HSE

Health and Safety Executive

Protecting the public

What you need to know as a busy builder

Want to run a safe and secure construction site?
These are the essential health and safety top tips you should follow, even if you don't directly employ the people working on your site.

Prevent trespass – do what you can to keep unauthorised people out of your site!

- Make sure the boundary fence or hoarding is secure. Check it regularly to make sure it is in good condition, it isn't falling down and it hasn't been damaged.
- If public pathways have to be diverted because of your work, make sure the route keeps the pedestrians and traffic apart (use barriers if necessary), is well lit and is clearly signed.
- Remove scaffolding ladders or fix a board over their rungs when you leave at night so they can't be used.
- Stop materials and debris falling onto members of the public by netting scaffolding and covering the boards if people are walking under (or near) scaffolding – or barrier the area off.
- Make sure timber is stacked flat rather than upright and that pallets used to stack materials are in good condition, on firm ground and not leaning.
- Cover or fence excavations to stop people falling into them.
- Discourage arson – keep your site tidy and free from piles of rubbish.
- Discourage theft – keep plant and equipment locked away and keep the keys safe.
- Use a banksman to help delivery and other vehicles and plant get on and off the site safely.
- If you are near a school, a park or a busy road, try to arrange deliveries to avoid rush hour.
- Make sure you know who's on site – close the gate behind them and lock up securely when you leave!

What can happen if health and safety is ignored?
A six-year-old girl got into an unsecured construction site and climbed a stack of building blocks. She was injured when one of the blocks fell on her.
The company was prosecuted and fined.

Fee for Intervention
HSE now recovers the costs of time spent dealing with material breaches of health and safety law. This is known as Fee for Intervention (FFI). FFI generally applies when an inspector finds something wrong that they believe is serious enough for them to write to you about. A fee is charged for the time spent by the inspector in sorting it out. Following the simple guidance on this sheet may help you to avoid having to pay a fee.

This is just a summary – you can find out what else you need to know about health and safety by visiting www.hse.gov.uk/construction

Unacceptable practice

Unsafe work like this would normally lead to enforcement action by HSE inspectors

Pedestrians are at risk from falling tools and materials, and workers are at risk of falling

Pedestrians are forced to walk in the road and are at risk from falling tools and materials, and workers are at risk of falling

Pedestrians are forced to walk in a busy road

Children and other members of the public can easily get into the site

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The Working Well Together campaign aims to improve health and safety in the construction industry, particularly in small and micro businesses. For more information visit www.wwt.uk.com

working well together

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory, unless specifically stated, and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance.