

Health on Site

Prepare: Quiet location? No distractions? Talk aids ready?

Reason: Many types of work related health matters are on the increase.

Why: Health matters are often overlooked by construction operatives.

Outline: This talk will cover types of health issues affecting construction workers and the preventative measures.



How Is Your Health?

- Contact with some hazardous substances can result in a severe form of dermatitis which could result in sufferers having to give up their trade.
- If you have asked the presenter of this talk to speak up, you may be suffering from work induced hearing loss.
- How is your suntan? The short term affects are sunburn and blisters, also there are 40,000 new cases of skin cancer each year resulting from too much sun.
- What about your weight? Try to eat a healthy, well balanced diet.
- All dust is hazardous to health, some types more so than others.
- Particularly beware of silica and hardwood dusts, which can cause long term health problems including cancer.
- Fumes from solvents and paints can cause headaches and make you feel sick, breathless or light headed. Your concentration and safety will be affected.
- Breathing in welding fumes can bring on an illness with flu like symptoms.
- Do your working hours or working conditions leave you feeling stressed out? Effects such as anxiety, poor decision making and loss of concentration will adversely affect your safety and maybe that of others.

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Q: Do you feel that you can do more to protect your health and well being?

What Are You Going To Do About It?

- Hazardous substances must be assessed before they are first put to use– use the appropriate control measures including the wearing of PPE.
- ‘Hand inspections’ are becoming a common event with the ‘at risk’ trades.
- If working in a noisy environment wear hearing protection.
- Resist the temptation to get a suntan – keep your shirt on.
- Site canteens do not always offer the most healthy food – is eating somewhere else or bringing your own food a practical and healthier alternative?
- Be prepared to wear face masks or respirators when the level of dust or fumes in the air becomes a hazard – your employer should assess the situation.
- Workplace stress is a growing problem. It is not easy to admit to but you must address the issue with your employer. If you are stressed you are not safe.

Q: What would you do if you thought that your work could adversely affect the health of another person on the site?

Do you have any questions for me?

Sources

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/pdf/fatalinjuries.pdf>
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/industry/construction.pdf>

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