

NISO Safety Observer  
April 2019; Issue 39

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Newsletter of the National Irish Safety Organisation

April 2019 - Issue 39

Welcome to the April 2019 edition of **The Safety Observer**, the newsletter of the National Irish Safety Organisation. The Safety Observer contains information that is current, informative and useful to subscribers. We keep you up to date on what is happening in occupational safety and health. NISO Update, the quarterly magazine, was circulated on 1 February 2019 last and the next edition for NISO members is scheduled for mid April 2019. The last edition of Safety Observer was distributed on 6 March 2019.

## SUBSCRIBE TO THE NISO MAILING LIST

The NISO Observer Newsletter is being sent to **email subscribers only**. Your colleagues may have to subscribe to the NISO mailing list again to receive email communications from National Irish Safety Organisation. Please forward this newsletter on to any colleagues or friends who may need to subscribe again.

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### Nationwide Workshop Series

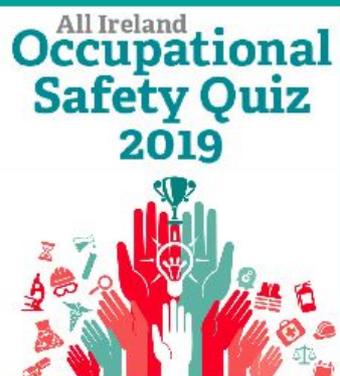


Promoting  
Health and Wellbeing  
in the Workplace

## NISO NEWS

### Promoting Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace

Nationwide Workshop Series  
National Irish Safety Organisation, in conjunction with Healthy Ireland, is running a half day workshop on Promoting Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace throughout 2019.  
Book your place at a workshop [HERE...](#)



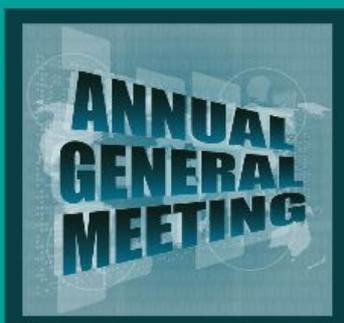
### All Ireland Occupational Safety Quiz Finals 2019

The All Ireland Occupational Safety Quiz Finals is taking place on Saturday, 6 April, in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk, Co. Louth. Best of luck to all the teams and organisations involved!  
Find out more [HERE...](#)



### All Ireland Occupational Safety Awards 2019 - submission deadlines

Early Bird: 29 March 2019  
Standard: 3 March 2019  
Late: 14 June 2019  
Find out more [HERE...](#)



### National NISO AGM 2019

The National AGM of the National Irish Safety Organisation will take place at 12pm on 6 April in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk, Co. Louth. All fully paid NISO members are invited to attend.

## **IRISH NEWS**

### **Minister Humphreys commences the PIAB (Amendment) Act 2019**

The Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation, Heather Humphreys T.D., has announced that the Personal Injuries Assessment Board (Amendment) Act 2019 will come into operation on 3 April 2019.

The legislation will ensure greater compliance with the PIAB process, which delivers compensation more quickly and less expensively than litigation.

<http://bit.ly/2uFkyUi>

### **Workers' Memorial Day 2019**

April 28th is the date every year when trade union and employer groups worldwide, as well as individual organisations, remember those who have been killed or injured in work-related accidents. In Ireland, colleagues from the relevant health and safety bodies and the social partners will come together to mark the occasion with a programme of joint awareness raising initiatives.

<http://bit.ly/2Vbw5X8>

### **HSA holding Transport Safety Seminars in May**

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) is holding Transport Safety Seminars throughout May. The seminars will be held in Dublin, Cork, Galway and Kilkenny and are free to attend. Attendees will be provided with information, guidelines and resources to help them understand and better manage vehicle operations and the interaction between vehicles and people in their business premises.

<https://goo.gl/mn18r3>

### **New HSA Assistant Chief Executive**

Yvonne Mullooly has been appointed the Assistant Chief Executive of the Health and Safety Authority. NISO wishes Ms. Mullooly well in her new role.

### **One-third of doctors in hospitals experiencing burnout**

A new national survey has found that one in three hospital doctors is suffering from burnout. The study looked at workplace wellbeing among a range of medical grades and found that many hospital doctors are suffering

from low levels of work-life balance and high amounts of work-related stress. One half of the medics surveyed reported being emotionally exhausted and overwhelmed by work.

<https://goo.gl/E2UdyL>

### **Crime survey raises concern for pharmacists' safety**

A recent crime survey published by an Irish union has revealed that 75% of pharmacies were the victims of crime in 2018, with a quarter of these incidents being described as "violent". The union is calling for a stronger garda presence in communities to deter criminals and to help protect pharmacy staff and customers.

<https://goo.gl/g5AcNv>

### **Codeine addiction surges amongst workers**

A pill-popping workplace culture where colleagues take codeine as hangover cures and at break times is leading to an increased demand for addiction treatment and a need for education, according to health professionals. Rising stress levels are believed to be behind some of the growing use in tablet-taking, with some people reported as consuming up to 72 tablets in a day.

<https://goo.gl/gqfcZt>

## **UK NEWS**

### **Railway freight operator fined £2.7m for safety failings**

A UK-based railway freight operator has been fined £2.7m after a 13-year-old boy sustained life changing injuries while playing on the company's railway marshalling land. The firm had failed to secure the land despite repeated warnings of the risks posed to trespassers. The court heard that the company was aware of the risk to trespassers as early as 2011 and that a risk assessment in 2013 resulted in a 72/72 risk rating, the highest rating possible.

<https://goo.gl/3szsQh>

### **Food factory fined £1.87m after two workers fall from roof**

A pork processing business has been fined £1,866,000 after two employees investigating a leaking roof fell more than 4m through a skylight. The two

employees had not realised that the roof contained roof lights, which were not visible due to a build up of moss and dirt. Both workers suffered serious injuries as a result of the fall. A HSE inspector described the incident as being wholly avoidable and said that it was caused by the failure to provide adequate controls against the risks associated with working at height.

<https://goo.gl/mDxq2v>

## **EUROPEAN NEWS**

### **New study sheds light on most dangerous substances and sectors**

A new study commissioned by EU-OSHA and carried out by the Institute of Occupational Medicine has used new methods to identify the dangerous substances and sectors that pose the greatest risk to workers in the EU. Five different sectors were identified as being most at risk and five substances were identified as being most dangerous.

<https://goo.gl/6vgPDu>

### **Provisional deal on new vehicle safety standards**

Starting from 2022 new cars, vans, lorries and buses sold in Europe will be fitted as standard with a range of new vehicle safety features, according to a provisional EU deal on the legislation reached recently in Strasbourg. The new rules include requirements for new technologies, such as Automated Emergency Braking which can detect pedestrians and cyclists, as well as overridable Intelligent Speed Assistance, to be fitted as standard for the first time.

<https://goo.gl/4fUsyj>

## **US NEWS**

### **Tesla factory staff lost triple workdays for injuries**

Tesla Inc. factory employees spent almost three times as many days off the job because of work-related injuries and illness in 2018 as the year before. Tesla's assembly plant in California logged 24,454 days lost in 2018, up from 7,619 in 2017. When taking headcount growth into account, the amount of time away per worker doubled last year.

<https://goo.gl/8NnMSb>

## **WORLD NEWS**

### **47 killed in explosion at Chinese chemical plant**

The death toll from a huge explosion at a chemical plant in eastern China has risen to 47 making it one of the country's worst industrial accidents in recent years. More than 600 people are receiving medical treatment following the blast at the industrial park. The explosion was so powerful that it is apparently triggered a small earthquake, knocked down several factory buildings and shattered the windows of homes a few kilometres away.

<https://goo.gl/n1abcf>

## **GENERAL SAFETY NEWS**

### **An Garda Síochána reports 30pc increase in road deaths this year**

An Garda Síochána has recorded a "significant increase" in road deaths in 2019, with 34 people having died on Irish roads so far this year, an increase of nine fatalities for the same time period in 2018. An Garda Síochána has also reported an increase in intoxicated driving, speeding, mobile phone use and non-use of seat belts.

<https://goo.gl/yC7Ty7>

## **FATALITIES AND ACCIDENTS**

### **Man dies following workplace accident at Rosslare Port**

A man in his 20s has died following a workplace accident at Rosslare port. The man is believed to have been fatally injured as cargo was being loaded onto a vessel. Gardaí and emergency services were called to the scene and the HSA has also been notified.

<https://goo.gl/ZKUHQf>

### **Fisherman's body found off Donegal Coast**

The body of a fisherman, who was originally from Co. Cork, was recently recovered from the Donegal shoreline. The man, who was in his 50s, was working on a Cork-based boat which had docked in the Donegal fishing port. A full investigation into the circumstances surrounding the man's death

has been launched.

<https://goo.gl/KVDofZ>

### **Elderly man dies in Co. Cork farm accident**

A man in his 70s has died in a farm accident in Co. Cork. He had been working at a holding in the area when the tragedy occurred. It is believed the man suffered crush-type injuries. An Garda Síochána and the HSA are investigating the fatality.

<https://goo.gl/jp59k1>

### **Fisherman hospitalised following injury off Cork coast**

The RNLI helped an injured fisherman off the Cork coast before he was transferred to hospital for treatment for a suspected broken arm and a head injury. Two of the lifeboat crew boarded the fishing boat to administer care to the injured crewman as sea conditions were too dangerous to transfer the injured man to the lifeboat. The fishing boat was then escorted to shore by the RNLI where the fisherman was met by paramedics for transfer to hospital.

<https://goo.gl/zbDJ53>

### **Man airlifted to hospital following meat factory accident**

A man has been airlifted to hospital following an accident at a Co. Mayo meat factory. It is understood the man caught his arm in a conveyor belt. The HSA has been notified and is investigating the incident.

<https://goo.gl/YbcKHG>

## **IN THE COURTS**

### **Mayo companies face prosecutions following workplace death**

Three Mayo-based companies are to be prosecuted for health and safety related offences following the death of a 31-year-old man who died as a result of a fall from height. The deceased suffered serious head injuries when he fell from a height while working as an electrician. He died from his injuries 7 days later in Beaumont Hospital, Dublin. The charges being brought against the three companies involved include the lack of a warning sign on the scaffolding, having an unsafe system or work resulting in the

death and lack of construction supervision on the work.

<https://goo.gl/DzQhiw>

### **Workplace injury case withdrawn following video evidence**

A mushroom picker has withdrawn a High Court claim for a back injury she said she suffered due to not being provided with the proper equipment for her job. The plaintiff claimed she came down hard on her right leg onto a concrete surface and suffered nerve compression in her back and has been unable to work since as a result of the pain. On the second day of the case, the defence introduced a film shot by a private investigator showing the plaintiff cycling one year after the accident. The plaintiff subsequently withdrew her case.

<https://goo.gl/Mckd1Y>

### **Shop assistant loses €60k claim for injured forehead**

A young shop assistant who lacerated her forehead as she “bent over laughing” at a colleague’s joke, has lost her €60,000 damages claim against her employer and two associated companies. The plaintiff and her colleague had been loading cardboard into a bin for recycling at the time of the accident. She said that while she had been laughing at what her colleague had said she denied that they had been “messaging” at the time. The plaintiff said that she had struck her forehead against the sharp edge of a metal sheet as she bent down to lift pieces of cardboard that had fallen short of the bin. The plaintiff was then taken to A&E for a vertical laceration of her forehead. The judge dismissed the case stating that if the plaintiff had been paying attention she would have seen the offending object and there was nothing the defendants could have done, through training or otherwise, to prevent the accident.

<https://goo.gl/twyBZE>

### **€40k award to checkout operator overturned**

A €40,000 award to a checkout operator who suffered arm injuries after slipping on the floor of a large Irish retail outlet has been overturned by the Court of Appeal. The appeal court ruled that the retailer was not liable and also reiterated its view that the High Court judges should not order payment out of part of a damages award unless “special circumstances” justify that

when an appeal is pending on liability. The court heard that the retailer had fulfilled its common law and statutory duty to the plaintiff as it had taken all such steps as were “reasonably practicable” to ensure her safety.

<https://goo.gl/foLXob>

### **Engineer who claimed he suffered lung injury settles action**

A maintenance engineer who claimed he suffered a serious lung injury after inhaling chemicals during the course of his work has settled his High Court damages action. The plaintiff brought proceedings arising from an incident that occurred in 2015 when he claimed he was overcome with fumes from a chlorine drum used to treat water in the facility where he worked. His action was against the food manufacturer on whose premises the incident occurred and his then-employer. He claimed the defendants were negligent, in breach of their duty of care towards him and failed to provide a safe place to work. The defendants denied they had been negligent. The court was told that the parties had agreed to make a costs order in favour of the plaintiff, and that liability had been agreed at 50-50 between the plaintiff and the defendants over the incident.

<https://goo.gl/7SnFEV>

### **Postal worker sues over bullying**

A former postal sorting worker has told the High Court her employer failed to deal with bullying by colleagues involving "gay rumours" being circulated about her. The plaintiff, a married mother-of-two who worked in a Galway mail sorting office, claims the bullying took place over a number of years and culminated in a pornographic postcard being left on her sorting bench. She said she became so distressed by innuendo and rumours in her workplace that she circulated a letter to her colleagues saying she was having suicidal thoughts. The case continues.

<https://goo.gl/F3Rp21>

### **“Danger to the public” radiographer struck off by court**

The High Court has struck off a radiographer described as “simply a danger to the public”. The judge said there “must be questions” about how recruitment policy and procedures could give rise to the employment of someone “so lacking in basic skills” as to be let go within two and a half

weeks of her employment at the hospital.

The judge had previously raised concerns about the recruitment of certain junior hospital doctors who lacked knowledge of the very basics of anatomy and procedures, he noted. A committee investigating the complaints against the radiographer found that, in order to protect the public, the only effective and proportionate sanction was to ensure the radiographer's registration was cancelled.

<https://goo.gl/zy5FDe>

## **INQUESTS**

### **Inquest hears tractor “rolled over” elderly farmer**

A man in his late 80s died in a farming accident after his tractor “rolled over him” when he tried to jump-start the vehicle, an inquest has heard. A post-mortem examination showed that Mr. Fitzsimmons died due to bronchial pneumonia after suffering multiple injuries. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

<https://goo.gl/6bQBbW>

## **SAFETY ALERTS**

### **Platform Lifts - Risks of falls from height**

The Health and Safety Executive UK has issued the following alert:

Platform Lifts (Vertical lifting platforms or lifts for people with impaired mobility) - Risk of falls from height to employees/workers and members of the public. This alert is aimed at platform lift maintenance companies, owners and operators of platform lifts in a range of sectors (e.g. health and social care, hospitals, public buildings, schools etc.). The potential dangers are as follows:

- inadequate maintenance of door components;
- inappropriate adjustment of door locks;
- interference with zone bypass switches at doors;
- unauthorised access to lift well (shaft) when the lifting platform (lift car) is at a different level

<https://goo.gl/N2cipL>

### **Safety warning issued after lorries crush cars on ferry**

An urgent safety warning has been issued after lorries toppled over during a ferry crossing in rough seas. Nine lorries fell on to their sides and cars were crushed when the ferry was sailing from Larne in Northern Ireland to Cairnryan in Scotland in December last year. An inquiry found that at least six drivers had remained in their cabs despite being instructed to leave the deck after parking. No-one was hurt during the incident but one of the drivers was trapped in his vehicle and need to be rescued by emergency services. The Marine Accident and Investigation Branch (MAIB) has issued a warning over drivers remaining in their vehicles on the roll-on roll-off decks which are a “hazardous and potentially life-threatening environment” which should only be occupied by professional seafarers.

<https://goo.gl/Y9smbo>

### **STATISTICS**

Eight people have been killed in workplace accidents since 1 January 2019 - Correct at 21 March 2019.

Source: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)

<http://bit.ly/2U9LQRV>

### **PUBLICATIONS**

#### **What to Expect When the Health and Safety Inspector Calls**

This leaflet from the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) tells you what can happen when one of the HSA inspectors visits your workplace to carry out an inspection or an investigation. It also explains what the HSA does with the personal data it is required to collect during its workplace inspections and accident investigations.

<http://bit.ly/2UaoVpC>

#### **Plain English Construction-Related Fatal Accidents in Ireland '89-'16**

This HSA report is a summary of the longer document named in the title above. It examines fatal accidents in construction between 1989 and 2016.

<http://bit.ly/2V8DxIF>

### **Job Stress and Working Conditions - Plain English Version**

Analysis of the European Working Conditions Survey which is a summary of the main ESRI report.

<http://bit.ly/2CJSinS>

### **SAFETY BLOGS/OPINIONS**

#### **Hard Living: What does concrete do to our bodies?**

A look at the harmful effects of working with concrete on the body.

<https://goo.gl/3baALG>

#### **Ireland's employment laws need to address "techno-stress"**

Techno stress can cause interrupted sleep, anxiety, depression and physical symptoms like headaches and muscle pain. It can result in burnout of workers and can falsely disguise serious under-staffing problems and companies profiteering off under-employment and over-work. Health and safety legislation in Ireland needs updating to reflect modern challenges.

<https://goo.gl/BepSiU>

### **SAFETY IN PICTURES**

#### **Dangerously balanced ladder lands roofer in court**

<https://goo.gl/8hqz2G>

### **TRAINING AND EVENTS**

**Training scheduled at NISO Training Centre, Dublin 12**

**All courses listed below available to be delivered in-house, nationwide, on request**

[Safety Representation](#), NISO Certificate (2 day); 8-9 April [Book now](#)

[Manual Handling Basic](#), NISO Certificate (half day); 11 & 25 April [Book now](#)

[VDU/DSE Assessor Training](#), NISO Certificate (1 day); 16 April & 15 May [Book now](#)

[Manual Handling Instruction](#) QQI L6 (5 day); 7-9 & 13-14 May [Book now](#)

[Risk Assessment - Basic Concepts](#), NISO Certificate (2 day); 21-22 May [Book now](#)

[Health and Safety Representation](#), QQI L5 (4 day); 24-27 June [Book now](#)

[Intro to H&S for the Non Safety Specialist](#), NISO Cert, (2 day); 31 July-1 August [Book now](#)

[Risk Assessment](#), QQI L5 (4 day); 12-15 August [Book now](#)

#### **Safe Pass Training**

**Dublin:** 5 & 12 April; NISO Training Centre, Ballymount, Dublin 12 [Book now](#)

**Galway:** 24 April; The Clayton Hotel, Galway [Book now](#)

**Cork:** 3 & 17 May; The Oriel House Hotel, Ballincollig, Co. Cork [Book now](#)

## **Promoting Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace**

**National Workshop Series in conjunction with Healthy Ireland** [Learn More](#)

**Dublin:** 28 March 2019; NISO Training Centre, A11 Calmount Park, Ballymount, Dublin 12 [Held]

**Cork:** 03 April 2019; Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Little Island, Cork [BOOK NOW](#)

**Galway:** 24 April 2019; Oranmore Lodge Hotel, Oranmore, Co. Galway [BOOK NOW](#)

**Athlone:** 09 May 2019; Radisson Blu Hotel, Northgate St., Athlone, Co. Westmeath [BOOK NOW](#)

**Limerick:** 23 May 2019; Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Ennis Road, Limerick [BOOK NOW](#)

**Waterford:** 06 June 2019; Viking Hotel Waterford, Cork Road, Waterford [BOOK NOW](#)

**Dundalk:** 20 June 2019; Crown Plaza Hotel, Dundalk, Co. Louth [BOOK NOW](#)

**Sligo:** 26 June 2019; Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Ballincar, Sligo [BOOK NOW](#)

## **Regional Courses**

[NISO Certificate in Health, Safety and Welfare at Work](#),  
(13 wks/2 hrs p/wk)

[Waterford: Waterford IT](#); September 2019

[Dublin: NISO Training Centre](#), Dublin 12; September 2019

[Limerick: Limerick IT, Moylish Campus](#); September 2019

[Mayo: Castlebar](#); September 2019

[Westmeath: Athlone IT](#); September 2019

[Kerry: Tralee IT](#); September 2019

## **All Ireland Occupational Safety Quiz Finals**

6 April 2019; 15.00hrs; Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk, Co. Louth

## **National Events:**

National NISO Annual General Meeting; Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk, Co. Louth; 6 April 2019

[All Ireland Occupational Safety Quiz Finals](#); 6 April 2019; 15.00hrs; Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk, Co. Louth

[55th Annual NISO Conference](#), The Galmont Hotel & Spa, Galway; 11 October 2019

[Trade Exhibition of H&S Productions and Services](#), The Galmont Hotel & Spa, Galway; 11 October 2019

[NISO/NISO All Ireland Safety Awards](#), The Galmont Hotel & Spa, Galway; 11 October 2019

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