



# Safety Post

## *They're handy to have*

Over the past two years there have been six incidents where employees have sustained hand injuries.

One or two have been nothing more than nipped fingers but others have resulted in a great deal of pain and suffering for the individuals concerned.

For almost all of us our hands are our working tools and we must therefore take very good care of them.



The hand is very flexible and strong, it has around 27 muscles, 27 bones and 29 joints.

We use our hands in almost everything we do. From handling items to sensing surface textures. From judging temperatures to shaking hands with someone, they are used by us without thought.

But these simple tasks require an extensive nerve system that is also very sensitive to pain.

Even minor injuries to the fingers and hand can be very painful and significantly affect our daily chores.

At work our hands and fingers can receive fractures, bruises, etc. from slips, trips and falls or contact with rough surfaces.

Cuts can be sustained from working with knives or other sharp objects such as hand tools.

We may be exposed to the risk of scalds or burns from electricity, boiling water, engine exhausts or certain chemicals used in processes.

And of course there is always the risk of our digits being caught between moving parts in machinery, etc.

### Electrical



Example of an electrical burn injury.

So just why do the hands get injured so often?

Because they are involved in nearly every task we undertake.

Also because we don't take enough care of where, how and when we place them. We don't, as individuals assess risks correctly or we take chances and don't follow procedure.

Perhaps we are guilty of not using the correct tool for the job or using the right tool the wrong way!

We must do all we can therefore to prevent anyone else suffering the pain of a hand injury and this can only be achieved with your help.

Recognise that your hands are important, fragile and potentially vulnerable. Make sure that when you set out to complete a task you understand what's involved.

Use the correct tools in the right way and make sure that you use the appropriate PPE when the task calls for it.

Remove jewellery that could create a risk. And be prepared to 'Stop the job' if you have any safety concerns.

Stephen Wilson

Health and Safety Advisor



### Market Street improvements

Improvement works have now commenced at Market Street and are expected to take around 5 months to complete.

As well as being a nuisance to staff and regular port users alike, causing delays in transiting areas of the port, they will undoubtedly encourage some non-port related drivers to take a short cut through the harbour estate or promote reckless driving from impatient drivers.

We have already witnessed reckless driving during the first few weeks of the work.

We would ask all staff to adhere strictly to the ports road safety policies and we would encourage employees to challenge unsafe or reckless driving by others.

The Board has a Near Miss/Safety Concern reporting system, which can be utilised by employees wishing to report reckless driving.

Alternatively you can contact the Boards Health and Safety Advisor on ext: 7059 to report any problems.

## Working at Height

During August and September this year the Board are providing Work at Height training sessions for all appropriate staff.

Each session will last one day and will provide staff with background knowledge of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 as well as practical training in the use of height work equipment and safe systems.



The sessions will be delivered by a specialist training consultant.

Staff wishing more information can contact the Health and Safety Advisor on ext: 7059.

## Safety Leadership

As part of ongoing development of the Port Safety Liaison Group (PSLG) Aberdeen Harbour Board recently staged a one day Safety Leadership event delivered by Scottish Training Consultants.

The event was attended by a mix of PSLG members and was viewed as being very successful. Feedback from those in attendance included

“The course was really interesting and there was plenty of student participation and I would thoroughly recommend the course to my colleagues”

“It was really interesting and covered areas relevant to our jobs.”

It's clear from these comments that the event was appreciated and we plan to have more regular PSLG events in the future.

## Top Tips for ladder safety

### Set-up for leaning ladders

- ◆ Carry out a daily pre-use check
- ◆ Secure it
- ◆ Ground should be firm and level
- ◆ Have a strong upper rest point
- ◆ Floor should be clean, not slippery

### Leaning ladders in-use

- ◆ Short duration work only!
- ◆ Light work (up to 10kgs)
- ◆ Ladder angle 1 in 4 rule (1 unit out for every 4 up)
- ◆ Always grip ladder when climbing
- ◆ Do not overreach
- ◆ Do not work off the top 3 rungs as they provide a handhold

### Set-up for stepladders

- ◆ Carry out daily pre-use check
- ◆ Ensure there is space to fully open
- ◆ Use any locking devices
- ◆ Ground should be firm and level
- ◆ Floors should be clean, not slippery

### Stepladders in-use

- ◆ Short duration work only!
- ◆ Light work (up to 10kgs)
- ◆ Do not work off top 2 steps
- ◆ Avoid side on working
- ◆ Do not overreach

## Time for Action!

Ever heard of the phrase ‘actions speak louder than words’? Well at Aberdeen Harbour Board they certainly do!

Over the last 3 years the Board has carried out over 300 documented actions relating to improving our occupational health and safety.

That's over 300 real tasks undertaken to make the workplace healthier and safer for staff and visitors to the harbour.



But we cannot do this without your help. The Near Miss and Safety Concern reporting system continues to be underused.

We all know that there are near misses going unreported and each one is an opportunity missed to improve safety and potentially remove a risk that could end up injuring you or a colleague.

It is vital that we capture any risks before they become an accident and we can only do this by utilising the systems already in place at Aberdeen Harbour Board.

They are in place to protect staff and visitors from the pain and suffering that all too often accompany accidents and the affects they can have on your loved ones.

**REMEMBER, YOUR COMPANY NEEDS YOU!**