



March 2009

Health & Safety News

Property Developers – an excellent guide to Health and Safety issues for anyone already in or considering entering the property development market.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/property-developer/index.htm>

Asbestos - The greatest single cause of work-related deaths in the UK. One in 17 British carpenters born in the 1940s will die of mesothelioma - a cancer of the lining of the lung caused by asbestos - according to new research published in the British Journal of Cancer.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/hiddenkiller/resources.htm>

HSE Podcasts – provide helpful guidance, easily accessed from your PC – they can be downloaded at www.hse.gov.uk/podcasts/

GOSHA news

- **Membership Packs** – these packs have been produced with lots of valuable information and resources. They will be available for all GOSHA members. If you have not received your pack please contact a member of the committee
- **Next Open Meeting – 19th March** – the next open meeting, the subject will be Noise, there is a change of venue from our usual for this meeting. It is being held in Les Cotils.
- **Managing Health & Safety Briefing** – the briefing is now scheduled for 20th March and is being held in conjunction with the GTA.
- **Practical site visits** – Next site visit is on 1st April 2009 to the Guernsey Brewery. The tour starts at 6pm and will cost £3. Places are limited to 24. Please contact a member of the committee if you wish to book a place.
- **Raising issues/training needs etc** - our next committee meeting takes place on 18th May 2009 – if you would like to raise any matter, please contact a member of the committee (details at www.gosha.org.uk).
- **5th Anniversary Dinner** – GOSHA reaches the grand age of 5 this year and we are planning a dinner on 26 November 2009, which will include health & safety awards. Details will be sent later in the year but please put the date in your diary.

GOSHA reminders

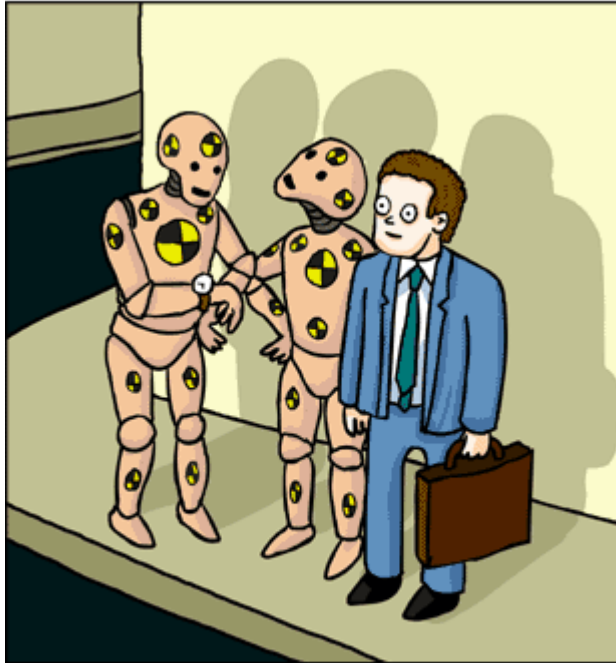
- **Website** – we hope you continue to find www.gosha.org.uk helpful.
- **GOSHA window stickers** – are a great way to make others aware of our association and highlight your concern for workplace health and safety in Guernsey. Please ask any member of the committee for yours.
- **Committee Meeting Minutes** – are displayed on www.gosha.org.uk, so you can keep up to date with all we are doing.

Accident Prone

The official definition of accident prone is “having more than the average number of accidents”. Is this a myth or are there actually some people who are really more accident prone than others. A quick look at the accident records suggests that this is true; indeed a recent study in Holland suggests that 1 in 29 people have over a 50% higher chance of having an accident than the rest of the population. Although the study showed that these unlucky people exist, it did not show which type of people are most at risk. However it does say that some contributing factors are youth, inexperience, job dissatisfaction, sleeping disorders, smoking and the absence of good safety training.

If there are these unlucky people around then I for sure want to be working well away from them! So how can we identify these unlucky souls?

BifSniff.com



Allen might not have been so relaxed if he'd realised he was standing next to an accident waiting to happen.

First of all according to a British study those of us who are not accident prone (or lucky) have the following attributes

Openness: This is the tendency to learn from experience and to be open to suggestions from others

Dependability: This is the tendency to be conscientious and socially responsible

Agreeableness: This is the tendency not to be aggressive or self-centred. People with low levels of agreeableness tend to be highly competitive and less likely to, for example, comply with safety instructions.

Lucky people are also more likely to have a hobby, and more likely to have a high IQ.

The battle of the sexes reveals that men particularly between the ages of 18-45 are far more likely to have an accident; in fatal car crashes that ratio is close on 3:1.

Of course this is building up a nice picture of what an accident prone person might be like, but is it really them or the activities that they do?

The BMA published a paper on the effect of Harry Potter on accident prone children. It suggests that at the time of book launches the amount of injuries happening to these children reduced significantly when compared to the release of the latest “craze” whether it is skate boarding, BMX or mini motos. Should Harry Potter books be issued as PPE?

Some say it's all in the stars and that Gemini's are restless, easily bored or frustrated and it seems far more accident prone. If you are a Capricorn then you are least likely to have an accident. Other studies have shown that the accident prone person will have difficulties in switching from paying attention from one task to the next; they will have difficulty picking out figures from a background and they believe that they cannot control what goes on around them.

According to the studies there are people who are accident prone, but accidents are not caused by one accident prone person. To quote RoSPA's (Royal Society for the prevention of Accidents) “We do not accept that certain people are accident prone, although we do believe that certain factors at different times of life will make a person more likely to have an accident. These factors could be lack of sleep, stress, distractions, inexperience etc.”

If we were to label those people as accident prone then it would be very easy to blame them for their actions rather than them accepting responsibility for their own actions.

In order to achieve an accident free environment we all need to recognise the value of training, acceptance of rules and procedures and continue to spot and report hazards and near misses.

Ode to the Accident Prone

There was a young man from Capelles
Whose story I have to tell
He didn't wear his hard hat
His head it went splat
And now he is very unwell



Now he worked in the main power station
With all of the noise and vibration
He never wore his ear plugs
Cos they were for mugs
Now sounds are a constant frustration

He was last seen in the compound
Just walking around and around
Where no one took heed
For the need to kill speed
He was hit and squished into the ground

Some say that his luck had run out
Most likely just arse-ing about
But when working with tools
If he had followed the rules
He'd still be with us, no doubt

Paul Craig, Health and Safety Manager, Guernsey Electricity



They said he was accident prone
That's why he was working alone
He didn't give two hoots
So didn't wear his boots
And both feet got crushed to the bone.