

Ken Richardson looks forward to this year's autumn training courses and reminds Course Managers of their responsibilities for reducing workplace stress.



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For details, please contact Ken Richardson on 01347 833800 or via ken@bigga.co.uk

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Many members wonder what they get for their membership fee each year. On average, we spend £25 per member on Education and Training, including: Regional Training Courses, the National Education Conference and Workshops, BTME/Clubhouse Seminars, Regional Conferences, Field Guides, Posters, Lending Library, Manuals, Videos, CD ROMS, DVD, Higher Education Scholarships and Refund of Fees. We have almost completed the planning of this Autumn's Regional Training Courses and places are available on the following:

28 & 29 October	Essential Management Skills	Sunningdale Park Conference Centre
29 & 30 October	Basic Computer Skills	Newark Golf Club
4 & 5 November	Next Steps in Management Skills	Beedles Lake Golf Club
11 November	Fire Safety and Manual Handling	Pennard Golf Club
25 & 26 November	Basic Computer Skills	BIGGA House

Each one-day course costs BIGGA members just £30 + VAT (35.25) and each two-day course costs £60 + VAT (£70.50). As the actual cost of staging a one-day course is £80 plus VAT and £160 for a two-day course, members can gain a subsidy worth more than their membership fee by attending just one day of training.

Courses in Tractor Driving, Risk Assessment, Presentation Skills, Abrasive Wheels and Chainsaw Operation are being held this autumn, however, they are already sold out.

More courses are being planned for the Spring of 2004, including, Tractor Driving, Further Computer Skills, Risk and COSHH Assessments, Budgets and Finance. Watch out for details of these and other courses in future editions of Greenkeeper International.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

The Health and Safety Executive treat hazards that lead to stress related illnesses in the same way as hazards leading to physical injury. Major changes in Health and Safety Law have made it easier for employees to take an employer to an Industrial Tribunal for stress related issues and, since stress can be caused by depression, a condition covered by the Disability Discrimination Act, there is no limit to the damages that can be paid out.

Workplace stress is of increasing concern and it has been estimated that stress related illnesses are responsible for more absenteeism from work than any other cause. However, due to the stigma associated with reporting stress, there has been a high degree of under-reporting. This is set to change and golf club managers need to analyse the risks to health and safety caused by stress. Many may think that there is nothing stressful about being a greenkeeper as they work outside in the fresh air and have very little responsibility. Anyone who thinks that is wrong and the problems that have been shown to lead to stress can be applied to greenkeeping and golf course management as well as many other jobs.

How many of you recognise some or all of the following as being a problem at your golf club:

- Boring or repetitive work or too little to do
- Too much to do in too little time
- Too little training for the job
- Too much training for the job
- Confusion about roles

- Having responsibility for others
- Poor working relationships
- Bullying, racial or sexual harassment
- Inflexible work routines
- Physical danger
- Poor working conditions
- Lack of communication
- Lack of support for personal development
- Blame culture when things go wrong

Golf Course Managers and Golf Club Management must implement strategies to control or remove these risks. Some are easy to put right by training. For example by providing training when and where necessary and increasing the scope of jobs for those already trained. Change the way in which jobs are done giving workers more variety of tasks. Avoid bullying and/or abuse.

I am sure that many of you will say 'it's yet another set of rules that meddle in affairs that are not the concern of Government' but as with all Health and Safety, reducing stress is a matter of common sense. Think about your club and reduce the risk.

Further information can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm from the HSE.

Tony Smith, Course Manager at Teeside Golf Club will be presenting a seminar on Stress in the Workplace on the Continue to Learn Programme on Wednesday 21 January 2004.