

News release

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**HSE SAYS HELP US REDUCE £1.4BN NORTH WEST COST
OF ACCIDENTS AND ILL HEALTH**

The estimated cost of accidents and ill health to the North West economy last year was a massive £1.4 billion – and David Ashton, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)'s North West Regional Director wants both employers and their staff to make a New Year's Resolution to cut that figure.

He says: "We are not interested in the frivolous health and safety issues like banning people playing conkers, but want them to take practical action to deal with real risks and serious health and safety issues that can cost the area so much and lead to great personal suffering. We want to concentrate on managing risks that cause real harm, not bureaucratic back-covering."

Country by county statistics for 2006/7 for the local authorities within the North West showing estimated cost and working days lost, and actual injuries reported to HSE respectively follow at the end of the press notice.

David Ashton continues: "The cost and the statistics show the importance of relevant health and safety measures. The costs and loss of important staff can be crucial for smaller firms.

"Yet it seems I repeat myself in saying that year after year the same underlying trends appear in our accidents statistics – and the tragedy is that deaths and injuries such as these could be avoided. If we could eliminate just two of the causes - falling from a height and being struck by moving or falling objects – more than half of the people killed would still be alive today.

"HSE inspectors repeatedly visit the scenes of the accidents and realise that in many cases they could easily have been prevented. I call on all businesses to act now to help stop this toll.

"It is not a matter simply for HSE to prevent. There are plenty of practical precautions including:

- using safe platforms with guarded edges for working at heights;
- securing ladders properly where these have to be used;
- securing loads before moving them; and
- laying workplaces out to keep vehicles and pedestrians apart wherever practical.

More....

“Operators and people using access equipment should be trained. Simple assessments of risk, asking everyday questions like ‘How will we clean out the gutters?’; ‘Can people get up to reach the tops of our lorry loads in a safe manner?’; “Do we avoid exposing our workers to dangerous chemicals or dust?’; Do we follow the good advice of our suppliers?” and ‘Have we trained everyone suitably?’ could prevent so much heartbreak.

“HSE works with a number of partners to provide free advice and education to those both carrying out and managing work and we need businesses and self employed people to work with us to help arrest this increase and make the North West a safer place to work.

“Neither HSE nor employers can rest on their laurels when it comes to workplace safety. There is a great deal of work to be done in 2008 and beyond.”

Notes to editors

The cost estimate figure represents the full societal cost (economic and social) of the ill health estimates and reported accidents for the area and is based on estimates compiled by HSE economists regarding the cost of a variety of injuries with an adjustment also made for under reporting.

Cheshire	£216m		
	Cost	Days	Injuries
Chester	£26m	82,000	313
Congleton	£20m	76,000	205
Crewe & Nantwich	£24m	80,000	287
EP & Neston	£17m	56,000	191
Halton	£26m	76,000	385
Macclesfield	£33m	110,000	362
Vale Royal	£25m	87,000	262
Warrington	£45m	143,000	650
Cumbria	£104m		
	Cost	Days	Injuries
Allerdale	£19m	62,000	207
Barrow in Furness	£14m	46,000	168
Carlisle	£24m	72,000	362
Copeland	£13m	48,000	122
Eden	£12m	41,000	122
South Lakeland	£22m	71,000	244
Merseyside	£254		
	Cost	Days	Injuries
Knowsley	£28m	91,000	395
Liverpool	£86m	226,000	1,336
Sefton	£47m	176,000	428
St Helens	£35m	115,000	471
Wirral	£58m	199,000	699

Greater Manchester	£527m		
	Cost	Days	Injuries
Bolton	£53m	173,000	643
Bury	£38m	130,000	365
Manchester	£88m	245,000	1,581
Oldham	£46m	144,000	635
Rochdale	£44m	141,000	642
Salford	£44m	141,000	602
Stockport	£60m	216,000	605
Tameside	£45m	147,000	514
Trafford	£45m	155,000	549
Wigan	£64m	209,000	783

Lancashire	£300m		
	Cost	Days	Injuries
Blackburn / Darwen	£28m	83,000	429
Blackpool	£28m	87,000	330
Burnley	£20m	58,000	261
Chorley	£22m	78,000	253
Fylde	£15m	46,000	151
Hyndburn	£15m	52,000	177
Lancaster	£29m	94,000	350
Pendle	£18m	57,000	235
Preston	£31m	93,000	500
Ribble Valley	£11m	41,000	104
Rossendale	£13m	43,000	130
South Ribble	£25m	82,000	291
West Lancashire	£24m	74,000	298
Wyre	£21m	66,000	213

Total cost for North West: £1.4bn

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