

**To: Member / Trades Unions Joint Consultation and Safety Panel
6th July 2005**

Subject: Accident Report

From: Health & Safety Adviser

1. Purpose of the Report

to advise Members of the accidents to personnel during the period 1st April 2005 - 23rd June 2005. Details of accidents during this period are set out below.

2. Accidents to Personnel

2.1 There was one accident requiring statutory notification in the review period.

LEISURE & AMENITIES

A leisure attendant at St. Nicholas Park was assisting a colleague moving the bouncy castle in a deflated state, on its trolley. It was then removed from the trolley, being rolled out over the floor. It was whilst the leisure attendant was stooping over the bouncy castle that he felt a sudden sharp intense pain in his lower back. The pain was of such intensity that 'painkillers' did not reduce the discomfort he was experiencing.

He later attended Warwick Hospital A&E where the diagnosis suggested either a prolapsed disc or muscle spasm. The injured party was absent from work initially for some 16 days necessitating a formal notification to the HSE. In this period of absence he received physiotherapy and medical attention. He then returned to work briefly and now remains off unable to carry out his usual duties. The initial diagnosis has changed indicating a more serious injury to the individual.

He has no previous history of back pain or injury. Although he has attended manual handling training in the past, this would not necessarily have prevented the incident. A risk assessment review has been undertaken and the outcomes addressed by the centre manager. In the interim the injured party has made a claim via a solicitor for damages. A number of employees have been asked to provide statements to the Council's insurers.

2.2 There were 3 other accident notifications received during the same period which did not require statutory notification.
The details are as follows:

A. LEISURE & AMENITIES

A relief supervisor was injured moving an engine block whilst on duty at Newbold Comyn Leisure Centre. A delivery company arrived at the centre on a Saturday morning with a package, the contents of which were unclear, as was its destination within the centre. The staff accepted the item and unpacked it as the packaging was damaged. An engine block for the combined heat and power plant was revealed. It

could not be left in the position where it was unpacked in the Supervisor's office. A decision was taken to carry it through to the area of the building used by Warwick Plant Maintenance. The injured party estimated that the block weighed about 65 lbs.

It was whilst the block was being lowered to the ground that the supervisors hand was trapped between the block and the floor. The supervisor's hand was crushed with associated laceration to his right hand and fingers.

A subsequent visit to Warwick Hospital revealed no broken bones, butterfly stitches were applied to the hand wounds. The injured party lost one days work.

Although the item had been ordered no delivery date or time had been arranged or anticipated. The procedure has since been reviewed.

B. CHIEF EXECUTIVES

An Administrative Assistant , accompanied by a colleague had made their way to Level 1 of Riverside House to dispose of confidential waste in the appropriate wheelie' bin. The capacity of the bin is 1100 litres secured from inadvertent opening by a lock. The member of staff was unfamiliar with the equipment as it was her first time of using the container.

The lid had been raised and left open whilst confidential paperwork was being put in the bin. It appears that during this process the lid fell down trapping the fingers on the right hand of the injured party. It is unclear whether it was the action of putting material in the bin that caused it to move or the movement of the bin itself whilst leaned upon by the injured party that brought about the fall of the lid. What is clear is that the brake to the wheels of the bin had not been applied to stop any movement of the bin.

First – aid was administered immediately post the incident, there being no lost time for the injured party. The procedure has been reviewed, although the waste container has not been used by the injured party since the incident.

C. MEMBERS' SERVICES

A Clerical Assistant at the time of the recent election was opening postal votes. The process involved the tearing of perforations to enable the voting slips to be removed. This involved a continuous and repetitious action over an extended time period. The injured party had a pre-existing arthritic condition. The prolonged activity brought about severe inflammation of her right hand. The condition eventually reduced in its severity.

It is understood that various factors such as the thickness of the paper used and the configuration of the voting slip makes machine opening not possible. Whilst this may be the present situation, the incident nevertheless prompts a review of working practices to minimise the risks for future elections.

No time was lost from work by the injured party.

3. **Recommendation**

The contents of this report be noted

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