

The 12 Health & Safety Myths of Christmas

1. Workers are banned from putting up Christmas decorations in the office
2. Indoor Christmas lights need a portable appliance test (PAT) every year
3. You can't throw out sweets at pantos
4. Santa needs a seatbelt in his sleigh
5. Second hand toys can't be donated for 'health and safety' reasons
6. Traditional shopping centre Christmas trees scaled back or replaced by artificial alternatives
7. Seats removed from shops – despite weary Christmas shoppers wanting to rest their feet
8. Carol singers are a health and safety risk
9. Children are banned from throwing snowballs
10. If you clear snow away from outside your business or home you are likely to get sued
11. Health and safety prevents people putting coins in Christmas puddings
12. Elf n Safety ruins Christmas!

Hazards presented whilst decorating the office can usually be managed through common sense control measures.



Health and Safety Update

Health and Safety Advisors are appointed by the Isle of Man Government to support all Isle of Man Government Departments.

To end 2023 we are establishing ways to improve our own engagement and communication with Government Departments.

This is our second newsletter and we have embraced the support from SafetyBot PEMEs' to deliver not only the newsletters but safety bulletins and updated guidance documents.

If you haven't checked out our website, please do take a look at what information and guidance is at your own fingertips.

As we step closer towards Christmas there is one place you don't want to end up.... A&E.

Christmas is a peak time for increased stress and accidents. According to RoSPA more than 80,000 people go to A&E each year for Christmas-related accidents and over 6,000 of these need to be admitted.

Decorations, fires, new toys, visitors, cooking and houses packed with over-excited children and extra animals present a lot of potential hazards.

Factor in the additional seasonal stress and alcohol and you can start to understand how people fall foul of the festive season.

For this reason alone you may find interest in our blog about first aid. Most first aiders will use their skill outside of the workplace and never inside. Emergency aid is a life skill that can save a life and make many more better through casualty comfort and early treatment.

this issue

Working at Height Guidance

First Aid at Work

Avoiding an incident is always a good safety measure.

Father Christmas will have many occasions of unknown hazards this Christmas as he accesses the many homes around the world to deliver presents.

Working at Height is working in any place where, if there were no precautions in place, a person (Father Christmas) could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury (for example a fall through a fragile roof).

In the workplace our own activities recognise working at height as a risk within each department.

Managers and Team Leaders can take simple, practical measures to reduce the risk of any of their workers falling while working at height. Providing information and training, suitable equipment which is kept in a good state of repair.

Not only have we covered Working at Height within this blog, we have also included some useful documents and checklists on our website.

Final message... If anyone wishes to give me another lump of coal for my very large collection then please ensure it is accompanied by a Certificate of Analysis stating the crystalline silica and tar content. Thank you



WELL, IF YOU WANT SANTA TO VISIT, YOU'LL HAVE TO WIDEN THE CHIMNEY BY 2.4 CENTIMETRES, INSTALL NON-SLIP ROOF TILES, BUILD A LANDING PLATFORM AND PROVIDE ORGANIC FOOD AND TOILET FACILITIES FOR HIS REINDEER...

Working at Height Safety

Do...

- ✓ Avoid working at height if feasible
- ✓ Provide safe means for workers to access where they work
- ✓ Put precautions in place for fragile surfaces
- ✓ Account for falling objects
- ✓ Maintain equipment adequately

Don't...

- ✗ Overload ladders – account for workers and materials
- ✗ Overreach or overextend on ladders
- ✗ Put ladders on weak or uneven surfaces
- ✗ Use ladders for long periods of time
- ✗ Allow users who are not competent or confident

UP ON THE ROOFTOP... *IT'S SAFETY SANTA!*



Working at Height is relevant to every Government Department.

During 2023 we have delivered Working at Height training sessions and developed awareness documents and materials to help our staff manage risks from working at height.

During October Farther Christmas himself brushed up on his working at height knowledge. Each year he will visit every home where access varies from doorways to ladders to rooftops. Many of which present changes especially when access is above ground level and has the need for a roof top landing or a ladder.

Ladders have been found with missing rungs, missing feet and generally in a poor state of repair. Rooftops are found to be fragile and without appropriate signage and edge protection.

Preventing slips, trip and falls from roof space can be helped by ensuring anti slip paint is applied, hand rails are installed, staff are wearing anti slip safety footwear and the roof space can be sufficiently lit – with artificial lighting installed.

Defective ladders cause incidents that lead to injuries. Those using ladders need to carry out their pre-use ladder checks. Ladder owners should ensure that monthly and six monthly ladder inspections are carried out and formally recorded. Damaged ladders must be removed, replaced and destroyed.

When working at height it is important to plan and organise the works to prevent a fall from height. Planning allows you to identify the hazards and risks which will allow you to organize controls to prevent them from occurring.

You will recognise that even falls from low heights can be fatal and that in actual fact there isn't a "2-metre rule".

You will recognize that if a person is working at any height then they could fall a distance which can cause injury – more likely when no precautions are taken.

Are you as safe as Father Christmas when working at height?

...Make safety your call, to prevent a Christmas fall...

Managing working at height – do you have a policy for working at height / roof access. A site risk assessment for working at height / roof access must be in place with foreseeable hazards having sufficient controls.

There is lots of useful guidance on the Isle of Man Government Website.

<https://hr.gov.im/health-and-safety/health-and-safety-guidance/>

Q. Can office workers put up Christmas decorations?

A. Christmas is a great excuse for office workers to let their hair down and spruce up the working atmosphere with a few festive decorations. Health and safety does not ban this seasonal tradition, but it does require employers to make sure suitable, safe equipment is provided to put up the decorations such as step ladders instead of wheelie chairs, and that any risks such as trailing wires are limited as much as is reasonably possible. Avoid putting tinsel especially and other decorations around lighting, door vision panels and items that produce heat (computer monitors being an example). Do not overload electrical points.

First Aid at Work

"It was an incredible feeling to know that I was responsible for saving somebody's life. It just made me realise that the 15years of training was for this one moment, and it doesn't matter how many times I've practiced CPR, this was the moment"



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbY7i5hjtTc>

First aid is the help given to someone who is injured or ill to keep them safe and to cause no further harm.

The role of a first aider is to give someone this help.

First aid training is a valuable life skill for everyone as it equips you with the necessary skills to provide basic life support in emergency situations.

Whilst recruited and trained to support the workplace, the skill is transferable to outside of the workplace. Benefiting family, friends and community strangers.

In fact, trained first aiders will tell you that you mainly use your skills outside of the workplace.

Learning the skill of emergency aid can preserve life whilst it can also prevent the worsening of symptoms

Did you know...

- It is estimated that only one in 20 people would know what to do in an emergency...

Do you know who your first aiders are?

If you would like to be considered to support the role as work place first aider please speak with your manager. Your interest could help to save a life.



5 Reasons Why Basic First Aid Knowledge is Essential

1. Preserves Life
2. Prevents injuries from getting worse
3. Aiding in recovery
4. Relieving pain
5. Protecting the unconscious

Festive Workplace

Q. Can we have Christmas lights in the workplace?

A. There is no legislation to stop this festive tradition, but think about what you're putting up. Is it time to invest in some new lights and not worry about the tired old lights having to be PAT tested this year... Or maybe even get some battery operated lights instead?

And remember as pretty as they may look. If you're not going to be in the office for the day or when it's the end of work-day. Switch them off.

Christmas Tips

Q: how do I stay safe this Christmas?

A: here is 6 tips that can be helpful for both the workplace and home

1. Beware of trailing cables and wires in the rush to connect new gadgets and appliances, and always read instructions.
2. Make sure you buy enough batteries so you don't have to remove them from smoke alarms. *Three people die each year when testing if a 9v battery works on their tongue.*
3. Do not be excited or rush when opening presents. Hundreds will cut themselves with knives while opening presents or using a sharp knife instead of a screwdriver.
4. Falls are the most common accidents so try to keep clutter to a minimum. Make sure areas around workstations and stairs are well-lit and free from obstacles
5. Many adults will suffer eye injuries after poking themselves or others in the eye with new gadgets and glitter fragments from cards or craft activities.
6. *Top Tip...* Children should avoid riding bikes and playing with toys until Boxing Day. This will allow proper reading of instructions, development of checklists, training, pre-start checks, calmer demeanor and supervision by responsible adults not affected by alcohol



Health & Safety Locally

Our local Health & Safety at Work Inspectorate will be hosting a number of 'workshop style' events with the aim of improving health, safety and welfare across the Isle of Man.

This first workshop will be held on the 31st January 2024. Further details can be found on the Isle of Man Government Website: <https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/departments/environment-food-and-agriculture/regulation-directorate/health-and-safety-at-work-inspectorate/health-and-safety-workshops/#accordion>

Upcoming Events and Professional Development

IOSH Managing Safely

Dates:

- 15th, 16th and 17th January 2024
- 12th, 13th and 14th February 2024
- 4th, 5th and 6th March 2024

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

Dates:

- 25th January 2024 – 09:30am until 11:30am
- 27th February 2024 – 09:30am until 11:30am

Health, Safety and Welfare will also host bespoke workshops and toolbox talks to Isle of Man Government Departments and Employees. Please make contact to discuss any requirements for your own area.

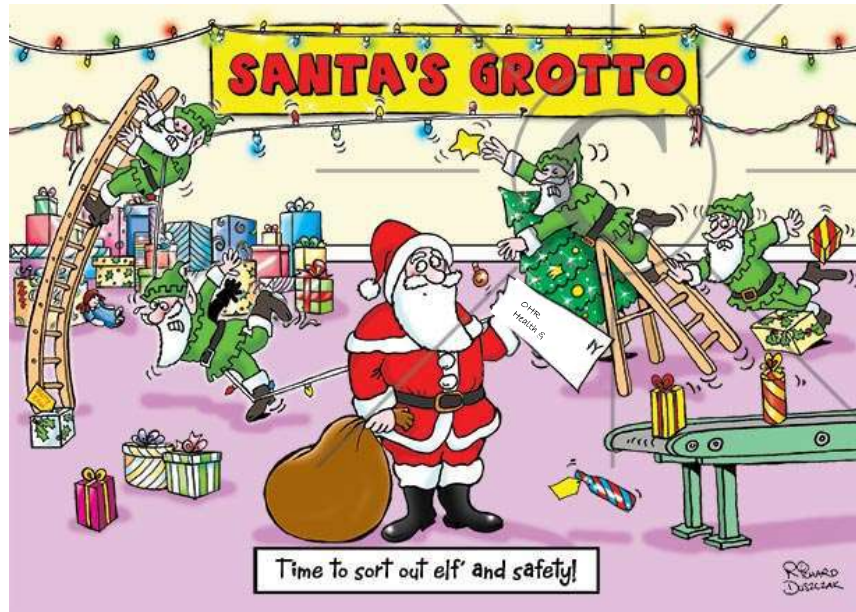
Just for festive fun...

Team Safety Moment – focused on the reporting of incidents (including near miss events) why not discuss this Safety Moment inside your next team meeting?

Employees have an obligation to report workplace incidents and near miss events so that steps can be taken preventing them happening again.

Identify who your first aiders are and how incidents are reported within your own area. Who is responsible for ensuring that incident investigations are carried out?

Finally... see how much of a Safety Champion you really are.. how many hazards can be found inside Santa's Grotto? Can you list them? See below for some identified hazards. Can you find anymore?



Working at height from ladders and step ladders whilst decorating ceiling and tree. Risk: Incorrect ladder selection cause the ladder to topple over or the user to fall from over-reaching. Injuries can be broken bones and bruising to more significant injuries including falling from conveyor belt. Risk: Items can break causing slip hazards from contents. This can result in injuries such as bruising and cuts to broken bones. Hazard: Santa's heavy sack of gifts. Risk: overloading of the sack places additional muscle strain. This can cause musculoskeletal discomfort and damage. Hazard: String of lights at low level. Risk: Can you identify any more?

How to contact Health, Safety and Welfare

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What 3 Words:

Recovery.eleves.tent