



**THINK SAFE
STAY SAFE**



**Tilhill
Forestry**

BSWGROUP member of **binderholz** ■

SAFETY AND ASSURANCE BULLETIN

INSIST ON SAFETY

APRIL 2025

World Safety Day 28th April

In 2003, the International Labour Organization (ILO), began to observe a World Day in order to stress the prevention of accidents and diseases at work. The World Day for Safety and Health at Work is a significant tool to raise awareness of how to make work safe and healthy and of the need to raise the political profile of occupational safety and health. 28 April is also the International Commemoration Day for Dead and Injured Workers organized worldwide by the trade union movement since 1996.

Whilst you may not have heard of the World Day for Safety and Health at Work, the ILO may sound familiar. They set out core conventions on workers rights.

Chain of Custody certification standards require us to comply with workers rights that are protected by the International Labour Organization (ILO) Core

conventions. In order to comply with these requirements organisation must:

- Not use child labour
- Eliminate all forms of forced and compulsory labour.
- Ensure that there is no discrimination in employment and occupation.
- Respect freedom of association and the effective right to collective bargaining.

Our harvesting contractors are considered as 'Outsourcers', therefore they sign up to an outsourcing agreement and they are required to complete an annual ILO self-assessment for them to describe how they conform to these Core Labour Requirements. Once this has been reviewed we shall use self-assessment to guide future audits and verification of compliance with the standard.

In this edition

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**International
Labour
Organization**

Left Fuming

In summary welders must be protected from welding fume, even welding mild steel outside.

It's now 6 years since the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) released a safety alert on welding fume. The change was brought about as a result of research releasing new scientific evidence that exposure to mild steel welding fume can cause lung cancer and possibly kidney cancer in humans. Mild steel welding fume was reclassified as a human carcinogen.

In order to protect workers, the HSE strengthened their enforcement of cancer-causing welding fumes with immediate effect. In summary welders must be protected from welding fume, even welding mild steel outside. This was a change from previously accepted practices.

What control measures do I need to implement?

General ventilation does not achieve the essential welding fume exposure control. Control of exposure to

carcinogenic fumes requires more effective engineering controls, such as local exhaust ventilation (LEV), which allows for at-source fume extraction thus preventing welding fume from spreading into the surrounding workplace and entering the worker's breathing zone.

Indoor welding tasks require the use of some form of filtered extraction. The tiny welding fume particles can hang in the air for days, so only controlling exposure indoor with Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) would be defeated once the RPE is removed and the fume is still hanging in the air. Also anyone else in the indoor space would be exposed.

Appropriate RPE must be provided for welding outdoors.

Regardless of the duration of exposure, the HSE will no longer accept any welding undertaken without suitable exposure control measures in place as there is no known level of safe exposure.



Welding fume is a complex and varying mixture of airborne particles, vapours and gases. The fume particles are formed from the vaporisation of molten metal then condensing to microscopic balls. Think about a boiling kettle where the water is vapourised and then condenses, only with metal when it cools and condenses it forms tiny solids.

Distracted?

RoSPA quote a vehicle driver is 4 times more likely to crash, injuring or killing themselves or other people when using a mobile phone, whether handheld or hands free. Mobile phones are not the only things to distract us from the task in hand when driving, adjusting sat-navs and using infotainment systems that have got ever more complicated are two others.

There are lots of sources of similar information online referencing distractions whilst driving, but how many of us consider the same when operating plant or machinery? In an incident on site recently an operator tracking a machine on site became distracted by a phone call and others around them. In their distraction they failed to control the tracked machine adequately and

ran their own leg over. The operator was fortunate that the ground was soft and the injury was minimised.

Operators of all machinery must follow the operators handbook and risk assessment to operate machinery safely and ensure they remain fully focussed on the task, no matter how familiar they are with it.



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Wildfire season

This years' wildfire season has started. In recent years, possibly due to the increased numbers of the public enjoying the countryside, the incidence of wildfires has increased.

Although wildfires can be started naturally the majority are caused by people, either accidentally or deliberately. We experienced this over the last two years during the various lockdowns when people accessed their local areas more and enjoyed UK breaks as alternatives to travelling abroad.

This summer may see a return to foreign holidays, however with costs rising and many finding the joy of the countryside on their doorstep potentially we could still see more people out and about than pre-pandemic. Despite mainstream media coverage in the past two years many of these people will not be aware of the Countryside Code and so the risk from Wildfires from portable BBQs, campfires, and discarded cigarettes will remain elevated.

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Remember!

- Ensure your Forest Fire plans are up to date.
- Subscribe to Wildfire Risk Alert services, such as provided through Confor.
- Check you have a grab bag ready to go if called upon to help manage a fire. It should contain items to sustain you if you are on site assisting the emergency services, e.g. power bank for phone/tablet, food and water.
- Don't forget a Helicopter authorisation form in case it is required (GN/51).

Good Call Award

The Good call award for February 2025 was awarded to Faith White. When Faith arrived on site she quickly identified timber stacks that were being loaded on to a lorry and leaving steep sides. She spoke with the driver about the stacks and they evened the profile out. Faith also spoke with the forwarder driver to keep the stack height correct and monitor/manage the profile.

Timber stacking areas on site can be limited, leading to high stacks if timber is moving from site quickly enough.

This should be identified on the site risk assessment and the stacks monitored. It is important that their profile also be maintained to avoid steep sides that can be a cause of stack movement.

Thank you Faith for seeing the hazard and taking action to put right there and then.

**STOP, THINK and
ACT when problems
start to develop.**

In the News Elsewhere

Farm partnership fined after man killed by exploding tyre.

A farm partnership has been fined £80,000 after a man died following an incident at a dairy farm. The deceased suffered fatal head injuries as he helped to inflate a tractor tyre at the farm. He was working as a farmhand at the farm.

At the time of the incident, he had been helping one of the partners in the business re-seat and inflate a large tractor tyre. As the partner of the business inflated the inner tube within the tyre, it suddenly exploded and the catastrophic release of compressed air propelled the wheel rim into the deceased, causing traumatic head injuries. He was taken to hospital and underwent skull and brain surgeries, but he subsequently passed away.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the farm partnership had failed to properly assess and plan this work activity. They also failed to identify and put in place the measures necessary to control the risks involved when inflating large commercial tyres.

The investigation also found that the risk of an explosion was much higher because the tyre, wheel rim and inner tube were all in a poorly maintained condition. A suitable and sufficient assessment had not been made to determine whether the damaged tyre, inner tube and wheel rim were suitable to be inflated safely.

The farm partnership pleaded guilty to breaching regulation 2(1) of the Health and Safety At Work Act 1974. They were fined £80,000 and ordered to pay £8,605 costs at a hearing at court.

After the hearing, HSE inspector said: "This was a tragic incident, and a much-loved young man has lost his life. It could have easily been avoided with the right controls in place. HSE would like to make all employers aware that, before they undertake the inflation of large commercial tyres, they need to have correctly assessed the risk and have in place the suitable controls for the task."

April 2025 – Safety & Assurance Bulletin briefing

I have been personally briefed in the contents of this Safety & Assurance Bulletin.

Please add any questions relating to this briefing or any other health, safety and environmental matters you wish to raise:

Please add any suggestions on health, safety, sustainability, and/or environmental matters:

I have been briefed by: _____ My Tilhill Office is: _____

I understand that I am encouraged to submit comment and contribution from this bulletin.

Signed: _____	Name: _____	Date: _____
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ORIGINAL sheet to be held at the Tilhill Office.

Send a **COPY** to: Head of Safety, Tilhill, The Gatehouse, Ruck Lane, Horsmonden, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 8EA. Fax: 01892 860441. Email: ios@tilhill.com

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