

Are you managing your Health and Safety using a Maintenance Plan?

Tutorial Eleven

How many of us have had what we call a near miss, an incident where there is potential for injury but none occurs? How many of us report the near miss to the Manager and the club investigates it?

I recently visited a club where a vehicle engine was left running while a member of the green staff jumped out the cab to collect a piece of equipment. The vehicle moved slightly knocking the member of green staff to the floor but he was uninjured. The member of green staff carried on as usual without reporting the incident and felt nothing more of it.

What went wrong at the club?

- The member of green staff was unaware of a near miss definition.
- The member of green staff had no written or verbal instructions on reporting near misses.
- The Health and Safety policy made no reference to near misses.
- The club management were unaware of learning lessons or carrying out investigations.
- Procedures and training should have been put in place to avoid this near miss happening again where the member of staff may have been injured.

Good health and safety management is about knowing the daily, weekly, monthly and yearly requirements of the club, and ensuring you have in place a system for achieving all of the requirements. A lot is written nowadays about managing health and safety but very little is written as to why and the good reasons for it. I will explain.

Good health and safety management is all about preventing accidents and illness to employees, golfers and visitors to your establishment. Health and safety

management is not about generating endless heaps of paper and endless amounts of checklists that will put you off the real tasks in hand.

A good Maintenance plan is presently operated by many clubs and has taken much of the burden of health and safety work from the club and Secretary/Head Greenkeeper. The plan does not and will not remove any of the responsibility but it does ensure that work gets completed and information stays right up to date.

The plan works in two main stages:

- To ensure the club is in full compliance with UK and EU Legislation.
- To ensure all documentation, procedures, risk assessments and systems remain up to date.

Developing your own system or subscribing to a proprietary Maintenance Plan is the easiest way of ensuring your club stays fully compliant with the laws and that Health and Safety becomes a core value in your club operations.

A Maintenance Plan will encompass the following key elements:

- Health and Safety Audit annually.
- Update to the Health and Safety Policy annually.
- Updates of the Risk Assessments regularly.
- Regular Legislation Update notifications.
- Annually updates of the Safe Working Practices/Procedures.

To find out more please look at www.safegolfplan.com or call us on 0208 905 7552; email: info@haztekinternational.com

Tip of the Month

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COMMUNICATION... COMMUNICATION... COMMUNICATION...

In much the same vein as when thinking of buying a home, 'location' is of paramount importance and I believe the same importance should be given to communication in golf course management.

I realise that there are many Managers already using two way radios, I apologise for spouting on about something you already know. For Managers that haven't thought of this form of communication it is well worth considering.

The benefits of being in complete contact with your staff at all times is immeasurable. There are also Health and Safety issues, such as lone workers needing to be able to contact someone in case of an accident. Maybe a machine has broken down and is stranded out on the golf course and

a simple call on the radio can summon the mechanic to the rescue. Radios are a useful tool to monitor progress of specific tasks out on the course without the need to be there in person.

Communication between your staff helps in a more productive and efficient work force (don't worry you can monitor all conversations). The list goes on and on.

No annual licences are needed for most models, they can be bought from most catalogue outlets and the one off cost is reasonable too. For just £50 you can buy a pair of two way radios with battery chargers and you're all set to go.

I am convinced that once you start to use them you won't believe how you managed without them before.

Do you have a tip that has helped you in your day-to-day work on the golf course? If so, why not share it with other greenkeepers. Please send any tips you feel would benefit your fellow readers to us either by post at BIGGA HOUSE or by email to gareth@bigga.co.uk.