

NISO Safety Observer
July 2023; Issue 73

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Newsletter of the National Irish Safety Organisation

July 2023 - Issue 73

Welcome to the July 2023 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 28 April 2023 last and the next edition for NISO members is scheduled for mid July 2023. The last edition of Safety Observer was distributed on 1 June 2023.

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NISO NEWS

NISO Annual Health & Safety Conference

The NISO Annual Conference is taking place on 13 October 2023 in the Great Southern, Killarney, Co. Kerry. Visit niso.ie for updates.

NISO Certificate in Safety, Health & Welfare at Work

Commencing September 2023
(Athlone, Castlebar & Dublin/Online)
Visit niso.ie/product/nisocert/

Seminar: Temporary Traffic Management at Roadworks | Latest Standards

For further information and bookings visit <https://niso.ie/product/ttm/>

Seminar: New Supports Available from the HSA

For further information and bookings visit <https://niso.ie/product/hsa-supports/>

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IRISH NEWS

National Farm Safety Measure 2023

The National Farm Safety Measure is being introduced by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to incentivise the purchase and use of certain farm safety equipment which protect farmers and machinery operators from serious and fatal injuries. Records show that, over the past decade, there were on average 19 fatal incidents on Irish farms each year accounting for more than two in five of all workplace fatalities. The measure will provide a financial contribution to participating farmers for a maximum of two quad helmets and four PTO shaft covers.

<https://bit.ly/43ZPz4e>

Farm safety investment scheme opens for applications

The Farm Safety Capital Investment Scheme under the new Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme (TAMS 3) is now open for applications. This is the first time that farm safety investments have their own standalone scheme under TAMS and have been enhanced with a higher grant rate of 60% up to the applicable maximum investment ceiling of €90,000 per holding. The Minister of State with responsibility for farm safety has urged farmers to consider using this funding for “practical investments to make their farms safer”.

<https://bit.ly/42HyquM>

Call for tractor driving competency tests for children

Children should be legally required to complete a driving competency test before they can drive a tractor, according to a leading farm safety campaigner. This comes following the recent deaths of two teenagers involving tractors. The campaigner wants the same legal requirements covering the use of quad bikes that are coming later this year to also apply to tractors.

<https://bit.ly/3paSfwW>

Employers need to take “sympathetic” view to menstrual symptoms

The findings from a recent survey into menstrual health have been described as “staggering” by the researchers. Ninety-six per cent of the women surveyed said they would welcome a menstrual support policy in the workplace. Nine out of 10 surveyed said that menstrual health affects their work. Most of the women said they were uncomfortable discussing menstrual health with managers and one in five said that periods were joked about in their workplace. The survey found that employers need to take a more “sympathetic” view towards women with “debilitating” menstrual symptoms.

<https://bit.ly/46q6ZsG>

UK NEWS

Company owner jailed after death of employee

A garden supplies company owner has been jailed and the firm has been fined £700,000 after a worker was crushed to death by a robotic packing arm. The 48-year-old man suffered fatal injuries after attempting to clean a sensor on the automated baggage production line. Safety systems for the production line, known as the RM machine, were deliberately disabled or bypassed within weeks of its installation in early 2015. It was found that unsafe practices continued at the company in the two years before the man’s death and there was no promotion, planning or ongoing review of health and safety. A Health and Safety Executive inspector said “There was a complete failure at management level to appreciate the need to proactively manage health and safety and a failure to react to incidents, injuries and reports of conditions that posed a serious to the health and safety of employees and others”.

<https://bit.ly/3Nk9ljO>

Company fined £240k following fatality

A public services company has been fined £240,000 after a man was killed when the lorry he was a passenger in crashed into litter picking vans blocking a

lane of a dual carriageway. The 44-year-old man was in the passenger seat of a lorry when it hit the vans which were obstructing the inside lane of the dual carriageway. An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive found that the company failed in its health and safety management of litter picking activities on high-speed dual carriageways. It had not provided its employees with appropriated work instructions to ensure the litter picking activity was safe and also failed to supervise and monitor the high-risk activity to ensure it was carried out safely. The company pleaded guilty to breaches of health and safety legislation.

<https://bit.ly/44rYdZn>

Company fined £75k for safety breaches after man's death

A Co. Down company has been fined £75,000 for health and safety breaches which resulted in the death of an employee. The case came about after a 66-year-old father of six was crushed by a piece of heavy machinery on the company's premises. The company denied an initial charge of corporate manslaughter but pleaded guilty to a second charge of failing to ensure the health and safety of employees. The judge, noting that the company had no previous convictions and that subsequent inspections found that no further breaches had occurred, handed down a fine of £75,000.

<https://bit.ly/430FbYI>

Ex-BBC presenter "bullied" after raising concern

A former BBC TV presenter faced "bullying and harassment" after she raised a grievance about a plan to change her role at the corporation, an industrial tribunal has heard. The former presenter's barrister told the tribunal that she had been a victim of age, sex and disability discrimination after the proposal to move her to a radio position several days a week in 2019. The tribunal is expected to last several days.

<https://bit.ly/3XqEZDo>

EUROPEAN NEWS

Better protection of workers from asbestos

The European Commission has welcomed a political agreement that has been reached between the European Parliament and Member States on the Commission's proposal to update the EU Directive on asbestos at work. Under the political agreement and in line with the latest scientific evidence, the new

rules will ensure that no worker is exposed to a concentration of more than 0.01 asbestos fibres per cubic centimetre during a transitional period. This is ten times lower than the previous exposure limit. After the transition period, Member States will choose between two limit values.

<https://bit.ly/44s65Kp>

Poland wins international road safety award

The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) has awarded its 2023 Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) Award to Poland for the first time. The country cut road deaths by 47% between 2012 and 2022, a rate only bettered by Lithuania, last year's winner. The EU average reduction was 22%.

<https://bit.ly/3CCWDro>

A new comprehensive approach to mental health

The European Commission published its latest Communication on a European Health Union: A new comprehensive approach to mental health. The European Commission has introduced a new approach to mental health as part of the European Health Union, aiming to prioritise mental well-being alongside physical health. Mental health issues already affected 1 in 6 people in the EU before the COVID-19 pandemic, and the situation has worsened due to recent crises. EU action on mental health will focus on three key principles: prevention, access to high-quality and affordable mental healthcare, and reintegration into society after recovery.

<https://bit.ly/3NpbcEd>

WORLD NEWS

Report shows Indian railways misused safety fund

It has been reported that a special fund created in 2017 to improve railway safety in India was misused to buy foot massagers, crockery, electrical appliances, furniture, winter jackets, computers and escalators, develop gardens, build toilets, pay salaries and bonuses and erect a flag. The report noted that this information may never have become public if it weren't for the recent triple-train accident in which nearly 300 people tragically died and more than 900 people were injured. The report observed that the shortfall in funds had defeated the primary objective of the creation of a fund to support absolute safety in railways.

<https://bit.ly/3r94UAQ>

FATALITIES AND ACCIDENTS

Man injured in industrial accident has died

A man who was badly injured in an industrial accident at a medical technologies plant in Cork two months ago has died from his injuries. The 41-year-old man sustained extensive burns in the incident while working at the plant. The HSA confirmed that an investigation, which had already been launched into the incident, is continuing.

<https://bit.ly/3NhFjND>

Man killed in Co. Cork timber yard accident

A 65-year-old man has died following an accident at a timber yard in Co. Cork. The accident happened when the man became trapped between a digger and a trailer. He was pronounced dead at the scene. The HSA has launched an investigation into the incident.

<https://bit.ly/3JsByUm>

Man dies in workplace accident in Co. Meath

A man in his 30s has died following a workplace accident in Co. Meath. An Garda Síochána responded to reports of an incident and confirmed that a man had suffered fatal injuries. The HSA has launched an investigation into the fatality.

<https://bit.ly/3CFHaH4>

Man dies following workplace accident in Co. Wexford

A man in his 50s has died in a workplace incident in Co. Wexford. The man had been working in a farmyard at a well known business in the county. An Garda Síochána and emergency services attended the scene. The HSA are investigating the incident.

<https://bit.ly/3NJhNKV>

Three hospitalised after chip van fire at festival

Three people were hospitalised after a fire broke out at a chip van at a festival in Co. Donegal. An Garda Síochána and emergency services attended the scene of the fire. It is understood that another food vendor managed to partially put out the blaze with a fire extinguisher, however, it is believed that three people were taken to hospital as a result of the burns. The HSA has been

notified of the incident.

<https://bit.ly/3pnEzfP>

Engineer experienced near miss on railway track

An engineer working on a railway track near Cork city had to dive to the ground as a maintenance vehicle passed over him to avoid serious injury, an investigation has revealed. A report by the Railway Accident Investigation Unit (RAIU) highlighted how the railway engineer felt something striking his back while he was on the track and he instinctively decided to “go to ground”. The engineer told RAIU officials that he lay as flat as possible between the rails as he knew the dumper was going to travel over him. He sustained a cut to the nose and soft tissue injuries to his arms and ribs during the incident.

<https://bit.ly/42N3hGd>

Man airlifted to hospital following farm accident

A man in his 50s who was injured in an accident on a farm in Co. Cavan is recovering in hospital. Emergency services were called to the scene following reports that a man had suffered serious injuries following an incident on his farm. The farmer was taken from the scene by helicopter to hospital for treatment in Dublin.

<https://bit.ly/43UibMh>

IN THE COURTS

Paramedic awarded €50,500 for injuries sustained in near collision

A paramedic who suffered significant injuries when his ambulance driver was forced to brake violently to avoid a collision has been awarded €50,500 in the Civil Circuit Court. The 52-year-old paramedic was looking after a critically ill, elderly patient in the back of the ambulance when he was thrown from his seat onto the floor as the driver had to take evasive action to avoid a car which had pulled out in front of the ambulance. He suffered an undisplaced fracture to his coccyx. The paramedic returned to work two months after the incident but he still suffered pain while sitting which continues to impact him particularly after a shift or when lying in bed. Dismissing the case against the ambulance service the judge awarded the paramedic €50,500 against the MIBI, the compensation fund in incidents where the vehicle responsible is untraced or uninsured.

<https://bit.ly/3PyypGC>

Worker who was “strangled” with seatbelt awarded €20k

A council worker who said he was strangled with a seatbelt by a colleague who threatened to “sort [him] out” has been awarded €20,000 by the Workplace Relations Commission over his employer’s handling of the incident. The tribunal ruled that the worker suffered reduced overtime and diminished duties after making a formal complaint about the behaviour. Upholding the complaint, the adjudicator wrote that the council’s failure to investigate, and the detriments imposed, were “at the most serious end of the scale” and awarded the worker €20,000 compensation.

<https://bit.ly/3qVVE30>

Farmer pleads guilty following workplace fatality

A farmer has pleaded guilty to a charge in respect of a fatal health and safety incident before the Circuit Criminal Court following a farm fatality more than three years ago. The farmer was working on the preparation of a trailer for re-painting with another man when the tailgate, which was propped by timbers, fell when his co-worker was working on it causing him immediate fatal injuries. The judge imposed a fine of €3,000 on the farmer and ordered the payment of €1,500 costs to the HSA. The farm where the fatal incident occurred had been used as a flagship farm in relation to campaigns for farm safety over the years.

<https://bit.ly/3XlqEfl>

Claim against employer withdrawn following video footage

An MMA fighter, who claimed he suffered concussion, memory loss and headaches resulting from a bang on the head when the boot lid of a car collapsed on him at work has withdrawn a €60,000 damages claim against his former employer. The man pulled his case in the Circuit Civil Court after the judge had watched a video of a mixed martial arts fight when he had been repeatedly pummelled on the canvas by his opponent. A doctor who had seen the video stated in a medical report that the former employee had many opportunities of suffering multiple concussions in his sport. The judge struck out the case as well as any cost orders that may have been made previously in the proceedings.

<https://bit.ly/3XjHzbY>

Employee’s personal injuries claim dropped

An employee who made a personal injury claim against a family-run business after falling down a flight of stairs while carrying a vacuum cleaner has now

dropped the case. Photos of the man doing landscaping work at a time when he alleged he was still suffering from severe pain were shown in the High Court and shortly after he confirmed that he would no longer be continuing with the case.

<https://bit.ly/3pneH5U>

Orchestra members refer workplace health and safety concerns to WRC

Union members employed by an orchestra have referred issues related to health and safety concerns to the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) following a failure of management to engage with union representatives on the matter. The union organiser said that they had tried to engage with the employer for many months to resolve serious issues in relation to a difficult working environment which the say union members have experienced over an extended period of time.

<https://bit.ly/3PxAl66>

INQUESTS

Inquest hears lack of evidence is “staggering”

A senior counsel representing a government department at a preliminary inquest hearing into the death of an Irish Coast Guard volunteer has refuted suggestions by a maritime lawyer for the deceased volunteer’s family that it has attempted to obstruct the inquest. The volunteer died after a rigid inflatable boat which she was crewing on capsized during a search for a missing man in September 2016. The maritime lawyer said that audio and visual recordings of the rescue attempt on the date had not been received yet noting that it was “staggering” that none of the evidence had been received seven years after the incident. The inquest has been adjourned until November.

<https://bit.ly/46vV2Se>

STATISTICS

Sixteen people have been killed in workplace accidents since 1 January 2023 - Correct at 23 June 2023. Source: www.hsa.ie

<http://bit.ly/34bJFyp>

SAFETY ALERTS

LPG forklift truck fire risk

The Health and Safety Executive (UK) has issued a safety alert on LPG forklift truck fire risk following a number of fires on and around liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) powered forklift trucks and other similar vehicles that have occurred during starting. The target audience for this safety alert is anyone responsible for operating, supplying, inspecting or maintaining LPG powered forklift trucks.

<https://bit.ly/3XqDov4>

Pop-up toilets: Risk of crushing

The Health and Safety Executive (UK) has issued the following safety alert regarding pop-up toilets. This safety alert follows a fatal incident in which a person was killed when working underneath a raised telescopic pop-up toilet. He was in the void below when the pop-up toilet lowered, crushing him. This safety alert highlights the risk of people being crushed when they are underneath a raised, unpropped pop-up toilet. This alert is aimed at any designers, manufacturers, suppliers and owners who are responsible for providing information on cleaning and maintaining pop-up toilets and anyone inspecting, cleaning or maintaining pop-up toilets.

<https://bit.ly/44mQKuC>

PUBLICATIONS

HSA Safety Representative Resource Book Third Edition

The third edition of the Safety Representative's Resource book has been issued by the HSA. The book has been revised and updated to have regard to legislative changes, legal precedents and policy changes. Based on an initial review, the key changes can be found in Chapter 30 - Inclusion of Gender Facts and Figures; Chapter 31 - updated to include Remote Working, and Chapter 33 - Updates on Work Related Mental Health.

<https://bit.ly/3NPNRwF>

Code of Practice for Indoor Air Quality

The HSA has published a Code of Practice (COP) for Indoor Air Quality. The COP is implemented through SI no. 255/2023 Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Applications) (Amendment) Regulations 2023. This COP is relevant to all places of work. Employers should use this COP to develop policies, conduct risk assessments and implement control measures to address Indoor Air Quality (AIQ) and ventilation in the workplace.

<https://bit.ly/44fUYUI>

Managing Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace 2023

This Information Sheet from the HSA gives practical advice on what psychosocial hazards are and the roles and responsibilities of employers and employees in relation to managing psychosocial hazards.

<https://bit.ly/3pn8dUE>

Effectively implementing smart digital monitoring systems

Smart digital monitoring systems for occupational safety and health use digital technologies to monitor risks at work and prevent occupational accidents and ill health. Found in wearables, equipment or phone apps, they have the potential to make workplaces safer. Two new policy briefs from the EU-OSHA explain how to effectively implement inclusive smart digital monitoring systems.

<https://bit.ly/44cFZuu>

GUIDANCE

HSA launches guidance on the dangers of UV rays for outdoor workers

The Construction Safety Partnership (CSPAC), an Advisory Committee to the board of the HSA, has developed a quick information guide for employers and safety representatives to raise awareness about the risk of skin cancer from sun exposure. The new information sheet highlights the dangers of ultraviolet (UV) rays to outdoor workers, what the UV index means and offers tips on how to protect skin from the sun and dangerous UV rays.

<https://bit.ly/42YMekL>

Are you set for a safe summer on the farm?

This article takes a look at some of the key danger areas to be mindful of when it comes to the busy summer period on Irish farms.

<https://bit.ly/3NDIyBB>

Safety with bulls during breeding

This article offers guidance on staying safe around bulls. HSA statistics show that from 2012 to 2021 bulls were the cause of 16% of farm workplace deaths.

<https://bit.ly/4465U7c>

RESOURCES

Online learning tool for Irish pig sector launched

The Teagasc Pig Department in conjunction with the HSA and FBD Insurance have launched their “Pig Staff Induction Module” which is an interactive online learning tool. This tool allows users to interactively learn about pig production best practice and safe farming health and safety protocols.

<https://bit.ly/441NGUG>

Heat at work - guidance for workplaces

OSHWiki page from EU-OSHA which provides guidance and resources for dealing with heat in the workplace. This resource provides practical guidance on how to manage the risks associated with working in heat and information on what to do if a worker begins to suffer from a heat-related illness.

<https://bit.ly/46mpWwa>

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

ECHA seeking comments on Trixylyl phosphate (TXP)

The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) has issued a call for comments on the draft screening report on the presence and risk of Trixylyl phosphate in articles. The objective of this call is to gather comments on the draft screening report prepared according to REACH Article 69(2). The deadline for providing input is 9 August 2023.

<https://bit.ly/46rizDA>

CASE STUDIES

Automated tasks at work in a safe manner

New comparative case study report on advanced robotic automation from EU-OSHA. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics to automate dangerous or repetitive tasks in the workplace as a way to protect workers is on the rise. However, there could also be challenges for occupational safety and health to be considered or new risks that should be effectively addressed during these early stages. The report also delves into the implementation and impact of AI-based systems and intelligent collaborative robots (robots) in task automation at work, with a focus on ensuring worker safety.

<https://bit.ly/44pjDWZ>

SAFETY IN VIDEOS

How to qualify for farm safety funding

Following the announcement of €1.5 million funding for farm safety, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine with special responsibility for farm safety, Martin Heydon explained what exactly is included and who can apply. The funding was launched on 21 June and applications will remain open until 29 September.

<https://bit.ly/3Jy9UFz>

SAFETY PODCASTS

HSE Talking Health and Wellbeing: Healthy Workplaces

In this podcast, Bidy O'Neill from Healthy Ireland in the Department of Health discusses Healthy Workplaces. This discussion covers the background to the Healthy Workplace Framework - Healthy Ireland at Work - and why and how the recently launched Healthy Workplace Website will guide workplaces on the best things they can do to develop and improve the wellbeing of their staff.

<https://bit.ly/44mK6nN>

NISO TRAINING AND EVENTS

Training scheduled at NISO Training Centre, Dublin 12 AND/OR Online

[Safe Pass SOLAS](#) (1 day); Clonmel, 15 July; Kilkenny, 29 July; [BOOK NOW](#)

[DSE-VDU Risk Assessor Course](#) (Online); NISO Certificate (1 day); 26 July [BOOK NOW](#)

[Manual Handling Basic](#) NISO Certificate (half day); 28 July; 18 August [BOOK NOW](#)

[Mobile & Home Working Assessor](#) (HYBRID); NISO Certificate (1 day); Dates TBC

[Safety Representation](#) (Online); NISO Certificate (2 day); Dates TBC

NISO Certificate in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work

13 weeks / 2 hours per week

TUS Athlone: Technological University of the Shannon: 18 September 2023

(Online / class attendance required on 3 evenings plus exam) [BOOK NOW](#)

Castlebar: ATU Castlebar Campus: 19 September 2023 [BOOK NOW](#)

Dublin / Online: 19 September 2023 [BOOK NOW](#)

CPD Certificates in Safety Management at Work (Certified by Technological University Dublin)

Hybrid - NISO Training Centre, Dublin 12 and/or Online

Autumn dates available soon - visit niso.ie/product/cpd-cert/

CPD Certificate in Auditing for Safety Managers

CPD Certificate in Behavioural Safety Management

CPD Certificate in Chemical Safety Management I

CPD Certificate in Chemical Safety Management II

CPD Certificate in Environmental Noise Measurement

CPD Certificate in Fire Safety Management I

CPD Certificate in Fire Safety Management II

CPD Certificate in Workplace Accident Investigation

CPD Certificate in Workplace Ergonomics

CPD Certificate in Workplace Noise Measurement

CPD Certificate in Workplace Safety Management I

CPD Certificate in Workplace Safety Management II

Workshop: New Supports from the HSA

Galway: 7 September 2023 [BOOK NOW](#)

Kilkenny: 14 September 2023 [BOOK NOW](#)

Sligo: 8 November 2023 [BOOK NOW](#)

Dublin: 16 November 2023 [BOOK NOW](#)

Seminar: Temporary Traffic Management at Roadworks - Latest Standards

Sligo: 28 September 2023 [BOOK NOW](#)

Athlone: 25 October 2023 [BOOK NOW](#)

Dublin: 26 October 2023 [BOOK NOW](#)

National Events

NISO Annual Safety Conference; The Great Southern, Killarney, Co. Kerry; 13 October 2023

NISO/NISO Safety Awards Ceremony; The Great Southern, Killarney, Co. Kerry; 13 October 2023

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