

Lights, camera, take action this World Mental Health Day

The scale of reported work-related stress across the UK economy has been increasing year on year, and Britain's workplace regulator is campaigning for employers to take action.

As the world acknowledges World Mental Health Day, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) welcomes three new partners to its Working Minds campaign, which urges workplaces to take action on work related stress and mental health.

All three new partners joining Working Minds campaign are in the entertainment and leisure sector – an industry which by its very nature, is fast paced and changeable with many being self-employed, freelancers or contracted for set amounts of time.

This can result in lots of uncertainty and long and unsociable hours. In the [Looking Glass '22 survey](#) conducted by the Film and TV Charity only 11% described the industry as a mentally healthy place to work.

The Mark Milsome Foundation, The Association of British Theatre Technicians and The British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers and Attractions, will now join 23 Working Minds partners across different industries to raise awareness of the support available and the campaign's key messages.

The law requires all employers to prevent work related stress to support good mental health in the workplace. No matter the size or type of business, employers have a legal duty to ensure risks of stress and mental ill-health are considered in health and safety risk assessments and acted upon. Measures should be put in place to prevent stress and support workers' mental health.

World Mental Health Day (10 October) has been celebrated for over 30 years, and whilst awareness and acceptance of stress and mental health may be increasing, action – particularly prevention – is not. Stress, depression and anxiety are the number one cause of work-related ill-health in Great Britain.

Elizabeth Goodwill, head of work-related stress and mental health policy team at HSE, said: "Small actions done routinely can make a huge difference to how stress and mental health issues are recognised and responded to where you work. Employers should make it routine to check in with individuals and teams about pressures they're facing and agree actions to help prevent and address them.

"Some of the most common issues are workload pressures, tight deadlines, too much responsibility and a lack of managerial support. Taking action doesn't have to be ground-breaking, your response can be small things that make a big difference. For example, making sure you have regular catch ups to discuss

workload and how the team can share the load or helping to prioritise work and deadlines.

“Taking an organisational approach that tackles the root cause of work related stress is key and can help the whole team rather than just an individual, and you may be able to take one action that helps a number of people.”

For guidance on managing workplace stress and talking to workers about it, see our [Working Minds campaign](#).

Samantha Wainstein, The Mark Milsome Foundation chair, says: “At the heart of our mission is the commitment to make film and TV sets safe for all cast and crew, by advocating for better health and safety practice across the industry and collaborating with partners to raise awareness about key issues that need to be addressed. A fundamental part of our advocacy is emphasising the importance of wellbeing and happiness on set, as this plays an integral role in ensuring the safety of both cast and crew.”

Mig Burgess, The Association of British Theatre Technicians co-chair, says: “The ABTT are delighted to join the HSE’s working minds campaign as a partner. As an association we are committed to upholding standards in technical excellence, safety, and compliance for live performance, and partnering with the HSE and its working minds campaign formalises our commitment to promote better practices around well-being and mental health in the workplace.”

Paul Kelly, Chief Executive of The British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers and

Attractions says: “Mental health must be a top priority for our industry, especially following a few very difficult years for staff and customers. As an association, we are committed to providing the information, resources and tools that our members need – supporting them to support their teams.”

Help is available

If you or someone you know needs help or support, reach out and ask how they are feeling and coping. There are tools and sources of support out there that can help.

[Sign up to support HSE’s Working Minds campaign](#) to help drive positive change across Britain’s workplaces.

- [download a risk assessment template](#) and see some examples
- [download a Talking Toolkit](#) to help structure conversations
- print out / share our [campaign resources round up](#)
- print out / display our [Working Minds 5 steps poster](#)
- get your [personalised mental health action plan](#), with tips and advice to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing from Every Mind Matters (NHS).

Work in entertainment or leisure?

Contact [Film & TV charity](#) for confidential and free support for anyone working behind the scenes in film, TV or cinema. Support Line 0800 054 0000.

The Mark Milsome Foundation – [Film and TV Online Safety Passport Course](#) (90 minutes)

Association of Event Venues – [Heads up: your well-being tool kit](#)

Read the [Blog from Mig Burgess](#), teacher, Creative Designer and Production Technician on her summer commitment to learn more about work-related stress and the [guidance note](#) she created for The Association of British Theatre Technicians.

Notes to Editors

1. The [Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise.
2. To read more about HSE's Working Minds campaign click [here](#)
3. For press and media enquiries please contact media.enquiries@hse.gov.uk

[Sole trader fined following workers' exposure to hazardous substance](#)

A Lincolnshire-based sole trader has been fined after his employees were exposed to a hazardous substance.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) prosecuted Chris Buckley, trading as The Furniture Chest, after the workplace regulator inspected the firm's site on Station Road, Heckington, Lincolnshire, on 7 April 2022.

HSE inspectors found a significant build-up of wood dust and that Local Exhaust Ventilation systems, provided to capture wood dust and protect employees, had not been thoroughly examined and tested.

A subsequent HSE investigation found Chris Buckley had failed to prevent or adequately control employees' exposure to wood dust and had failed to ensure that Local Exhaust Ventilation systems had been thoroughly examined and tested. Improvement Notices had been served in relation to the control of wood dust at previous inspections.





Wood dust is a hazardous substance and exposure can lead to workers suffering from respiratory diseases such as asthma and sino-nasal cancer.

HSE has guidance on working in the [woodworking industry](#) and is running the [Dust Kills: Wood Dust campaign page](#), which provides free advice to businesses and workers on the control measures required to prevent exposure to dust.

Chris Buckley of Heckington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulations 7(1) and 9(2) of the Control of Substances Hazardous to

Health Regulations 2002. He was fined £1,354 and ordered to pay costs of £3,578 at Boston Magistrates' Court on 9 October 2023.

HSE inspector Muir Finlay said: "Chris Buckley could have ensured that his Local Exhaust Ventilation systems were thoroughly examined and tested to ensure that they were working to protect the health of employees. A suitable and sufficient cleaning regime could have been implemented to further reduce the build-up of dust.



"HSE recognises wood dust can cause serious health problems and launched its

[Dust Kills campaign](#) to help businesses to take action now to protect their workers' respiratory health."

This HSE prosecution was supported by HSE enforcement lawyer Rebecca Schwartz.

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

[Company fined after worker crushed to death](#)

A recycling company has been fined £40,000 after its failure to maintain the lifting equipment on a refuse vehicle caused the death of an employee.

Henry Chambers had been working for Bin Busy Recycling Limited at an aggregates site run by another company in Charlton, London, when the incident occurred on 5 July 2019.

The 65-year-old, from Dartford, had been unloading glass bottles from the refuse vehicle at an unloading bay at the site before he became trapped between the vehicle's tailgate and hopper.



The bin lorry at HSE's laboratory in Buxton, Derbyshire

He sustained multiple crush injuries and died in hospital four days later.

Mr Chambers' wife, Gail, said: "The Christmas before Henry died, we had just celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary. It was a 40-year marriage which shouldn't have ended as abruptly as it did.

"Henry was 65 and he kept saying he wanted to retire but there was no set time. There were lots of things we wanted to do when he retired. His big dream was to hire a Winnebago and drive Route 66, but he would have been just as happy down in Cornwall. His big things were holidays and family."

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation into the incident identified multiple faults with the refuse vehicle's lifting equipment, with some parts excessively worn and even missing. The equipment had not been thoroughly examined by a competent person after Bin Busy purchased the vehicle in April 2017.

A thorough examination is a systematic and detailed examination of the equipment and its safety-critical parts, carried out at specified intervals by a competent person. In the case of this vehicle's lifting equipment, a thorough examination should have been carried out every 12 months. Although Bin Busy had arrangements in place for the vehicle to be maintained, these were focused on its roadworthiness and did not include inspection and maintenance of its lifting equipment.

HSE guidance can be found at: [Thorough examinations and inspections of lifting equipment \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/lifting-examinations)

Bin Busy Recycling Limited, of Standard Wharf, Manor Road, Erith, Kent, pleaded guilty to breaches of Regulation 9(3) of the Lifting Operations and

Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 and Regulation 5(1) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. The company was fined £40,000 and ordered to pay £22,338.24 in costs and the victim surcharge of £181 at Westminster Magistrates' Court on 9 October 2023.

HSE inspector Gordon Carson said: "Regular proactive maintenance and inspection of work equipment is vitally important to ensure equipment does not deteriorate to the extent that it puts people at risk or, as was tragically the case here, causes fatal injuries. Bin Busy failed to effectively maintain the lifting equipment on this refuse vehicle or arrange for it to be thoroughly examined in accordance with specified timescales."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/)
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
4. Attached picture of the bin lorry at HSE's laboratory in Buxton, Derbyshire.

[Unregistered gas fitter jailed for illegal and unsafe gas work](#)

A West Midlands self-employed plumber has been jailed after carrying out further illegal and unsafe gas work.

During 2020 and 2021, Daniel Kelly Mountain, installed and worked on gas boilers and performed gas work when he was not registered as an individual with the Gas Safe Register. He also falsely advertised himself as being Gas Safe Registered. By law all gas businesses and individuals who perform gas work must be on the Gas Safe Register.

Official Gas Safe Register inspectors who checked on the work carried out by Mr Mountain found it to be unsafe, left in a condition of being 'immediately dangerous' or 'at risk'. This placed the occupiers at risk to their safety.

A previous investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in 2016 resulted in Mr Mountain being warned not to carry out any gas work until he was registered with Gas Safe Register. He was issued with a Prohibition Notice preventing him from carrying out further gas work until he was

competent to do so and had become registered with the Gas Safe Register. However, Mr Mountain breached the Prohibition Notice and performed unsafe and unlawful gas work at a number of domestic properties across the West Midlands.

HSE guidance can be found at: [Gas – HSE](#) and details on the [Gas Safe Register](#) is widely available.

At Wolverhampton Crown Court on 6 October, Mr Mountain formerly of Wellington Court, Bilston, Wolverhampton, pleaded guilty to one breach of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 Regulation 3(7), two breaches of section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and one breach of section 22 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. He received a 12-month custodial sentence.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Marie-Louise Riley-Roberts said: “Mr Mountain knew that he was not registered to undertake gas work, but still put the occupiers at risk by carrying out the work.

“All gas work must be done by a registered Gas Safe engineer to ensure the highest standards are met to prevent injury and loss of life.

“A gas boiler must be properly commissioned by a competent registered gas engineer before being left operating otherwise you cannot be sure that it is working safely. Please let this be a warning to other rogue gas fitters.”

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2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.

[Dog food boss spared jail after teenager lost finger on first day at work](#)

The director of a dog food company has been given a suspended prison sentence

after a teenage boy severed and lost his finger on his first day working at the firm.

Company director Gary Pitchford was given a six-month custodial sentence, which was suspended for a period of 12 months.

The new starter, who was 16 at the time, had been hired by Finer By Nature after leaving school and began working there on 15 July 2020.

Kidderminster Magistrates Court heard that the middle finger on the teen's right hand was sliced off while assisting another worker operating a food processing machine, used to package dog food, at the company's site at Whitestone Business Park in Hereford.

Despite there being an interlock guard on the machine, the young worker, who is now 19, was instructed to stand on a step ladder and put his hands into the hopper bowl to scrape meat into the base where there were dangerous moving parts of the machine.

This led to his middle finger being severed by the machine. He had two operations to close off the wound following the incident and stayed in hospital for six days in total.

The male said in a statement: "The emotional effect on me has been huge. At 16-years-old I felt so self-conscious, and this stopped me socialising, especially around strangers as they would always ask about my stump. I became very snappy with people including my own family because the trauma of what had happened upset me so much, it affected my mood and behaviour.

"I was experiencing flashbacks and phantom pains in my finger at night-time. Any sound that went snap caused a major flashback because I remember hearing the bone in my finger snap in the machine. I have never returned to the place where this happened, I actually don't even go down the road where the factory is, the thought of it all still makes me feel sick and faint."

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation found Finer By Nature had failed to make suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks involved with this type of work and that Gary Pitchford, the director at Finer By Nature, had neglected to manage the safety of employees using the food processing machine.

Finer By Nature, of Whitestone Business Park, Whitestone, Hereford, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 3(1) and 3(4) of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and Regulation 11(1) Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. The company was fined £34,000 and ordered to pay £4,564.15 in costs at Kidderminster Magistrates' Court on 5 October 2023.

Gary Pitchford, of Whitestone Business Park, Whitestone, Hereford, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. He was sentenced to a six-month custodial sentence for each of the three offences to run concurrently, suspended for 12 months and 180 hours of unpaid work.

HSE inspector Sara Lumley, said: “This incident occurred on the first day of this young person’s work.

“The machine was adequately guarded, and correct use of the guard would easily have been prevented this incident. The risks should have been identified before the machine was used.

“Employers should make sure they properly assess and apply effective control measures to minimise the risk from dangerous parts of machinery.

“The sentence handed out should act as a reminder to all employers that they will be punished if they don’t protect their workers.”

This prosecution was supported by HSE enforcement lawyer Jon Mack.

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