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Subject: VIRTUAL TOOLBOX TALK: Working at Height(s) - To all Cleaning & Property Services Colleagues

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION: VIRTUAL TOOLBOX TALK: Working At Heights - To Cleaning & Property Services Colleagues

Good Afternoon,

Hope you are well and reason you have received this email is to increase you awareness of Working at Height(s)...

Purpose / objectives: This virtual toolbox talk is to increase colleagues' awareness of what you need to think about and do, before and while carrying out work at height.

Hazards / risks: Working at height is defined as 'any place where a fall from could result in injury'. This includes working beside open excavations. Around half of all deaths on construction sites are due to falls from height, therefore all work at height must be properly planned.

Hazards:

- Incorrect selection or use of access equipment for the particular task being undertaken is one of the biggest causes of falls from height.
- You should never use the wrong piece of equipment just because it is all you have available.
- Adverse weather conditions (wet, windy or icy weather), should be anticipated and suitable precautions taken.
- Excess material on a working platform - this can make the platform unstable and access difficult.
- Do not allow waste to build-up - use a chute or lower materials properly.

Before undertaking work at height...

- All work at height must be avoided where possible. If work at height cannot be avoided, a collective system to prevent falling should be used e.g. MEWP, mobile tower scaffold or fixed scaffolding.
- The most suitable and correct access equipment must be provided for the task.
- Ensure that you have the right skills, knowledge, training and experience for the task.
- Ensure you have received the correct information, instruction and training on the safe use of the specific access equipment you will use, so that the work at height can be carried out safely.
- All working at height must be carried out as per any safe system of work provided.
- All access equipment provided must be inspected at specified intervals and before use, and maintained as required.
- Fall prevention (such as edge protection systems, barriers and perimeter scaffolds) should be installed to prevent the risk of materials or persons falling.
- The consequences of a fall should be reduced by the use of safety netting or fall arrest harness systems.
- Ladders and stepladders should only be used for light work of a short duration and where there is a low risk of falling.
- Access ladders must extend to at least one metre above the stepping-off point, be secured, and rest at the correct angle (one unit out to four units up).

Safe work on roofs...

- A safe means of access to the roof must be provided (such as a temporary staircase or fixed ladder with a gate).
- Fragile surfaces must be identified with signs e.g., cement roof sheets and skylights. Measures should be taken to stop you falling through any fragile surface.
- A safe system of work must be devised and used where the roof could be liable to collapse under a person's weight, e.g., a temporary platform
- If edge protection or a soft-landing system cannot be used, it may be necessary to use a harness and lanyard. In this case, a secure, designed anchor point and training will be necessary.
- Openings must have a cover or guard; if removed for any reason, replace as soon as it is practicable.

- Where bitumen boilers are in use, a drip tray and fire extinguisher are required.

Questions?

- What is the definition of working at height?
- What should be identified before any work at height begins?
- Above what height must edge protection, toe-boards and guard rails be erected?
- When might a temporary platform be used?
- How far should ladders extend above a stepping-off point?

Please also see the links below for more HSE & company information...

HSE website and links below:

- HSE – Asbestos Essentials - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/guidance/a0.pdf>
- HSE – Lifting Equipment at Work – A Brief Guide - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg290.htm>
- HSE – Manual Handling at Work – A Brief Guide - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.htm>
- HSE – Slips & Trips – A Brief Guide - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/cleaning/topics/slips.htm>
- HSE – Working at Height & Safe Use of Ladders - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg455.pdf>
- HSE - COSHH - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/basics/whatdo.htm>
- HSE – COVID-19 - <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

STAFF ZONE is a bespoke intranet for all McSence colleagues with company information in one place - to access this click on this [Company Policies | McSence](#) and enter password staffzone123

Any feedback is most welcome and going forward we will be sharing more of this information on a regular basis.

Warmest regards, Martha

Martha Convie

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