

## See it, share it



The winner of this month is key influencer Rishi Khera on the A14 project who stopped an operation that he came across. Due to ground conditions making the environment very slippery, the Hiab was potentially at risk of movement during the lifting operation. Before the load was lifted, Rishi, stopped the work. This was escalated and it was decided to send the Hiab away pending a review of the operation.



Make sure you share observations

Text [07876 448 119](tel:07876448119)

Email [besafe@vgcgroup.co.uk](mailto:besafe@vgcgroup.co.uk)

Remember every month we pick a winner from all observations provided into VGC. This person receives a commendation from Laurence McKidd, managing director as well as a gift voucher.

## Fatigue is a risk factor

Research has shown that the effects of being tired can be similar to the effects of being drunk.

You must tell VGC if you work for other companies during your working week.

- The maximum number of hours permitted in any seven-day period is 72 hrs.
- You may not work for more than 12 hours in any 24-hour period.

You may not work more hours than these without authorisation **in advance** from your primary sponsor and your VGC labour manager.

## Slips trips and falls

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSW Act) requires employers to ensure the health and safety of all employees and anyone who may be affected by their work, so far as is reasonably practicable. This includes taking steps to control slip and trip risks.

Employees have a duty not to put themselves or others in danger, and must use any safety equipment provided.

In all workplaces:

- If you have an accident or a near miss, make sure you report it to your employer promptly. They can use this information to prevent future accidents.
- If you see a spillage, clean it up or make arrangements for it to be cleaned.
- Report any damaged floors or mats.
- Play your part and keep the workplace tidy.
- If you see items on the floor where someone could trip over them, remove them or arrange for them to be removed or for the situation to be made safe.
- If you are given PPE, wear it and look after it. Report any faults or damage to your employer and make arrangements for a replacement.
- Tell your employer about any work situation that you think is dangerous, or if you notice that something has gone wrong with their health and safety arrangements.

## Reporting

Please remember to follow your project's procedure for reporting any injuries, accident or observations. In addition please ensure you **also** inform your labour manager as soon as possible.

## Driving licence

Following an incident on a Network Rail site where a dumper collided with a pelican crossing traffic column. The plant operator (non VGC worker) had been transferring granular fill between site and another area via the public road. It was found that the operator did not have a driving licence as this is not a requirement of holding a construction plant safety certificate.

Ensure that

- Any plant movements on the public roads should be risk assessed with details included in a Traffic Management Plan.
- Always check that required competencies, including driving licences, are in place for operating plant on Network Rail sites.



## Noise - Don't lose your hearing

Noise at work can cause hearing damage that is permanent and disabling. This can be hearing loss that is gradual because of exposure to noise over time, but also damage caused by sudden, extremely loud noises. The damage is disabling as it can stop people being able to understand speech, keep up with conversations or use the telephone.



Hearing loss is not the only problem. People may develop tinnitus (ringing, whistling, buzzing or humming in the ears), a distressing condition which can lead to disturbed sleep.

Noise at work can interfere with communications and make warnings harder to hear. It can also reduce people's awareness of their surroundings. These issues can lead to safety risks – putting people at risk of injury or death.

Ensure you use any noise - controlled devices and follow any working methods in place comply with wearing the correct hearing protection and have regular hearing checks.

## Drugs and alcohol policy

Some clients are changing their D & A policy. Whereas some already work to the requirements of Railway Group Standard, some do not and for non PTS workers they currently are tested to the Road Traffic Act requirements, the Railway Group Standards are much lower. Some clients are now specifying that all employees and supplied labour will be at these new lower levels. These are less than half the Road Traffic Act requirements. VGC has a strict policy on drugs and alcohol and you must ensure you are compliant with this policy.

## New healthy habits in 2019

Are you planning a healthy new year?

NHS Choices has a free guide to help you develop healthier eating habits and get more active. The website has over 100 topics on Live Well and there are some great stories, whether you want to take up a new hobby, burn some calories after the festive season or maybe address an underlying medical issue.



## (London only) Ultra low emission zone (ULEZ)

To improve air quality an Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) will be in place in central London from 8 April 2019. Most vehicles including cars and vans will need to meet new, tighter exhaust emission standards (ULEZ standards) or pay a daily charge. The new ULEZ will replace the T-charge from 8 April 2019. It will operate 24 hours, 7 days a week every day of the year within the same area as the current Congestion Charge Zone (CCZ).

Cars need to meet minimum emissions standards when travelling in the ULEZ or the daily charge must be paid.

You can pay the ULEZ daily charge from 8 April 2019. It will be:

- £12.50 for most vehicles up to and including 3.5 tonnes
- £100 for heavier vehicles including lorries over 3.5 tonnes

If you travel in around central London and use a company vehicle you will need to check with your labour manager how this will affect you.

## Rehabilitation of ex-offenders back into work

VGC does not discriminate against persons who may have a criminal record. We actively encourage applications from any person who has a criminal record and these will be looked at on an individual basis with the aim of getting that person back into sustainable employment and become a valued person in society.

If you have a friend or family member in this position who wishes to work in Construction, encourage them to contact Kim McGinty via email: [kimberley.mcginty@vgcgroup.co.uk](mailto:kimberley.mcginty@vgcgroup.co.uk)

## Wellbeing calendar

Our themes for January are

1. Slips, trips falls
2. Hearing

Please read the posters displayed at VGC offices.

## Norovirus - winter vomiting bug

Norovirus is one of the most common stomach bugs in the UK. It's more common in the winter, although you can catch it at any time of the year.

Although it usually clears up after a few days, it can be very unpleasant. Symptoms appear one to two days after you become infected. You can catch it by touching a contaminated surface.

Avoid catching bugs of this kind by washing your hands thoroughly with soap and water

- after you've been to the toilet
- before you eat or drink or smoke.

Don't forget to let your line manager know if you will be off work sick.

## Charity partner 2019

### State of Mind Sport

For 2019 our corporate charity is State of Mind Sport. The partnership will help to raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing issues among our workforce. Further details will

The period after Christmas can be a stressful time for many. Remember our projects have Mental Health



First Aiders. There are people who will listen to you and support you.

VGC also have a wellbeing champion who is able to provide support. The contact number is 07464 919245. Alternatively call the Construction Worker helpline

Freephone - 0808 801 0372

8am to 8pm - 7 days a week