

New speed limits

New speed limits are now in force on Whiteknights campus. The reduced limit, of 20mph, has been introduced to improve the safety of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. The limit has been further reduced to 10 mph on some narrow inner roads and in areas of high pedestrian traffic.

New speed limit signs and road markings have been installed around the campus. A new 'roving' 'Speed Indicator Device' [flashing sign to you and me] has also been introduced and will be deployed at varying locations to alert drivers to excessive speed.

We all share the campus together, whether or not we walk, cycle or drive. We have had very few serious road traffic accidents on campus over the last few years, and we want that to continue. The most effective actions that we can take as individuals to make the campus safer for everyone are to obey the road safety signs and to:

- Car drivers - reduce your speed;
- Pedestrians - use the pavements and crossings provided, don't take dangerous shortcuts.
- Cyclists - look out for pedestrians on shared routes.

Construction sites

It is very important that extra care is taken in the vicinity of construction sites. While the investment in new facilities is very welcome, it does lead to increased road traffic, temporary road and footpath layouts, and limited sight lines around site fencing. Facilities Management Directorate work hard to make the temporary arrangements as safe as possible, and to reduce traffic on site during normal working hours. However if staff identify potential 'hot-spots' please let Health and

Safety Services know so that we can work with the Projects team to try to make the area safer.



The Speed Indicator Device (SID) in action for the first time

Asbestos awareness

In previous issues of 'Safety Matters' we have highlighted the potential risk to staff of disturbing asbestos in buildings, and how to check that any minor 'building' work that you intend to do is safe. We are following this up with mandatory training for department staff.

It is essential that all staff, whose work might disturb the fabric of a building, and any asbestos therein, receive asbestos awareness training. This is a legal requirement. This also applies to staff working with department equipment which contains asbestos. Therefore a special seminar has been organised for Wednesday 14 November for key departmental staff. The seminar will cover a brief introduction to asbestos; its properties; why it is harmful to

health; where it might be found in buildings; and the University procedures for controlling work that might disturb asbestos containing materials. It should last 1 ½ hours. Details are as follows:

Wednesday 14 November at 2pm in the Palmer Building, Room 109.

Staff to attend:

Area Health & Safety Co-ordinators
Laboratory & workshop technicians
IT technicians
Building attendants.

Booking with Estella Tanner (Extn 8888, email safety@reading.ac.uk) is advised. Additional seminars will be arranged for January/February 2008 for those who are unable to attend in November.

Asbestos web pages

Information on the University's asbestos policy and other guidance is now on H&SS web site at <http://www.fmd.rdg.ac.uk/safety/Asbestos.asp>

H&S training

The Health and Safety Services training prospectus for 2007/08 has now been published on our web site at

www.fmd.rdg.ac.uk/safety/document/ET_FullProspectus.pdf

While the programme is similar to previous years, we have adjusted our fire safety training to place greater emphasis on fire prevention, and to provide more in-depth training for higher risk groups, such as lab-based staff and catering. We recommend that all staff receive basic fire precautions training (page 23 of the prospectus).

Lighten the load – European Week for Safety and Health

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are the most common form of ill-health disorders at work in Great Britain. In support of European Week for Health and Safety we are running a series of short workshops throughout **Thursday 25th October 2007**, in **Palmer Building**, on the topic of preventing back injuries.

Work-related MSDs affect one million people in Great Britain alone each year. Problems include back pain, work-related neck disorders and work related upper limb disorders (WRULDs). Raising awareness, prevention and management are all key factors in reducing MSDs.

These workshops will provide information on manual handling and some practical tips to keep your back strong and avoid injury, which can be fitted into everyday life.

Charlotte Wood, Occupational Physiotherapist, will be demonstrating how to keep your back strong with easy-to-do exercises promoting good core stability.

Jonathan Crabb, University Health and Safety Adviser, will be demonstrating good manual handling techniques to avoid injury.

Ludmila Paixao, Sportspark Fitness Consultant, will be discussing the classes on offer at the Sports Park and providing one week's free membership to everyone who attends the workshop session.

University suppliers will also display equipment and furniture designed to support the back and to reduce injury from manual handling.

Just drop in - Palmer G06

Everyone is free to drop into one of the sessions. However to enable us to judge demand, if possible please contact Estella Tanner x8888 safety@reading.ac.uk to let us know which time would be most suitable for you.

Time	Session
1000-1035	Morning
1215-1250	Lunchtime 1
1310-1345	Lunchtime 2
1500-1535	Afternoon



Smoke free policy

Most of you are aware that the University has adopted a policy of 'no smoking' within 10 m of buildings. We are asking for the support of staff in abiding by this policy and encouraging students to do so.

The policy was introduced to alleviate the problem of smoke drifting into the working environment. Not only is this unpleasant for building occupiers, it could be seen to be in breach of the spirit of the recent smoke-free legislation. In general this policy has been welcomed by staff and it is noticeable that most are complying.

Regrettably, student compliance is has not been quite so successful. This may be causing a nuisance to building occupants and those using building entrances. Where this is the case, a low-key approach to politely ask the smoker to move away from the building is recommended. There are now signs in place in most buildings advising of the 10 m rule (electronic copies are available from Health and Safety Services). It should therefore be possible to refer to a sign. No-one should enter into any

sort of confrontation, but if there is persistent nuisance, Health and Safety Services or Security should be informed.

Fire Safety Adviser

We are delighted to announce that **Peter Lawther** has joined the Health & Safety Services Team as the University's Fire Safety Adviser.

Peter has worked as a fire safety professional since he joined the RAF Fire Service in 1972. Prior to joining the University he was the fire safety advisor for the Ministry of Defence Air Command Headquarters at High Wycombe. Peter is a Member of the Institute of Fire Engineers as well as holding the CFPA European Diploma in Fire Safety Management. He can be contacted on Extn. 8282 or by email to firesafety@reading.ac.uk.

Corporate manslaughter

Parliament has now passed the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007, which will come into force in April 2008.

This new legislation provides for organisations to be prosecuted for corporate manslaughter. This will apply in cases where there has been a gross breach of a duty of care resulting in a death, and that a substantial element in the breach is attributable to the way the organisation's activities are managed or organised by the senior management. It does not provide for the prosecution of individual directors, which is covered under existing legislation.

Health and Safety Services
Facilities Management Directorate

Extension 8888

Web: www.fmd.rdg.ac.uk/safety/

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Contact: **Moira Simpson**, Head of Health and Safety Services