



# Wilkins Safety Group

**Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014**

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## *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.

### ***Seasons Greetings for the Christmas and New Year***

**We would like to wish all our subscribers, clients and readers a very merry festive time over the winter break.**

This is the last newsletter for 2014, the next one will be sent on Monday 5th January 2015.

We continually strive to send you relevant information on current health and safety legislation, we hope you find it useful and informative.

If you have any requests or would like to see any specific information or safety details highlighted in future editions, then do drop an email to [info@wilkinssafety.co.uk](mailto:info@wilkinssafety.co.uk)

Unfortunately, as soon as the first hint of mulled wine hits the air, “elf and safety” becomes the catch-all excuse for all kinds of strange and silly stories.

Because we all deserve a laugh now and then, as an early Christmas present I've rounded up a couple of the most ridiculous health and safety corkers and they are in place of our usual recent HSE cases.

### **So this week's 2 ridiculous “Elf & Safety” corkers are:**

- Council bans taxi driver's Santa beard – because it wouldn't match his ID card photo.
- Popular Christmas parade in Poole cancelled – because it might be... popular?.

Of course, if you take a closer look at these stories you will see they show a completely different picture. One that's not at all related to health and safety regulations.

## *Christmas is definitely in the air.*

The fairy lights are twinkling, and you've started your annual month-long mince pie marathon.

You've dusted down your obligatory ugly Christmas jumper and you're just getting warmed up to the festive season with The Pogues, Slade, Wizard and Mariah Carey on repeat. Although personally I prefer the more classical standards from the likes of Gustav Holst and Franz Gruber



**Christmas is definitely in the air.**

If you're lucky, that is. But we mustn't forget all the wonderful people that will be working over the Christmas period to keep us safe, fit and well. So please raise a glass for Nurses, Doctors, Care home assistants, Police Officers, Firemen and anyone else who has to work over Christmas. **Thank you.**

## *The serious side*

Cooking up some Christmas Elf and Safety myths might be great for giggles, but there's also an important side to it too.

Health and safety isn't some silly bureaucratic game to stamp out fun. It's there to make sure you and everyone around you gets to enjoy a happy, enjoyable and – most of all – safe Christmas.

Pinning the blame on health and safety regulations when there's no real concern at all doesn't just lead to jokey headlines. It also suggests that people can afford not to take it seriously, when they really should.

## *Your takeaway tips*

Here are a few essential health and safety tips you should keep in mind over the coming weeks:

- Flickering flames are festive and pretty, but candles are also responsible for over 1,000 house fires every year. If you're lighting up, keep them away from curtains and flammable surfaces – whether in the workplace, or at home.
- Don't let your work Christmas dinner be a total turkey – whatever you're serving up, make sure it's properly cooked to avoid the risk of food poisoning.
- Watch where you go – bad weather and low light are the best of buddies when it comes to causing accidents so take it slow and keep an eye on weather warnings.
- **PLEASE DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE – [watch this latest film.](#)**



# Merry Christmas

## *Closing times.*

Over the festive break all our offices will be closed from 17.00 on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2014 to 0900 on 5th January 2015 inclusive.

However, as many of you know, **Jon** doesn't worry about holidays so please call us if needed on [01458 253682](tel:01458253682). This will be transferred to Jon's direct line. If he is out there will be an answerphone. Leave a message and he will get back to you.

## **Now to the "Elf & Safety" corkers:**

### ***Bah humbug council bans taxi driver's Santa beard because it wouldn't match his ID card photo***



**Dave Leonard wanted to dress up as Father Christmas to raise money for the hospice where his mum died.**

The taxi driver has been banned by his council from dressing as Santa to raise money for charity because a false white beard would break health and safety rules.

Kind Dave Leonard, 43, was stunned when the council said no to his scheme to make cash for the hospice where his mum died.

Although lights, baubles and his Santa suit were allowed, his council in Barnsley, South Yorks, drew the line at the beard as he wouldn't match his ID card.

Council bosses explained it would stop people being able to identify the driver and wouldn't match his ID card.

The dad-of-three, of Hoyland, South Yorks, said:

*"There are strict rules and I understand they have to be. "But the one thing I thought they would allow was Santa's beard. I have had to grow my own, which isn't as good. Mine is dark."*

Councillor Roy Miller said:

*"Barnsley Council fully supports Mr Leonard in his fundraising efforts, and congratulates him on the amount of money he has raised previously for good causes. Safety of the public is our paramount concern."*

Last year Dave, a cabbie for the last 20 years, raised £765 with just a bucket collection and was this Christmas aiming to top the £2,500 mark.

The festive fundraiser can be seen driving around in his eight-seated bus decked out with Christmas lights, garlands of flowers, snowmen and reindeer



## ***Popular Christmas parade in Poole cancelled – because it might be... popular?.***

A popular Christmas parade held every year for four decades has been cancelled for health and safety reasons - because of fears it would attract too many people.

Officials say the Santa's Parade through Poole, Dorset, has become too popular and that crowd safety could not be guaranteed.

The decision to cancel the event, put on every year since the 1970s, has been branded 'crazy' and 'outrageous'.

The event, organised by Poole's Dolphin Shopping Centre, has been cancelled after concerns that there will be too many people in a confined space with moving vehicles going past as part of the parade.



A petition demanding the tradition is reinstated gathered nearly 1,500 signatures in just a day.

Town councillor Charmaine Parkinson said: 'The children are devastated, parents are angry - they just don't see the sense in it. It is an outrageous decision.'

Daniel Carrington, who lives in the seaside town, said: 'It's crazy. This is something local children look forward to every year. It's not exactly getting behind the true spirit of Christmas by doing this is it?'

One mother wrote on Facebook: 'What utter guff. Other towns run such events with 'health and safety' risks managed. It's taken place for decades without incident, what do they think would happen this year?'

Several thousand people normally attend the parade, which involves Father Christmas arriving at Poole Quay in an RNLI lifeboat. He is then transported on a slow-moving, Christmas-themed float around the streets of the town centre before taking up residence in his grotto inside Dolphin Shopping Centre.

Ryan Stiggants, 18, who has helped launch the petition, urged the organisers to bring it back. He said: 'Using health and safety as an excuse is not on, they can make this happen if they want to.'

John Grinnell, the manager of the shopping centre, said the parade had become too popular. He said they had failed to find any alternative routes in order to keep it going. He said: "Our Santa parade has been one of the most popular events in Poole. Sadly, however, we've become victims of our own success. As we've seen the numbers swell every year, we've become increasingly concerned about the volume of people in such a confined space, especially around moving vehicles."

"We always have to put the safety of our customers and the community first so this year we've decided to adapt the event to a Christmas lights switch on. We know it will be a fantastic evening. We'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to the parade."

## Footnote from Jon Wilkins.

I personally would like to thank all our clients for their continuing support over 2014. Recent years have been a very financially trying time for many companies and we at the Wilkins Safety Group appreciate you continuing to utilise our services for systems and training. You obviously appreciate the cost effectiveness of having an effective safety system in place, which reduces the chances of you falling foul of legislation and incurring costs and fines.

I look forward to working with you for the foreseeable future and personally wish you well with a relaxing festive time and a prosperous 2015.

*Jon*

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Wilkins Safety Group.



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)



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Safer in Our Hands