



SafetyMatters

Issue 1, September 2008

Welcome...

... to the first issue of Safety Matters, a newsletter published by the Safety Office when there is a need to highlight issues we deal with which could be of interest to others, but do not require a more formal Safety Circular to bring them to your attention.

We hope you find it helpful.

Could you be 'Off your trolley?'

An accident occurred recently when the bottom shelf of a trolley being used to transport items from stores dislodged and sent the load of four full Winchesters, including 2.5l of extremely flammable ether, crashing to the floor in the middle of a corridor.

Thankfully the damage was limited to the vinyl flooring, but there was a potential for a fire due to the nature of the chemicals being transported.

When the trolley was examined it was found that the shelves were not actually secured but merely supported by a loose fitting bracket that slotted over the frame.

Could this happen in your area?

Please check all trolleys to ensure shelves are secure and they have side supports - especially if they are 'home-made', to ensure this won't happen to your equipment.

If you see it, Sort it!

Easy ways to reduce slips, trips and falls

Did you know that in out of the 403 accidents reported to the Safety Office last year, 74 (that's nearly a fifth!) were as result of someone being hurt because they either slipped or tripped and then fell? Some were serious enough to need another, unwanted trip - to the hospital for treatment!

These accidents happen all over the campus, both indoors and outside. The reason is often because there is some form of spillage on the floor; e.g. water, food or oil, or because the floor is uneven e.g. due to loose or uneven paving, or floor covering.

Many of these accidents could be prevented if we all did our bit to make sure these things were promptly attended to.

If you see a spillage you should:

- sort it yourself by either cleaning up and drying the area, or,
- inform a Building Attendant or other responsible person who can sort it out for you.

It would be ideal if you could put up some sort of temporary warning to stop people slipping in the meantime, e.g. a notice or barrier

made out of chairs will do whilst you get assistance,

If you notice wobbly or broken paving outside then please let the Estates Helpdesk know.

You can do this by:

- phoning ext 52424 (08.00-16.00 Monday to Friday) or
- reporting it online at

www.estates.manchester.ac.uk/BusinessUnits/Helpdesk/NewRequest.asp



*If you see it, please report it!
Let the Estates Helpdesk know about broken or loose paving*

Please do all you can to make the campus a safer place for everyone.

Visit our website at

www.manchester.ac.uk/healthandsafety

where there is information on a wide range of topics, including:

University Health and Safety Policy

A-Z of Safety Procedures & Guidance and other helpful documents

Bio/GM Safety

Radiation Safety (Ionising & Non-ionising)

Meeting minutes

Occupational Health

First Aid

Is there anything you'd like to see included in future editions of **Safety Matters**?

Have you experienced something that would be of interest to the wider University community?

Have you a particularly good way of dealing with an issue that others could benefit from knowing about?

If so, please tell your University Safety Co-ordinator. Contact details are at:

www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/healthandsafety/safetycontacts.htm

Centrifuge disruption – don't let one disrupt your work

This centrifuge was damaged beyond repair following a recent incident. The centrifuge disruption occurred when a lid came off one of the buckets as the rotor was spinning at 3000rpm. The lidless bucket then came off the rotor, damaging other buckets and causing the rotor to jam in place within the bowl.

Although the rotor stopped, the centrifuge motor kept on spinning at 3000rpm until it eventually came off its mountings causing extensive damage. The bowl came off its mounting also and rotated within the centrifuge. Thankfully everything was contained within the centrifuge casing and nothing was ejected into the room.



damaged bucket

However, those reliant on the equipment for their research face further disruption as the equipment was a complete 'write-off' and unavailable for use.



centrifuge beyond repair

Equipment in shared facilities presents particular management difficulties and needs careful monitoring regarding who are authorized users. It is preferable that shared equipment is under the responsibility of a named person.

To minimize the likelihood of incidents with centrifuges all users should receive training in their correct use.

Safety Myths

Myth: Risk assessments must always be long and complex

The reality

On its own, paperwork never saved anyone. It is a means to an end, not an end in itself - action is what protects people. So risk assessments should be fit for purpose and acted upon.

OK, if you're running an oil refinery you're going to need a fair amount of paperwork. But for most, bullet points work very well indeed, according to the HSE.

If you want to see examples, why not have a look at the generic risk assessments the Safety Office have prepared for you to use?

They can be found on the Health

and Safety Services website at

www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/healthandsafety/risk_assessment.htm

But remember: Hazards will only be adequately controlled if the things listed under 'Existing measures to control risk' are carried out in your specific location, or if your existing measures are equivalent to these or better.

If not, you must take action to address any deficiencies before an assessment is adopted for use in your area.

If you have ideas for others generic assessments we could provide, please contact your University Safety Co-ordinator.

(Image: HSE)

