

Volunteer Health and Safety Newsletter

Issue 2, Summer 2022

Reporting accidents, near misses and other incidents

Please ensure you promptly report all accidents, near misses and incidents to your Primary Contact without delay.

Update to Livestock Checking Safe Working Procedure

Minor changes have been made to the [Livestock Checking Safe Working Procedure](#) (SWP 77). It has also been reformatted onto our new (simplified) SWP template.

Hot weather working

As the temperature is likely to rise over the summer here are some good practice suggestions when working outdoors in hot weather and direct sun:

- take frequent breaks
- drinking plenty of water
- work in the shade where possible
- cover up
- don't forget sun screen
- regularly top up protection

Volunteer health and safety newsletter

The purpose of this quarterly Health and Safety Newsletter is to communicate key updates on health and safety to our Volunteers. If you have any comments, questions or suggestions for the Newsletter please contact, Justin Tyas, H&S Manager – contact details below.

Hand Arm Vibration

Hand-arm vibration comes from the use of hand-held power tools and is the cause of significant ill health (painful and disabling disorders of the blood vessels, nerves and joints).

Why is hand-arm vibration an issue?

Regular and frequent exposure to hand-arm vibration can lead to two forms of permanent ill health known as:

- hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS); and
- carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS)

Symptoms and effects of HAVS include:

- tingling and numbness in the fingers which can result in an inability to do fine work (for example, assembling small components) or everyday tasks (for example, fastening buttons);
- loss of strength in the hands which might affect the ability to do work safely;
- the fingers going white (blanching) and becoming red and painful on recovery, reducing ability to work in cold or damp conditions, e.g. outdoors.

Symptoms and effects of CTS can also occur and include:

- tingling, numbness, pain and weakness in the hand which can interfere with work and everyday tasks and might affect the ability to do work safely.

Symptoms of both may come and go, but with continued exposure to vibration they may become prolonged or permanent and cause pain, distress and sleep disturbance. In most cases, it will happen over a few years.

What the law says

The Vibration Regulations require you to:



Vibration White Finger is a permanent and painful numbness and tingling in the hands and arms, also painful joints and muscle weakening.



- make sure that risks from vibration are controlled;
- provide information, instruction and training on the risk and the actions being taken to control risk; and
- provide suitable health surveillance.

The Vibration Regulations include an exposure action value (EAV) and an exposure limit value (ELV) based on a combination of the vibration at the grip point(s) on the equipment or work-piece and the time spent gripping it.

During July 2022 the Trust will be undertaking its annual survey of all power tool users with a self-completed HAVS screening questionnaire as part of our Health Surveillance programme.

Safety doesn't happen by accident

First Aid

Organisations are required to assess first-aid needs appropriate to the circumstances of each workplace. How much first-aid provision an employer has to make depends on the hazards and risks. So, office-based needs will be very different (lower) than, for example, where safety critical machinery is used, especially if this is in more remote locations away from immediate assistance.

As part of our ongoing needs assessment the Trust needs to consider a wide range of factors including, where relevant, the national and regional context. As the country emerges from the pandemic there has been a general decline in ambulance response times including for immediate life-threatening injuries and illnesses. At the same time wait times for A&E handovers have generally increased.

Where an organisation provides first-aiders in the workplace, they should ensure they have undertaken suitable training, have an appropriate first-aid qualification and remain competent to perform their role. First-aiders will hold a valid certificate of competence.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) states that organisations should provide the same level of protection to volunteers where they carry out similar activities and are exposed to the same level of risk as employees.

The highest level of risk-based training the Trust provides for staff and volunteers is the 2-day Outdoor Level 2 First Aid (with Forestry) and 3-day First Aid at Work.

Anyone who has been trained will be assigned a designated First Aid kit and will be responsible for checking it regularly and keeping it up-to-date.

Contact

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Middlesex**
Wildlife Trust