



Safety Bulletin 109

Site Safety - what inspectors look for

In conjunction with the HSE's 'Watch Your Step' initiative, this bulletin contains information on keeping your site safe, and what a health and safety inspector would be looking for on a site safety inspection, in respect of slips trips and falls.

Several thousand construction workers are injured each year following a trip or slip while they're at work on a building site. Around 1000 of these involve someone fracturing bones or dislocating joints. Each year simple accidents like these mean that people just like you have to give up working in the construction industry. You can't afford it, and neither can the industry. Most of these accidents could be avoided if everyone on site did their bit to make the workplace safer. From the top to the bottom, it's in everyone's interest to keep the sites you work on in good order. The job can be done quicker, more easily and without the risk that workers like you will get seriously injured.

This bulletin gives a few examples of some sensible things that can be done to make sure that the sites you work on are kept in good order. But reading the bulletin isn't enough. Unless everyone on site actually takes some action to improve the situation, nothing will change, and people like you will continue to be seriously injured.

What inspectors look for

It is not acceptable for corridors and stairwells to be obstructed with materials, footpaths to be uneven, cables to be strewn across walkways, or for steps into site cabins to be poorly constructed.

Inspectors look to make sure that sites are properly organised, with waste streams managed, so that walkways are kept clear of unnecessary obstructions which could cause a trip injury.

Principal contractors should consider how they will manage the site to ensure that it is kept in good order by:

- ✚ Segregating traffic routes from pedestrian routes
- ✚ Managing the procurement of materials to ensure that only the minimum amount of materials are stored on site at any time
- ✚ Ensuring that everyone working on the site is aware of the site policy for managing the movement and storage of materials around the site, and the removal of waste from work areas.

Everyone on site including workers needs to play their part by:

- ✚ Keeping walkways and stairs clear and free from obstructions
- ✚ Ensuring that footpaths are firm and level, stoned up if necessary, and gritted if icy
- ✚ Keeping work areas as clear as possible of unnecessary materials and waste
- ✚ Storing materials safely, whether in the site compound or around the site
- ✚ Complying with the site arrangements for the removal of waste
- ✚ Reporting good order problems to site management

Remember: see it, sort it.



Real examples of good and bad practice

The following photographs were taken on the same small refurbishment job. The 'before' shots are the conditions a HSE inspector found when he first made an un-announced site visit. Enforcement notices were issued. The 'after' shots are the same site when the inspector came back at a later date to check on compliance with the notices.

Before



After



Before



After



Conditions throughout were so poor that the toilet facilities for the workers were a hole in the ground (behind the screen to the left hand side on the before shot). As you can see in the after shot a temporary portaloo was provided following the HSE site visit.

Before



After





Ask yourself the following questions:

- + Whose job is it to clear up the waste? How often?
- + Are bins provided? How many? Where? Who by?
- + Whose job is it to empty the bins? Where to? How?
- + Whose job is it to make sure the waste is removed from the site?

Everyone has a role to play in keeping the site in good order.

If you require any further information, clarification or assistance with the above, then please do not hesitate to contact us;

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Source –Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
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