

Risks

TUC 

e-bulletin

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**HAZARDS
MAGAZINE**



**Asbestos -
The hidden killer**

Hazards at Work

updated second edition
now available

Risks is the TUC's weekly online bulletin for safety reps and others, read each week by over 17,000 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](#)

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

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TUC advice on snow days

As a blanket of snow descended on much of the country this week, TUC issued advice for workers and their employers on what to do when the weather turns bad. The union body says while workers should make every reasonable effort to get into work, employees shouldn't attempt to travel if it's not safe to do so, particularly if they live in isolated areas. TUC said in snow-bound areas it makes sense for employers to allow staff who are able to do so to work from home rather than struggle with a lengthy commute to work. It added that many employers already have bad weather policies which set out what is expected of staff and what they should do when snow, ice and a lack of public transport prevents them from getting into work. Any 'snow' policy should also cover what parents should do if their local schools close and they have no alternative means of childcare, it said. Last year TUC received reports that some "mean" employers were docking the pay of their staff, despite their often valiant attempts to get into work. TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said: "Employers and workers must keep each other informed as to whether it's safe, or even possible, to commute to and from work." He added: "Scrooge bosses who dock pay and take away holiday are needlessly adding to their business woes by creating resentment amongst staff. Workers who have been prevented from getting to work despite their best efforts should not have to foot the bill for the bad weather conditions."

- [TUC news release](#).

FT staff campaign for safe staffing

Journalists at the Financial Times have taken the latest step in their campaign to combat unsustainable workloads. Journalists' union NUJ says cutbacks to editorial staffing levels mean the pressures on journalists have become too great. NUJ members took part in activities before the xmas break to mark the start of a campaign to make management take their concerns more seriously. A newsletter produced by the NUJ chapel committee, which was distributed to staff to mark a 16 December day of action, notes that while the introduction of new media technologies "is fantastically exciting for any journalist... the sheer potential of new technology means that it inevitably increases the workload on journalists, who find that there are many more demands on them to exploit the technical possibilities to the full." The union's FT chapel is undertaking a survey of stress levels among the editorial workforce to assess the risk posed by low staffing levels to journalists' health. Union reps have already written to management to raise their concerns and flyers and stickers have been handed out to staff to highlight the NUJ campaign. Addressing members at the paper, NUJ general secretary Jeremy Dear said: "Journalists at the FT show an incredible level of commitment. The current standards can only be maintained because of the pride the company's staff take in their work and the fact they will go far beyond what should be expected of any worker." He added: "Management need to listen carefully to their journalists: they're the people who know what counts when it comes to quality, and they're saying that current situation is unsafe and unprofessional."

- [NUJ news release](#).

Unions back social care swine flu jab

Social care organisations must ensure that all eligible staff are given access to swine flu vaccination during working hours to protect themselves, their families and those they care for, unions have said. A joint statement from Unite, UNISON and GMB, addressing members in care homes and other home-based social care settings, notes: "While we recognise that the decision to be vaccinated is a personal matter, we encourage staff to protect themselves with the swine flu vaccine, in addition to the seasonal flu immunisation. It is your best defence against flu this winter." The statement says: "Many of the people you care for and support could become seriously ill if they catch swine flu. We fully support the swine flu vaccination programme. It will reduce the risk to staff, protect their colleagues, families and those they care for and support and help sustain services during the pandemic." It adds: "It's important that staff can make an informed decision about the vaccination and social care organisations will provide you with information to enable you to do this. The vaccine has been thoroughly tested and is entirely voluntary. We call on social care organisations to ensure that all eligible staff are given suitable and reasonable access to the vaccination during working hours to protect themselves, their families and those they care for and support from swine flu."

- [UNISON news release](#). [GMB news release](#). [TUC pandemic flu guide](#).

Official boost for rail union on train guards

Rail union RMT has welcomed "positive progress" after Scottish transport minister Stewart Stevenson accepted a key part of the union argument for a guard on every train. The dispute relates to staffing on Scotrail's new Edinburgh to Glasgow via Airdrie route which is due to begin operating this year ([Risks 437](#)). RMT says at a 5 January meeting "the minister made it absolutely clear that there is no economic case for scrapping guards" as the net savings - £300,000 - are only a tiny fraction of the total cost of the new route. That position matches the arguments put forward by RMT, the STUC and members of the Scottish parliament and blows a massive hole in Scotrail's cost-based case for Driver Only Operation, says the union. It says the whole issue of Driver Only Operation now rests on the safety case. RMT said it will be stepping up the pressure for a guard on every train to ensure the safety and security of passengers. This comes ahead of a meeting with Scotrail's Steve Montgomery scheduled for 13 January. RMT general secretary Bob Crow said: "Crucially, the financial case for scrapping guards, which has been right at the heart of Scotrail's case for Driver Only Operation, has now been demolished. The campaign now is all about safety and we know that we have the overwhelming support of the Scottish public who recognise the importance of having a trained guard on every service."

- [RMT news release](#).

Snow exposes 'dangerous' rail gamble

Rail union RMT says the severe weather problems on the railways have exposed the "dangerous gamble" posed by Network Rail's plans to axe nearly 1,500 maintenance jobs. The union said it will be "closely monitoring investigations" into weather related incidents which it says have "reinforced the priority that has to be given to safety and the essential role of the maintenance crews." The union is taking steps towards a ballot for industrial action of Network Rail maintenance members in response to the planned jobs "massacre". An RMT lobby of parliament under the banner 'Cuts Cost Lives' is scheduled for 27 January. RMT general secretary Bob Crow said hundreds of its crew members who had kept the rail system running despite the "appalling" weather conditions now "face the prospect of being slung on the scrapheap as part of Network Rail's job cuts programme. RMT is fighting those job cuts every step of the way and will begin balloting for action shortly." He added: "The severe weather has shown that we are already short of staff when we come under pressure and that makes a nonsense of the drive to axe nearly 1,500 of these crucially important workers. You can't run safe and efficient rail services by cutting corners and slashing jobs and the dangers for both passengers and staff of Network Rail's reckless gamble have been underlined by the freezing weather."

- [RMT news release.](#)

Union casts doubt on official plaques dossier

Construction union UCATT has said the author of a key government report recommending that pleural plaques victims should not receive compensation is not an expert in the field and has not met any pleural plaques sufferers. Professor Robert Maynard, an expert in air pollution, wrote 'Medical aspects of pleural plaques: a review for the Chief Medical Officer'. But UCATT says Professor Maynard has admitted to asbestos disease experts in that he had not met any patients with asbestos diseases. The union says the report has been used by government ministers to explain its reluctance to overturn a Law Lords decision that removed the right to compensation for pleural plaques victims. The condition is linked to a higher risk of subsequent development of a number of asbestos-related cancers. UCATT general secretary Alan Ritchie said: "It is outrageous that the person tasked with writing such an influential report was not an expert in this field and had never met a pleural plaques victim. This dossier is at best dubious. I hope that it will no longer be cited as a reason why pleural plaques victims should not receive compensation for their injuries." On 6 January 2010, Labour MP David Anderson raised the issue of pleural plaques compensation at Prime Minister's question time, asking "when we can expect some progress?" Gordon Brown responded: "As my hon. Friend knows, a meeting of legal advisers took place in the past few weeks. I am meeting a group of MPs - I think he is part of it - in the next week. I hope to get a resolution to what is a very dreadful disease- asbestosis - and what we can do about it, and also to deal with the problem that arises from pleural plaques."

- [UCATT news release](#).

Broken limbs and scaly skin at JCB

Unsafe workplaces can hurt you. Unhealthy workplaces can make you sick. And it appears the JCB factory at Rocester in Staffordshire is guilty of a bit of both. Peter Slaney, 63, was testing the new JCB Loadall, a type of vehicle used on farms for moving materials, when a faulty step on the machine caused him to fall and break his arm. The GMB member, a test team leader, was undertaking final tests on the new machine before it went out for sale. He now has a 30 per cent disability in his left arm, but has been able to return to work in a different role. A GMB-backed compensation claim was settled out of court for an undisclosed sum after the company, JC Bamford Excavators Ltd, admitted liability. In a second case, a GMB member who suffered occupational dermatitis after being exposed to irritants in the same workplace received £20,000 in compensation. The 48-year-old, whose name has not been released, developed the condition after working as a plumber and team leader for JCB. Like Mr Slaney, he had worked for the digger manufacturer for more than 20 years when he developed the condition in his hands. His job brings him into contact with irritants like diesel and coolant on a daily basis. Although he wore gloves when handling the liquids he should have been given specific equipment to avoid developing the condition, which left him with painful and cracked skin. He often has open sores and must apply medicated cream regularly. The GMB member still works for JCB and has now been provided with a waterproof suit and appropriate gloves to use when dealing with irritants. The claim was settled out of court after JC Bamford Excavators admitted liability.

- Thompsons Solicitors news releases on the [broken arm](#) and [dermatitis](#) payouts.

Hovis maker pays out for fall injury

A bakery worker has received £17,500 in compensation after he fell from an unsafe ladder at work. The 28-year-old member of bakery union BFAWU, whose name has not been released, was unable to do heavy manual work for two years as a result of the injury in April 2006. He was made redundant when the bakery closed and is still unemployed. The BFAWU member was using the ladder and a broom to clean sensors on a piece of machinery at British Bakeries' Newcastle factory when it slipped and he fell to the floor. He suffered a serious back injury which needed prolonged physiotherapy. He has found it impossible to find another job at the same pay level because he is unable to do any heavy lifting. Compensation lawyers brought in by the union argued the bakery was using an unsafe system of work that required employees to climb the ladder with a broom and then lean over a conveyor belt to clean the sensors. British Bakeries' owner, Premier Foods, admitted liability and agreed the settlement. BFAWU's Alan Milne commented: "Falls from heights are the number one cause of workplace deaths and this member was lucky to escape with the injuries he did. With a proper assessment of the risks,

understanding of the limitations of ladders and regular maintenance, these accidents could be avoided.”

- [BFAWU news release](#). [Thompsons Solicitors news release](#).

Train worker gets needle injury payout

An RMT member who was injured by a dirty needle has received £8,500 in compensation. The 34-year-old from Sunbury on Thames, whose name has not been released, was stuck by a needle in his knee while attempting to fix lights on a train carriage at Paddington Station. The fitter for First Great Western got down on the floor to access an electrical panel on the carriage and knelt on the needle. He had to wait three months for the results of blood tests that established he had not developed any blood-borne diseases. The member, who has received counselling, was so concerned by the potential threat to his health he was off work for six months. Personal injury lawyers brought in by the union argued that First Great Western should have provided its employees with knee pads, equipment which all staff are now given. RMT general secretary Bob Crow commented: “Employers must provide their employees with a safe working environment and First Great Western patently failed to do that. The injury he sustained had a substantial effect on his life. By providing the correct protective clothing and ensuring carriages are kept clean this injury could have been avoided.”

- [Thompsons Solicitors news release](#).

Fire union warning after deaths verdict

The government must learn the lessons of a tragedy that claimed the lives of two firefighters, the union FBU has warned. The call came after a fireworks factory owner and his son were convicted in December 2009 of the manslaughter of two firefighters. Geoff Wicker, 49, and Brian Wembridge, 63, who served with East Sussex fire and rescue service, were killed in a blast at Marlie Farm in Shortgate, near Lewes on 3 December 2006. Alfa Fireworks owner Martin Winter, 52, and his son Nathan, 25, received jail sentences of seven years and five years respectively ([Risks 437](#)). The union warned, however, that the lessons from the tragedy had not been properly learned by either government or the fire service. It said government strategy is reducing resources used for emergencies such as Marlie Farm. According to FBU, this is having a detrimental impact on the way the fire service plans, trains and deals with emergencies. The union added the regulations covering the storage and transport of fireworks were not properly monitored or enforced. Commenting after the manslaughter verdicts, Steve Huggins, FBU brigade secretary for East Sussex, said: “What happened at Marlie Farm and what came out in witness evidence have implications for all fire services. This tragedy could have happened anywhere and may happen again with even worse consequences. Nationally the monitoring and enforcement of fireworks regulations is patchy at best and non-existent at worst. There is very little co-ordination between the agencies which are meant to be responsible for the regulations.” He added “it is important to ensure that all the lessons

are properly learned, so no one else is killed in similar circumstances.”

- [FBU news release](#).

Other news

'Lamentable' Shell fined after worker is paralysed

Oil giant Shell and two of its contractors have been fined after “lamentable failings” led to a “totally avoidable” refinery incident that left a worker paralysed from the waist down. Shell UK Oil Products Ltd, Dalprop Ltd and Hertel UK Ltd were fined at Warrington Crown Court on 4 January for safety offences related to the 9 February 2007 incident at Shell’s Stanlow complex near Ellesmere Port. Stephen Rizzotti was working for SG Blair and Co (now Dalprop Ltd) on a refurbishment project at the plant. The company was removing part of the concrete lining of the 'cracker' unit, where crude oil is turned into various chemical components. Mr Rizzotti, who is a father of three, suffered a broken back, two broken legs, a broken pelvis and other injuries when a container carrying 500kg of waste materials fell 30 feet on top of him. The court heard that the incident was caused by the materials being suspended above a walkway. Judge Dutton said he accepted lessons had been learned from the “fundamental failures” and the “lamentable failings” of the companies to act on a warning over the safety of the crane raised by another site worker the previous day. HSE inspector Alan Graham said: “This incident was totally avoidable and has had a devastating impact on Mr Rizzotti and his family. The scaffolding should have been constructed so that the lifting equipment was away from areas where people had to walk. The landing area should also have been suitably protected. This case clearly demonstrates why it's so important for companies to put the safety of their employees first.” Shell UK Oil Products and Dalprop pleaded guilty to contraventions of the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998. Shell was fined £116,666 and £16,204 costs, and Dalprop was fined £83,333 with costs of £11,115. Hertel UK, which installed the scaffolding and platforms used for the project, pleaded guilty to safety breaches and was fined £83,333 and £16,204 costs.

- [HSE news release](#) and [video interview with Stephen and Jayne Rizzotti](#). [Liverpool Daily Post](#). [Wall Street Journal](#). [The Times](#). [Personnel Today](#).

Bus company fined for death of driver

A bus company has been fined £400,000 after a driver was crushed to death between two seven-tonne London buses. Robert Cherry, 59, died from massive pelvic injuries at Uxbridge Bus Garage - a depot belonging Centrewest London, part of the First UK group - on 18 May 2004. The grandfather-of-four had been collecting a can of water to top up his vehicle's engine when the gear stick of the bus in front slipped, and it reversed into him. Mr Cherry was pinned between the first bus and one behind him. An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the bus that struck Mr Cherry had a defective gear selector, meaning it was in a different

gear to that indicated to the driver. Checks carried out on similar buses after Mr Cherry's death revealed that four others based at Uxbridge had similar problems. A check at the company's other garages in London showed that 10 out of 60 buses were significantly faulty and a further 30 per cent suffered from more minor faults. The Uxbridge garage was designed to hold 65 buses but at the time of Mr Cherry's death, 119 buses were based there. During a hearing at Southwark Crown Court, colleagues told how buses were squeezed so tightly into the depot that they had to enter via the emergency doors and walk sideways to squeeze between them. On 16 December the company, which had pleaded guilty, was fined £400,000, with costs will be determined at a separate hearing. HSE inspector Bill Hazleton said: "Robert Cherry died because his employer did not do enough to ensure his safety or that of his colleagues. He was a much loved family member who was killed while going about his daily work." He added: "The company's traffic management system was poor and its processes for maintaining vehicles and for identifying and repairing defects were inadequate."

- [HSE news release. Uxbridge Gazette.](#)

Roadworks firm fined after M6 death

Road maintenance firm Cumbrian Industrials has been fined £65,000 after a motorist was killed on the M6 in Lancashire. Graham Campbell died after he hit an unlit contractor's vehicle parked on the hard shoulder of the M6, just past junction 35 near Carnforth, at approximately 11.30pm on 8 May 2004. Preston Crown Court was told last month that Cumbrian Industrials was guilty of several failings, including inconsistency in the positioning of the traffic cones, which caused uncertainty to motorists about whether the hard shoulder should be used. The Health and Safety Executive also said the company had failed to provide detailed drawings for a change in the layout of the traffic cones after the original plans were altered. The Bristol-based firm pleaded to safety breaches. Joy Jones, HSE's principal inspector for traffic management, said: "The company should have carefully planned and co-ordinated the work of its subcontractors. A new route through the roadworks should not have been opened until the carriageway was clear of obstructions and the correct signs and cones were in place." The judge deferred his decision on what costs the company should pay in addition to the fine.

- [HSE news release. Construction News.](#)

New cancer prevention alliance launched

The UK's cancer establishment is ignoring the environmental and occupational risk factors for cancer, says the newly formed Alliance for Cancer Prevention – and in doing so is ignoring thousands of the most easily prevented cancers. Campaign coordinator Helen Lynn said: "There has been no movement from the cancer establishment on the environmental and occupational risk factors for cancer despite 14 years of accumulated evidence. It's time for a robust voice to ask questions about this and other prevention issues so we

want to announce the formation of this new Alliance." She said despite the "mountain" of scientific research pointing to environmental and occupational risk factors for cancer playing a major role in the disease predisposition, onset and development, the cancer establishment is choosing to ignore this evidence. The alliance warns that government policy has been overly influenced by polluters and the manufacturers of dangerous products. It adds that it is concerned about the lack of consideration given to the "precautionary principle" before the introduction of any new industrial or household products. The campaigners say while there is a perception that cancer is a disease on the decline, "in fact the number of people developing the disease has reached record levels over the last decade." It adds: "Relying on cures that often don't work and magic bullets that may never appear is a poor substitute for prevention – particularly given the UK's relatively poor survival rates for many cancers. We estimate that tens of thousands each year have to endure potentially terminal diseases that could have been prevented by simple, affordable changes to the substances and processes used by industry." The alliance includes unions, environmental groups, women's health organisations and the Hazards Campaign.

- [Hazards Campaign news release](#). [SHP Online](#).

Waste and recycling is a sick industry

Workers in the UK waste and recycling industry have much higher sickness rates than other local authority workers, research by a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) agency has found. A report from The Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL) found the sector recorded more days off work than other departments within local government but also found record keeping was inconsistent and inadequate, so data "failed to accurately capture the reasons for absence". The report revealed local authority employees in the waste industry had an average of 12.8 days' absence. In contrast, the Local Government Employers (LGE) absence survey, published in 2007, reported an average of 9.6 days' absence for wider local authority workers. HSL statistician Dr Eileen Holmes, the author of the report, commented: "The research revealed some interesting findings and indicated there are higher rates of absenteeism in local authority waste workers than in the wider public sector." She said, however, variations in the quality of data collected by local authorities "meant it has not been possible to identify the most common reason for someone taking time off work and, it follows, to recommend measures to highlight and address those underlying causes." The study looked at data compiled in 2007 and 2008 from 16 local authorities and two private companies. "The current system makes it near impossible to determine the most frequently occurring absences or to properly compare like for like," Dr Holmes added, calling for standardised criteria for recording this information.

- [Review of sickness absence data in the waste and recycling industry](#), HSE research report 750 [[pdf](#)]. [Green jobs, safe jobs blog](#).

Egypt: TB-infected workers are abandoned

Workers in Egypt with tuberculosis (TB) are being left to fend for themselves, campaigners have warned. Mohamed Mustafa inhaled the soft dust that used to come out of the machines in the cement factory south of Cairo where he worked. A few years ago, the 55-year-old former cement worker developed fever and night sweats and a chronic cough with blood-tinged sputum, and he began losing weight. When a doctor told him he had TB, he said he collapsed in shock with the realisation that he would lose his job, just as many of his former colleagues had when they had been found to have the disease. "Cement dust used to fall on my head in showers every minute," Mustafa said. "I never expected it to bring about my end." The condition, while seen in the general population, is also linked to dust exposure at work. Mohamed al-Asmaie, head of Friends of the Environment, a local NGO campaigning on behalf of TB patients, said when many Egyptian workers become sick with TB, instead of receiving treatment in hospitals, they are laid off and have to fend for themselves. "Tuberculosis patients shouldn't be given that treatment," said al-Asmaie. "Employers shouldn't take the fruit and throw out the peel like this." Health officials in Egypt hope to eradicate TB by 2050. But this means little to TB patients like Mustafa. The father of six, who lives on a pension of LE 76 (US\$14/£9) a month, has already developed lung cancer and psoriasis, like many of his colleagues from the factory who were infected with TB. Adding to his burden is that he has infected his wife and one of his six children. "Most of the drugs my doctors give me are ineffective," Mustafa said. "Everybody keeps avoiding me and my wife for fear of catching TB."

- [IRIN News](#).

Global: Q fever outbreaks on two continents

Outbreaks on two continents of the occupational disease Q fever have highlighted a common but underestimated risk of animal handling. The Dutch government last month ordered a cull of tens of thousands of goats in a bid to stop an outbreak of the disease, which has killed 10 workers since 2007. Six farmworkers have died so far this year. The disease causes symptoms similar to flu, pneumonia or hepatitis, but in a significant minority of workers also causes a potentially fatal heart condition, Q fever endocarditis. The risk is not restricted to farmworkers. In December 2009 it was revealed that two Australian laboratory workers had contracted Q fever following a breach in laboratory protocol. Both the South Australia Pathology employees have recovered from the condition, thought to have been caused by exposure to an infected animal on the site. In 2006, a major outbreak of Q fever occurred at the Scotbeef meat processing plant in Bridge of Allan in Stirlingshire ([Risks 267](#)). The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found almost 50 workers were infected. An HSE investigation into the outbreak concluded in 2007 that Q fever is far more prevalent and debilitating than previously thought. Commenting at the time, HSE's Alistair McNab, who oversaw the report, said: "There was long-standing guidance on Q fever but the belief was that it caused flu-type symptoms and was not that serious. Our concern is that

the risk was being downplayed and was not fully understood. Our conclusion is that it is much more serious than just flu symptoms and we need to raise the level of protection." The condition is an officially recognised occupational disease in the UK.

- [BBC News Online](#). [Herald Sun](#). [Sydney Morning Herald](#).

Global: Another deadly year for journalists

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) is demanding more action from governments and the United Nations to protect media workers. The call came as IFJ announced a grim total of 137 journalists and media personnel had been killed during 2009. The number of targeted killings at 113 is one of the highest ever recorded said the IFJ, despite calls by the United Nations for governments to put an end to impunity. In a year that ended with a rush of media killings, the Philippines, Mexico and Somalia are designated the most dangerous countries for journalists. "Last year's drop in the murder rate of journalists has been short lived," said Jim Boumelha, IFJ president. "The devastating massacre of 31 journalists and media staff in the Philippines in November and fresh violence against colleagues in Mexico and Somalia have made this a year of terrible bloodshed for media." The IFJ list of work related media killings is coordinated with the International News Safety Institute (INSI) and contains 137 journalists and media personnel who died during 2009 against 109 killings recorded in 2008. Of these, 24 were accidental deaths while journalists were at work. The IFJ says the continued violence against media is a challenge to governments which in 2006 were told by the United Nations Security Council to take steps to protect journalists and media in conflict zones. "The question is whether governments are listening or ready to take their responsibilities seriously," said Aidan White, IFJ general secretary. "There is no room for complacency and indifference. The crisis facing media threatens innocent lives and democracy itself."

- [IFJ news release](#). [INSI news release](#).

USA: Poisoned BP workers get \$100m payout

A federal jury in Texas has ordered UK-based multinational BP plc to pay \$100 million (£62.5m) to 10 workers who were sickened by a 2007 chemical release at its Texas City refinery. BP spokesperson Ronnie Chappell said the company was "shocked and outraged" by the verdict and would appeal. "We believe the evidence showed that BP did not cause harm to anyone on April 19, 2007," Chappell said in a statement. "The verdict, and punitive damages award in particular, is utterly unjustified, improper and unsupportable." The cases occurred at the same refinery where 15 workers died in a March 2005 explosion, which led to over \$2 billion in compensation payouts and the USA's largest ever safety fine. "They're like an ostrich with its head in the sand," said Tony Buzbee, the workers' attorney, of BP. "They don't understand the meaning of responsibility." The workers said they were exposed to chemicals while repairing two refining units damaged in a plantwide 2005

shutdown prior to Hurricane Rita's strike on the Texas Coast. They said BP had a poorly maintained workplace and lacked sufficient monitoring to detect toxic chemicals or warn workers of a release. BP countered that the plant did not release a toxic substance, and the company had no control over the "odour event" that stemmed from another unidentified party's negligence. Tony Buzbee represents another 133 workers suing BP over the chemical release. Originally his clients asked BP for \$5,000 each in damages, Buzbee said, but went to trial when BP wouldn't budge from a \$500 settlement offer to each worker.

- [Buzbee Law Firm news release](#). [Houston Chronicle](#). [More on BP's safety record](#).

Resources

New Euro magazine on workers' health

The European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) has launched a new free magazine devoted to occupational health and safety. HesaMag, a twice-yearly glossy, "aims to show that occupational health is not just a matter for the specialists, it is equally a question of everyday life and a major political issue," said Laurent Vogel, the director of the ETUI's health and safety department. Coverage includes articles on popular science, reports, interviews, surveys and other related topics. Each issue will devote ten or so pages to tackling a particular problem with implications for workers' health, ETUI says. The first issue – which is out now - focuses on nanotechnologies, while the second will explore the links between work and social inequalities in terms of health. Also covered in future issues will be "the most burning areas of European policy on health and safety at work, together with an international section, reports on trade union initiatives and reviews of works on the subject," says ETUI.

- [ETUI publication alert](#).

Events and Courses

TUC courses for safety reps

COURSES FOR JANUARY 2010 to MARCH 2010

- [Northern](#), [North West](#), [Southern & Eastern](#), [Yorkshire & Humber](#), [South West](#), [Midlands](#), [Scotland](#), [Wales](#)

Useful Links

- Visit the TUC 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.
- HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2WA. Tel: 01787 881165; fax: 01787 313995