site manager needs to be requesting the appropriate RAMS [risk assessments and method statements] systems and reading them, not just filing them, then monitoring to make sure the contractors are following their own systems. There are perfectly good solutions to the obvious risks, and any decent site manager knows that.'

BEST PRACTICES

Ian advises OSH professionals in the construction industry that the best way to help reduce the occurrence of MSDs is to make use of the MAC [manual handling assessment chart] tool – now an interactive online platform – to look for red flags. 'You've got a red, amber and green system, so it puts it in a simple way for OSH professionals to target the risk areas of the operation,' he says.



'MSDs aren't just about box-lifting. In construction especially, you've got weights, posture, ergonomics, carrying distance, restrictions, how you hold it and centre of gravity,' Ian adds. 'Look at some of the manual handling RAMS when you see them on-site and challenge them. Because an awful lot say nobody will lift more than 25kg – and that isn't a sufficient assessment. It needs to be much wider and explore all the factors.'

The Work Right campaign should equip the sector to make positive changes.

SCA AND HEART ATTACK



Do you know the difference?

Cardiovascular diseases are the number one cause of death globally, affecting almost 50,000 people each day. 1 Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) and heart attack are two common cardiovascular diseases with low survival rates. Both can be deadly, but they are not the same. Do you know the difference?

It is a common misunderstanding that sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) and a heart attack are the same thing. Knowing the differences between these diseases and how to take immediate action is essential to maximising a victim's chances of survival. When either SCA or a heart attack occurs, it's imperative you call local emergency services. And if the victim has no pulse, immediately start CPR, and find an automated external defibrillator (AED).

Learn more about the difference between SCA and a heart attack in the "Do you know the difference?" poster.

[Download Poster](#)

ST JOHN SPOTLIGHT: SHINING A LIGHT ON WHAT WE DO!

St John Ambulance is well known for being the nation's leading first aid training provider and for our volunteers who can be seen at events up and down the country, but did you know we offer so much more?

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We want to show you all the amazing things that St John people do, and ways that you could get involved, so each month we will be shining a spotlight on something we do that you might not have been aware of.

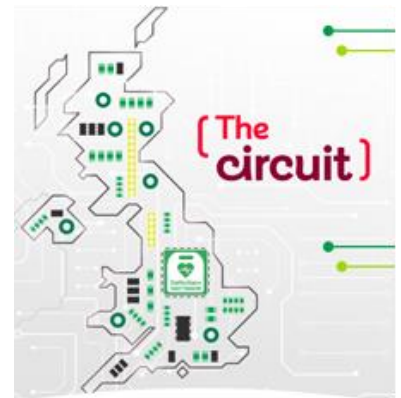
This month we are shining a spotlight on our partnership with The Circuit!

The Circuit is the national defibrillator network which maps defibrillators across the UK, connecting them directly and automatically to each ambulance service.

At the moment, many defibrillators never get used because emergency services don't know where they are or how to access them. This can cost lives and that's why this new infrastructure is so vital.

We're proud to be working in partnership with British Heart Foundation (BHF) to establish and run the network.

[Find out more today >>](#)



APPRENTICES SHOULD LEARN ABOUT SILICOSIS, SAY MPS

A cross-party group of MPs has said construction apprentices must learn about the risks of inhaling silica as part of their syllabus, one of ten priorities aimed at preventing silicosis.



The All Party Parliamentary Group for respiratory health says there have been 'significant developments' both in technology and understanding of how respiratory diseases can be prevented and treated since its last report in 2020.

"The lessons learned during the pandemic must serve to transform the diagnosis, treatment and management of respiratory diseases and ensure silicosis has a place in prevention policies," says the foreword.

The report calls on HSE to 'urgently' look into real time monitoring of dust particulates and to consult the industry on using the technology more widely. Occupational histories should be shared with GPs to enable early detection, it says. Further, silicosis should be made a notifiable disease with the NHS and industry regulations to help doctors.

Silicosis is the most common chronic occupational lung disease worldwide. It is a progressive, degenerative clinical respiratory condition which causes crippling health conditions and can lead to death. RCS is the most toxic form when it is freshly 'fractured' through processes such as stonecutting, drilling and polishing and it becomes a fine enough dust to reach deep inside the lungs when inhaled.

Read the 'Improving Silicosis Outcomes in the UK' report [here](#).

CELEBRATING MY WHOLE SELF DAY 2023

My Whole Self is MHFA England's campaign for workplace culture change, culminating on My Whole Self Day. This year's celebrations fell on Tuesday 14 March.



We believe wellbeing and productivity fuel one another. Our people and teams are most effective and creative when everybody feels psychologically safe and is seen, heard, and valued. Our free resources are a great way for organisations to get involved on 14 March, from activities, and panel discussions to My Whole Selfies.

This year, we are focusing on managers' critical role in creating working environments where everyone is safe to bring their whole self to work. Managers are the vital link between wellbeing and productivity. Despite this, data published today reveals that a third of managers feel out of depth supporting their team with mental health concerns, rising to almost half of managers under 25. Over a quarter of those we asked said more support and training from their employer would help them to create a team where everyone feels they can bring their whole selves to work.

[Read more about My Whole Self Day](#)

To support you and to support your managers, we will be publishing a free Managers' Toolkit on My Whole Self Day. It will be packed full of practical advice and support, to help your managers ensure individual objectives, team plans, and the business's vision and mission work in harmony.

Keep an eye on our digital channels to be one of the first to download it.

MHFA's Chief Executive's thoughts on the importance of My Whole Self

Finally, as part of our launch for My Whole Self 2023, Simon Blake, Chief Executive of MHFA England, has shared his thoughts on his time as a manager, why good mental health competency is the key to best-supporting employees and the importance of being able to bring your whole self to work.

Bonus tip: Look out for #MyWholeSelf and #MyWholeSelfie on social media on the day!

[Read our latest Chief Executive blog](#)

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT... THE GOLDEN THREAD

The HSE has published some guidance on information you will need to manage and keep if you are responsible for high-rise residential buildings.

The 'golden thread' is both the information that allows you to understand a building and the steps needed to keep both the building and people safe, now and in the future.



This guidance on [storing your building's information - the golden thread](#) is for anyone responsible for a building's information throughout its life-cycle. This includes building companies, principal designers and principal contractors, and local authorities.

NEW TEXT SUPPORT SERVICE



Our campaign partner [Mates in Mind](#) has launched a free and confidential text service to reach individuals who may be struggling with their mental health.

The Be A Mate text service is aimed at those who work in construction, transport or related industries.

Simply text “BeAMate” to 85258 and trained volunteers can help with issues including anxiety, stress, loneliness or depression and are available 24/7 (please don't WhatsApp).

£175K FINE AFTER CONCRETE PUMP CAUSED BRAIN TRAUMA

[London concrete firm Singh Will Mix It has been convicted of safety failings after a worker was hit in the head by a concrete pump while being operated by an untrained colleague – the company has since become insolvent.](#)

The accident involved a man in his thirties who sustained head injuries while working on a domestic property in Crouch End in March 2019.

[Worker struck by concrete pump boom](#)

A concrete pump operator was cleaning the pump's hose after it had been used to pump concrete for a ground floor extension at the property. As the pump operator was doing this, the pump became blocked, leading to a sudden release of pressure and causing the hose to whip and strike the worker in the head. The pump operator was not qualified to operate the machine.



'We will not hesitate in prosecuting where contractors and operatives do not have the appropriate skills, knowledge, experience and training when carrying out dangerous tasks and putting people at risk.'

The injured worker spent seven months in hospital following the incident, sustained brain trauma, and continues to have difficulties with his speech, memory and movement.

Southwark Crown Court was told that Singh Will Mix It Ltd failed to ensure workers had the necessary skills, knowledge, experience and training to carry out the work and they failed to have appropriate health and safety systems in place to carry out the work safely.

[Force of sludge injured trio of contractors at power station](#)

The HSE inspector leading the investigation said the safety watchdog will not hesitate in prosecuting where contractors and operatives do not have the appropriate skills, knowledge, experience and training when carrying out dangerous tasks and putting people at risk.

The company was found guilty of breaching sections 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act. It was fined £175,000 and ordered to pay £75,722 earlier this month. In October 2022, three years after the incident, it entered into insolvency.

FACE FIT TESTING LEGAL REQUIREMENT



AGA have 6 fully qualified Face Fit Testers ready to come to your site

Where respiratory protective equipment (RPE) is used as a control measure under Health and Safety Legislation, it is vital that the selected RPE is adequate and suitable. RPE must reduce exposure to as low as reasonably practicable, and in any case to an acceptable level (e.g., below any applicable Workplace Exposure Limits or Control Limits).

To ensure that the selected RPE has the potential to provide adequate protection for individual wearers, the ACoPs supporting COSHH, CAR and CLAW stipulate that tight-fitting RPE must be fit tested as part of the selection process. This will help to ensure that inadequately fitting facepieces are not selected for use. Ill-fitting facepieces can create inward leakages of airborne contaminants.

AGA can advise you on:

- The different types of RPE available
- The different grades of RPE and how to understand what the right RPE for the task is
- The different exposure hazards and ill health from working with wood, silica and construction dust
- The law and requirements for RPE use
- How to correctly fit RPE

We can then test the face fit of RPE on your operatives using our testing kit and provide certification for each operative.

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 host a virtual session 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 info@aga-ltd.co.uk


AGA E-LEARNING COURSES

Whether you are looking to improve your own knowledge or provide training to employees, our E-Learning courses will guide you through the regulations, your legal duties, identifying hazards in your workplace and suitable control measures. Each course is followed by a short test to clarify your understanding regarding that topic, upon which after completion, you will be issued a certificate.


Each course costs £15+vat unless otherwise stated. The courses we currently offer training in are:

- Asbestos Awareness *Course cost is £25+vat*
- Abrasive Wheels
- 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
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (Overview)

Risk Assessments - What is a Hazard and What is Risk?



A risk assessment involves identifying the hazards present in any working environment or arising out of commercial activities and work activities.



Basic Ladder Awareness - Directive Key Requirements.

Classification	Duty Rating	Maximum Static Vertical Load	Application	Symbol
Class I	130kg	175kg	Industrial	
Class EN131	115kg	150kg	Commercial	
Class III	95kg	125kg	Domestic	

The value of the safe working load is intended to cover the weight of a single person and their equipment and is also referred to as the 'Maximum Static Vertical Load'.



For more information or to book our courses visit www.aga-ltd.co.uk/e-learning-courses.



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