BREATHE FREELY
Controlling exposures to prevent occupational lung disease in CONSTRUCTION

Breathe Freely - helping you take control

Occupational hygiene is about recognising, evaluating and controlling risks to health in the workplace. Occupational hygienists have the knowledge and skills to help you protect your employees.

Let’s get going by deciding to treat health like safety. Sign up to our HI Standard and commit to a contract for health.

Then begin to breathe freely.

Join us and be part of the solution www.breathefreely.org.uk

99% health
Approx 12,000 died from work-related disease

1% safety
144 workers died in accidents at work

These figures are for British Industry as a whole. However, the picture is likely to be the same in the Construction Industry. HSE Statistics 2015/16

www.breathefreely.org.uk
Treat health like safety and breathe freely

Every year in the UK, about 13,000 people die from diseases which were caused by the work that they do, or used to do. In 2015/16, in comparison, precisely 144 people died from avoidable accidents at work. In other words, 99% of deaths caused by work can be attributed to it, health, and 1% to potentially avoidable accidents.

An occupational health campaign comes in. That's where our occupational hygienists in the UK, employers, and employees - through good occupational hygiene - can protect workers' health and safety. Just as surprising, though, is that we can protect workers' health and safety while actually preventing most of these deaths and illnesses.

We need to recognise what the greatest hazards in the workplace actually are, such as chronic bronchitis and emphysema. Not every risk to health is a high risk. Low level exposures to some substances can lead to debilitating or chronic diseases. Some substances are hazardous only if exposure to them happens over a long period of time. We have evidence that occupational cancers are linked to long-term exposure to known carcinogens. The latency between exposure and the onset of a disease can be 20 years or more. This means that from the date of the first occupational exposure to a known carcinogen, it can be more than 20 years before a person begins to experience a sign of the illness thereby prolonging the time before diagnosis.

BOHS supports you to breathe freely and to be aware of what your company's occupational hygiene standards need to be met, and what these standards and keep them high. In April 2016, a new version of the Standard has been launched, offering a unique level of user-friendly detail, and evidence points to the actual construction industry context.

There are a multitude of construction trades all facing a combination of different levels of health risks all of the time. It's clear that not everyone on any construction site can be aware of all of the risks, and ergonomic issues which exist. The list in the box above are just some of the substances that cause lung diseases which are serious, debilitating, irreversible, life-limiting and, in some cases, fatal. These lung diseases include lung cancer, pulmonary fibrosis (e.g. asbestosis and silicosis), asthma, pulmonary oedema, pneumonia and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) which includes conditions such as chronic bronchitis, and emphysema.

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BOHS is the Chartered Society for Workplace Health and Safety, representing employers, the Society for the study of the occupational environment, and the National Institute for Health and Safety at Work, and we understand how health hazards affect us all, and we know how to control them.

That's where our Breathe Freely campaign comes in.

Breathe Freely
A collaborative approach

BOHS launched this initiative on 28 April 2015 in partnership with Health and Safety Executive and Construction Industry Council.

We have developed Breathe Freely to help employers and employees reduce the risk of developing lung diseases. Breathe Freely will encourage all people in the workplace to realise the importance of the work they do, and to do something about it so that everyone can breathe freely.

Breathe Freely is a toolkit for managers and supervisors - have a key role to play in minimising health risks. You can protect your employees by making sure hazards are recognised, risks are evaluated and measures are effectively controlled.

BOHS launched this initiative on 28 April 2015 in partnership with Health and Safety Executive and Construction Industry Council. Breathe Freely has attracted unprecedented levels of support with BOHS launching this initiative on 28 April 2015 in partnership with Health and Safety Executive and Construction Industry Council.

We have evidence that workers need to be aware of what their company's occupational hygiene standards need to be met, and what these standards and keep them high. In April 2016, a new version of the Standard has been launched, offering a unique level of user-friendly detail, and evidence points to the actual construction industry context.

At BOHS, we believe that construction employers - managers and employees - have a key role to play in minimising health risks. You can protect your employees by making sure hazards are recognised, risks are evaluated and measures are effectively controlled. And we do this by providing all the information, resources and signposting to the advice and expertise that we know you sometimes need.

Recognise, evaluate, control and breathe freely

BOHS launched Breathe Freely on 28 April 2015 in partnership with HI, BOHS (Construction) and BOHS (UK) with the start of the campaign. Over 150 partners and supporters, including employers, trade unions and other influential people and organisations outside the construction sector and industry.

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Consult the experts and breathe freely

Breathe Freely is a centre of excellence on exposure control. Web-based information hub covering common risks, covering common risks, and providing detailed guidance and tools. Links take you to more detailed guidance and services. BOHS Directory of Occupational Hygiene Support Services.

BOHS (Construction) was launched specifically for construction industry. Good practice guidance is a toolkit for managers and supervisors - have a key role to play in minimising health risks. You can protect your employees by making sure hazards are recognised, risks are evaluated and measures are effectively controlled. And we do this by providing all the information, resources and signposting to the advice and expertise that we know you sometimes need.

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