



Craven Safety Services - October 2019 Newsletter

In this issue

Risk Assessments - These have to be "suitable and sufficient", but what does this mean?

HSE latest initiative - Between 7th October and 1st November the HSE will be carrying out its latest construction inspection initiative, focusing on health, in particular the measures in place protecting workers from occupational lung disease.

Dust in the workplace - Are you protecting your workers from dust in the air? Watch our video on dust awareness.

Risk Assessments

The law states that a risk assessment should be "suitable and sufficient", but what does this mean?

It means that you can show that a proper check was made, you asked who might be affected, you dealt with all the obvious significant risks, taking into account the number of people who could be involved, the precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low and that you involved your workers or their representatives in the process.



The level of detail in a risk assessment should be proportionate to the risk and appropriate to the nature of the work. Insignificant risks can usually be ignored, as can risks arising from routine activities associated with life in general, unless the work activity compounds or significantly alters those risks.

Your risk assessment should only include what you could reasonably be expected to know - you are not expected to anticipate unforeseeable risks.

HSE October initiative

Between 7th October and 1st November the HSE will be carrying out its latest construction inspection initiative.

This will continue the focus on health, in particular the measures in place to protect workers from occupational lung disease caused by asbestos, silica, wood and other dusts when carrying out common construction tasks.

Priority is often given to safety but thousands more workers suffer ill-health at work than are harmed by accidents at work.

Asbestos and dust are slow killers. The HSE estimates that annually there are around 8,000 work-related cancer deaths a year. The construction industry accounts for around 3,500 of these with asbestos and silica the major causes. Construction businesses and workers need to be aware of how dangerous and hazardous to someone's health such substances can be.

Inspectors will be looking to ensure those involved with construction projects know the risks, properly plan their work and use the right controls. Where poor standards are found, enforcement action will be taken.

For more information see:

Working with Asbestos - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/index.htm>

Construction Dust Information sheet - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cis36.htm>

Construction Dust Busy Builder sheet - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cis78.pdf>

Dust in the workplace

With the latest HSE initiative upcoming we thought we would look at dust in the workplace. This is covered under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) 2002 regulations.

The HSE have a [Dust Hub](#) on their website with good general guidance for anyone looking to implement protection from dust. Here you can find information about dust-related health issues as well as employer responsibilities.



All uncontrolled dusts are potentially hazardous. Dust can come in various sizes and have different chemical components. Some are more harmful than others and can cause health problems including asthma and lung cancer.

The dangers are not just from breathing in dust, but from skin contact, eye contact and ingestion as well. Depending on the size of the particle dust is described as inhalable or respirable. Inhalable dust is invisible to the naked eye and can get trapped in the nose, mouth, throat or upper respiratory tract where it can cause numerous issues. Respirable dust is even smaller and can be breathed deeply into the lungs.

Dusts such as epoxy resins, rubber processing chemicals, wood dust and fibre glass can cause skin irritation. Dust particles in the air can irritate the eyes, sometimes because of the chemical content.

Swallowed dust can cause gastrointestinal irritation and it can enter the bloodstream where it can affect other organs and tissues.

The HSE website has a page covering COSHH (Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health) for 10 major industries, where you can see the key hazards involved by industry. [COSHH by industry](#). The HSE have also published a guide '[Dust in the workplace: General principles of protection](#)' guidance note EH44, which is a good starting point and can be downloaded for free. This leaflet describes how to control exposure to dust at work to avoid ill health. It is for employers and managers, but employees and health and safety professionals may also find it useful.

It will help you understand what you need to do to comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) and gives advice on the precautions that may be needed to prevent or adequately control exposure. If dust is generated in your business, your risk assessment should cover whether there is a need for air sampling to check the level of dust in

the air. Dust monitoring can be done in several ways, from wearing dust monitors to portable monitors which can be used for short term or occasional surveys.

If dust in the air cannot be controlled, then it may be necessary to use Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE). This will need to be selected depending on the hazardous substance in the air (e.g. dust, fumes, vapours etc) and legally must be Face Fit tested. If the RPE is not correctly fitted to the user it will not work properly, a seal around the face will not be maintained and won't protect the user from the hazardous substance. For more information on Face Fit testing go to the [fit2fit.org](https://www.fit2fit.org) website which contains guides for different fit testing methods as well as a list of accredited Fit2Fit testers.

Watch our Video on Dust in the Workplace



We are always looking to assist businesses with their Health & Safety, if you know of anyone who would benefit from our services please do let us know. Many thanks.