

ONE YEAR OF THE WORKING MINDS CAMPAIGN

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WORKING MINDS
MAKE IT ROUTINE
REACH OUT > RECOGNISE > RESPOND > REFLECT

The Invisible load on small business owners
IN CONSTRUCTION

- Long hours
- Balancing finances
- Material supplies
- Shorter, darker days
- Being rained off
- Intense workloads, juggling jobs
- Keeping customers and clients happy
- Unexpected problems

Prevent work-related stress and support good mental health

The graphic features an illustration of a construction worker in a green high-visibility jacket and yellow hard hat, carrying a clipboard. A red checkmark icon is positioned above a list of stressors. A dark grey box with a question mark icon contains the text 'Prevent work-related stress and support good mental health'. The background is a light grey with a dark grey arrow pointing right.

HSE's Working Minds campaign celebrated its 1st anniversary last week. The campaign calls for change across Britain's workplaces where stress, depression and anxiety are responsible for half of ill-health reports amongst workers.

The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) and The International Stress Management Association (ISMA UK) are the latest organisations to join the campaign which means the number of partners has more than doubled since launch.

This month the campaign has also reached a significant milestone of one thousand champions signed up to support, share and amplify messages.

One year on, our partners share their views on why mental health and stress prevention need to be a priority in these challenging times. [Watch the video from campaign partners.](#)

You can also [hear from HSE Chair, Sarah Newton](#) about the importance of working together.

Useful information and resources

- download our [prevent stress at work poster](#)
- download a [Talking Toolkit](#)
- download a [risk assessment template](#)
- visit the [Working Minds website](#)
- sign up to the [Working Minds ebulletin and/or become a campaign Champion](#)
- get your free [Every Mind Matters Mind Plan \(nhs.uk\)](#)

£600,000 FINE FOR BUILDING CONTRACTOR AFTER FIRE RISK FAILINGS

The firm's director was also ordered to complete 100 hours of unpaid work and personally fined £4,200, following serious and repeated failings in managing the risk of fire during work at a construction site.

The company had previously been subject to HSE interventions after risks of a fire had been identified across a number of sites over several years.

Evidence gathered during this proactive HSE investigation indicated that the company director regularly attended the Regent House site and failed to implement improvements from previous HSE interventions.

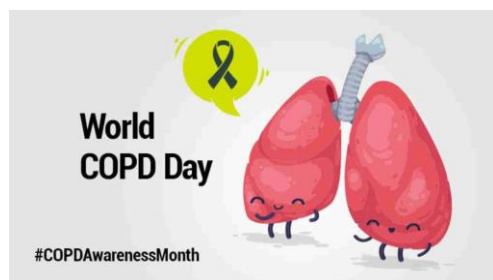
To find out more details on these incidents [read this press release](#).

Our website has more information about [fire safety in construction](#).



WORLD COPD DAY

17 November is World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Day.



COPD describes a number of breathing problems where there is damage to the breathing tubes and air sacs within the lung.

Breathing in certain dusts, fumes, chemicals or gases in the workplace can cause serious long term lung damage. This includes prolonged exposure to airborne particles of respirable crystalline silica (RCS).

[Further information on COPD can be found on our website](#)

NEW WORK-RELATED STRESS PODCAST EPISODE RELEASED

The latest episode of the HSE Podcast focuses on the importance of work-related stress and supporting good mental health in the workplace.

To coincide with Working Minds' 1st anniversary, HSE Chair Sarah Newton is joined on the podcast by one of the world's foremost experts on wellbeing, Professor Sir Cary Cooper.

Professor Cooper is the author/editor of over 170 books, has written more than 450 scholarly articles for academic journals, and is a frequent contributor to national newspapers, TV and radio.

[Listen to the podcast](#)



FIVE TIPS TO AVOID DIGGING INTO DISASTER

Tony Abbott of ECA member firm Modus Utilities explains why contractors need to plan ahead when digging on construction sites in busy towns and cities.

Digging into urban streets is potentially dangerous work. And it seems that it's becoming riskier.

The [Energy Networks Association](#) (ENA) reports that electric cable strikes have increased 46% since the end of lockdown. On average, 70 people each year are seriously injured due to contact with underground electricity cables.

The problems are exacerbated when working somewhere like the City of London, where there are narrow streets and heavy traffic.

There is guidance on how to approach these projects safely. [HSG47 Avoiding Danger from Underground Services from the Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) outlines three important stages of safe work during excavation:

- Planning the work;
- Locating and identifying buried services; and
- Safe excavation.

But not everyone is following this guidance. Figures show that around a third of construction workers fail to check for underground electricity cables when digging on site.

Information can be found in HSG47 from HSE: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg47.htm



Going underground advice

Research your project carefully

Designing the preferred route includes making a request for statutory drawings for utilities. It's also crucial to take the time to walk the route. This will provide a clear view of any potential physical challenges in the area.

Visiting the site can help to identify risks in the work location that may not be marked on the drawings. This is more common than many realise, as drawings rarely keep pace with new roads, street furniture, pipes and cables.

Plan and check

Although a CAT 4+ scanner can be used to track electrical cables, it does not provide accurate depths. If cables have been laid incorrectly this can be very dangerous to anyone working on the project. We have seen high voltage cables laid at 180mm when the depth should be 750mm. Planning and checking literally saves lives.

Give it enough time

We're all aware that projects are increasingly time pressed. Working anywhere in London is challenging because permissions to access roads may have to come from more than one local authority and involve [Transport for London](#) (TfL).

None of these bodies want to close city roads for very long. As a result, it's likely that the excavation contractor has limited time and space to get its work done. And that's often when safety takes a back seat.

Ideally, a contractor should work 500mm either side of a cable to avoid contact. But, if a cable is close the edge of the work area, it could be tempting to lift the tarmac, 'just to see what's there'.

This is when accidents can happen. It's vital to take the time to stop work and assess how to proceed to undertake the work safely (by extending the work zone or extending the permit, even if that seems counterintuitive).

Planning ahead means decisions are not left to a time-pressed site foreman, who may make a bad decision with the best intentions.

Pre-plan and assess proposed routes

This can highlight danger areas. Potential problems can be controlled by instructing excavation teams on how to investigate (for example, by implementing no-dig zones). Clear instructions can reduce the risk of a bad decision being made, despite a team's best intentions.

The need to excavate in our city streets is growing. New buildings require the utilities that are vital for modern life. What's more, government is driving the development of low-carbon district heating systems in urban areas, which will add to the challenge as more pipes are laid.

Safety first

As contractors, we know the importance of prioritising safety for ourselves, our colleagues and our clients. With accidents on the rise on excavation projects, it's time to put that same focus on ensuring that contractors adopt robust safety standards out on our city streets.

HSE HEALTH AND WORK CONFERENCE

[If you were unable to make it to HSE's Health and Work Conference this year, it's not too late to sign up for a video-on-demand ticket.](#)



The free, virtual event promoted better prevention, management and control of the common risks and causes of occupational ill-health across Great Britain.

As well as discussions on topics including musculoskeletal disorders and work-related stress and mental health, HSE unveiled how it is supporting the government's response to the Health is Everyone's Business (HiEB) consultation.

[Sign up for your video on-demand ticket](#)

NEBOSH HSE CERTIFICATE IN MANAGING STRESS AT WORK

[Last month NEBOSH launched its new course, Managing Stress at Work, which was developed jointly with HSE.](#)

The course is designed to provide straightforward, practical skills in identifying the causes of workplace stress, and developing interventions to prevent, control and reduce stress.

[Find out more and book](#)



HSE ANNUAL STATS REVEAL WORRYING TREND AROUND MENTAL HEALTH

HSE's annual statistics show stress, depression and anxiety make up almost half of work-related illnesses.

The [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#) has published its [annual statistics](#) on work-related ill health and workplace injuries revealing a worrying trend around mental health.



The report shows the estimated number of workers in Great Britain suffering a work-related illness is 1.8 million with stress, depression, and anxiety make up around half of cases. The figures show there were an estimated 914,000 cases of work-related stress, depression, or anxiety in 2021/22 and an estimated 17 million working days were lost due to work-related stress, depression, or anxiety in 2021/22. This is over half of all working days lost due to work-related ill health.

The statistics also show the impact work-related ill health is having on Great Britain's economic performance including 36.8 million working days being lost due to work-related ill health and non-fatal workplace injuries in 2021/22. In 2019/20, the annual economic cost of work-related injury and new cases of ill health (excluding long latency illnesses such as cancer) was £18.8 billion.

The figures also show that 123 workers were [killed in work-related accidents](#) in 2021/22 and a further 565,000 workers sustained a non-fatal injury.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact on the workplace. Of the 1.8 million suffering a work-related illness, an estimated 585,000 reported it was caused or made worse by the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. Around a quarter of these workers were in human health and social work. In addition, 123,000 workers suffering with COVID-19 believed they were exposed to the virus at work.

HSE's Chief Executive, Sarah Albon, said the report highlighted the need for a greater focus on worker's wellbeing, "Stress and poor mental health is the number one cause of work-related ill health. The effects of stress, depression, and anxiety can have a significant impact on an employee's life and on their ability to perform their best at work. Britain is one of the safest places in the world to work but we need all employers to do more and take seriously their responsibilities to support good mental health at work."

CONSTRUCTION AND MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS (MSDS)

Over the past two months, HSE's construction inspections health initiative has been focused on manual handling and the risks associated with MSDs.

Last year, 40,000 construction workers reported suffering with work-related MSDs, which can equate to time off work and potentially long-term pain.

Throughout the campaign we have shared examples of good practice that our inspectors have found, including this inexpensive lifting aid that was being used at a site by carpenters to help with positioning while fitting heavy doors. The inflatable air bag is designed for lifting loads of up to 135kg.

Simple aids like this can take the strain of the materials weight while they are being installed; therefore reducing the risks of musculoskeletal disorders over time.

Visit the HSE's [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#) pages to see further examples of good and bad practice that our inspectors have found during the campaign. In case you missed it, our free webinar on moving and handling risks, in partnership with IOSH, is now available to [watch on demand](#).

RESPIRATORY HEALTH INSPECTIONS CONTINUE ACROSS GREAT BRITAIN

[HSE's health campaign targeting manufacturing businesses across the country continues.](#)

HSE inspectors are visiting businesses where materials such as stone, rocks, tile, sand, and clay are used. These workplace inspections focus on the risks of respirable crystalline silica (RCS), which can cause debilitating respiratory conditions.

As well as November being Lung Cancer Awareness Month, November 17 was World COPD Day. Visit our campaign pages for further [information about occupational lung diseases](#) and how to control the risks to workers' health.



THE BUILDINGS REGISTER

[The Building Safety Act 2022 requires all higher-risk buildings in England to be registered on a Buildings Register.](#)

Under the Act, higher-risk buildings are defined as 18 metres or more in height, or 7 storeys or more with at least two residential units. We usually refer to these as high-rise buildings.



It is expected that building registration will open in April 2023 subject to the required secondary legislation being in place. All existing and new buildings in scope will need to be registered.

The Act also introduces two new roles, Accountable Persons (APs) and the Principal Accountable Person (PAP). It will be the PAP who is responsible for completing the registration process for their building.

If you currently own or are responsible for managing buildings, we will keep you up to date over the coming months with more information on the PAP/AP roles and the registration process.

BSR ONLINE: FURTHER RESOURCES AND FEEDBACK



For further information and resources available to help you prepare for the introduction of the Building Safety Regulator and the new building safety regime in England, [visit our building safety webpages](#).

We've produced some shareable email banners, social graphics and factsheets for you and your organisations to use at events and to encourage your networks to sign up to this ebulletin.

[Access the resources](#)

If you have any questions or comments, ideas or suggestions, please share and email us at BSR-Communications@hse.gov.uk

FACE FIT TESTING LEGAL REQUIREMENT



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

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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