

## Fire safety film

We are pleased to announce that our new fire safety film for staff and students is available on Health & Safety Services website. It shows the University's fire evacuation procedures and explains basic preventative measures to stop a fire breaking out.



This short film (7 minutes) covers how to raise the alarm; evacuation procedures; and fire prevention. Schools/ Departments are asked to make sure that all new staff see the film when they first start on campus, and to identify it on induction checklists. Schools may also wish to include this in their inductions of new students.

The film can be accessed via the following link: <http://streaming.reading.ac.uk/asxgen/Healthandsafety/FireSafetyTrainingFilm.wmv> . If you would like a copy that does not require web access please contact Health & Safety Services on 0118 378 8888.

Health and Safety Services would like to thank the staff and students who took part in the filming, and ABC Medical.

### If you find a fire

1. Raise the alarm – use the nearest break glass call point
2. From a safe place, phone the Fire Service on 999, then alert University Security on extn 6300.
3. Get out of the building – and stay out until the Evacuation Officer or the Fire Service confirm that it is safe to return.

## Health & Well-being Week

**Don't forget – 23 to 25 March 2010!**

This year Health and Well-being Week is taking place between 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> March in the HuMMS Building. There will be a range of topics covered including healthy eating, fitness and the dreaded body check ups!

Health and Safety Services are teaming up with FMD's driver training provider, DriveTech, to offer advice on speed reduction, drink driving and mobile phone use whilst driving. There will be a competition (with prize) to spot the defects on a car and computer based driving assessments to test concentration.

More details will be available closer to the time on the HR webpage: [http://www.reading.ac.uk/humanresources/rdg-only/health\\_and\\_wellbeing.htm](http://www.reading.ac.uk/humanresources/rdg-only/health_and_wellbeing.htm)

## Safety Policy

We have revised the University health and safety policy to keep it as short and simple as possible. See the last page of this newsletter for a copy of the new policy – and please think about what you can do to help achieve the University's policy commitments.

### First Aid training – is on the move

The company that provides the University first aid training, ABC Medical, is on the move to bigger and better premises. With effect from 1 April, their new address will be:

ABC Medical Services Ltd  
Building A126, Oldhouse Farm  
Cutbush Lane, Shinfield  
RG2 9AE

Tel. 08452 300 999

**Note: ABC Medical are sub-contracted via Occupational Health, so all bookings for first aid training courses should continue to be made through Occupational Health, tel. 0118 322 7629.**

# Under pressure

**If your School/Department uses pressure systems or equipment, or lab gases, cylinders and regulators, you may be audited in the next few months. The standards set for the audit will be the recently published Safety Guides (SG46 parts 2, 3 and 5).**

The purpose of the audit is to confirm that gas/pressure systems in use on campus are safe and that management controls meet legislative requirements.

The first phase of the audit (in March) will cover FMD, Chemistry, Pharmacy and Food, and Biological Sciences. In a continued effort to raise standards, we will disseminate our findings to all science Schools soon afterwards. This will enable the remaining science-based Schools, who will be audited in the summer, to check that they are doing what they need to do to operate safe systems. The prompt sheet for the auditors is available via the following web address:  
<http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/health-and-safety/GasandPressureSystemsAudit2.doc>

If, having looked at the audit sheet and the Safety Guides, you would like further advice, please call Larry Woodley on 0118 378 7290.

---

# Road risk policy

**A new University wide Road Risk Policy is being developed. This will aim to ensure that staff who drive on university business are appropriately qualified and insured, are road safety aware, and are driving roadworthy and suitable vehicles. In parallel, a fleet management company has been appointed to manage the maintenance of university vehicles.**

The road risk policy will emphasise the existing requirement for all car drivers to have business insurance when making journeys in their own vehicle. If you currently attend e.g. conferences or other external events, or drive between campuses in your own vehicle, you are advised to check that your car insurance policy includes business use. If it does not, you may not have adequate cover in the event of an accident. Obtaining such insurance is normally free at the time of annual renewal. Any costs that might be charged such as administration fees are deemed by the University to be covered by the mileage allowance.

It is proposed that the road risk policy will introduce checks of licences, insurance and other documentation for staff who:

- drive university vehicles;
- or drive substantial annual mileage;
- or who make short local journeys on an almost daily basis;
- or who are 23 years of age or under.

Basic driver awareness training is also being recommended for staff who meet the above criteria.

Training requirements for staff who drive 'special' vehicles (e.g. minibuses, tractors, fork lift trucks, or who tow trailers) are also defined. For minibus drivers these are already set out in the University Minibus Regulations (see <http://www.reading.ac.uk/finance/opentoall/insurance/Minibusregulations.htm>).

H&SS are currently seeking views on the proposals, and will be contacting Area Health & Safety Co-ordinators and others to assess the implications of the proposed new policy.

---

# Food purchasing note

**A new Safety Note (No. 53) is now available which gives simple food safety advice when buying food from local supermarkets and suppliers for departmental events.**

The note covers sourcing potential suppliers, purchasing, transporting, storing and serving food. It can be accessed at: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/health-and-safety/NOT53FoodPurchasingGuidance.pdf>.

This note is only intended to cover buying food for small sandwich orders (less than 6 people) and, in food safety terms, 'low risk' items such as cakes at meetings and training events. For all other events Commercial Services or one of the University's nominated food suppliers should be used. Details of these suppliers can be found on Procurement's website:  
<http://www.reading.ac.uk/procurement/>.

---

# Cryogenics course

**We have developed a new 'Working safely with cryogenics' which will run for all staff and postgraduates who work with cryogenic liquids and gases.**



Working with cryogenics presents some serious and sometimes underestimated risks, varying from cold burns to asphyxiation. It is important that if you are in charge of a facility or project that uses cryogenics, or if you work with cryogenics, you must know what to do to stay safe.

This course will give you the basics of safe working procedures, including how to calculate if the work area is suitable to be used for cryogenics, how to decant safely, and emergency procedures.

We are pleased to say that this is a joint effort with Schools from the Faculties of Science and Life Science,

who will be providing hands-on training. The first course will be piloted in June.

**Please contact Health and Safety Services if you or any of your postgraduate students wish to attend. Please note that in due course this training will be mandatory for everyone who works with cryogenics.**

---

## Recent accidents

**Slips, trips and falls are at the top of the statistics for causing serious injuries across the University in 2009/10. Here's a short summary of some of the more serious accidents.**

- Working on a two step ladder, slipped, and banged right arm, resulting in a broken elbow.
- Slipped in overflow car park, resulting in a broken arm, ligament damage, and other injuries.
- Slipped whilst cleaning stairs, resulting in a broken arm.
- Tripped on kerb in car park and fell, causing a broken wrist.
- Tripped on a wad of straw and fell, resulting in broken arm.
- Slipped whilst carrying material downstairs, aggravated a pre-existing back injury and hit head.

**Not all of these injuries were foreseeable or preventable. But the severity of the injuries should encourage all of us to think about what we are doing, and how we are doing it. In some of these cases better working practices and greater awareness could have prevented someone being hurt.**

**Given the number of slip and trip accidents, H&SS have developed a slips and trips policy. This aims to raise awareness, encourage better housekeeping, and include slip resistance of flooring materials in the design brief when specifying new or refurbished facilities. The policy is with the University Health & Safety Committee for approval.**

---

## PEEPs and fire refuges

**Over the last two years the University has improved the facilities available to disabled people in the event of a significant fire in university buildings. This includes evacuation lifts in new buildings (ICMA, Henley Business School and the Hopkins Building). Fire refuges have been constructed in other buildings where disabled people can access upper floors, but where the existing passenger lifts cannot be used in an emergency.**

A fire refuge is a place of relative safety where a person can wait for assistance, before being helped to a place of ultimate safety i.e. normally outside the building. Whilst waiting, they need to be protected from the possible effects of a fire. All of our refuges offer at least 30 minutes protection from fire and smoke.

Refuges are normally located within a fire protected stairwell. However, in some cases due to space restrictions in the stairwell, a refuge may be situated in a corridor. Every refuge has an emergency voice communication system. This is to enable people in the refuge to alert those managing the evacuation (typically the Evacuation Officer or fire service) that they need assistance, and for them to be reassured that this assistance will be forthcoming.



Fire refuge with signage and communication system

One of the new communication system boxes is shown left (red box) - these are linked to the fire panel within the building and to the Security Control Room.

H&SS are preparing a revised version of Safety Note 28 – Emergency Evacuation of Disabled People, which will be available in April. In addition we are planning a training package for staff who will be responsible for developing and producing Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs). We envisage that this will include School Disability Advisers (for students), managers, Area Health and Safety Co-ordinators and Building Managers.

---

## New Safety Guides

**The following new Safety Guides have been published on H&SS web site:**

- SG46 Management and use of work equipment
- SG46 Part 2 Pressure systems
- SG46 Part 3 Gas safety
- SG46 Part 4 Local exhaust ventilation
- SG46 Part 5 Cryogenic gases
- SG46 Part 6 Woodworking and engineering workshop machines

**Health and Safety Services**  
Governance Directorate

Extension 8888

Web: [www.reading.ac.uk/safety](http://www.reading.ac.uk/safety)

Email: [safety@reading.ac.uk](mailto:safety@reading.ac.uk)

Contact: Moira Simpson, Head of  
Health and Safety Services

# University Health and Safety Policy

The University of Reading recognises its duty to provide a safe place of work and a healthy working environment. We understand how these are essential elements of a successful organisation. We believe that excellence in the management of health and safety is a fundamental part of our strategic plan.

We are, therefore, committed to:

- ✓ Compliance with health and safety legislation and codes of practice;
- ✓ Continuously improving health and safety management and performance;
- ✓ Maintenance of safe working arrangements and facilities throughout the University;
- ✓ The provision of appropriate resources, information, supervision, instruction and training;
- ✓ The prevention of incidents, including accidents, near misses, injury or ill health, arising from the activities of the University;
- ✓ Investigation of incidents so that lessons can be learnt and shared to prevent future occurrences;
- ✓ The integration of health and safety objectives into strategic and operational planning;
- ✓ Leadership by the senior management team to encourage a positive health and safety culture, and to check that policies and procedures are implemented effectively;
- ✓ Ensuring that managers and staff are equipped with the knowledge, competence, confidence and capacity to deal effectively with health and safety issues, and have access to competent specialist advice;
- ✓ Effective communication on health and safety with staff, students and others who may share our facilities or activities;
- ✓ Ensuring that staff and students understand their personal responsibility to act safely and responsibly, and that they are encouraged to contribute to the continuous improvement of health and safety standards.

The organisation and management arrangements that support this policy commitment are given in [Safety Guide 2](#).



Professor Gordon Marshall  
Vice-Chancellor  
November 2009