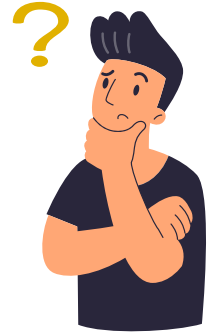


Welcome to another edition of 'Astute Safety Thinking' In this month's edition:

- Electricity - Toolbox Talk
- Fire Safety in the workplace
- Why Astute Safety Consulting?
- Managing risk from reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete
- Company and director fined for putting workers at risk
- Company fined after workers injured by explosion
- Investigation into double fatality at Teesworks site.
- Fireworks Night 5 November



## Electricity - Toolbox Talk

In 2019/2020 there were 231 serious non-fatal injuries and four fatalities as a result of accidents involving electricity.

### **Hazardous effects:**

- Electric shocks
- Burns
- Electrical fires
- Explosions caused by electrical equipment igniting a flammable atmosphere.

### **Choosing suitable electrical equipment**

- Extension cables – do not overload them or use them reeled up, ensure they are fused.
- Plugs – make sure the cable is properly gripped and no evidence of black burn marks, not cracked/damaged, pins must not be bent. All plugs should have Live and Neutral part sleeved; this eliminates the possibility of small fingers being able to come into contact with live conductors as can be seen in the picture below:



- Equipment must not be used in wet or contaminated areas or where there could be a risk of mechanical damage, unless specifically designed for such use.
- Only purpose designed electrical equipment can be used where there is a risk of a flammable atmosphere.

### **Cables and leads:**

- a) Should be in good condition, insulated, no kinks or strain. Where needed, cable connectors should be used to connect cables, no taped joints.
- b) Should not have any signs of damage – for example burn marks, overheating, exposed coloured or copper wires, damaged insulation, exposed conductors, trapped cable, or cable becoming brittle.

**NB Always check equipment before use and if any damage; isolate, do not use and report fault.**

### **Safe use of electrical equipment**

- Fuses – cut off the power supply if current exceeds a limit. It is essential to use the correct fuse rating.
- Earthing – earth wire acts as a conductor to the ground if equipment becomes live for any reason.
- Isolation – of electrical system (i.e. cut power off, lock off, unplug equipment), should be done before carrying out work on system.
- Reduced voltage – lessens severity if shock received. For portable tools or construction site equipment, use a transformer (to reduce voltage from 240V to 110V) or use a battery-operated device.
- Residual current device (RCD or residual current circuit breaker) – isolates electricity supply on a portable electrical appliance if there is a fault where current is flowing to earth and can give some protection from direct electric shock.
- Double insulation – provides extra protection against shock and such equipment does not need to be earthed.

# Electricity - Toolbox Talk Continued

## Inspection and testing

a) A Fixed Electrical Installation, e.g., mains wiring, plug socket, distribution boards, lighting:

- Installation must be maintained by competent staff
- Visual inspection to be carried out regularly
- Formal testing – by competent person e.g. electrician
- Frequency of testing/inspection varies for different types of installation
- Keep records.

b) Portable electrical appliances – anything moveable with a plug, e.g. kettle, till, computer:

- Equipment has to be well maintained
- Visual inspection undertaken regularly – this is the best way of detecting faults
- Formal portable appliance testing – frequency depends on many factors, e.g., age of equipment, how often it is used, type of equipment
- It is important to keep records, or mark equipment to show it has been tested.

## Fire Safety in the Workplace

### Who's responsible?

You're responsible for fire safety in business or other non-domestic premises if you're:

- An employer
- The owner
- The landlord
- An occupier
- Anyone else with control of the premises, for example a facilities manager, building manager, managing agent or risk assessor.

You're known as the 'responsible person'. If there's more than one responsible person, you have to work together to meet your responsibilities.

The Fire Safety Order also applies if you have paying guests, for example if you run a bed and breakfast, guesthouse or let a self-catering property. Fire safety rules are different in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

### Responsibilities

As the responsible person you must:

- Carry out a fire risk assessment of the premises and review it regularly.
- Tell staff or their representatives about the risks you've identified.
- Put in place, and maintain, appropriate fire safety measures.
- Plan for an emergency
- Provide staff information, fire safety instruction and training.
- You can read about how to make sure your premises are safe from fire.

### Non-domestic premises are:

- All workplaces and commercial premises
- All premises the public have access to
- The common areas of multi-occupied residential buildings

### Shared premises

In shared premises it's likely there'll be more than one responsible person. You'll need to co-ordinate your fire safety plans to make sure people on or around the premises are safe.

For common or shared areas, the responsible person is the landlord, freeholder or managing agent.

### Alterations, extensions, and new buildings

When building new premises or doing building work on existing premises, you must comply with building regulations. This includes designing fire safety into the proposed building or extension.

Read the fire safety building regulations.

### Penalties and enforcement

You could be fined or go to prison if you do not follow fire safety regulations.

Local fire and rescue authorities inspect premises and can issue fire safety notices telling you about changes you need to make.

For more information, please visit <https://www.gov.uk>



## Why Astute Safety Consulting?

### Manage your risks

Understanding the hazards in your business and their consequences is the first step to improving safety.

We will help you manage your risks by working with you to carry out risk assessments and help introduce practical ways of reducing risks.

### Safe Methods of work

Once you know how you need to control the risks in your business, you need to let your staff know how to work safely. There will need to be procedures and safe methods of work given and briefed to your staff, simply and clearly to ensure everyone is working safely.

**Make the astute choice and let Astute Safety Consulting help your business today.**

## Managing risk from Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete

It has been in the media recently regarding the challenges faced in schools regarding RACC (Reinforced accelerated concrete).

It is worth noting that there are other buildings that could have these issues. The HSE has issued guidance on this, as follows.

Owners or managers of estates should identify reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) in your buildings and seek specialist advice to assess it and develop a management plan.

The Institution of Structural Engineers information on Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) provides authoritative guidance on RAAC.

RAAC is a lightweight form of precast concrete, commonly used in buildings in the UK between the mid-1960s and the mid-1980s. It is mainly found in roofs, although occasionally in floors and walls. It is less durable than traditional concrete and there have been problems as a result, which could have significant safety consequences, that is, its liable to collapse.

### Identify, Assess, Manage

If you are responsible for the management, maintenance, or alteration of buildings you should first establish whether your buildings contain RAAC and then take steps to manage and control risk. If you confirm or suspect the presence of RAAC planks you should seek guidance from a competent structural engineer to assess it and develop a management plan.

For more information, please visit <https://hse.gov.uk/education/raac.htm>



# Why Astute Safety Consulting?

## Online Learning

We've teamed up with Video Tile Learning to offer you the latest online learning resources, designed to improve you and your team's safety awareness and knowledge. You choose the subjects and learn at your own pace.



### Electrical Safety

This course will start by covering the many benefits electricity brings to society, as well as its key components voltage, current and resistance. It will explain the two main types of electricity, cover UK accident and death statistics, and describe a simple way of remembering the electrical hazards. It then goes on to provide basic instructions about how you could safely help someone you suspect has received an electric shock.

**Approved by IIRSM & IOSH  
45 mins**



### Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

This course covers what you need to know about the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health. It's aimed at anyone who is exposed to Substances Hazardous to Health at work, as well as line managers with responsibility for such people.

**Approved by IIRSM & Institute of Hospitality  
125 mins**



### Basic Fire Safety Awareness

This course explains, in brief, why fires occur and what actions you must take to help prevent them starting and the actions you must take when they do. By completing this course, you will be making your workplace a safer environment.

**CPD Units: 2  
Approved by IFE, CPD, Gatehouse Awards,  
Institute of Hospitality, IIRSM & IOSH  
60 mins**



### Workplace Health and safety

At the end of this course, you will have an understanding of health and safety legislation and you'll be able to list common causes of accidents. You'll also be able to understand good practice in relation to electricity and describe the use of safe manual handling techniques as well as be able to describe good practice associated with COSHH regulations, be able to describe your action in the event of a fire and also you will know how to deal with an accident.

**CPD Units: 2  
Approved by IIRSM, CPD & IOSH  
45 mins**

**BROWSE OUR TRAINING MODULES**



## Company and director fined for putting workers at risk

A West Midlands engineering company and its managing director have been fined for failing to protect their workers from welding fume.

Associated Metalmasters Limited and managing director Darren Spittle were prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) following an inspection of the company's former site at Woodside Industrial Estate, Pedmore Road, Dudley, in October 2021.

HSE inspectors found the company had failed to put in place appropriate precautions to control the exposure of mild steel welding fume from metal inert gas (MIG) welding taking place at the site.

Breathing in welding fume can lead to asthma, pneumonia, and lung cancer. HSE guidance can be found at: [Welding fume: protect your workers - Overview - HSE](#)

HSE inspector Heather Campbell said: "There are clear dangers from welding fume - remaining compliant with the law is not something that can tail off over time. This case shows prosecution will be considered if that happens."

You can read the full article [here](#)



## Company fined after workers injured by explosion

Weir Minerals Europe Limited, a West Yorkshire manufacturing firm, was fined £200,000 due to an explosion on 25 February 2020 that injured three workers.

The incident, at their Todmorden site on Halifax Road, occurred as wet scrap metal was improperly added to a furnace.

Despite awareness of the risks, the company failed to adequately protect against rain exposure, according to a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation.

Read the full article [here](#).



## Investigation into double fatality at Teesworks site.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) will now lead the investigation into the 2019 Teesworks site explosion that killed John Mackay and Tom Williams.

Post a joint investigation with Cleveland Police, there's insufficient evidence for manslaughter charges. Though challenging for the victims' families, HSE assures a thorough yet expedient investigation, with continued support from Cleveland Police. Full article [here](#).

## Fireworks Night 5 November

On 5th November, the excitement sets in as many gather to celebrate Fireworks Night.

To ensure a safe celebration, here are some quick guidelines:

- Adhere to legal standards for firework usage. More information on regulations can be found at [gov.uk/fireworks-the-law](http://gov.uk/fireworks-the-law).
- Handle sparklers with care, suitable for children over five and with protective gloves. Dispose of used sparklers in water.
- Keep fireworks stored safely, light them at arm's length using a safety lighter, and never return to a lit firework.
- Conduct a safety check for bonfires, ensuring they are away from structures and overhead wires, and confirm no animals are hidden inside. Be sure to check smoke will not blow onto roads or motorways

Remember, responsible behaviour ensures an enjoyable and memorable night for everyone. Let's keep safety a priority, allowing the night to shine bright with joy and awe. Wishing you a fantastic and safe Fireworks Night!

