

## Health & Safety Poster

Do you have a Health & safety Poster where all your employees can see it? This poster gives your employees information of what they can expect and to whom they can turn if they are dissatisfied with Health & Safety at their workplace. You must fill in who is responsible internally, you should inform them of your Health & Safety Advisor, but finally you should inform them the name and address of the enforcing authority, generally the Local Authority Environmental Health Office and also the address of the HSE's Employment Medical Advisory Service (EMAS)

The last two have been a problem as many local authorities change offices every other year and the addresses go out of date. You are required to keep this updated



The poster has now been updated and the new poster gives contact phone numbers for local EHO, HSE and EMAS. You will not have to update these.

Your existing poster is NOT out of date and does NOT have to be replaced until **5 April 2014** – a five year transition.

**At current VAT rates (15%) the standard version costs £7.34. The semi-rigid version costs £11.75.**

See details on the web at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/lawposter.htm>  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/law.pdf>



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## May 2009 Newsletter

### Being injured by a golf ball.

In USA they have taken a lot of the data on golf and found that you are more likely to be killed from being hit by a golf club than a golf ball – and a proportion of those killed by a golf club are intentional!!

The danger area is the forehead and the temples – damage in that area causes brain damage & death. Being hit on the back of the head can cause serious injury but is rarely fatal. The danger distance is in the first 70 yards from the golfer hitting the ball. The ball travels horizontally, once it begins to fall vertically it has lost its momentum and is unlikely to cause serious damage, unless the person is looking up at it!

Knowing this it is advisable to have some form of head protection worn by your greenkeepers when they could be exposed to golf balls. **The traditional golf woolly hats**, with a double layer around the forehead and temple will give some protection. **A baseball type hat** with firm skip and sponge insert will give some protection. The use of a construction type safety hat will not give adequate protection as it is designed to protect from things falling vertically, not travelling horizontally.

Before the golfers go out there is no risk but working in the field of play when golf is being played is a definite hazard. Working on a bunker or sand patching are probably the worst hazards – **hats are obligatory** at this time and the use of some fence or low netting is obligatory whilst working in a bunker for any length of time

Lastly, have you a written emergency procedure for those injured by golf balls, which should also include noting the name of the golfer concerned.

## Adverse weather on the course

What happens at your club during adverse weather conditions? – have you a written policy for fog, lightning and frost?

**FOG;** In the event of foggy conditions the Starter and/or the Club Secretary will judge whether play can go ahead or not, taking into account the safety of the earlier teetimes.

*Generally, the Starter and/or the Club Secretary decide this. Some golf courses place a coloured stake 250 yards from the starters box to allow this judgement to be made – use of other features can also be made.*

**LIGHTNING;** In the event of lightning on the course, every effort will be made to warn the players. It is advisable to come off the course as many of the club shafts are excellent lightning conductors and the golf swing involves raising the club to create the ideal position as a lightning rod!

*Generally the Starter and/or the Club Secretary decide if action is necessary. Open golf courses, especially links courses, and open fairways are particularly at risk as also are individual trees. If there are safe shelters these should be advised to the golfer by the starter if there is any expectation of lightning conditions.*

**FROST;** In the event of frost the Course Manager/ Head Greenkeeper will judge if play can go ahead or not, taking into account the safety of the players and the damage which will be caused to the course by playing in frosty conditions.

*Generally the Course Manager/ Head Greenkeeper will decide if action is necessary. The Course Manager/ Head Greenkeeper will also have to make a judgement on the work being carried out by the greenkeepers as the likelihood of trips and falls is increased dramatically in these conditions.*

## Trees in the club

There have been several cases of trees falling in parks and estates where people have been killed. Most of these did not involve prosecution but in one case Birmingham City Council 2002 was fined of £150,000, after 3 people were killed by a tree falling across a road during strong winds. The reason for the fine was that the Council had not been proactive in there dealing with trees on their land.

It is not required that you employ an arboriculturalist to examine your trees. What is required is that you carry out a risk assessment on the trees on your course, their condition and the resulting consequences of their failure.

Most problems can be seen easily – damaged branches, dead branches, etc. Look especially at the large trees on or near the playing areas, clubhouse and car park. If in doubt, bring in the arboriculturalist, the expert.

If you are cutting down trees, are the operators qualified to operate chainsaws, to cut down trees and is your Public Liability Insurance cover adequate?

## Portable Appliance Testing

On my audits of various courses I have found that arrangements have been made for PAT testing with a local electrician to check all portable electrical items on an annual basis. However, often a greenkeeper has brought in a radio into the bothy which has obviously missed the check – can he use this radio?

The answer is straightforward, from the MHS-golf program, print out the safe working practice for electrical equipment and give the radio proper visual checks – plug not blackened, no frayed flex, the correct fuse etc. Note the item on the sheet, sign and date to confirm the checks have been made. The inherent risk is low, and the checks have reduced any risk to acceptable levels. That is your risk assessment. Let the greenkeeper use the radio!

The same is true for most new items of electrical equipment. After carrying out the above, these should be added to the plant list and be checked by the electrician on his next annual visit.

Should an old item of electrical equipment be brought in, the risk may not be as obvious and may require immediate PAT testing, especially on powered equipment such as powered drills and saws, which work in damp conditions.

## Driving on a Golf Course

A greenkeeper has been off due to illness which leaves him not allowed to drive on the road until the doctor allows it. Can he come back to work and drive a tractor or other ride-on equipment?

The simple answer is; not until you get a doctors letter that he is safe to do so. This is not a decision for the Course Manager, Head Greenkeeper or Club Secretary; it is a medical decision and can only be done by the greenkeepers doctor. A similar judgment should be made on the hiring of a buggy to a golfer with a similar medical problem.