

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE – 13TH MAY 2009

SUBJECT: RECENT HSE UPDATES

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of recent updates in Health and Safety information, advice and guidance.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 As from 6th April 2009, HSE is publishing a new version of its approved health and safety poster. The approved leaflet, an alternative to displaying the poster, has also been replaced with a new pocket card that may be handed to employees (e.g. those who work where the display of the poster is unsuitable or impractical).
- 2.2 The new poster and pocket card are eye-catching and easier to read, and set out in simple terms, using numbered lists of basic points, what employers and workers must do, and what to do if there is a problem.
- 2.3 The Authority can continue to display the old creamy-coloured version of the poster (or hand out the older version of the approved leaflet) until 5th April 2014, as long as they are readable and the addresses of the enforcing authority and the Employment Medical Advisory Service are up to date.
- 2.4 The poster and pocket card are available in English and Welsh. An MP3 version is also available for employees with poor eyesight, available from the HSE's 'Talking Leaflets' page of its website
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/tlindex.htm
- 2.5 The 'Gas Safe Register' has now formally replaced the CORGI gas engineer registration scheme. All gas engineers appointed by the Authority must be registered on the Gas Safe Register. Further information regarding the new registration scheme is available from
www.gassaferegister.co.uk
- 2.6 The HSE has published a new A2 size durable poster illustrating a number of recommended pre-use checks and how to put a filtering facemask (dustmask) on and how to check that it fits to ensure a good seal and offer adequate protection from the inhalation of harmful dusts. Such facemasks are worn by those working in various occupations in the Authority, including those involved in building maintenance, woodworking and cleaning.
- The poster '*Using Filtering Facepieces*' is available from HSE Books.
- 2.7 Camden Council was recently fined £40,000 plus £16,000 costs after a workman died because a security light on a north London council estate had been vandalised and a related fault that could have been "easily identified" was not rectified.

The 24 year old workman was electrocuted when he touched the live metal casing during improvements to the council estate accommodation in 2006. An investigation found that the earth cable had been cut, possibly to stop it flickering, and that there was no evidence it had ever received routine safety maintenance.

The council admitted breaching health and safety legislation by failing in its duty to inspect light fittings on the estate. There is no evidence that the light had even undergone routine maintenance to ensure its safety since it was installed in the early 1980s.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 That the contents of the report be noted.

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Consultees: Nigel Barnett, Director of Corporate Services
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Councillor Allan Pritchard, Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Constitutional Affairs
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