



# Risks Newsletter



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Editor: [Rory O'Neill](#) of [Hazards](#) magazine.  
Comments to the TUC at [healthandsafety@tuc.org.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@tuc.org.uk)

Risks is the TUC's weekly online bulletin for safety reps and others, read each week by over 13,000 subscribers and 1,500 on the TUC website. To receive this bulletin every week, click [here](#). Past issues are [available](#). This edition contains [Useful links](#) [TUC courses for safety reps](#) [Disclaimer](#) and [Privacy statement](#).

## In this issue

### • UNION NEWS

- Amicus blueprint for better jobs
- Union defends remains of the day of rest
- Firefighters plan to strike over unsafe cuts

### • OTHER NEWS

- Minister blames "poor management" for work toll
- Company fined over horrific drill accident
- Firm fined £150,000 after worker's death
- Britain's deadly waste industry kills again
- Refuse collectors face rubbish risks
- Toxic warnings for nano industry

- Chemical giants accused of "corrosive lobbying"
- Safety systems failed at Buncefield
- Immobile office workers given DVT warning
- School asbestos linked to another death
- Asbestos site advert 'misleading'
- Sellafield faces legal action over radiation leak

### • INTERNATIONAL NEWS

- Australia: Company doctors hurt injured workers
- Australia: Did profit undermine gold mine safety?
- Ireland: "Massive increase" in work illnesses
- USA: Political animals say the dumbest things

### • RESOURCES

- HSE e-bulletin
- ILO/CIS listing of chemical exposure limits
- Microwave News online

### • EVENTS AND COURSES

- TUC courses for safety reps
  - USEFUL LINKS
-

## UNION NEWS

### Amicus blueprint for better jobs

Health and safety and more control of the working environment are essential components of “good” work, Britain’s largest private sector union has said. ‘Good work: An Amicus agenda for better jobs’ puts the two factors at the head of a list of “five key elements that need to be considered in the pursuit of improving working lives.” Other priorities include secure and interesting work, fairness and dignity at work and a trade union voice. The report says: “Workplace safety, sickness absence and health promotion are important issues. But it is vital that consideration of work and health goes further and looks at work organisation, job design and management standards.” It adds: “Why are these important? Because there is a ‘social gradient’ in health whereby workers in lower status jobs experience worse health and lower life expectancy than workers in higher status jobs – a phenomenon known as ‘status syndrome’. This is not just about the type of work people do. Status syndrome exists within employment grades.” It adds that control and autonomy are crucial factors in determining whether workers become ill because of their jobs. John Earls, head of the Amicus research section, said: “People not only want to work, they want decent jobs. This is not just about meeting basic standards of employment. It is about enjoying working life, achieving job satisfaction and maximising potential. This is an aspirational agenda for workers, employers and government. Amicus is working to meet those aspirations.”

- [Amicus news release. Good work: An Amicus agenda for better jobs \[pdf\]](#).
- [Amicus health and safety webpages](#).

### Union defends remains of the day of rest

Extending Sunday shopping hours would have a devastating impact on the family lives of Britain’s 3.1 million shopworkers, retail union Usdaw has told the new team of ministers at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). An independent cost-benefit analysis published last week by DTI looks at the possible extension of the six-hour limit on Sunday trading hours for large stores. Usdaw’s lobbyists put the union case against an exhausting, family-unfriendly extension of the allowed hours to ministers at a 10 May ‘stakeholder conference’ called by new DTI minister Jim Fitzpatrick. The union says the economic cost-benefit analysis fails to take any account of the negative impact on the family lives of Britain’s shopworkers. “Any proposal to extend Sunday shopping is bad news for shopworkers as it will have a devastating impact on the time our members can spend with their families because the reality is that it will mean 10 hour Sundays for many of our members,” said Usdaw general secretary John Hannett. “Usdaw’s survey of over 4,000 shopworkers has shown in fact that 95 per cent of staff oppose longer Sunday opening. One third want to work less hours on Sundays and only 3 per cent wanted to work for any longer.” He added: “Usdaw will make sure that their voice is heard because extending shopping hours means hard working retail staff will come under even more pressure to cut their precious family time to work longer Sunday shifts. Usdaw’s message on this issue is loud and clear: we don’t think extending the present six-hour limit is good for shopworkers or business. So we’ll make our well researched case to the Department of Trade and Industry that the present six hour limit is working well, so there is no need to lengthen the hours our members already have to work on Sundays.”

- [Usdaw news release. DTI Sunday shopping cost-benefit analysis](#).

### Firefighters plan to strike over unsafe cuts

Hertfordshire fire crews are warning they will proceed with two eight hour blocks of industrial

action on 15 and 20 May in a bid to stop what they believe are dangerous cutbacks. Firefighters' union FBU said late proposals from the fire authority are "a vain attempt to gloss over cuts to frontline fire services." FBU members voted eight to one vote in favour of strike action in a secret ballot. Hertfordshire FBU vice-chair Tony Smith said: "The short term action will minimise the impact on the public and fire crews will be available for normal working immediately before and after lawful periods of action. In contrast, the planned cuts would make our work less safe and the public less safe 365 days a year for years to come." He criticised the Herts fire authority for proposing a deal that was "too little, too late" and urged it to reach an agreement acceptable to both sides. "Although we did win a reprieve for two of the frontline posts under threat, over 40 frontline firefighter posts will still be lost and Radlett and Bovington stations will still close with 23 frontline firefighters at those stations facing redundancy," he said: "The fire authority has put a thin coat of gloss on their last proposals but budget cuts of around £625,000 to frontline services remain. We are already one of the lowest spending county fire authorities in England, and there is no room for cuts of this magnitude in this county."

- [FBU news release.](#)

## OTHER NEWS

### Minister blames "poor management" for work toll

Britain's health and safety record must improve, safety minister Lord Hunt has said. In a speech to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) he said most of the blame for the workplace toll of deaths and injuries was down to poor health and safety management. Lord Hunt said: "Over the past 30 years we have achieved a great deal in improving health and safety standards but more still needs to be done. Last year more than 200 people were killed at work and over 350,000 injured. The cost to the

economy is well over £10bn every year. This is largely as a result of poor health and safety management. Most of the deaths and serious injury are completely avoidable and often by simple inexpensive measures." The safety minister added: "Every death and injury is a tragedy; the cost is felt highest by the family of those involved both economically and emotionally. Employers, regulators and safety professionals have a moral and legal duty to see that avoidable workplace incidents don't happen." Lord Hunt stressed the importance of partnership working, and how the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is working closely with organisations such as RoSPA, the Institute of Directors (IoD) and Trades Union Congress (TUC).

- [HSE news release.](#) [RoSPA news release.](#)

### Company fined over horrific drill accident

A construction company is facing a fines and cost bill of £50,000 for breaching health and safety regulations after an employee suffered horrific injuries at a site in Enfield. Mark Cousins, 42, an employee of CET Group Ltd, was dragged into a lorry-mounted rotating drill as he dug a borehole at Ellenborough Table Tennis Club on 29 March 2004. The machinery stripped and shattered his forearm, and left him with a broken humerus, broken femur, damaged ribs and extensive bruising. CET Group Ltd, of Maidstone, Kent, was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £30,000 at the City of London Magistrates Court last month. The company admitted breaching the Health and Safety Act following an investigation led by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). It found the company had not carried out a proper risk assessment before Mr Cousins used the machinery. The drill was completely unguarded and its emergency stop device did not work. HSE inspector Sarah Snelling said: "Accidents such as the one suffered by Mark Cousins are notably foreseeable when using such large, dangerous pieces of machinery without the proper safeguards being in place. The need for proper

risk assessment and the provision of effective guards or other protection devices are well known within the industry.”

- [HSE news release](#). [Enfield Independent](#).

### **Firm fined £150,000 after worker's death**

A Birmingham firm that admitted breaches of health and safety rules following the death of a worker has been fined £150,000. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) brought the case at Birmingham Crown Court after the death of Ian Milligan, who worked for Clifton Steel Limited. He was trapped between steel coils on 17 January 2002. Mr Milligan was using a crane to move a steel coil and was crushed when a nearby stack of coils moved. HSE said the stack had not been set up safely, meaning the smallest vibration, perhaps from the operation of the crane, could cause it to slip and move. HSE investigating inspector Mike Burd said: “The death of Mr Milligan was the tragic result of a failure to pay full attention to the very risky business of storing and moving steel coils. In the Midlands especially there are many companies who do this sort of work, and they need to realise that common sense does not provide all the answers. The safe storage and movement of coils, often weighing many tonnes, should be subject to careful risk assessment, and, where necessary, expert help.” The company pleaded guilty to a breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and on 8 May was fined £150,000 and ordered to pay costs of £20,000.

- [HSE news release](#). [BBC News Online](#).

### **Britain's deadly waste industry kills again**

A 66-year-old man has died after being hit by a bin lorry in North Tyneside, the latest in a disastrous series of deaths blighting the industry. The death on 2 May happened as the lorry, belonging to North Tyneside Council, was being

reversed. Victim Brian Kindred was taken to hospital, where he was pronounced dead. Northumbria Police have appealed for any witnesses to the incident to contact officers. A North Tyneside Council spokesperson said: “We are providing our full support to the police in their investigation into the collision.” HSE in March warned that there had been a massive upturn in waste industry deaths affecting workers and members of the public, with the total for the year up from two deaths in 2001/02 to double figures last year. Nine deaths occurred in the eight-week period from 21 December 2005 ([Risks 247](#)). Commenting on this upturn in fatalities, HSE said reversing aids such as mirrors, CCTV, detectors and beacons could reduce the risks. In 2004 HSE backed a waste industry voluntary initiative to tackle the industry's dire accident record ([Risks 162](#)), however deaths have subsequently increased. Risks this year warned that the recent spate of deaths could be clear evidence that HSE's support for a self-regulatory voluntary approach, increasingly preferred to inspection and enforcement, has been a dangerous flop.

- [BBC News Online](#).

### **Refuse collectors face rubbish risks**

Fortnightly rubbish collections could put refuse workers' health at risk due to toxic gases released, experts have warned. The longer period between collections allows dangerous emissions to build up, causing respiratory irritation, scientists have found. A study in Scandinavia in 2003 found that organic waste left to rot and putrefy in bins for two weeks caused refuse collectors' windpipes to become inflamed ([Risks 100](#)). Previously, the study had been dismissed as irrelevant in the UK as most of the country enjoys weekly bin collections. But now Bracknell Forest has decided to scrap the traditional system, and campaigners say this could lead to long-term health problems in refuse workers. Environmental scientist Doretta Cocks, who spearheads the national Campaign for Weekly Waste Collection, said the risk is unacceptable.

“Tests in Norway where they have their rubbish collected every two weeks have found that there are health risks,” she said, adding the Scandinavian scientists noticed that during the working week the workers’ respiratory tracts were more inflamed than after they had rested for the weekend. The researchers found that the putrefied waste also released potentially dangerous discharges called bioaerosols which contain bacteria and fungi. Mrs Cocks said: “It is unacceptable to put people's health at risk for no good reason.” The campaign warns that more councils are opting for fortnightly refuse collections as a cost saving measure.

- [icBerkshire. Campaign for Weekly Waste Collection.](#)

### Toxic warnings for nano industry

Hundreds of nanotechnology products about to hit shop shelves have not been properly tested for their safety, a top workplace and environmental health expert has warned. Edinburgh-based Professor Anthony Seaton said concerns tiny particles from the products might cause respiratory, cardiac and immune problems had not been properly assessed. Prof Seaton was speaking just weeks after the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) launched a consultation on plans to ask companies developing products such as sunscreens, paints and fuels that use nanoparticles to provide health and safety information. He told The Scotsman: “The technology and applications of nanoparticles are racing ahead and still we haven't actually put together a proper research programme into the effect of nanoparticles on the biological system. We don't know enough to know which nanoparticles would be harmful.” Greenpeace UK's chief scientist, Doug Barr, said the government should impose a moratorium on the release of products with free nanoparticles - ones not bound up in a compound, as most are - until evidence of their safety emerged, ideally from publicly funded studies. “Industry data rarely provides the whole story. On what basis do we

think the nanotechnology industry is going to tell Defra things that are not in its commercial interest to disclose?” he said. Prof Seaton said many nanotechnology companies were small spin-offs from academic institutions and could not afford elaborate health and safety research. During his address to a European nanotechnology conference this month, he warned that “very little” was known about the health impacts of nanoparticles engineered at small scales and that industry should take his comments as a “warning shot”. He said he was concerned about the safety of lab workers as well as consumers.

- [The Scotsman. BBC News Online. Environmental News Network.](#)
- [Hazards nanotechnology news and resources.](#)

### Chemical giants accused of “corrosive lobbying”

Large chemicals firms have led a concerted push to undermine and destroy European Union attempts to introduce stringent controls on hazardous chemicals ([Risks 237](#)), a Greenpeace report has claimed. ‘Toxic lobby: How the chemicals industry is trying to kill REACH’, says the industry’s bid to nobble REACH, the proposed EU chemicals law, had “scared and misled decision-makers” by denying the problems of chemical contamination and creating fear over job losses and economic costs. “Lack of accountability and transparency in Brussels decision-making comes at the cost of public interest legislation,” said Jorgo Riss, director of the Greenpeace European Unit. “The chemicals industry’s corrosive campaign to destroy REACH thus far has depended on the willingness of key officials to abandon their role as public servants and behave like industry lobbyists.” The report says the projected costs of REACH - 0.2 billion euro (£0.14bn) per year – compare to annual chemicals industry sales of 586 billion euro (£401bn), 2,790 times the cost of REACH. Nadia Haiama, Greenpeace EU policy director on chemicals, said: “The drip-

drip influence of the chemicals lobby has led to a wholesale dilution of what started out as a promising effort to improve human health. Unless this toxic influence is reversed, REACH will allow the continued use of hazardous chemicals that can cause cancer and reproductive illnesses, even where safer alternatives are available.” A report last year from the Brussels based trade union safety thinktank ETUI-REHS concluded a beefed up version of REACH, subsequently diluted by the European Union industry ministers ([Risks 237](#)), would benefit both health and the economy ([Risks 229](#)). A Scientific American report this week concluded low “safe” concentrations of chemicals that were harmless on their own, were toxic in combination. The findings were based on a University of California, Berkeley, study of the effects of pesticides on frogs and tadpoles.

- [Greenpeace news release. Toxic lobby: How the chemicals industry is trying to kill REACH](#), Greenpeace, May 2006. [Scientific American](#).

### Safety systems failed at Buncefield

Failure of safety systems at the Buncefield oil depot meant a storage tank was overflowing unleaded petrol for more than 40 minutes before an explosion in which 43 people were hurt. Fuel was piped into the tank in Hemel Hempstead, Herts, for 11 hours before the blasts on 11 December last year, the latest investigation board report said. Around 600,000 litres (3,500 barrels) too much fuel was pumped into tank 912, cascading out through eight breather holes in the top. The report of the joint HSE and Environment Agency investigation board said it did not seek to address any shortcomings in the plant's design and operation “in order to avoid prejudicing future legal considerations.” The inquiry, overseen by Lord Newton of Braintree, found that two separate safety devices failed. Lord Newton said: “The first was a float - a level gauge - which got stuck and therefore didn't rise and register as the tank continued to fill. And then it did fill, and just before that happened, an

alarm should have been triggered - a so-called high-level alarm - and that doesn't appear to have operated either.” The overflow caused a huge vapour cloud to build up, which was then ignited by a spark. More than 20 tanks caught alight during the blaze, which raged for almost two days and was described as the largest in peacetime Europe.

- [Buncefield Investigation Board statement and news release](#). Third progress report [[pdf](#)]. [HSE news release](#). [BBC News Online](#). [Times Online](#).
- [Buncefield investigation website](#). [Defra report on Buncefield air quality](#).

### Immobile office workers given DVT warning

Office workers risk being struck down by deep vein thrombosis (DVT) if they sit at their computer screens for long periods without a break, health experts have said. The warning came as it emerged that a computer programmer from Bristol almost died after a 12-hour stint in front of his screen in what is believed to be one of the first cases in the UK of a growing phenomenon dubbed e-thrombosis. Beverly Hunt, medical director of the thrombosis charity Lifeblood, said few office workers seemed aware that they could be affected in the same way as air passengers. Dr Hunt added: “Immobility is a key factor in causing thrombosis.” The term e-thrombosis was coined after a 32-year-old man in New Zealand inexplicably suffered a pulmonary embolism ([Risks 201](#)). He often spent 12 hours a day at his computer and did not stand up for hours, said the report in the Journal of the New Zealand Medical Association. In the latest case, Bristol computer programmer Chris Simmons, 41, told how he collapsed in agony after spending 12 hours at his screen and was unable to move. A few days later he began coughing up blood and underwent an MRI scan. A pulmonary embolism - a blood clot that travelled from his leg and lodged in his lung - was spotted. Mr Simmons, who works from home, is a vegetarian and not overweight but he

has changed his routine. “Now I get up from the computer more often, even if it is just to play with the cats for 10 minutes, or make a cup of tea,” he said.

- [The Guardian](#). [BBC News Online](#). [Personnel Today](#).
- [Lifeblood](#).

### School asbestos linked to another death

Another death has been linked to occupational exposure to asbestos in a school. Victor Kirk, 66, a divorced retired caretaker from Paignton, died from the asbestos cancer mesothelioma on 6 April. An inquest into the death was opened and adjourned in Torquay last month. At the hearing, coroners' officer Ric Parsons said Mr Kirk had been diagnosed as suffering from mesothelioma. He said: “He had spent much of his working life as a caretaker, working at various schools. It is believed that during the course of his employment he had been exposed to asbestos” ([Risks 251](#)). Mr Kirk died just three days after schools were issued new official Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidelines for dealing with classroom asbestos. The HSE action was prompted by concerns raised by teaching union NUT, which revealed over 100 teachers have died from contact with the substance in the past 20 years. HSE's own figures show 147 education workers died from mesothelioma in the decade between 1991 and 2000, 73 of them primary and secondary school teachers.

- [Western Morning News](#).
- [NUT news alert](#). HSE updated guidance, Asbestos - An important message for schools [[pdf](#)]. [HSE duty to manage asbestos webpage](#). [Hazards asbestos news and resources](#).

### Asbestos site advert ‘misleading’

The firms bidding to re-develop a former asbestos factory for housing published a misleading advert downplaying asbestos risks, a watchdog has ruled. The Advertising Standards Authority has upheld three complaints from campaigners, headed by the Greater Manchester Hazards Centre and the Save Spodden Valley campaign. MMC Estates and Countryside Properties sent out 50,000 brochures saying rubble on the Spodden Valley site in Rochdale was free of asbestos. The ASA ruling said this breached the code of honesty and truthfulness. Campaigners fear any development at the former Turner and Newall site could disturb asbestos, which was dumped there, placing residents, construction, environmental assessment and others workers at risk. The communication workers' union CWU last year raised concerns about its members working on the site and gave its backing to the campaign ([Risks 205](#)). Three out of the five complaints about the published brochure were upheld by the ASA. It said the claim the “the landowners, MMC Estates and the Rathbone Trust are committed to the comprehensive remediation (clean-up) of the entire site including the wooded area” was misleading. It also agreed that claims about levels of asbestos at the site were misleading. The case is believed to a first where campaigners have successfully used ASA to expose company spin on an occupational health-related issue.

- [BBC News Online](#).
- [Greater Manchester Hazards Campaign](#). [Save Spodden Valley](#).

### Sellafield faces legal action over radiation leak

Bosses at the Sellafield nuclear plant are to face court after an investigation into a radiation leak. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is bringing the criminal prosecution against British Nuclear Group Sellafield Ltd (BNGSL) in connection with an incident at the Sellafield reprocessing site. Radioactive liquor leaked inside a heavily shielded facility at the Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP). HSE was

notified of the incident on 20 April 2005. HSE has applied to the courts for summonses alleging that BNGSL breached three conditions attached to the Sellafield site licence, including a failure to ensure safety systems were in good working order, that radioactive material was contained and, if leaks occurred, they were detected and reported. The plant has been shut since April 2005. An initial hearing is scheduled for 8 June 2006 at Whitehaven Magistrates Court, Cumbria.

- [HSE news release.](#)

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Australia: Company doctors hurt injured workers

Australia Post has been caught breaking the law by using its in-house doctor scheme to force injured workers back to work and to deny workers' compensation. The Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) this week found Australia Post was abusing a scheme to test an employee's fitness for work. The company docs were breaking the law with their recommendations on employees making application for sick leave or workers' compensation following a workplace injury, the panel found. Evidence provided to AIRC showed employees who attended their own doctor were found unfit for work 95 per cent of the time, yet when they saw a company-appointed doctor just six per cent were found unfit for work. "This decision is a win for injured postal workers who have been subjected to harassment and bullying behaviour under Australia Post's doctor scheme," said Jim Metcher, NSW secretary for the communication workers' union CEPU. "The practice was grossly unfair to injured workers because doctors - paid by Australia Post - invariably found them fit for work when postal workers own doctors were saying they were unfit following a workplace injury." He added the decision highlighted the effectiveness of the independent umpire - the AIRC - in providing an

avenue for natural justice for workers against unfair or unlawful boss behaviour. He condemned the federal government for removing the powers of AIRC as part of a package of business-friendly industrial relations law reforms.

- [CEPU news release.](#) [LaborNet.](#)

### Australia: Did profit undermine gold mine safety?

Miners and union leaders in Australia have blamed managers keen to exploit rising gold prices for a Tasmanian mine collapse that left two men trapped a kilometre below ground for 14 days and one miner dead. Several miners from the Beaconsfield goldmine — including some who were involved in the dramatic rescue on 9 May of Brant Webb, 37, and Todd Russell, 34 — said that mine managers had failed to leave enough of the deeper levels unexploited to provide support. "There were simply not enough pillars left in the whole mine because of the value of the ore," one miner told The Australian. "If they found an ore body, they'd just take it out." The men were trapped by a rockfall at a depth of 925m (3,035ft). A third miner, Larry Knight, 44, was killed. There have also been concerns raised that safety inspectors were "deskbound" in the Tasmanian capital, Hobart. It is thought both points will be key considerations of an independent inquiry into the tragedy. The managers of the mine have declined to respond to allegations of unsafe practices, pending the inquiry. The Australian Workers Union (AWU) blamed the collapse on a law passed in 1998 that allowed a self-regulatory approach in the Tasmanian mining industry.

- [The Australian.](#) [Times Online.](#) [ABC News.](#) [Confined Space.](#) [The Age.](#)

### Ireland: "Massive increase" in work illnesses

There has been a massive increase in work related illnesses in Ireland, with 60,000 people affected in just three months, a union has revealed. SIPTU called for action to tackle the escalating numbers of employees affected. Figures from Ireland's Central Statistics Office (CSO) have revealed almost 60,000 people suffered work-related illnesses in the first quarter of 2005. "This is a massive increase of 29 per cent over the same period for 2004. Even if we allow for the increase in employment for the same period – from 1,835,900 in 2004 to 1,908,300 in 2005 – the net rate of increase is still 24 per cent," SIPTU's health and safety adviser, Sylvester Cronin, said. SIPTU said a more dramatic increase was evident in the eight years to 2005 - with the number of workers suffering work-related illnesses increasing by 129 per cent. "Such drastic increases are completely unacceptable," he said. "It appears that trade unions – particularly SIPTU – are the only organisations demanding action to reverse this trend. The silence from employers and government has been deafening." He added that there was also a major cause for concern at the increase in the number of people killed at work – with 73 people killed in 2005, a 46 per cent increase on the previous year. Mr Cronin said: "We demand to know what initiatives the government is taking to ensure that employers are conforming with their statutory duties to protect employees at work. It seems employers can ignore their duties of care with virtual impunity." The Irish safety authorities signalled a shift to more voluntary approaches in June 2004, with the creation of the first US style voluntary protection programmes ([Risks 165](#)).

- [SIPTU news release](#). [Irish Examiner](#).

### USA: Political animals say the dumbest things

The man appointed by President George W Bush to the USA's top health and safety job has been accused of "astounding sensitivity" after implying in a jokey speech that dumb employees were the cause of America's appalling workplace fatality record. Edwin Foulke, the new Assistant

Secretary of Labor heading federal safety agency OSHA, made the May Day speech, 'Adults do the darndest things', accompanied by a selection of the dangerous work photos that have been circulating on the web for years. He asked delegates: "First of all, what did you think of the pictures showing how careless adults can be when it comes to safety?" According to Jordan Barab, editor of the Confined Space safety news bulletin: "What do they represent? Workers too dumb to live, or managers too cheap to purchase or rent lifts or cranes?" He described the speech by the holder of the highest workplace safety office in the land as "sickening". He added "any true safety professional (which Foulke obviously isn't), or anyone who knows anything about workplaces - particularly construction workplaces - (which Foulke obviously doesn't), would be asking (after the initial chuckle) 'Who the hell is managing this place?', 'Have these people ever been trained?'" Barab added: "This pathetic attempt at humour insults the families of those killed on the job and dishonours our dead who gave their lives trying to eke out an existence in George Bush's America, a country where corporate cronyism has replaced competence in our regulatory agencies, to the peril of our nation and its citizens." He said the OSHA boss's energies might be better spent concentrating on the less than funny behaviour of those company directors responsible for safety breaches at BP's Texas City refinery, the Sago mine or the many other workplaces where over 5,700 workers died last year through no fault of their own.

- [Adults do the darndest things](#), speech by Edwin G Foulke Jr, OSHA, 1 May 2006. [Confined Space](#).

## RESOURCES

### HSE e-bulletin

You can now sign up to a free Health and Safety Executive (HSE) weekly e-bulletin, giving you updates on new additions and amendments to

the HSE website. HSE says the new resource will also provide details of improvements to the website, recently issued news releases and publications and news of HSE campaigns and other initiatives.

- [Sign up to HSE e-bulletin.](#)

### **ILO/CIS listing of chemical exposure limits**

The ILO's International Occupational Safety and Health Information Centre (CIS) has published an online guide to chemical exposure limits for a number of countries. The list so far includes links to official listings from 27 countries, from Argentina to the USA. There's also a European Union link, which takes you to a similar listing provided by the Bilbao-based European Agency. The CIS listing provides, by country, a brief description of the agency responsible for the exposure limits or the name of the document in which they are published, along with a web link to the actual values. If you are more interested in the effects these chemicals have on your body, the US National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) pocket guide to chemical hazards remains one of the most useful resources around.

- ILO/CIS [news report](#) and [Chemical Exposure Limits listing](#). [European Agency Occupational Exposure Limits webpages](#). [NIOSH pocket guide to chemical hazards](#). [Hazards tools webpages](#).

### **Microwave News online**

Microwave News, a key resource on non-ionising radiation hazards, has a new, improved website. The new site proves more and more timely news and commentaries. You can also sign up to email alerts.

- [Microwave News online](#).

## **EVENTS AND COURSES**

### **TUC courses for safety reps**

#### **COURSES FOR APRIL TO JULY 2006**

- [North West](#), [South East](#), [Yorkshire and the Humber](#), [South West](#), [Midlands](#), [Scotland](#)

### **USEFUL LINKS**

- **Visit** the TUC [http://www.tuc.org.uk/h\\_and\\_s/](http://www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/) website pages on health and safety. See what's on offer from [TUC Publications](#) and [What's On in health and safety](#).
- **Subscribe** to [Hazards](#) magazine, supported by the TUC as a key source of information for union safety reps.
- **What's new** in the [HSC/E](#) and the [European Agency](#).
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