

Date	18 March 2012
Issue Ref:	HSE Information Sheet 0023
Topic:	One in five construction sites fail safety inspections
Details:	<p>One in five construction sites failed safety checks during the first five days of an intensive inspection initiative in Merseyside and Cheshire.</p> <p>Inspectors from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) visited a total 167 sites in the two counties between 20 and 24 February, but 32 were found to have working practices that could put workers at risk.</p> <p>The inspections were carried out as part of a month-long drive across Great Britain to improve health and safety in one of the country's most dangerous industries. Inspectors are targeting sites where refurbishment or repair work is being carried out, with the aim of reducing the risk of death, injury and ill health.</p> <p>The primary focus is on high-risk activity including working at height and 'good order', such as ensuring sites are clean and tidy with clear access routes. Attention is also being paid to structural stability, public protection, fire safety issues and asbestos.</p> <p>During the visits in Merseyside and Cheshire, HSE inspectors issued 29 Prohibition Notices stopping work activities immediately and 15 Improvement Notices requiring changes to be made to working practices. Half of the notices related to unsafe work being carried out at height.</p> <p>Falls from height remain one of the most common causes of deaths and major injuries in the construction sector in Great Britain, with more than five incidents recorded every day.</p> <p>The purpose of the initiative is to remind those working in construction that poor standards are unacceptable, and could result in enforcement action.</p> <p>Neil Jamieson, HSE Principal Inspector for Construction, said: "The majority of the sites we visited were meeting acceptable standards but sadly one in five weren't, putting the lives and health of workers at risk. "The fact that half of the enforcement notices we issued related to work at height shows that companies still aren't doing enough to tackle one of the biggest causes of death and major injury in the sector.</p> <p>"Implementing simple, inexpensive changes, or just a moment of extra thought, could prevent someone being killed or seriously injured. Employers should create an atmosphere where workers can raise concerns without fearing for their jobs."</p> <p>During 2010/11, two workers were killed while working in the construction industry in Merseyside and Cheshire, and there were 95 serious injuries</p>

Recommended Action:	<p>Health and safety tips for construction firms are available at www.hse.gov.uk/construction</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>During the inspection initiative, HSE inspectors are looking at whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jobs that involve working at height have been identified and properly planned to ensure that appropriate precautions are in place; - Equipment is correctly installed / assembled, inspected and maintained and used properly; - Sites are well organised, to avoid trips and falls; - Walkways and stairs are free from obstructions; and - Work areas are clear of unnecessary materials and waste.
Links/References	<p>Further information on the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2007 http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm.htm</p> <p>Further information on falls and trips in the construction industry http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/campaigns/fallstrips/index.htm</p>
Picture:	None
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