

Environmental and Waste Management Group



March 2019 Newsletter

LEGISLATION, REGULATORS, GUIDANCE & CONSULTATIONS

Packaging and recycling consultations

The Environmental and Waste Management Group (EWMG) would be grateful to receive any comments or feedback members may have on the following waste and recycling issues by early April:

- Plastic Packaging Tax (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plastic-packaging-tax>);
- Packaging waste: changing the UK producer responsibility system for packaging waste (<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-quality/consultation-on-reforming-the-uk-packaging-produce/>);
- Waste and recycling: making recycling collections consistent in England (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/waste-and-recycling-making-recycling-collections-consistent-in-england>);
- Introducing a Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for drinks containers (bottles and cans) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/introducing-a-deposit-return-scheme-drs-for-drinks-containers-bottles-and-cans>).

EWMG will pool all responses received and submit to DEFRA on behalf of IOSH.

Please use the webpage addresses or embedded links to access the consultation documents and submit any feedback or comments to us via our e-mail address (ewmg@ioshnetworks.co.uk)

Landmark report urges major review of work at height culture

The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Working at Height has published a new report urging the Government and the construction industry to undertake a major review of work at height culture

The report, [Staying Alive: Preventing Serious Injury and Fatalities while Working at Height](#), is the result of a 12 month inquiry by the APPG exploring why the 18% of people who die at work do so as

a result of a fall from height, and what steps can be taken by government and industry to prevent incidents for the 10 million people in the UK that work at height.

The Working at Height report makes four primary recommendations to reduce the overall number of falls:

- The introduction of an enhanced reporting system through RIDDOR.
- The appointment of an independent body that allows confidential, enhanced and digital reporting of all near misses, to be shared with government and industry to inform health and safety policy.
- The extension of the Working Well Together – Working Well at Height safety campaigns.
- An equivalent system to Scotland’s Fatal Accident Inquiry process extended to the rest of the UK.

Alison Thewliss, Chair of the APPG on Working at Height and MP for Glasgow Central said: “Every fall from height can have life-altering consequences for workers and their families. There is an urgent need to improve work at height culture, yet this issue is sadly not at the top of decision-makers’ agenda... We have made comprehensive recommendations to government, but the APPG’s work does not stop here. Our report must be the first step in a wider process of systematic and cultural change. It is now time for policy-makers to act.” (Read more: ioshmagazine.com)

“I want you to panic.”

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, speech to Climate Action Society. (Read more: gov.uk)

Waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) collection: code of practice

How a designated collection facility (DCF) must manage its separately collected WEEE. (Read more: gov.uk)

OTHER TOPICS OF INTEREST

UK wind farms generate 40% of the UK power

On Sunday 17th February 2019 UK wind farms contributed nearly 40% to the UK’s power consumption. Turbines in the UK produced 238 GWh of power which equated to 39.66% of all electricity in the country, putting it far ahead of all other energy sources. (Read more: renewablesnow.com)

Recycling tyres into concrete improves fire-resistance

Reusing fibrous materials from tyres in concrete has been found to reduce spalling where concrete explosively cracks under intense heat.

University of Sheffield researchers have found that reusing the textile reinforcement from old tyres helps to prevent layers of concrete shattering off under heat stress. Man-made polypropylene fibre

is commonly used in concrete to prevent spalling. This study is the first to show that the using reclaimed materials can have the same effect. (Read more: newcivilengineer.com)

UK in danger of missing EU household recycling target

The UK achieved a recycling rate of 45.7% for waste from households (WfH) in 2017, according to figures published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The figure trails behind the EU's target to recycle at least 50% of WfH by 2020, although it is an improvement on the 45.2% recorded in 2016.

While all UK countries reported improved WfH recycling rates in 2017, Wales remains the only country exceeding the EU target with WfH rates of 57.6%. Nevertheless, the UK remains on track to meet the EU's other waste target on biodegradable municipal waste (BMW) sent to landfill (35% below 1995 baseline by 2020).

Defra's figures also document a dramatic uptake in energy from waste (EfW) disposal methods. Energy recovery was used to treat 7.3m tonnes of waste in 2016 compared to 1.9m tonnes in 2014, a jump of over 270%. The amount of waste sent to landfill meanwhile rose 8.5% to 52.3m tonnes over the same period.

Shortly after the publication of the figures, the government launched a series of consultations to overhaul the waste system, cut plastic pollution and move towards a more circular economy (see 'Packaging and recycling consultations' above). The proposals would see packaging producers pay the full cost of dealing with their waste, more consistent household recycling and a deposit return scheme for cans and bottles. The changes are set to form a key part of the government's pending Environment Bill, due to be introduced in the second session of parliament. (Read more: gov.uk)

Builders urged to tackle waste plastic and packaging

A new campaign has been launched to drastically cut the amount of waste plastic and packaging in the construction sector. The Considerate Constructors Scheme's Spotlight on plastics and packaging campaign comes after a survey revealed the vast majority (81%) of people working in the industry believe it is not doing enough to reduce its consumption of plastics and packaging. (Read more: shponline.co.uk)

JCB waste and recycling site safety videos launched

JCB has launched a series of online videos aimed at improving health and safety within the waste and recycling sectors. Working in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Waste Management, Biffa, HW Martin Group, EU Skills, Mentor Training and Waste Masters Hire, the construction equipment company has produced a series of five 'WasteWise' films that promote the safe and efficient operation of handling machinery at waste sites. (Read more: shponline.co.uk)

Mild steel welding fume reclassified as a human carcinogen

Following new scientific evidence that exposure to all welding fume, including mild steel welding fume, can cause lung cancer, and identifying limited evidence of linkage to kidney cancer, HSE has with immediate effect changed its enforcement expectations in relation to the control of exposure of welding fume.

In order to protect workers HSE require all businesses undertaking welding activities to ensure effective controls are in place. In buildings or within enclosed spaces, Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) or 'on-gun extraction' should be provided and correctly used to control the fume at source arising from welding activities. Where LEV alone does not adequately control exposure, it should be supplemented by adequate and suitable respiratory protective equipment (RPE) to protect against the residual fume. Noting that general ventilation does not achieve the essential welding fume exposure control, appropriate RPE should also be provided for welding outdoors.

Regardless of duration, HSE will no longer accept any welding undertaken without any suitable exposure control measures in place, as there is no known level of safe exposure. (Read more: [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk))

Pollution map reveals unsafe air quality at almost 2,000 UK sites

London, Leeds, Doncaster and Maidstone are among the worst affected. Almost 2,000 locations across the UK have levels of air pollution that exceed safety limits, according to a pollution map released by campaigners. In 2017, the worst location for nitrogen dioxide pollution was Kensington and Chelsea, followed by Leeds and Doncaster. Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is one of the most harmful pollutant gases, irritating the lungs and potentially causing breathing difficulties. Road traffic is a leading source. (read more: [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com))

Waste Management 2019: Implementing Effective Strategies for Brownfield and Contaminated Land

This new event, which will take place on 21 May in London, will explore issues such as hazardous waste and how to manage it; construction waste management and reuse through to landfills; mining possibilities/issues; developments; coastal and updates on the tax regime and DoWCoP.

The programme is currently being researched, to be notified when it is ready [click here](#).

National Safety and Health Conference: Looking after the worker

The 2019 National Safety and Health Conference (NSHC) will be held on Thursday 13 June at the Holiday Inn Royal Victoria Sheffield. In its 44th year in 2019, this conference will be led by four IOSH Groups including the EWMG. (Read more: [iosh.co.uk](https://www.iosh.co.uk))

Safety & Health Expo

18-20 June 2019, ExCeL London. (Read more: safety-health-expo.co.uk)

IOSH 2019

For the practitioners, the leaders and the innovators in safety and health; the global conference for safety and health professionals, 16-17 September 2019. (Read more: ioshconference.com)