

HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BULLETIN

Autumn 2017

Ladder Regulations Transformed



EN131 revised to help reduce the number of ladder-related accidents. Class 1 and Class 3 withdrawn.

The British Standards and Regulations on Ladders and Steps are changing in November 2017. The BS2037 Class 1 Industrial and Class 3 Domestic standards are being withdrawn and replaced with two European wide categories (EN131) – ‘non-professional’ for domestic use only and ‘professional’ for use in the workplace.

EN131 is a European Union Certification designed to ensure portable ladders and steps, manufactured from metal and other specific materials, meet minimum safety requirements, including dimensional changes to improve stability, increased strength testing, and new requirements for ladder durability. Both ‘professional’ and ‘non-professional’ ladders will have the same minimum capacity of 150kg.

- ❖ *Falls from height still remain the single biggest cause of fatalities on site and in the workplace*
- ❖ *Ladders account for around 40% of falls from height accidents investigated by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)*



Manufacturers are already in the process of changing over to new designs which meet the requirements of the revised standard due ‘live’ on 1 January 2018. The revision is being touted as the most extensive review and update since standards for ladders were first established.

However, the standard does not apply retrospectively therefore existing ladders can still be used as long as they are in a good, safe condition. There will be no need to replace existing ladders immediately the standard comes into force.

Instead, users will still be able to purchase ladders meeting the old BS 2037 and BS 1129 ladder standards (often referred to as Class 1 and Class 3 ladders) during the transitional period, but not once this period has finished.

After that, when replacing existing ladders because they are damaged or unfit for further use (or simply to obtain an additional ladder), the supplier of any new ladder purchased must provide a copy of the certificate of compliance with the EN131 standard, issued by an accredited test body such as BSI, TUV or AFNOR etc.

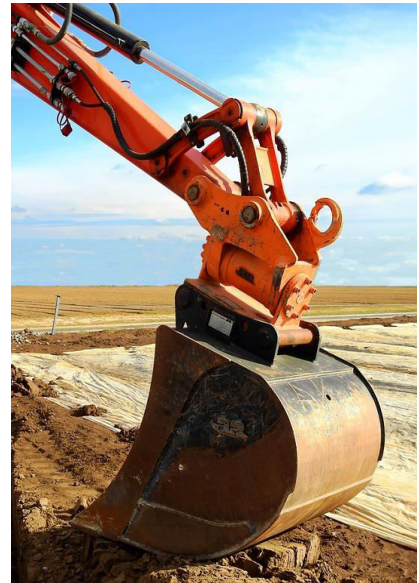
Furthermore, all EN131 ladders must be sold with the correct safety labels and a set of user instructions containing comprehensive safety information.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED ABOUT HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK

Deaths on construction sites in UK at all time low

Latest Health and Safety Executive (HSE) figures on workplace deaths show the number of construction industry fatalities in the United Kingdom has fallen in the 12 months ending 30 March 2017 to 1.37 deaths per 100,000 workers, against the five-year average of 1.82 per 100,000 workers. During this period, 30 workers died, the lowest number since records began in 1974.

According to HSE's findings, workplace fatalities in total correspond to 0.43 deaths per 100,000 workers. Although any fatality is tragic, these figures indicate a continuing downward trend of workplace deaths, a fall of around 50% over the last 20 years.



PVC recycling in the UK reaches new high

Recovinyl, a European PVC industry initiative created to advance the sustainable development of the PVC industry, has announced record UK figures for PVC recycling. Latest figures show that 120,392 tonnes have been recycled, up almost 12% on 2015. This represents 21% of Europe's entire annual output, member countries themselves collectively yielding a record 568,696 tonnes. According to Recovinyl, an increase in demand from manufacturers for good quality recycled material is a major factor driving the recycling success. PVC can be recycled up to seven times without loss of performance and used for a wide range of products and components.

Every year, thousands of workers are made ill by hazardous substances, contracting lung disease such as asthma and skin disease such as dermatitis. Ignoring a hazardous substance today is something you may regret tomorrow. Therefore:



- Always assume that substances are hazardous unless proved otherwise (substances can take many forms including chemicals, solids, liquids, fumes, dusts, vapours, mists, gases / asphyxiating gases and biological agents (germs)).
- Any substance that has a hazard warning label has the potential to do harm — always assess the risks before using it. **If there is no label, do not use.**
- Where exposure cannot be adequately controlled by engineering means, appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) will be provided and must be worn.
- Avoid all unnecessary contact with hazardous substances. Do not expose others to hazardous substances. Never mix hazardous substances unless the data sheet says it's safe to do so.
- Always ensure there is adequate ventilation when using or storing hazardous substances.
- Keep hazardous substances in their original containers and ensure that lids or stoppers are securely sealed in place when not being used. Never leave hazardous substances unattended.

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LEGISLATION UPDATE

What's happening at Parliament UK !

A Bill is a proposal for a new law, or a proposal to change an existing law, presented for debate before Parliament. A Bill can start in the Commons or the Lords and must be approved in the same form by both Houses before becoming an Act (law).

Carbon Emission Reductions Bill 2017-19: A Bill to amend the target for reducing net carbon emissions in the UK to 100% by 2050. The First reading took place in the House of Lords on 18 July (this stage is a formality that signals the start of the Bill's journey through the Lords). The Second reading - the general debate on all aspects of the Bill - is yet to be scheduled.

Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) (Disabled Access) Bill 2017-19: A Bill to amend the Equality Act 2010 to improve access to public buildings by introducing six-inch and 12-inch rules for step-free access. First reading took place on 27 June; Second reading is yet to be scheduled.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Adopted on 27 April 2016, the GDPR becomes enforceable from 25 May 2018 after a two-year transition period, replacing the Data Protection Act 1998. Its intentions are to strengthen and unify data protection for all individuals within the European Union (EU) and address the export of personal data outside the EU. The primary objectives of the GDPR are to give control back to citizens and residents over their personal data and to simplify the regulatory environment for international business by unifying the regulation within the EU.

Road Traffic Offenders (Surrender of Driving Licences Etc.) Bill 2017-19: A Bill to make provision about the surrender, production or other delivery up of driving licences, or test certificates, in relation to certain offences; to make provision in relation to identifying persons in connection with fixed penalty notices, conditional offers and the payment of fixed penalties under the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988; and for connected purposes. First reading took place on 11 July; Second reading is yet to be scheduled.

Towards a Smokefree Generation – A Tobacco Control Plan for England.

A government initiative that aims by the end of 2022 to:

- Reduce the prevalence of 15 year olds who regularly smoke from 8% to 3% or less
- Reduce smoking prevalence amongst adults in England from 15.5% to 12% or less
- Reduce the inequality gap in smoking prevalence between those in routine and manual occupations and the general population
- Reduce the prevalence of smoking in pregnancy from 10.7% to 6% or less.

To achieve these ambitions the Department of Health has developed a control plan targeted around four main themes (prevention, support, variations in smoking rates, enforcement) with a range of actions for each.

Full details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/towards-a-smoke-free-generation-tobacco-control-plan-for-england>

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Drones impact on heart attack survival rates

Swedish fire crews have taken part in trials flying drones with a defibrillator on board to locations in the town of Norrtälje where cardiac arrests had previously been dealt with. On average, the 18 flights took 5min 21secs, whereas the attendance time for ambulance crews was 22mins. Jacob Hollenberg, associate professor at Karolinska Institute, says his team will now prepare the drone for dispatch to actual emergencies.

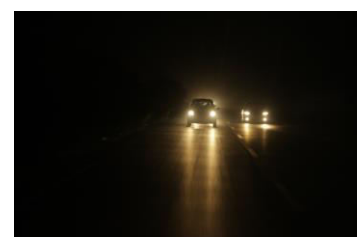


‘Outstanding’ new breast cancer drug developed

A new drug developed by UK scientists to delay incurable breast cancer has had ‘outstanding’ results, according to charity Breast Cancer Now. In clinical trials, Olaparib had a seven months’ typical progression time in comparison to 4.2 months for chemotherapy, giving women having BRCA-mutated advanced breast cancer significant extra time before the disease progresses.

Learner drivers to be allowed on UK motorways

Government has announced that from 2018 learner drivers will be allowed to take motorway driving lessons with an approved driving instructor in a car with dual controls. The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency says this will help make sure more drivers know how to use motorways safely. Motorway driving will not, however, be included in the driving test changes coming into force on 4 December 2017. Furthermore, the change will only apply to learner drivers of cars - learner motorcyclists won’t be allowed to have motorway lessons. But Jason Wakeford, director of campaigns at road safety charity Brake, says: “ There should instead be a requirement for all newly-qualified drivers to receive mandatory lessons, including on the motorway, once they've passed their test.”



No longer the excuse not to jog – “running not bad for the knees” say experts



New studies have found no link between running and osteoarthritis – perhaps now putting an end to excuses for not going jogging. For a book just out, called *Running Science*, says running is *not* bad for the knees. The publication, (consultant editor: Professor John Brewer of St Mary’s University, London) states ‘couch potatoes’ have around 45% greater risk of osteoarthritis in comparison to runners. This follows a study in the USA by Baylor College of Medicine which found 22.8% of runners analysed had knee osteoarthritis, compared to 29.8% of non-runners studied.

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Male Breast Cancer: the signs and what to do if you think you may have it

Breast cancer accounts for 1% of male cancers, affecting 350 UK men every year



According to UK charity Breast Cancer Care, almost three-quarters of men do not check their breasts for signs or symptoms of cancer because they think they won't get it. Put simply, men don't think of themselves having breasts

Supporting this unfounded sentiment, studies suggest that 85% of men claim their primary reason for not checking is due to their gender, leading to them being far less likely to spot the warning signs and subsequently letting the issue go under the radar.

With only 17% of men regularly checking their breasts for changes, the lack of association between men and this specific type of cancer not only affects prognosis, but may also hinder further research due to many cases being diagnosed at later stages. Indeed, most research into the disease has been heavily focused on female patients, with 1 in 8 women being diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime compared to 1 in 870 men.

Yet, the Erasmus Medical Centre in Rotterdam has discovered important differences between male and female breast cancer, claiming that treatment should not be the same for all, and that further research is needed to ensure men have a better chance of beating the disease.

But while the exact causes of breast cancer in men are not fully understood, certain factors may increase the risk. These include being older and having a significant family history of breast cancer.

Treatment for breast cancer may involve surgery, hormone therapy, radiotherapy, and sometimes chemotherapy and targeted therapy. These treatments may be given alone or in combination.

How do I know if I have breast cancer?

Most men who get breast cancer are over 60, although younger men can be affected. The most common symptom is a lump, often painless and usually close to the nipple. But lumps can also occur away from the nipple. Breast Cancer Care says men should also look out for:

- A change in the size, shape or feel of a breast
- Dimpling of the skin
- A change in the shape of your nipple, particularly if it turns in, sinks into the breast, or has an irregular shape
- A blood stained discharge from the nipple
- A rash on a nipple or surrounding area
- A swelling or lump in your armpit



I'm concerned – what should I do?

If you notice a change to your breast tissue or nipple, see your GP as soon as you can. The sooner breast cancer is diagnosed and treated, the better the outcome may be.

For further information, visit www.breastcancercare.org.uk or www.macmillan.org.uk



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Sources: en.wikipedia.org; [Insight Magazine](#); [IOSH Magazine](#); [Metro](#); [Saturday Mail](#); [The Ladder Association](#); www.breastcancercare.org.uk; www.gov.uk; www.hse.gov.uk; www.iosh.co.uk; www.netdoctor.co.uk; www.newsnow.co.uk; www.parliament.uk; www.pixabay.com; www.the-glazine.com

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