

## HSE / LOCAL AUTHORITY INSPECTIONS

***A new initiative has been unveiled to enable the HSE and local authorities to work together more closely, visiting as many businesses as possible. Visits will be preceded by a letter, so if you get one, assume that you are going to be inspected.***

### **How might this affect you?**

Knowing which authority was responsible for enforcement on your premises was previously straight forward. The HSE would look after construction and industrial sites etc and the local authority would look after the rest.

However things have now changed, as part of a new flexible warrant initiative, inspectors from the local authority will join their colleagues in the HSE to undertake industrial site visits.

**A flexible warrant** – this allows inspectors from local authorities to inspect sites traditionally covered by the HSE and vice versa. It also allows inspectors to undertake inspections in neighboring authorities.

**How will it work** – firstly, an area will be chosen and then inspectors will target as many businesses as possible within it. The size, nature and even the level of risk within a business will not matter. The inspectors are expected to focus on risk assessments, managing workplace transport, slips and trips, manual handling, asbestos and working at height – basically everything on the HSE's priority list

It is expected that employers will be informed via a letter, warning that they are a potential target.

It's important to note that not every business that receives a letter will get a visit, but if you get a letter you should be prepared for a visit

**What to do?** – If you get a letter, we would suggest that you complete a formal check on your health and safety systems i.e.

- Make sure you have risk assessments covering tasks with significant risks
- Make sure all your staff are aware of them – inspectors may ask your staff about them.
- Check your safe working and or operating procedures, have staff been informed, are they being followed.
- Check your housekeeping standards for slip and trip hazards – or anything else that may be picked up on.

You and your business may be affected by the planned inspections. If you're not yet a client of Safety2Business you can still speak to a member of our team who will provide you with information and guidance on 0161 320 2020 or send us an email to [hello@safety2business.com](mailto:hello@safety2business.com)

## In the Courts

### **MD fined after apprentice suffers fatal head injuries**



An apprentice at a joinery workshop died from serious head injuries after a stack of MDF boards fell on him.

Simon Murphy, 17, was working as an apprentice joiner at Chris Pridmore Joinery Ltd when the accident took place on 6 November 2006, at the firm's workshop in Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire.

Prior to the accident he was attempting to remove MDF boards, which had been stacked on top of a bench and held in place by a bracket. He had successfully removed one of the boards when the remaining nine boards toppled and struck him on the head. He was rushed to hospital, where he later died as a result of serious head injuries.

There were no witnesses to the accident but it is believed that the boards fell because the bracket was not strong enough to support their weight. HSE principal inspector, Maureen Kingman, Stated: "The bracket failed after only a week in use. It is not known if the boards simply fell of their own accord, or if Mr Murphy was attempting to push them towards the wall and this resulted in them toppling over."

The firm's managing director, Christopher Pridmore, appeared at Nottingham Crown Court on 2 March and pleaded guilty to breaching reg.4(1) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. By virtue of this plea, he also pleaded guilty to S37(1) of the HSWA 1974. He was fined £7500 and ordered to pay costs of £2500, with no further action taken against his company.

In mitigation, Pridmore accepted responsibility for the accident but said that the bracket had been installed in order to improve safety at his workshop. The firm has folded since the incident and Pridmore now trades under a different name. His new company no longer stores large quantities of chipboard.

Inspector Kingman added: "Mr Pridmore neglected to provide safe arrangements for the storage of sheets of MDF boards. The bracket, which had been produced to Mr Pridmore's design, posed inherent risk and its use as part of the storage system was ill-conceived."

In a statement Mr Murphy's family said they hoped a line could now be drawn under the incident. Added the statement: "Simon is thought of and greatly missed every day by all his family. While the loss of Simon is not lessened we are all pleased that the court case has been concluded."

# Don't get caught out

## Photo card Driving Licence Expiry Dates

Are you aware that photo card driving licenses have just past their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary having been introduced in July 1998. Are you also aware that thousands of drivers now risk being prosecuted and fined up to £1,000 because they are unwittingly driving without a valid license?

Drivers have failed to spot that their photo card driving license automatically expires after 10 years and has to be renewed.



DVLA figures reveal that while 16,136 photo card driving licenses expired this summer, so far only 11,566 drivers have renewed, leaving 4,570 outstanding.

With another 300,000 photo card licenses due to expire over the coming year, the number of invalid licenses could soar. A total of 25million have been issued.

At the heart of the confusion is the small print on the credit-card size photo license. Just below the drivers name is a numbered series of dates and details.

Number '4b' features a date in tiny writing but the significance is explained only if the driver turns over the card and reads the key on the back which states that '4b' means 'license valid to'.

### **A mock-up driving licence from 1998 showing that the license has now expired item '4b'**

Currently drivers have to pay £17.50 to renew their Photo card driving license.

Motorists who fail to renew their license in time are allowed to continue driving but the DVLA says they could be charged with 'failing to surrender their licence', an offence carrying a £1,000 fine.

For further information on photo card driving Licenses go to:

[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/DriverLicensing/DG\\_068315](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/DriverLicensing/DG_068315)

13.	9. Cat	10. From	11. To	12. Codes
14.	B	16-01-07	09-04-58	
1. Surname	B1	16-01-07	09-04-58	
2. Other Names	f k p	16-01-07	09-04-58	
3. Date and place of birth				
4a. Licence valid to				
4b. Licence valid to				
5. Licence number				
6. Issue date				
7. Category				
8. Information codes				

**4b: The small print on the back of the photo card driving licence is easy to miss**

### **Things to Do:**

**Managers:** Inspect employees driving licenses as part of your annual checks, Keep copies of photo card driving licenses as well as the paper counterpart.

**Employees:** Check your photo card driving license, renew your photo card driving license if it's near to its expiry date and if you change your name and/or address notify the DVLA and your employer immediately.

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