

NISO Safety Observer  
October 2019; Issue 43

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## The Safety Observer



Newsletter of the National Irish Safety Organisation

October 2019 - Issue 43

Welcome to the October 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 19 July 2019 last and the next edition for NISO members is scheduled for mid October 2019. The last edition of Safety Observer was distributed on 30 August 2019.

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National Irish Safety Organisation  
safetyconference.ie

56<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
**HEALTH & SAFETY  
CONFERENCE &  
TRADE EXHIBITION**

Conference, exhibition & Awards Dinner  
Friday, 11 October 2019; The Galmont Hotel, Galway

**SHWW  
30 Years  
On**

**AUTUMN  
HEALTH AND  
SAFETY  
TRAINING  
SCHEDULE**

## NISO NEWS

### NISO Annual Conference 2019

The 55th Annual NISO Health and Safety Conference and Trade Exhibition is taking place this year on **11 October in the Galmont Hotel, Galway**. This year, our panel of renowned speakers will speak on the theme "**SHWW - 30 Years On**".

Visit our dedicated conference website for more details:

<https://safetyconference.ie/>

### Upcoming Safety Training & Events

**First Aid Response** 16-18 Oct  
**Young Person's Safety Quiz** 17 Oct  
**VDU/DSE Assessor** 29 October  
**Manual Handling Basic** 7 & 21 Nov  
**Manual Handling Instruction** 18,19,20, 25, 26 Nov  
**Safe Pass Dublin** 4 & 23 October; 1 November  
**Safe Pass Limerick** 1 & 29 Nov

Book Online: <http://bit.ly/2vRjc9n>

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## **IRISH NEWS**

### **HSA annual report reveals vehicles are biggest workplace killer**

Vehicles are the leading cause of death in Irish workplaces, new figures released by the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) reveal. The HSA's 2018 Annual Report shows that there were 39 work-related fatalities reported to the HSA in 2018, compared to 48 in 2017, a decline of 19%. The single biggest danger last year came from vehicles in the workplace, with 17 lives lost across all industries last year.

<http://bit.ly/2MM1w9H>

### **Workers aged 55 and over has doubled since 1998**

A new ESRI report, commissioned by the HSA, has found that the number of workers aged 55 or over in Ireland has doubled since 1998. Back in 1998 just one in 10 workers was aged 55 or over; by last year that figure had doubled to almost 20 per cent. The report shows that Ireland is significantly better at retaining older workers in the workplace than the average across the OECD – 71 per cent, up from 55 per cent in 2012.

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

### **57% of farmers impacted by anxiety**

A recent survey of 3,000 farmers has revealed startling statistics on mental health. The survey focused on several mental health issues including feelings of depression/severe sadness; feelings of anxiety; suicide/attempted suicide. The results showed that 46% of the participants were impacted to some degree by depression/severe sadness and 57% by anxiety.

<http://bit.ly/2m951uJ>

### **Bus station increases after dark security**

A national bus station has announced that it is increasing security following reports of anti social behaviour and assaults on staff and customers. The move comes as drivers threatened to stop carrying passengers to the station after dark unless security was stepped up.

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

### **Warning to farmers over confined spaces on farms**

The HSA has launched a new publication on “Confined Spaces in Agriculture” which explains the dangers associated with confined spaces and sets out practical steps on how to prevent life threatening incidents. Exposure to dangerous gases in confined spaces such as in a grain silo, slurry pit or storage tank is a real risk in modern farming.

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

### **Over 400 garda attacks reported in 3 years**

More than 400 assaults on gardaí have occurred in two and a half years, forcing a number of gardaí out of work for six months or more. However, representatives of rank and file gardaí say the reality is even worse as a significant number of incidents go unreported. About 24 incidents resulted in gardaí taking six months or longer off work, with 33 incidents resulting in three to six months off.

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

## **UK NEWS**

### **Britain's death toll from asbestos at crisis levels**

The death toll from asbestos exposure has reached crisis levels in Britain as people pay the price for “criminal failings by industry and government” made decades ago. Asbestos-related cancers can occur as many as 50 years after exposure and deaths are now thought to be reaching their peak, years after the widespread industrial use of the carcinogen between the 1950s and 1970s.

<http://bit.ly/2m81Mnm>

### **Protests held at 7 UK-based Amazon warehouses**

Union officials in the UK say they are taking action after more than 600 reports were made from Amazon warehouses to the Health and Safety Executive in the past four years. Similar protests have taken place in Germany, Poland and the United States over the poor working conditions for the warehouse staff.

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

## **EUROPEAN NEWS**

### **European Week for Safety and Health at Work 2019**

This year's European Week for Safety and Health at Work will take place from 21-25 October and continues to raise awareness on the current Healthy Workplaces Campaign topic: managing dangerous substances in the workplace.

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

## **FATALITIES AND ACCIDENTS**

### **Boy (7) killed in accident involving road sweeper**

Two separate investigations have been launched by the gardaí and the HSA following the death of a seven-year-old schoolboy in an accident involving a road sweeper in Dublin. The boy was rushed to a children's hospital in a serious condition but later died. The driver of the vehicle was also taken to hospital with non life-threatening injuries.

<http://bit.ly/2mPPLE5>

### **Kerry farmer dies in slurry pit while rescuing calf**

A man in his 70s has been killed following a farm accident in Co. Kerry. The man died while trying to rescue a calf from a slurry pit. The HSA and gardaí are carrying out separate investigations.

<http://bit.ly/2nSOY5u>

### **Man dies after fall down building shaft**

A man in his 60s has died after falling down a shaft in an office building in Dublin. It is understood that the man fell from the roof down a shaft in the multi-storey building. Gardaí and the HSA are investigating the fatality.

<http://bit.ly/2n5SN71>

### **Man killed in Co. Cork farm accident**

A man in his 70s has been killed in a farm accident in Co. Cork. The man was found unresponsive and injured in a farm shed. It is understood he had been attending to livestock. Gardaí attended the scene and the HSA has been notified of the fatality.

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

### **Garda injured in Co. Louth assault**

A garda suffered injuries to his face after being attacked after responding to a call from an apartment building in Dundalk, Co. Louth. The man was struck near the eye with a sharp instrument that was described as a trowel. A man in his fifties was arrested in relation to the assault.

<http://bit.ly/2nSOY5u>

### **Man critical after accident at port**

A man in his 30s is in a critical condition in hospital following an accident at a major Irish port. The man was found stuck between two pieces of equipment and was brought to hospital. Gardaí and the HSA have attended the scene.

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

## **IN THE COURTS**

### **Two companies prosecuted over Limerick bridge deaths**

Two companies are to face criminal prosecution following the death of two workers who drowned whilst carrying out maintenance works on Thomond Bridge in Limerick city more than four years ago. The two male workers, aged 29 and 36, died when a platform supporting them fell into the water while they were carrying out repair works. A number of separate investigations were launched following the fatal incident and the DPP has now directed that two of the companies involved should be prosecuted on indictment before the circuit court. Both companies face charges under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

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

### **Lecturer awarded €10k following sexual harassment case**

A female college lecturer who experienced several incidents of sexual harassment from a large group of male students has been awarded €10k by the Labour Court. The lecturer claimed that her employers took no adequate steps to ensure that sexual harassment, harassment and bullying did not take place in her workplace. The chairperson of the Labour Court said that the court was satisfied that the college involved is liable for the sexual harassment and the harassment suffered by the lecturer on grounds of her gender.

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

### **Incident involving crane “could have been worse”**

A Co. Cork District Court has heard details of an incident in which a crane that was being used to remove a catch of fish from a boat snapped and part of it landed on a van which had two people inside. A HSA inspector said that as the crane slewed the catch from the boat to a van parked on the pier, on the third lift the lifting device on the crane collapsed and fell onto the roof of the van. The incident led to charges being brought against the company involved, including failure to maintain the crane or to have it examined over the previous 12 months. The company was fined €2k and was also ordered to pay the HSA’s expenses of €2,200. The court heard there had been injuries as a result of the incident but thankfully no fatalities.

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

### **Moderators sue Facebook for “psychological trauma”**

The Personal Injuries Assessment Board has given the go-ahead to a group of former content moderators to serve proceedings against Facebook in the High Court. It is understood that more than five former moderators are seeking damages for personal injuries caused by the disturbing content they were exposed to during their employment with Facebook in Dublin. The former content moderators have undergone medico-legal evaluation by a consultant psychiatrist at a Dublin hospital. They will claim they are suffering psychological trauma as a result of both the graphic and disturbing content and the working conditions, which they will say fostered a constant fear of failure.

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

## **STATISTICS**

Thirty-four people have been killed in workplace accidents since 1 January 2019 - Correct at 17 September 2019. Source: [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)

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

## **SAFETY ALERTS**

### **Use of ICAR Capacitors in uninterruptible power supply (UPS) systems**

This safety alert, issued by the UK’s Health and Safety Executive, is aimed at all users of industrial uninterruptible power supply (UPS) systems including, but not limited to, the chemical industry, energy industry, offshore oil and gas

production and other users of high capacity electrical capacitors in industrial equipment. Affected capacitors are known to be found in some models of UPS system manufactured by Vertiv Infrastructure, previously trading as Emerson or Chloride. This safety alert has been issued due to potential danger from fire and any consequential issued arising from the possible loss of power to connected equipment.

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

### **Catastrophic rupture of dead-leg pipe-work**

This safety alert, issued by the HSE UK, highlights the increased risks of primary containment loss associated with dead-legs that may be present on process pipe-work. Dead-legs are lines containing process fluids under stagnant, no or low flow conditions. This safety alerts is primarily aimed at operators fo Process Plant (and associated inspection bodies) which may have pipe-work dead-legs on toxic, flammable, dangerous to the environment or other critical services.

<http://bit.ly/2n5iAfJ>

## **GUIDANCE**

### **How can cleaners stay safe and healthy?**

The European cleaning and facility services industry employs over 4 million people across 277,000 companies, many of them SMEs. The nature of cleaning work means that most – if not all – cleaners are in close contact with dangerous substances every day. What steps can cleaning firms take to reduce workers' risk of exposure? The EU-OSHA takes a detailed look at the safety issues facing cleaners.

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

## **RESOURCES**

### **Updates to the HSE's hand-arm vibration (HAV) exposure calculator**

The HSE's HAV exposure calculator helps estimate and record workers' exposures to HAV and compare them with the actions values in the regulations as part of a HAV risk assessment. It includes drop down vibration magnitudes for common tools from HSE's HAV database that can be used to make cautious estimates of exposure before representative in-use data for specific tools is

available. The calculator is available from the HSE's website.

<http://bit.ly/2oBsJ49>

## **SAFETY COMMENTARY/OPINION**

### **Over 4.3 million UK employees unhappy at work**

According to recent research, more than one in 10 UK employees are unhappy at work, accounting for more than 4.3 million people in the UK. The UK has the highest rate of unhappiness in the workplace among the countries surveyed, including Canada, Australia, Germany and 4% higher than in the US. The research found that one in three (31%) UK respondents admitted to finding their work stressful, while one in 10 (12%) employees report being dissatisfied with their work–life balance.

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

### **UK workers call in physically sick to hide mental ill health**

UK workers are taking on average nearly four days off a year for mental health reasons, but more than half who do report the cause as physical illness, a recent survey has found. The poll of 2,000 people found that in 2019 workers took on average 3.75 days off for mental health reasons including stress, exhaustion and depression because they were overwhelmed. Of those who took mental health days, 55 per cent told their employer they were physically ill, with less than a third (32 per cent) admitting that the reasons were to do with mental health.

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

## **SAFETY APPS**

### **Hazard identifying app can help create safer buildings**

Digital apps can help construction project designers create safer buildings by improving their knowledge of hazards during the design phase, new research has shown. It has been found that the use of a multimedia digital tool can help to educate designers on typical design-related hazards and assist them in designing safety into construction projects more effectively.

<http://bit.ly/2nW2PaU>

## MCIB REPORTS

Report of investigation into a fatal incident involving the fishing vessel “Beal Sruthan” off Craugh Island, Galway Bay, by the Marine Casualty Investigation Board.

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

## TRAINING AND EVENTS

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

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

[First Aid Response](#): PHECC Certificate (3 day) 16-18 October [Book now](#)

[VDU/DSE Assessor Training](#), NISO Certificate (1 day); 29 October [Book now](#)

[Manual Handling Basic](#), NISO Certificate (half day); 7 & 21 November [Book now](#)

[Manual Handling Instruction](#) QQI L6 (5 day); 18, 19, 20 & 25, 26 November [Book now](#)

### Safe Pass Training

**Dublin:** NISO Training Centre, Ballymount, Dublin12; 4 & 23 October; 1 November [Book now](#)

**Limerick:** Kilmurry Lodge Hotel, Limerick; 1 & 29 November [Book now](#)

### Regional Courses

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

Athlone, Castlebar, Cork, Dublin, Limerick, Waterford: Commencing spring 2020

### National Events:

[56th 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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## 17 SEP 2019 | 6.30PM

NISO Certificate in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work  
One two hour evening per week over 13 weeks in Dublin.  
Also at 7pm in the following locations:  
Cork (17 Sep); GMIT Castlebar (17 Sep); AIT Athlone (23  
Sep); LIT Limerick (24 Sep); WIT Waterford (24 Sep).  
**CLICK ME** to register online or call 01 465 9760



## 11 OCT 2019 - GALWAY

NISO 56th Annual Conference  
NISO Annual Exhibition of Safety Products and Services  
NISO 28th Annual Awards Presentation and Dinner  
**CLICK ME** for further information or visit  
[safetyconference.ie](https://safetyconference.ie)



## OSH TRAINING

All courses listed available to be delivered in Dublin,  
nationwide or in-house on request.  
NISO Certificate in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work |  
Safe Pass | Health & Safety Representation QQI L5 |  
Manual Handling Instruction | Manual Handling Basic |  
Risk Assessment | Safety Rep | VDU/DSE Assessor |  
Introduction to H&S for the Non Safety Specialist  
**CLICK ME** to view all upcoming courses



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