



# Wilkins Safety Group

**Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2014**

## **Inside this Issue**

1. Firework Safety.
2. Somerset firm sentenced following worker's death in explosion
3. Injury and ill-health statistics highlight workplace dangers

## *Welcome to our latest Update E-Newsletter*

As ever, please feel free to share this with friends and colleagues. You will also find PDF versions of all our other newsletters on our website: [www.wilkinssafety.co.uk](http://www.wilkinssafety.co.uk) with lots more useful information and a wealth of leaflets covering Health and Safety topics.



## **Firework Safety**

It is coming to the night of the 'fireworks', the night when rhyme and reason disappears in the fun of seeing explosive actions and hearing loud noises.

Nearly everyone likes to witness a good firework display; however if you are organising an event for your company, youth group, school or church, there are some considerations you will need to observe..

## **This week's 2 recent HSE cases also look at accidents that could and should have been avoided.**

- **Peter James**, aged 67 of Southmead Terrace, Crewkerne, died of head injuries six days after an explosion at his works in Isle Abbots, Taunton
- **Figures published today** show that while Britain continues to be one of the safest places to work in Europe, too many workers are still being injured or made ill by work.

We hope you learn from the mistakes of others that are highlighted in our weekly newsletters and, as a result, do not have similar accidents at your workplace.

As ever, if you have a subject that you would like us to cover one week, please contact us by phone **01458 253682**  
Email [info@wilkinssafety.co.uk](mailto:info@wilkinssafety.co.uk) or via our [Facebook page](#) or by [Twitter](#)

# *Firework Safety*



It is coming to the night of the 'fireworks', the night when rhyme and reason disappears in the fun of seeing explosive actions and hearing loud noises. Nearly everyone likes to witness a good firework display; however if you are organising an event for your company, youth group, school or church, there are some considerations you will need to observe.

If you follow the simple guidelines as laid out by the HSE then YOUR firework evening will go with a successful 'BANG'.

If you have any questions then do contact our office [01458 253682](tel:01458253682) or drop an email to us on [info@wilkinssafety.co.uk](mailto:info@wilkinssafety.co.uk)



Enjoy the fun but please be safe.



*Organising firework displays*

Firework displays should be enjoyable and spectacular occasions - but they obviously need some responsible planning. The good news is that there is straightforward guidance to help you.

If you are organising a major public event, you will clearly need a robust and detailed approach to planning as well as professional involvement. If you are holding a local firework display, such as those organised by many sports clubs, schools or parish councils, you still need to plan responsibly, but the same level of detail is not necessary or expected. Below are some tips and guidance to help you.

### ***Before the event:***

- Think about who will operate the display. There is no reason why you should not light a display yourselves provided it only contains fireworks in categories 1, 2 and 3. but remember, category 4 fireworks may only be used by professional firework display operators. In untrained hands they can be lethal.
- Consider whether the site is suitable and large enough for your display, including a bonfire if you are having one. Is there space for the fireworks to land well away from spectators? Remember to check in daylight for overhead power lines and other obstructions. What is the direction of the prevailing wind? What would happen if it changed?
- Think about what you would do if things go wrong. Make sure there is someone who will be responsible for calling the emergency services
- Make sure you obtain the fireworks from a reputable supplier.
- If the display is to be provided by a professional firework display operator make sure that you are clear on who does what especially in the event of an emergency
- Ensure you have a suitable place to store the fireworks. Your firework supplier or local authority should be able to advise
- If you plan on selling alcohol the bar should be well away from the display site

### ***On the day of the event:***

- Recheck the site, weather conditions and wind direction
- Don't let anyone into the zone where the fireworks will fall - or let anyone other than the display operator or firing team into the firing zone or the safety zone around it
- Discourage spectators from bringing drink onto the site
- Don't let spectators bring their own fireworks onto the site
- If you will also have a bonfire at the display then you should:
  - o Check the structure is sound and does not have small children or animals inside it before lighting it
  - o Not use petrol or paraffin to light the fire
  - o Have only one person responsible for lighting the fire. That person, and any helpers, should wear suitable clothing eg a substantial outer garment made of wool or other low-flammable material.

- o Make sure that the person lighting the fire and any helpers know what to do in the event of a burn injury or clothing catching fire

- Never attempt to relight fireworks. Keep well clear of fireworks that have failed to go off

### ***The morning after:***

- Carefully check and clear the site. Dispose of fireworks safely. They should never be burnt in a confined space (eg a boiler)

Additional points to consider if you are organising a major public display

For major displays, particularly those involving category 4 'professional' fireworks or very large number of spectators, a more robust approach is obviously needed.

- Plan and mark out the areas for spectators, firing fireworks (and a safety zone around it) as well as an area where the fireworks will fall

- Think about how people will get into and out of the site. Keep pedestrian and vehicle routes apart if possible. Mark exit routes clearly and ensure they are well lit. Ensure emergency vehicles can get access to the site

- Appoint enough stewards/marshals. Make sure they understand what they are to do on the night and what they should do in the event of an emergency

- Contact the emergency services and local authority. If your site is near an airport you may need to contact them

- Signpost the first aid facilities

### ***Insurance***

Although it is not required by health and safety law, if you are holding a public firework display, it's a good idea to have public liability insurance. Bear in mind that not all companies are used to dealing with this type of event, and as with any other type of insurance, it's worth shopping around: look for a company that's used to insuring firework and other public events - you are likely to get much better deal and avoid unsuitable terms and conditions. If you have difficulty with the standard insurance terms, TALK to your insurer and find a way forward; they can be very helpful.

### ***Further guidance***

- [Giving your own firework display \(HSE Guide HS\(G\) 124\)](#)

If you need further information please call us on [01458 253682](tel:01458253682) or send us an email at [info@wilkinssafety.co.uk](mailto:info@wilkinssafety.co.uk)

<<< >>>

**Now to the latest HSE cases:**

## ***Somerset firm sentenced following worker's death in explosion***

**A horticultural company has been fined after a worker died and three others were seriously injured in an explosion while emptying a pressurised tank used to heat greenhouses.**

Peter James, aged 67 of Southmead Terrace, Crewkerne, died of head injuries six days after the incident. Two of his workmates had been asked to open the tank in preparation for upgrading work at a nursery at Bradon Farm, Isle Abbots, near Taunton on 11 May 2010.



The incident was investigated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), which prosecuted Mr James' employer, Cantelo Nurseries Ltd, at Taunton Crown Court today (24 October).

The court heard that two workers were asked to unbolt a hatch cover from a pressure vessel while there was still pressure in the system. This caused a devastating release of pressure that sent the hatch cover flying across the room followed by a large jet of water that swept everyone off their feet.

In addition to Mr James's fatal injuries, the three other men standing nearby suffered severe injuries.

Arek Kuchczynski, aged 29, was unconscious for two weeks following the incident and remained in hospital for many months after suffering injuries to his head and skull, and damage to his forearm, requiring three operations and a skin graft.

Roger Mees, a 43 year old horticultural manager, suffered serious trauma to his head including a broken jaw, heavy bruising to his face, damage to his teeth, a cut across the nose, black eyes and a two-inch deep cut to his lip. Horticultural technician Radoslau Dimitov, aged 25, also suffered a fractured arm.

HSE's investigation found that the work was not properly planned, that workers had not been properly trained or supervised, and that at least one of them spoke very little English, which made it difficult to understand instructions.

The court was told the hatch should not have been removed until all the pressure had been safely released from the system.

Cantelo Nurseries Ltd, of Bradon Farm, Isle Abbots, Taunton, pleaded guilty to two breaches of health and safety legislation and was fined a total of £80,000 and ordered to pay £59,812 in costs.

HSE Inspector Christine Haberfield, speaking after the hearing, said:

**“This tragic incident has cost one man his life and changed the lives of many other people forever. There were simple, sensible and proportionate steps, such as releasing the pressure in the tanks, that could – and should – have been taken to do the work safely.**

**“All that was needed was a little thought beforehand to ensure that the work was properly planned, carried out by competent people and supervised. Had this been done, this tragedy could have been avoided.**

**“All employers must ensure any task of this nature, indeed any maintenance or repair task, is properly planned and considered to ensure that sensible precautions can be taken. That includes ensuring all sources of energy are isolated before work begins.”**



# *Injury and ill-health statistics highlight workplace dangers*

Figures published today show that while Britain continues to be one of the safest places to work in Europe, too many workers are still being injured or made ill by work.

Injury and ill-health statistics released by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) show that an estimated 28.2 million working days were lost due to work related ill health or injury in 2013/14.

As a result, the cost to society from such injuries and new cases of ill health due to current working conditions is an estimated £14.2 billion (2012/13 figures based on 2012 prices), according to the latest annual statistics published by HSE today.



Judith Hackitt, the chair of HSE, says that behind every number is the reality of a real person being killed or suffering injuries or ill health while simply doing their job.

The statistics show that, in 2013/14, there were;

- 133 fatal injuries – a fall from 150 the previous year.
- 77,593 other injuries reported under The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). That equates to 304.6 injuries per 100,000 employees.
- An estimated two million people in 2013/14 suffering from an illness they believed was caused or made worse by current or past work.



Judith Hackitt said:

“These latest figures remind us what health and safety is really about. We should remind ourselves what these numbers actually mean – the number of times in the last year someone went out to work and either did not return home to their loved ones or came home with life changing injuries.

“The health numbers also demonstrate the scale of harm being done to people’s health while at work, too often leading to premature death.

“Jobsworths using ‘elf n safety as a convenient excuse for all manner of things, and those claiming health and safety is a burden, need to reflect on this. Britain has one of the best health and safety systems in the world, but that is cold comfort to those who have suffered loss or suffering that is so easily avoided with sensible and proportionate risk management.

“We all need to commit to focussing on what really matters – ensuring more people return home from work every day and enjoy long and healthy working lives.”

The industries in which workers are most likely to be injured by their jobs have not changed significantly – with

- construction (1900 major/specified injuries),
- agriculture (292 major/specified injuries),
- manufacturing (3159 major/specified injuries) and
- waste and recycling (486 major/specified injuries)

among the higher risk sectors.

<<< >>>



If you have any queries on any health and safety matter, please contact Jon Wilkins on [01458 253682](tel:01458253682) or by email on [jon@wilkinssafety.co.uk](mailto:jon@wilkinssafety.co.uk)



Your Business is  
Safer in Our Hands