

SIMPLY SAFE JULY 2010

DRIVERS WARNED OVER LEGIONELLA RISK

Commercial drivers and transport managers are urged to check that their vehicles' windscreen-washer systems contain screenwash to avoid the risk of Legionnaires' disease. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) reported recently that windscreen-washer water could be behind one in five cases of Legionnaires' disease in England and Wales. The findings came after researchers spotted that professional drivers are five times more likely to be infected. Published in the *European Journal of Epidemiology*, the research found that wiper fluid that doesn't contain screenwash provides suitable breeding conditions for legionella bacteria. When the water is sprayed on to the windscreen, tiny droplets can enter the vehicle's interior through the ventilation system, and be inhaled.

Adding screenwash is a simple step to take, which kills the bacteria and could prevent drivers from contracting Legionnaires' disease. Employers have a duty to manage risks where employees are required to drive at work, and this simple step should form part of a company's driving-at-work policy and routine checks. There were 345 cases of Legionnaires' disease in England and Wales last year, and the disease is estimated to be fatal in around 10-15 per cent of patients.

A TO Z OF FOOD SAFETY

W is for (HAND) WASHING

Failure to wash your hands before preparing a meal means that anything present on your hands can be transferred onto the food, work surfaces and utensils that you touch. Food poisoning can result from eating food contaminated with harmful micro-organisms which have been allowed to multiply to dangerous levels. You will be unable to tell from its appearance, taste or smell that food is contaminated. Hands should be washed as frequently as necessary throughout the day, but ALWAYS:

BEFORE:

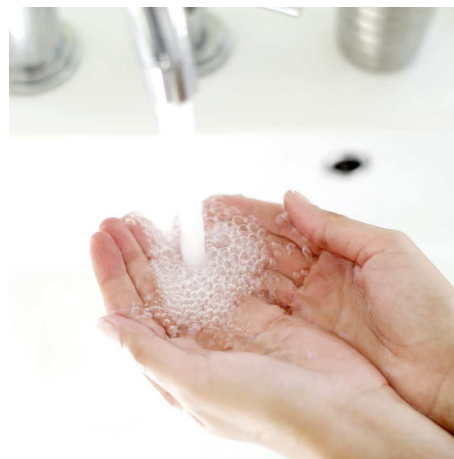
- starting work
- touching raw meat and high risk foods;

BETWEEN:

- handling raw and cooked meats/foods;

AFTER:

- handling raw meat/food;
- handling raw eggs in their shell;
- visiting the toilet;
- coughing or sneezing into your hands;
- touching your hair or face, nose, skin, etc;
- carrying out cleaning jobs or touching containers of cleaning chemicals;
- dealing with rubbish/waste and bins;
- eating, drinking and smoking (in areas set aside for these activities)



How to wash your hands properly:

Step 1 - Wet your hands thoroughly under warm running water and squirt liquid soap onto the palm of one hand

Step 2 - Rub your hands together to make a lather

Step 3 - Rub the palm of one hand along the back of the other and along the fingers. Then repeat with the other hand

Step 4 - Rub in between each of your fingers on both hands and round your thumbs

Step 5 - Rinse off the soap with clean water

Step 6 - Dry hands thoroughly on a disposable towel

This should take between 10 and 20 seconds.

HOTEL PROSECUTED FOR FIRE SAFETY OFFENCES



The owner of a hotel in Leicester has been ordered to pay fines and costs totalling £40,000. Fire safety failings were revealed after a fire at the hotel in August 2009. Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Services found there was no fire alarm sounder in the staff accommodation, which was located in the basement of the hotel. There was no evidence of the alarm or emergency lighting being tested on a regular basis and an adequate fire risk assessment had not been completed. The company was prosecuted for 10 breaches of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which resulted in a fine of £29,715 plus costs of £8,000. In addition the general manager of the hotel was fined £2,985 with £380 costs.

This case highlights the reasons why it is important to ensure that basic checks on fire safety equipment are carried out and recorded. In addition, a copy of the premises fire risk assessment should be readily available and reviewed by the premises on a routine basis to ensure it still reflects the way in which fire safety is managed in the premises. The following schedule provides you with a guide as to when tests should be carried out.

SCHEDULE OF INSPECTIONS						
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Six Monthly	Annually
Escape routes, exit doors & fire extinguishers	<i>Check and record twice a day</i>					<i>Fire extinguishers tested by a competent Engineer</i>
Fire alarm	<i>Visual check of panel indicator light for normal condition</i>	<i>Test at least one break glass call point each week and record</i>			<i>Test by a competent Engineer</i>	
Emergency lighting	<i>Visual check of indicator lights on lighting units</i>		<i>Test and record</i>		<i>Test by a competent Engineer</i>	<i>Test by a competent Engineer if lighting over three years old</i>
Fire hose reels		<i>Visual check and record</i>				<i>Test by a competent Engineer</i>
Smoke vents						<i>Test by a competent Engineer</i>
Dry risers					<i>Visual inspection only. Any missing or damaged items are replaced.</i>	<i>Full annual pressure test by a competent Engineer for dry risers for buildings above 18 metres and below 60 metres (buildings over 60 metres/18 storeys require wet risers).</i>
Sprinkler system		<i>Routine tests and checks as advised by manufacturer</i>	<i>Routine tests and checks as advised by manufacturer</i>	<i>Test by a competent Engineer</i>	<i>Test by a competent Engineer</i>	<i>Test by a competent Engineer</i>
Magnetic door holders		<i>Check all in good working order each time alarm is tested</i>				<i>Test by a competent Engineer</i>
Training records	<i>Induction to be recorded</i>				<i>Staff refresher training and record</i>	
Fire drills					<i>All staff -fire drills</i>	

HEALTH AND SAFETY LAW POSTER

The Health and Safety Law Poster has changed – please see guidance below for the completion of the new style posters.

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE NEW HEALTH AND SAFETY LAW POSTER

Under the Health and Safety Information for Employees Regulations 1989 every employer must display a poster or distribute a leaflet setting out basic health and safety information. The old style poster which included information such as the Enforcing Authority, Employee Representatives and details of the Employment Medical Advisory Service (EMAS), was replaced with the poster below on 6 April 2009. It is important to note that employers will still be complying with the law if they continue to display the old style poster after 6 April 2009, however, where employers do keep the old poster, these will need to be replaced by 5 April 2014 and they will need to keep the additional written information up to date.

The new approved poster includes optional boxes where details of employee health and safety representatives and other health and safety contacts can be added. It is not a legal requirement to include this information, but it will be helpful to workers.



Your Health and Safety Representatives:

The names of the employee's health and safety representatives should be inserted here.

Other Health and Safety Contacts:

Details of any other health and safety contacts (e.g. Perry Scott Nash Associates, Local Authority Health and Safety Officer etc...) can be inserted here.

Perry Scott Nash Associates Ltd
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 Stevenage
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 SG1 2FS

Tel: 01438 745771

If your health and safety law poster does not look like this then you need to update it and replace it with this version. Please contact your head office for more details or Perry Scott Nash Associates on 01438 745771