

Autumn driving

Visibility is often a challenge in autumn with low sun, thick fog, drizzle and leaves on the road.

Glare:

Dazzle from low sun can surprise drivers and cause accidents. Keep your windscreen clean, replace worn or damaged windscreen wipers and keep a clean pair of sunglasses in your car all year round.

Use of speed

It is easy to lose track of your speed, especially in fog, due to lack of visible reference points. Keep checking your speedometer.

Lights

Check your rear lights and headlights are working before you set off. In fog, avoid using the main headlight beam when behind or approaching another driver – always use dipped headlights when on the move.

Driver fatigue

Travelling in low sun or thick fog can be tiring. Driver fatigue is a major cause of collisions. Organise your journey to ensure you incorporate driving breaks before you feel tired. Take at least a 15-minute break every 2 hours.

Vehicle maintenance (POWDER)

Check:

Power (fuel)

Oil

Water; for washers

Damage; to lights, windows, mirrors

Electrics; bulbs, wipers, washers and horn

Rubber; tyres, wiper blades

Working on rail

Before you start work ensure that you are following the Safe System of Work. Stop if anything changes. Ensure adequate sighting distance whilst constantly paying attention to your surroundings on track.

Unsafe loads

Recently a load came into a VGC site that could not be unloaded safely by the team.

They did the correct thing by refusing to unload the lorry. They raised the issue with the supplier to investigate why this occurred.

Thank you!



See it, share it

The winner of this month is Mark Mullan and his team who discovered an uncharted service **at just 20mm below the tarmac!** They stopped work and escalated their findings to VGC management and the client. Never just assume a cable (chartered or uncharted) you have scanned is buried to the specified depth.



Please make sure you share observations and good practice:

Text [07876 448 119](tel:07876448119)

Email besafe@vgcgroup.co.uk



If you need to contact VGC out of hours, call the hazard line on [07876 448 119](tel:07876448119) to speak to the HSQE team as a matter of urgency.

Don't walk by!

Driver awareness

Remember if you use a company vehicle you must maintain a valid full driving licence. We check these every six months as part of our Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme accreditation.

Also check the DVLA website to see if you need to notify DVLA of any medical conditions.

www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving

Wellbeing and mental health

This time of year can be quite difficult for some people. Some may be worried due to financial or family issues or may suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). The Samaritans are reminding everyone that small talk really does save lives. If you need to talk to someone in confidence don't feel alone, there is always someone who can give advice.

Contact them on 116123.



Look out for your colleagues and ensure they are not isolated.

Annual leave

Please make sure you take all your holiday within the leave year (January – December).

To book annual leave please fill in the online form at: www.vgcgroup.co.uk/holiday

Be safe rules.

Stop work if anything changes

Recently some operatives have been working outside the Safe System Of Work (SSOW). Circumstances had changed. Always ensure your SSOW is applicable to the works actually being undertaken.

Sometimes the point of work briefings may not take into account all the hazards and control measures required to minimise the risk.

Always ensure the briefing you receive is relevant to your environment. These briefings are your opportunity to raise any questions or concerns. Remember the Be Safe rules.

Modern slavery

VGC is committed to ethical working. We work with Stronger2gether to encourage ethical practices in our industry. Here are some signs:



Physical appearance

Malnourished, dirty, possible injuries

Body language

Frightened, withdrawn, confused, afraid to talk, may avoid eye contact, rejects help

Communication

Someone speaks on their behalf, looks to their 'agent' before answering any questions, rarely left on their own

Support network

Accompanied to and from interview / work
Someone else answers their phone, or they don't know their number
Reluctant to seek help

Work environment

Few personal possessions
Has no lunch or access to funds
Always wears the same clothes; or clothes unsuitable for work, limited relationships - does not mix with others

If you have any information you feel we should be aware of, report it. Do not try to resolve the situation yourself as you may jeopardise the safety of the individual or others. Contact

ciara.pryce@vgcgroup.co.uk – 01895 671780

If she is unavailable contact the Modern Slavery Helpline – 08000 121 70

If you believe the individual to be in immediate danger – call 999

You may want to download the Unseen App

Unseen UK (App store, google play, windows store)