

RISK ASSESSMENT

By Tony Rees MIOSH

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 came into force on 1 January 1993 and provided a general framework for Safety Management and places duties upon employers, self employed persons and partnerships.

One of the main duties that the Regulations impose is where employers have to complete formal, suitable and sufficient, risk assessments and record all significant risks if more than five persons are employed (Regulation 3).

Risk assessment is the formal process of identifying hazards and then deciding what is the significance of the danger that has been identified. What this means for the Greenkeeper in general is:

1. What are the hazards ie something with the potential to cause harm. This could be, for example, any piece of machinery that you use, any chemicals etc or any time that you are actually on the course.

2. Once the hazards have been identified, you have to look at what is the probability that exposure to that hazard will result in harm ie what is the risk. Risk assessment is, therefore, what is the probability of something that could cause harm occurring and what would be the severity of the outcome. This process is similar to what we have previously looked at with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH). However, whereas COSHH dealt specifically with chemicals and substances used at work, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations deals with all other situations that are encountered in the workplace that are not already covered by specific legislation such as Manual Handling, Noise, Display Screen Equipment etc.

Situations that Greenkeepers and green staff encounter are varied and this would give the impression that a risk assessment programme would be a difficult and arduous task, this is not necessarily the case however. It is important to remember that we carry out "risk assessments" as part of our everyday tasks anyway. For example, can you use the ride-on mower on the tees or are they too wet and you have to use the hand mower? You have looked at the situation and decided that it would be wisest and safest if you used the hand mower. With that decided you then realise that you have got to wear your safety boots with steel toe caps etc. This is all part of the process of risk assessing but without actually writing it down and recording it.



So in order to meet the legislative requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations request for risk assessments, you firstly have to identify all the hazards that you will encounter. This process can be made more manageable if the task or work area is broken down into stages eg.

WHAT

- is happening
- materials are in use
- is the effect on golfers, fellow employees, the environment
- legislation is in force

WHO

- is doing the job
- is exposed to the risk
- else could be affected
- is supervising the task

WHERE

- is the activity located
- are the instructions
- do waste materials go

WHEN

- is work/task carried out
- was task last carried out
- were procedures reviewed/updated
- else could task be carried out

WHY

- is task/activity being performed
- is exposure possible/risk uncontrolled
- is exposure not controlled at source

HOW

- is hazard controlled
- can exposure occur
- may people be affected.

This procedure requires a physical examination of the work area and activity and can often be sufficient to identify the majority of the hazards that you will encounter in your work.

Once the hazards have been identified we must then look at the second part of the risk assessment process, actually assessing the outcome and what its severity will be. We will look at this next month.

■ For further information on training courses and consultancy contact ATB-Landbase Training Services (Jean John on 01282 617466 or Tony Rees on 01686 622799).

NEW PRODUCTS

A valuable addition

Launched at the Saltex exhibition, Mascot Magnet from Rigby Taylor should prove a valuable addition to the range of products available to today's greenkeepers and groundsmen.

Iron products in various forms have been used for many years, in some cases to correct iron deficiencies, but on many occasions to produce an even dark green sward when otherwise the grass would look sickly and yellow. The continual use, however, of traditional ferrous sulphate (sulphate of iron) can lead to problems with "black layer", blackening, iron pan formation, reduced root growth and corrosion of spray equipment.

Mascot Magnet has none of these drawbacks and will produce a beautiful green sward even during periods of negligible turf growth. Mascot Magnet has therefore all the advantages of traditional iron treatments but none of the disadvantages!

Mascot Magnet utilises a mixture of high purity, biologically active iron chelates plus a leaf penetrant. The addition of a leaf penetrant system enables very efficient movement of the iron chelate through the turf-grass foliage in addition to uptake via the root system. Mascot Magnet will not only produce rapid and long lasting "green-up" of turfgrasses, even during cool autumn/winter conditions, but will also correct iron deficiency under alkaline and acidic conditions.

"The product was originally developed for the Spanish market where the soils in many areas have high pH levels," said Clive Williams, Marketing Director for Rigby Taylor Ltd, "but when the performance had been confirmed by an independent trials programme at ASTARA (Aberystwyth Sports Turf and Amenity Research Association) we realised that there was a substantial market for this product all over Europe.

"Groundsmen and greenkeepers faced with television coverage particularly in the autumn and winter will find this product invaluable," concluded Mr Williams.

Power packed

The new Jacobsen LF135 Turbo features a powerful, 35-horsepower, fuel efficient, turbo-charged Kubota diesel engine. That turbo power goes straight to heavy duty, seven inch diameter reels to tackle tough



warm season turf, wet conditions or hilly terrain. For additional traction and handling, the easy to engage mow switch gets automatic four-wheel drive.

More powerful features include the hydraulic oil monitor, alarm horn and the high-back, contoured suspension seat that reduces operator fatigue.

For more information Tel: 01536 417777.

Cleaner sweep

Spaldings has introduced a range of replacement brushes to fit most leading makes of yard sweeper.

The brushes are available in both heavy duty steel and nylon options and regular replacement of brushes ensures maximum sweeping efficiency.

The products can be ordered under Spaldings product numbers 2600 for steel and 2601 for plastic and are priced at £3.99 each.

For further information Tel: 01522 500600.