

# RISK News

Issue 43

July 2010

## Barbecues and food safety

Each year there are many instances of people getting food poisoning from outdoor catering activities. To avoid problems follow these tips.

- Do not store raw meat above cooked meat in a fridge
- Keep food cool, covered and off the ground
- Wait until the coals are glowing red, with a powdery grey coating, before cooking
- Ensure any poultry, game or minced / chopped meat (sausages, burgers, etc) are thoroughly cooked through and not served pink in the middle. Whole pieces of meat (steaks, lamb) can be cooked rare if required as any bacteria present is normally on the outside and will be killed by cooking. Chopping or mincing will spread the bacteria through the food which is why processed foods need to be fully cooked



- Wash hands often, especially if handling raw and then cooked meat
- Use separate utensils for raw and cooked meat
- Eat food as soon as it is ready
- Don't be tempted to undercook food just because diners are getting impatient
- Don't add basting sauce or marinade to cooked food if it has already been used on raw meat

For further advice, go to the Food Standards Agency website at [barbecues](#)

Produced by the Risk Management section of Corporate Finance

## Comment

Welcome to the latest issue of Risk News.

This issue takes a bit of a summer theme with articles about protecting ourselves from excessive sun exposure and how to deal with any adverse consequences, safe cooking tips for barbecues and alternative strategies for working in high temperatures. All of this does assume we will continue to get a sunny, hot summer - fingers crossed!

Two other things to mention. Firstly watch out for details of this year's driving competition which is being linked with some motor risk awareness raising activities and publicity.

Secondly, thank you to everyone who responded to the feedback survey in the previous issue of Risk News. It is pleasing that so many of you think it is worthwhile and relevant, as well as easy to read.

Finally, as ever, if you have any ideas for future articles, awareness raising activities or would like to contribute, please contact us.

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## Survey feedback

**Thank you to everyone who kindly completed the feedback form in the last issue. It seems you like what we produce!**

Satisfaction ratings were:

<b>Layout and style</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>Readability</b>	<b>88%</b>
<b>Interest</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>Usefulness and relevance</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>More risk aware?</b>	<b>79%</b>

While these results are a few points higher than the last time we asked your opinion, we are not complacent. You're busy people, (and likely to get busier!) so we need to keep it relevant.

While layout and style was rated highly, some of you mentioned that some articles were too short or lacking in detail. This is deliberate to keep the articles of an easy-to-read length but we will try to ensure that sources of further information, guidance or depth are always published from now on.

Where there are online resources we will try to include relevant links.

If you need this newsletter in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact us on 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.



# Lost in translation

Swansea council got lost in translation when it was looking to halt heavy goods vehicles using a road near a local Asda store.

All official road signs in Wales are bilingual, so the local authority e-mailed its in-house translation service for the Welsh version of: “No entry for heavy goods vehicles. Residential site only”. The reply duly came back and officials set the wheels in motion to create the large sign in both languages. The notice went up and all seemed well - until Welsh speakers began pointing out the embarrassing error.



What it actually says is “I am not in the office at the moment. Send any work to be translated”.

## Lessons to be learned

Oh the perils of blindly accepting what you are given – it’s the same with statistics and financial information - they need to be understood before they are used. This will help avoid embarrassing situations or making incorrect decisions.

## Postal service scam

Colleagues in neighbouring counties report that some rogue organisations are targeting schools in their areas.

These groups will claim to be working on behalf of, or in partnership with, local authorities or other “corporate” groups like PTAs or maybe school governor “clusters”. They claim to be able to take over your post service, gain huge discounts and reduce the cost of your mail. They often state that, while you have to buy this service in advance, you will more than make up the cost over time. **Please be warned, this is completely bogus.**



These groups might say they can reduce your postal costs by linking your postage to other schools or organisations within the region to access Royal Mail discounts, that they can install printing or franking equipment that will access these discounts AND that they offer to reimburse your first year’s postage up front.

**Sounds good? Don’t believe a word of it – what they actually do is sign you up to a very expensive and onerous long term finance agreement.**

# Eco-Driving top tips

If you implement these eco-driving tips you could experience an overall fuel saving of up to 20%.

## The top four tips

### 1 Shift to a higher gear as soon as possible

Driving at lower engine speeds reduces fuel consumption; change up between 2,000 and 2,500 rpm.



### 2 Anticipate road conditions and drive more smoothly

Rather than last minute braking, decelerate smoothly by easing off the throttle as early as possible. This allows the car to decelerate using engine braking. With the car in gear and the throttle released, a modern car uses almost no fuel at all. This form of braking is also smoother on the car and its occupants.



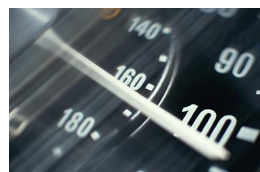
### 3 Maintain a steady speed in as high a gear as possible

Driving at a steady speed requires little effort for the engine so try to avoid unnecessary acceleration and heavy braking.



### 4 Drive a little slower than your normal speed

Stick to the speed limits and make your fuel go further. For most cars the most efficient speed is 45–50 mph. The faster you go above this, the more fuel you will use. Driving at 50mph rather than 70mph reduces your fuel consumption by 10% at a stroke.



## Best of the rest

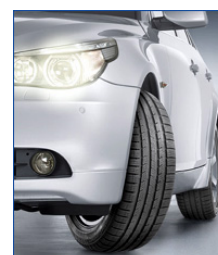
### 5 Switch off rather than idling if you're stationary for more than a minute or so

When stuck in traffic or waiting for someone, switch off your engine. Switching off in appropriate situations can soon lead to significant savings.



### 6 Keep your tyres at optimum pressures

Under-inflated tyres not only lead to poor road holding but also cause excessive drag and resistance, and as a result increase fuel consumption. Both over and under-inflated tyres can be dangerous to road holding, so make sure your tyres are at their recommended pressure.



## 7 Switch off air conditioning unless absolutely necessary

Use air conditioning sparingly as your engine has to work harder to make the air conditioning machinery work. If driving at low speed, open the window.



## 8 Close windows if travelling at 50mph or more

The aerodynamic drag on your car of an open window at speeds of 50mph or more can add to your fuel usage. Keep your windows closed at high speeds.



## 9 Remove roof boxes and roof racks if not being used

Car designers work hard to make their products as aerodynamic as possible. Adding a roof box or rack can spoil this by increasing drag on your car and therefore increasing your engine workload and fuel usage. A Spanish research study found that using a large roof box whilst travelling at motorway speeds could increase your fuel consumption by as much as 39%. So, if not in use, remove them.



## 10 Remove excessive weight that is not needed

Carrying excess weight in a vehicle increases fuel consumption, so heavy or large items, e.g. heavy tool kits, golf clubs, etc should be removed when not required.

# Safe Driving competition 2010



The Safe Driving competition is back and now in its third year – this time we are making it a team based competition. So, if you can get a team of 3 people from your section together who think they are skilled, safe drivers, keep a look out on the Intranet to find out how you can enter soon... it all starts with an online quiz in July!

The prize this year for the winning team is an Eco-Driving session with NCC's Road Safety Section.

## Driving Risk Awareness Week

Look out for our special edition of Risk News, coming out in August – this will be promoting our Driving Risk Awareness Week, commencing on 6 September. Features will include a display in the foyer of County Hall and lunchtime seminars on various driving related subjects. More details will follow.

# Sun awareness

**Skin cancer is one of the most common cancers in the UK and the number of people who get it is increasing. Most skin cancers are caused by damage from ultraviolet (UV) rays in sunlight. These cancers could be prevented if we protect ourselves from the sun. Sun burn is a clear sign that UV radiation from the sun or sun beds has damaged the genetic material in your skin cells (DNA). Damaged DNA can cause cells to start growing out of control.**



**FACT: Getting painful sun burn just once every two years can triple the risk of melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer. Your body's attempt to repair this damage is what causes the painful symptoms of sunburn.**

## Who is most at risk from the sun?

Some people are more likely than others to develop skin cancer. These people tend to have one or more of the following:

- fair skin that burns easily
- lots of moles or freckles
- a history of sunburn
- red or fair hair
- light-coloured eyes
- a personal or family history of skin cancer



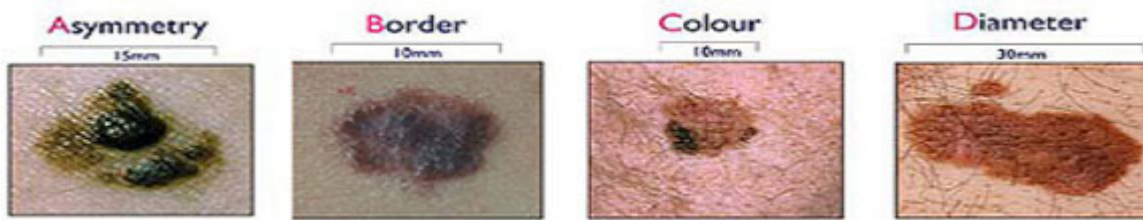
**Your skin type:** Your skin type is determined by the genes you get from your parents. It affects both your likelihood of burning in the sun and your risk of skin cancer. Knowing your skin type will help you work out when to protect yourself. As a general rule, the lighter your skin, the more careful you should be in the sun. But remember that everyone, even people with dark skin, can burn if the sun is strong enough.

**Detecting skin cancer:** You may have some moles or dark patches on your skin that are flat or slightly raised. Usually these will remain harmless all your life. But moles or patches of normal skin that change in size, shape or colour over weeks or months in adult life should be shown to your doctor.

**Skin cancer types:** Skin cancer is one of the most common cancers in the UK and the number of people who develop it is increasing. Most skin cancers are caused by too much ultraviolet (UV) radiation - the kind found in sunlight and sun beds. These cancers could be prevented if we protect ourselves from over exposure to these rays.

**When to visit the doctor:** When you notice any skin changes your GP should be your first port of call. They will be able to either reassure you that the problem is not serious or refer you to a specialist for tests. Most changes are not caused by cancer but you do need to be checked out by a doctor. If skin cancer is caught early, then the treatment is quick and effective.

## Moles and dark patches to look out for:



**Working outdoors:** If you work outdoors then your skin is regularly exposed to the damaging effects of the sun. In fact, outdoor workers receive on average 3 to 4 times more UV exposure each year than people who work indoors. This means that fair-skinned outdoor workers are at greater risk of skin cancer unless they take steps to protect themselves.

## When you are spending time in the sun, whether at work or at home, remember - Think SMART

**S**pend time in the shade between 11am – 3pm

**M**ake sure you never burn

**A**im to cover up with a t-shirt, hat and sun glasses

**R**emember to take extra care with children

**T**hen use factor 15+ sunscreen

[www.sunsmart.org.uk](http://www.sunsmart.org.uk)

[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

[www.cancerbackup.org.uk](http://www.cancerbackup.org.uk)

## Coping with hot weather

During the short spells of extremely hot weather each year the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team are frequently asked about what the legal maximum temperature should be. While there isn't one, there is a need to have a reasonable working environment.

Here are a couple of points to bear in mind:

- Ask your manager about different ways of working. This obviously depends on the business need but there may be an opportunity to increase working from home (or another cooler workplace). In addition consider a change of working hours on a rota system if you can - that way you can avoid the hottest part of the day more often.



- While we would like to avoid the use of fans, it isn't always possible in extremely hot weather. Make sure any fans that have been stored out of the way have a valid, in-date PAT sticker on them and carry out a visual inspection for damage.

If you need assistance with any specific issues please email [healthandsafety@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@norfolk.gov.uk) or contact the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team.

# Men's health

The purpose of the National Men's Health Week campaign in June was to heighten the awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men. This article aims to reiterate some of those key messages for NCC employees.



## Prostate cancer

Prostate cancer generally affects men around the age of 45. Around 32,000 men in the UK are diagnosed with prostate cancer each year. About 1 in 3 men over the age of 50 have some cancer within their prostate. Most of these cancers grow extremely slowly and so, particularly in elderly men, will never cause any problems.

### Family history

Men with close relatives who have had prostate cancer are slightly more at risk of developing it themselves.

### Ethnic groups

Some ethnic groups have a higher chance of developing prostate cancer than others. African Caribbean men are at a higher risk than Asian men.

### Diet

A diet which is high in animal fats and low in fresh fruit and vegetables may increase your risk of developing prostate cancer.

Tomatoes and tomato products (such as tomato sauce) may help protect you as they contain high levels of Lycopene. The body does not produce Lycopene, so you must eat foods that are high in it to benefit from its considerable antioxidant powers.





## Don't ignore symptoms

Men are usually more reluctant to visit the Doctor than women. Here are 5 symptoms that men should **not** ignore and should seek medical advice as soon as possible:

- **Finding a lump in your testicles**

If you notice a lump or abnormality in your testicles, first see your GP. Most testicular lumps are not cancerous, but it is essential to have the abnormality checked.

- **Moles**

Check your moles regularly and be aware of any change in colour or shape, or if they start bleeding. Most changes are harmless and are due to a non-cancerous increase of pigment cells in the skin. See your GP if a mole looks unusual or becomes itchy. It can then be checked and removed if necessary.

- **Feeling depressed**

Depression is a real illness with real effects on your work, social and family life. Treatment usually involves a combination of self help, talking therapies and drugs. Depression is more common in women, but men are far more likely to commit suicide.



- **Trouble urinating**

When the prostate is enlarged it can press on the tube that carries urine from the bladder and make it hard to pass urine. This can be a sign of prostate disease, including cancer. Other symptoms include pain or burning when you pass urine and frequently waking up in the night to pee.

- **Impotence**

Generally, lifestyle changes, such as losing weight and exercise, can correct the problem. Your GP is likely to assess your general health, as impotence (erectile dysfunction) can also be a sign of more serious conditions such as heart disease, diabetes or high blood pressure.

For support and advice to Norfolk County Council employees contact Norfolk Support Line on 0800 169 7676 for a chat in complete confidence. Norfolk Support Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Or visit the website [Norfolk Support Line](https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/support-line)

Further information can be found on these websites:

<http://menshealth.about.com/>

<http://www.netdoctor.co.uk/menshealth/index.shtml>

[www.nhs.uk/](http://www.nhs.uk/)

**Norfolk Support Line**  
**0800 169 7676**  
 Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year

# Risky business

## Increase in Norfolk oil thefts

Police have recently been put on alert following an increase in thefts from oil tanks. Particularly in rural areas, householders and commercial premises have suffered from oil being siphoned off from tanks.



If you are a school which is closing for the summer holidays or just live in a rural area then an investment in a fuel lock for your oil tank may prove beneficial. These can usually be obtained for less than £100.

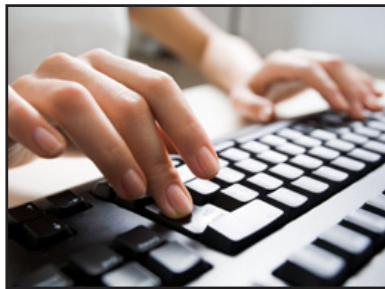
## Web hit by hi-tech crime wave

Hi-tech criminals are racking up more than 100 attacks per second on the world's computers, a recent survey suggests. While most of these cause no problems, the Symantec report suggest that one attack every 4.5 seconds does affect a PC.

The wave of attacks was driven by a steep rise in malicious software (malware) in circulation. This in turn is due to the growing popularity of easy to use toolkits that the novice cyber criminal can purchase or acquire.

In fact some of the more expensive kits are so popular that their creators offer telephone support for those who can't get them to work!

Often the software will use spam to lure people to web sites where the victim will be tricked into installing malicious code or which exploits a known vulnerability.



This will then allow criminals to set up botnets – a network of hijacked home PCs that can be used to send further spam or plunder for lucrative personal data.

In 2009 Symantec saw almost 7 million distinct PCs that were members of botnets.



## So how to protect yourself?

- Use security software that can tackle viruses and spyware
- Use a firewall
- Apply operating system updates as soon as they become available
- Be suspicious of unsolicited emails
- Keep your browser up to date

## And finally . . .

Bungling bank robbers in Germany recently tried to use explosives to remove a cash machine from a rural bank building. Unfortunately they miscalculated the amount of explosives needed.

The building was completely destroyed, along with damage to some local houses and several parked cars. They also managed to destroy their getaway vehicle in the blast. In fact the only thing that survived intact was . . . the cash machine!