

## Environmental and Waste Management Group



### December 2018 Newsletter

#### **LEGISLATION, REGULATORS, GUIDANCE & CONSULTATIONS**

##### **Latest statistics illustrate the effects of work-related stress**

Last month we highlighted HSE's release of annual injury and ill health statistics for Great Britain; the latest health and safety statistics also reflect the impact of work-related stress, with the latest annual figures (2017/18) revealing that

- 595,000 workers are suffering from work-related stress, depression or anxiety
- 239,000 new cases of work-related stress, depression or anxiety were reported
- 15.4 million working days were lost as a result of work-related stress
- 44% of all work-related ill health cases were due to stress, depression or anxiety
- 57% of all working days lost were due to stress, depression or anxiety

(Read more: [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk))

Signposting HSE's report, Public Health England, noted that the legacy of past asbestos use continued to dominate mortality statistics, accounting for approximately 40% of the 12,000 deaths attributed to work-related respiratory disease in 2017. Lung cancer associated with other agents accounted for approximately 23% and COPD associated with other agents for approximately 32% of the total. In 2017 to 2018, coal workers' pneumoconiosis accounted for 136 deaths, asbestosis 500, silicosis 11, and allergic alveolitis and byssinosis 5.

HSE has estimated that mesothelioma deaths (2,500 in 2017 to 2018), due to asbestos exposures prior to 1980, will peak and start to decline from 2018 to 2019. (Read more: [www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

##### **Scottish salmon farm medicine is significantly impacting local marine environments**

A comprehensive marine research project undertaken by SEPA, 'Fish Farm Survey Report – Evaluation of a New Seabed Monitoring Approach to Investigate the Impacts of Marine Cage Fish Farms', examined environmental impacts from eight Scottish fish farms.

Samples were analysed for the sea lice medicine Emamectin Benzoate (EmBz) and Teflubenzuron (Tef), last used in 2013. The medicines were detected in 98% and 46% of samples respectively, with residues more widely spread in the environment around fish farms than had previously been found. Moreover, the research concluded that the impacts of individual farms may not be contained to the vicinity of individual farms. (Read more: [sepa.org.uk](https://www.sepa.org.uk))

### **More beaches are failing tests over dirty water**

The number of swimming beaches that failed to meet minimum standards for water quality rose this year despite a dry summer reducing incidents of sewage overflowing. Nine bathing beaches in England were rated as “poor” after weekly tests during the summer by the Environment Agency, up from seven last year and six in 2016.

[Surfers Against Sewage](#), the conservation charity, said that the increase in beaches rated poor was worrying because a dry summer should have resulted in an improvement. Overflow systems, from which raw sewage spills directly into waterways that flow into the sea, are triggered by heavy rainfall. The charity said that it had issued 1,352 sewage alerts this summer, based on information from water companies. This was down on the 1,605 issued in the summer of 2017, which was wetter. (Read more: [thetimes.co.uk](#))

### **Michael Gove philosophizes**

Environment secretary Michael Gove outlined his philosophies and thinking which influence current policies at the Theos’ annual lecture last month and said that environmental policies should be linked with social justice and that a radical fusion between conserving nature and resources and belief in the advancement of science was what was needed. (Read more: [theosthinktank.co.uk](#))

### **Waste Prevention Implementation Fund open for applications**

Preventing waste from occurring is always preferable to managing it. Resource Efficient Scotland is inviting grant applications for projects with a focus on raw materials savings and carbon savings; ‘moving waste up the waste hierarchy makes good business sense and is better for the environment’. (Read more: [resourceefficientscotland.com](#))

### **Further environmental checks for Grenfell site**

Additional environmental checks are to be carried out in and around the Grenfell Tower site to provide extra reassurance to survivors and local residents. In a contentious statement to many involved in the assessment of land contamination, the governments press release noted that ‘contaminated land is generally considered to be very low risk to health, as any impact would be the result of exposure over a long period’, rather contradicting previous Public Health England briefings to senior health agency staff, commenting that “huge concentrations” of potential carcinogens had been found in the dust and soil around the tower in west London, and in burned debris that had fallen from the tower. (Read more: [gov.uk](#))

### **Government launches guide to support drive for inclusive workplaces for disabled staff**

The UK government is urging large companies to reveal how many of their workers have a disability or a mental health condition in an effort to create greater transparency in the workplace. (Read more: [ioshmagazine.com](#))

## **Wood Recyclers Association officially launches its Fire Prevention Plan Guide**

The document is the first sector-specific guide on FPPs to be produced. It has taken more than a year for the WRA to develop it, which it has done in close association with the Environment Agency.

(Read more: [woodrecyclers.org](http://woodrecyclers.org))

## **EEF Health and Work Survey 2018**

Britain's manufacturers are urging the Government to use its review of Occupational Health (OH) provision in the UK to ensure all companies have access to an OH service as part of a much wider overarching strategy for tackling more than just work-related sickness absence.

Findings of a major survey of work and health by EEF and specialist insurance broker Howden show that time spent waiting for medical surgery/investigation, tests and recovery from surgery remains the biggest cause of work-related absence followed by stress. (Read more: [eef.org.uk](http://eef.org.uk))

## **INCIDENTS AND PROSECUTIONS**

### **Amey refuse collector dies in lorry collision**

The incident occurred in the morning of 4 December and will be investigated by the police and HSE.

(Read more: [ealingtoday.co.uk](http://ealingtoday.co.uk))

### **Site remediation contractor fined after wagon driver fatally injured**

Sirius Remediation Ltd has been fined £45,000 (and £10,000 in costs) after a driver died when his wagon overturned while he was tipping spoil onto a stockpile for re-use on site rather than being sent to landfill.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Medani Close said: "Stockpiling should only take place under the control of a suitably qualified temporary works manager or co-ordinator as it can be a high risk activity if not properly managed. Where stockpiling is unavoidable, tipping should take place on a firm, level surface, preferably at the base. Plants such as a crawler dozer, tracked / loading shovel or excavator should be used to create and maintain the stockpile and its edges should be clearly demarcated with barriers." (Read more: [hse.gov.uk](http://hse.gov.uk))

### **Fine for failing to undertake asbestos assessment**

A residential property development company has been fined £16,000 (and £5,000 in costs) after failing to carry out an asbestos survey prior to undertaking extensive refurbishment works.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Jenny Morris said: "The risk of exposure to asbestos could so easily have been avoided if the company had carried out a suitable and sufficient asbestos assessment to identify the presence of asbestos within the property prior to commencing refurbishment work. Companies should be aware HSE will not hesitate to take appropriate

enforcement action against those that fall below the required standards.” (Read more: [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk) and see below).

### **Company sentenced after death of employee**

A Sheffield metal recovery company has been fined £60,000 (and £15,000 in costs) for breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 after an accident where a worker suffered fatal crush injuries. The deceased had been working with his son, dismantling a 3-core reactor vessel, when an unsupported metal section weighing approximately 1.3 ton fell and fatally crushed him between the fallen cylinder and a shipping container.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Tim Johnson said: “This was a tragic and wholly avoidable incident, caused by the failure of the company to put in place adequate risk control measures to prevent sections of the steel ring falling onto employees. A suitable and sufficient risk assessment would have clearly identified the risk of serious injury from falling sections and should have prompted the company to put in place adequate, properly designed support and devise a safe system of work for the employees to carry out the dismantling operation.” (Read more: [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk))

### **Carlsberg pollution leads to restorative charity donations**

Carlsberg has paid £120,000 to environmental charities as part of an Enforcement Undertaking accepted by the Environment Agency following two pollution incidents in the River Nene in Northampton. (Read more: [www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

### **Office for Nuclear Regulation prosecutions**

The Office for Nuclear Regulation is pursuing prosecutions for offences relating to three issues under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. Two of the three cases relate to conventional, industrial-type incidents. The third relates to an incident that caused radiological contamination to a site employee. (Read more: [onr.org.uk](https://www.onr.org.uk))

## **OTHER TOPICS OF INTEREST**

### **Asbestos**

Experts gathered in Manchester last week for the first BOHS Faculty of Asbestos Assessment and Management scientific conference. IOSH presented on NTTL, and we heard some disturbing facts... (Read more: [iosh.co.uk](https://www.iosh.co.uk))

### **Sedentary office workers at risk of chronic health conditions**

A study in the scientific journal Occupational Medicine warns that exercising at the weekend will not protect office workers who sit down for long periods from chronic health conditions. (Read more: [som.org.uk](https://www.som.org.uk))

## **Children's lung development reduced by diesel pollution**

Research led by Prof Chris Griffiths, of Queen Mary University of London, and published in [The Lancet Public Health](#), looked at more than 2,000 schoolchildren in London. The study concluded that within London's low emission zones, a smaller lung volume in children was associated with higher annual air pollutant exposures. It is the first such study in a city where diesel pollution is a significant factor, and has implications for cities around the world. It also showed that charges to deter polluting trucks from entering the city did reduce air pollution a little but did not reduce the harm to children's lungs. (Read more: [theguardian.com](#))

## **High Court overturns decision on Northumberland opencast**

A High Court judge has overturned a decision by former communities secretary Sajid Javid to refuse plans for an opencast mine in Northumberland on grounds including the scheme's potential impact on climate change. (Read more: [bbc.co.uk](#))

## **Smart technology**

Smart technology could be the solution to minimising worker injuries and ensure a safer construction site? (Read more: [pbctoday](#))

## **New health and safety qualifications launched**

EEF and the University of Portsmouth have joined together to launch a new series of qualifications for health and safety professionals, which they claim are rooted in a real-world business setting. The first qualification is an entry level certificate of credit in health and safety management, which meets the academic requirements for Technical Membership (TechIOSH) without the pressure of exams. (Read more: [shponline.co.uk](#))

## **National Safety and Health Conference**

The 2019 National Safety and Health Conference (NSHC) will be held on Thursday 13 June at the Holiday Inn Royal Victoria Sheffield. In its 44<sup>th</sup> year in 2019, this conference will be led by four IOSH Groups:

- Public Services Group
- Education Group
- Health and Social Care Group, and
- Environmental and Waste Management Group

Early-bird bookings are now available. (Read more: [iosh.co.uk](#))

## **The 'Future of Gas II'**

HSE announced its second annual 'Future of Gas' event to be held in London, February 2019. The recently issued IPCC special report 'Global Warming of 1.5 Degrees' calls upon the global community

to take urgent action to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. This urgency reinforces the importance of projects that are already underway in the UK to investigate the decarbonising of heat.

The conference focusses on key challenges to the broader energy sector, the importance and challenges of technologies that are designed to partially or fully replace natural gas in the grid, and the increasing diversity and complexity of the gas system and the steps being taken to understand, control and regulate it. (Read more: [govdelivery.com](http://govdelivery.com))

### **Brownfield Land Scotland 2019**

The 12<sup>th</sup> annual Brownfield Land Scotland conference will take place on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019 in Edinburgh. The event will update delegates on the current planning and regulatory backdrop for brownfield land development in Scotland, as well as providing practical solutions to many of the current challenges faced when risk assessing and remediating contaminated and derelict land. (Read more: [environment-analyst.com](http://environment-analyst.com))