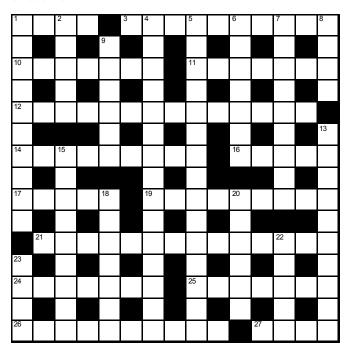


In the Shed

Greenkeeper International brings you 'In the Shed', a puzzle page to keep you entertained when the weather forces you in or for when times are slow.

CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Make way for pedestrians? (4)
- 3 Time's starting point? (3,4,3)
- 10 Belgian city on the river Scheldt (7)
- 11 Not equipped with weapons (7)
- 12 Futile pursuit of something unattainable (4-5,5)
- 14 In the early days of rail transport, a term for a locomotive (4,5)
- 16 Reject something with contempt (5)
- 17 Blows hard and noisily (5)
- 19 Person or situation which is potentially explosive (6-3)
- 21 Gambling game of Spanish origin (5-4,5)
- 24 Document which confers e.g. university degree (7)
- 25 Slender tower with balconies (7)
- 26 Mostly poisonous plant of the Solanum genus (10)
- 27 Dull noise of impact (4)

Down

- 1 Literary figure such as Brendan Behan, Bertolt Brecht etc. (10)
- 2 Essential (5)
- 4 Ethical affirmation of the medical profession (11,4)
- 5 ITV's home camcorder compilation programme (5,4,6)
- 6 Indigenous Americans resettled in Oklahoma (7)
- 7 Something that disappoints after high expectations (4,5)
- 8 Put things in order (4)
- 9 Distance from start to finish (6)
- 13 Out of the blue (10)
- 15 Of clothing, made in standard size (3-3-3)
- 18 Make certain, ensure (3,2,2)
- 20 Expensive white fur obtained from type of weasel (6)
- 22 Compass point at 0 or 360 degrees (5)
- 23 Supreme god of Norse mythology (4)

QUICK NINE-HOLE QUIZ

- 1. Which country did cricketer Ian Redpath play for?
- 2. Who scored England's second goal in the 1966 World Cup Final?
- 3. In which sport do you have to stand behind the 'oche'?
- 4. In which sport would you compete for the Davis Cup?
- 5. American Football is played to which set of rules?
- 6. Venus Williams beat which player to win the Wimbledon singles title in 2007?
- 7. Which Briton won his first ever Grand Prix in Hungary in 2006?
- 8. Which jockey rode Comply or Die to Grand National success this year?
- 9. Which England player scored his maiden Test fifty on his home ground against New Zealand in 2008?

MONSTER SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 4x4 box contains the numbers 1 to 9 and the letters A,B and C.

	9	Ε		1			4			3	D	0	В	2	
7			3			2	9	0	F		В	Ε			D
5			В	7		Α	3				8		4		
6				O		D	Ε				1		5		
	Α	1	6	F					D			8	9		Е
			Е				8			В					Α
		ם		В	ш	5		1	9	2		O			
	F	5			7	С				0	Е				6
Ε				8	1				С	D			6	Α	
Ε			С	8	1	В	2		C E	D 6	Α		6 1	Α	
E 3			С	8	<u> </u>	В	2	В	-	<u> </u>	Α	4	_	Α	
		В	C 1	8	4	B 7	2	В	-	<u> </u>	A 9	4 F	_	A E	
3		B 6		4	4		2	B 2	-	<u> </u>		-	1		0
3					4		2		Е	<u> </u>	9	-	1		0 4
3		6		4	4		2 B	2	E 3	<u> </u>	9	F	1		-

SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 9 box shape contains the numbers $\bf 1$ to 9.

		6				3	
1	3			7			8
8				2		1	6
			7		3		
	6		5	8		4	
		9		4			
6	2		1				9
7			4			2	5
	4				8		



Maintaining tees and driving practice areas all year round to a high standard is an increasing problem faced by greenkeepers and course managers up and down the country. This problem is now being tackled head on by a number of golf clubs across Essex who have decided on a synthetic solution to their problem. Chris Bassett recently visited three golf clubs in Essex to find out how this problem is being solved.

Members and visitors to Rochford Hundred, Ballards Gore and Cannons Brook golf courses in Essex, are now benefiting from a major upgrading of their winter tees following the installation of over 40 tees, all supplied by Kent firm Active Leisure Contracts.

The first course in the region to have Active Leisure's Tee Turf installed some four years ago was Rochford Hundred Golf Club. Rochford Hundred is definitely a unique club in more than one way. The term 'hundred' was an area to raise 100 men in case of strife, but this is not the complete definition. In King Edgar's reign in 973AD, areas of land were divided into 'hundreds' consisting of several villages controlled by 100 men.

In 1896 the club moved from Southchurch to the meadows of Rochford Hall. In 1924 James Braid and J.H.Taylor, together with the renowned golf course architect Frederick Hawtree were invited to redesign the course. Additional land was then obtained raising the acreage to 98 and the end result is largely the course that is played on today - 6,300 yards from the white tee's compared with the previous 4,010 yards.

The decision to have artificial tees installed came from Course Manager, David Rand, who was intrigued by the idea of having a low maintenance tee option during the winter allowing players to play all year round.

"We've learnt as we've gone along" commented

David, "We've had no problems with the flat tees but the raised tees have sunk a little as they have been built with railway sleepers surrounding the area, but that was nothing to do with the mat itself, just how we built the platform."

David continued: "As long as you maintain them - fill them up with infill from time to time, ensure that they are regularly brushed and treat the occasional weed, then they are absolutely fine."

David currently has eight artificial tees and if he could, would have a full 18 installed. "I'm not quite sure on the actual life span of the tees, but they seem absolutely fine after four years - in fact they just get better the longer they've been here! If we could, I'd like to have all 18 holes with the artificial tee. It would certainly lighten the load on our natural tees during the winter and help keep all holes open during the wetter months.'

It was in fact the success of this course that led to the nearby Ballards Gore club installing the same system. Ballards Gore Golf Club is an 18 hole course situated two miles from Rochford and is set in 100 acres of Essex countryside. Being one of the longest courses in Essex, 6974 yards with a par of 73, the course offers a truly impressionable and challenging game of golf. The club, now 18 years old, was recently bought by Julian Innell and a huge investment made in upgrading all aspects of the course.

One major problem faced by the club is that the course was built on a clay soil so drainage has always been poor during the wetter months making it difficult to keep tees open all year round. "We wanted to give golfers as good a surface as they could possibly play off throughout the year - both in the dry summer months and in the wet winter months" commented lain Evans, the Club Secretary.

The decision was made to install artificial tees for all 18 holes giving full coverage on the course

and keeping members playing all year round. The first artificial tee was installed in January 2007. with the completion of installations in October the same year. Members then started playing off them from November 2007 in their entirety once they had had some time to 'settle in'.

"We wanted to give golfers the opportunity to play all year round which wasn't possible with natural tees" continued lain, "we looked at the different products available, but it wasn't until we spoke to some local clubs who had already installed the TeeTurf some time ago and then invited us to their club to look at how their tees were performing that we decided that TeeTurf was the right option for us. We then contacted ALC who were local to us and very informative."

General feedback from both the greenkeepers and players has been very positive. The greenkeepers time is now concentrated on making sure that the rest of the course is in tip-top condition as no high maintenance of the tees is needed. The only maintenance needed is to make sure that infill levels of sand and rubber crumb are kept topped-up and to ensure that no weeds are growing within the surface. "The feedback that we've received back from our members is that the new tees are great. They accept tee pegs and also allow balls to be played directly off the surface. The mat actually reacts very similar to that of a natural tee if you take a divot. However, members have said that they prefer playing on them once they have been 'worn in' slightly which only takes a little time for the fibres to flatten off" commented lain.

The last course visited was Canons Brook. Situated within 112 acres of mature rolling countryside, the 18 hole, 6769 yard, par 73 championship course makes excellent use of the surrounding landscape and its numerous natural and man-made hazards and beautiful features. Designed by the legendry Sir Henry Cotton, whose





philosophy was to create a championship course with very little rough, but incorporating many bunkers and large undulating greens and matured over 40 years, it presents a truly engaging golf experience with lots of variety.

Mark Paxton, the Course Manager, first became aware of the artificial tees at Dyrham Park Golf Club where he previously worked before become Course Manager at Canons Brook. Dyrham Park had installed a similar product from Huxley Golf to Active Leisure's TeeTurf. When Mark became Course Manager at Canons Brook and the need for artificial tees arose, he instantly thought back to his days at Dyrham Park. He made some enquiries and then looked around at similar products. After coming across TeeTurf, he contacted Active Leisure Contracts for a sample and finding the price more competitive to other suppliers, the decision was made after funding from the club via its members was made.

"We made the tees raised where possible" commented Mark "This reduces debris being brought onto them by machine wheels, grass clippings etc. It's also easier to level them up rather than putting them into the ground which isn't level. Some tees have been positioned in front of the natural tees as you couldn't have a raised 'box. For example, our 15th hole tee has been sunk into the ground so there is no obstruction to golfers. Where we can build frames and have raised tees, we have. Aesthetically, the raised tees look better although it is cheaper to set them into the ground."

Used when the weather conditions become cooler, slowing down the grass growth and therefore unable to repair, the artificial tees come into their own. "Ideally, because the artificial tees are so good, golfers can come off the natural tees while the tee grass is still growing and that then gives them enough time to start to regenerate before the winter. What happened in the past was that

we left players playing on the natural tees as long as we could which was obviously damaging the grass during the wetter months, causing us to be unable to repair the divots. Come spring when the weather starts to improve, we carried out our renovation programme and the tees just didn't have enough time to recover. The beauty about using the Tee Turf is that we ensure players come off the natural tees earlier while there is still growth which gives the greenkeepers more time to make sure the perfect tee is ready for spring."

Before the club had TeeTurf, the greenkeepers would make sure that golfers used a traditional winter tee 1m x 1m in size. Players didn't like playing off them, so inevitably they wouldn't be used and left on the natural tees as long as possibly which gave the club problems with renovation works later on.

"That was one reason why I changed all the short holes first as they take the most wear with divots being knocked out. Players come off the natural tees and use the artificial ones first. We've kept the artificial tees as close to the yardage as possible so there is no disadvantage using them. The idea is once we've installed artificial tees at all the holes, we'd have a measured new course for the winter months, a new course that players can still run competitions on all year round."

Normally as soon as players come off the natural tees, the competitions are finished for the year, as the previous winter tees shortened the yardage of the course by around 100 yards. This has seen approximately 60 new members joining the club during the winter.

"We get a lot of positive comments from the players that they love playing on them as they can continue to play golf during the wetter winter months. Because of the success that we've had, it's my idea to have a full 18 artificial tees."

Active Leisure Contracts have seen a significant increase in sales of all weather tees over the last

few years. "TeeTurf offers a solution to courses that suffer with heavy or wet conditions that would normally mean closure during the wetter months" says Andrew Baylis, MD of ALC, "maintenance costs will also be reduced while still providing a tee which is popular with players."

While some companies continue to sell artificial turf as a 'no maintenance' alternative to natural turf, this is not strictly true. Yes they are low maintenance, but that's not exactly no maintenance is it? Mark Paxton explains: "We've never had any problems with the actual TeeTurf material or with the tee 'pulling up' once it has been down - in fact, the longer it has been down, the better it seems to get. The only maintenance that we have to carry out is that we ensure that the infill is always topped up. We also get a problem with weeds on some of the tees which are positioned close to the natural tees which are irrigated. Obviously, grass clippings get on to the tee and because they are moist, it's ideal breeding conditions. We've started to use a product called 'Casoron G' from Scotts Professional which is a granule residual weed killer. We just spread the granules all over the tee which kills all of the grass off."

Available material only or installed in sizes to suit most requirements, TeeTurf is designed for permanent installations allowing all year round use, as a replacement to natural tees in shaded and wet locations or as a seasonal alternative to grass tees to help spread wear and tear and reduce maintenance costs.

For further information, please contact: 01474 364 320 or visit www.teeturf.com



Fix the odds in your favour

The demands being placed on today's greenkeepers and groundstaff are greater than ever.

And so you need products and support you can depend on. Products that take away the guesswork and deliver consistent results.

At Rufford, we don't leave construction and maintenance materials to chance. Our product range has evolved from the extensive research and development work of an in-house laboratory that's part of the USGA Proficiency Testing Programme.



www.rufford.com rootzones, top dressings, bunker sands, sands, divot mixes, sales@rufford.com or 0845 357 3030 screened soils, gravels, tree soils,play sands, environmental products



Only genuine Toro filters will give the performance you've come to expect.

Many lookalike air and oil filters fail to meet Toro standards for form, fit and function.

So get one that's not quite the part, and you'll be replacing it early and often. It could even damage your Toro equipment and affect machine performance.

It's how we design and make our filters - with quality materials and advanced technology - that makes them superior to lookalike parts.

Now with our competitive prices and 24-hour delivery service – straight to your door, if you wish – there's absolutely no need for imitations anymore.

Afterall, you didn't compromise when you chose your Toro. So give it the care it deserves.

And remember, no one can look after your Toro better than your local, specialist Toro dealer or service centre. So contact yours today.

For your copy of the new Toro Performance Parts Catalogue, call 01480 226845 now.



TORO Commercial, Irrigation and Consumer Products are distributed by Lely (UK) Limited St Neots, Cambridgeshire PE19 1QH. Tel: 01480 226800 Email: toro.parts.uk@lely.com TORO Commercial and Irrigation Products are distributed by Lely Ireland Limited, Kilboggin Nurney, Co. Kildare. Tel: 00 353 (0)45 526170 Email: turfcaresales.ie@lely.com www.lely.com www.toro.com



NEW PRODUCTS

Saltex New Products

DESTROYS ALGAE

New product, Bioaktiv, manufactured in Germany was developed some 14 years ago by the collaboration of a homoeopathist and an engineer who invented a device which generates high oscillations in a chamber (accumulator) which causes the oxygen in the chamber to be separated and transferred to calcium place under the chamber.

When introduced into ponds and lakes through a medium of fresh water, Bioaktiv provides oxygen and energy at the bottom of the pond or lake and revitalises the water thus clearing it of algae and simple weed.

0116 2592590 email: ewibio@tiscali.co.uk

NEW HYDROSEEDERS

New to the UK are two hydroseeders from RMB Hydroseeding.

A 3000 litre skid mounted machine and a 1200 litre compact steel tank hyrdroseeder will compliment the companies existing fleet.

01453 511365 visit: www.hydroseeding.co.uk

COST EFFECTIVE SOLUTION

Charterhouse Turf Machinery has launched the Verti-Top Vac, offering groundsmen a new, cost effective solution for cleaning and maintaining sand and rubber infill synthetic sports surfaces. A unique vacuum system removes even fine particles, giving a cleaner, safer surface.

 01428 661222 www.charterhouseturfmachinery.co.uk



VERTICUTTING NEEDS REDUCED

New to the Campey Turfcare range is the Turfworks GreensTriplex Brush.

Daily brushing of greens increases smoothness for a true ball roll, while reducing grain and the need for frequent verticutting. The fully adjustable brush head can be set to a 'lock position' which allows normal triplex use without removing the brush, and its synthetic bristles resist wear and environmental degradation. Durable steel construction and powder coat to the frame makes for longer life.

01260 224568
 www.campeyturfcare.com



NEW COMPACT TRACTORS

Tractors remain at the heart of New Holland's expertise, and a new series of compacts will took centre stage at Saltex. The Boomer series is in the 21-45hp bracket that New Holland has made its own with high tech features and renowned reliability, and the latest additions will enhance that reputation.

01268 292183 www.newholland.com

Allett Mowers is now using tungsten carbide tipped blades on three of the interchangeable cartridge heads available for the Allett C20, C24 and C34 machines.

WEAR RATE AND DOWNTIME CUT

The blades are being fitted as standard to the powered scarifier and verticutter heads offered for the three Allett C-Range models and also to the powered groomer unit available as an option on the 10-bladed cutting unit for C20 and C24 mowers and for the 20in and 24in Allett Tournament fine-cut mowers.

www.allett.co.uk





Saltex New Products

LINE MARKING PAINT REDUCES CARBON FOOTPRINT

Vitax Amenity introduces Supa Stadia Echo, a highly concentrated, long lasting line-marking paint, previously only available to selected export customers.

Supa Stadia Echo has a free flowing formulation, which means that it can be used with high water volumes, but its highly concentrated form saves the use of oil for both transportation and container

Designed to deliver SupaStadia Echo is the new Topline Xcel Line Marker, a unique machine, which allows turf managers to change their paint dilution on the move.

01530 510060 www.vitax.co.uk



SURFACE CLEANER AND MOSS DETERRENT

Cleanmax, a hard surface cleaner and moss deterrent, is a blend of organic acids and surfactants that loosen deposits acting as a safe cleaner for all types of hard surfaces. Apply using spraying equipment when no rain is expected and should be allowed to dry thoroughly. If there is significant moss cover the area may need to be brushed, hosed or pressure washed to remove dead vegative matter after a couple of days.

www.avoncrop-amenity.com www.aitkens.co.uk

NEW TUFFA PRODUCTS SAVE FUEL AND

Petrol and diesel are too valuable to waste through poor handling and storage. On top of that clearing up spills is costly and could run foul of environmental regulations. Tuffa has launched new products to keep oil under control.

Storing or moving petrol, or diesel, for small vehicles, or uses like mowers, is often a problem. Filling cans and carrying them in cars or vans is not safe and can invalidate insurance cover. The new Tuffa Petrol Caddy 200 litre steel bunded and fireproofed tank meets this problem.

For larger storage the Easi-fill fuel station range, in capacities from 1350 litres to 15,000 litres, gives users complete control over dispensing and filling.

0 08707 567700 www.tuffa.co.uk



MULCHING MOWER

Tracmaster has launched the BCS Professional Mulching mower. The 80cm Mulching Deck offers outstanding performance and is the ideal machine for heavy-duty cutting and clearing tasks on even the most difficult terrain. For safety and ease of operation, the machine offers an automatic blade brake and two pivoting castor wheels at the front which can be easily retracted.

www.tracmaster.co.uk 01444 247689

WET WALKING SURFACES CAUSE NASTY **INJURIES**

Gripclad provides a hardwearing long term solutions to golf clubs to help eliminate the risk of slipping on sleepers, footbridges, viewing platforms, bunker steps, gangways, walkways, ramps and even the mower foot plates.

Gripclad's anti-slip material includes the new high grade aluminium oxide aggregate for extra durable surfaces and longer product life. It is resistant to metal and rubber spikes, oil, grease, frost, chemicals, impact, and all weathers.

It can be fixed down onto wood, concrete, metal, marble, terrazzo, vinyl, rubber or open grate etc and one important point, it offers peace of mind.

www.gripclad.com



THE HIRE SUPPLY COMPANY

The Hire Supply Company has launched two innovative new groundscare products - the unique Hawk 13hp Stump Grinder and the Barreto Tracked Trencher.

The Barreto tracked trencher is the smallest dedicated tracked trencher currently on the market. It gives more traction, lower ground pressure and provides extra steerability, which is ideal for the wet UK climate.

At 30" wide, the Hawk stump grinder is narrower than HSC's previous models. In addition, its engine is at an offset angle to the blade, which allows the machine to dig in deeper without tipping the engine to such an angle so that it starves of oil and seizes.

www.thehiresupplycompany.co.uk

NEW RENTAL ADDED

In a continuing purchasing drive as Liebherr-Rental Limited grows and augments its versatile and specialist rental fleet, the company has now added a Seppi 150 BMS Mulcher from distributors Lamberhurst Engineering.

The Seppi 150 BMS is a well-proven excavator attachment designed for fast and efficient brush clearance in forestry plantations, road and rail embankments and, in fact, anywhere that requires thick undergrowth to be removed. It is the largest in a range of three attachments with a cutting width of 1500mm and features a fixed knife rotor.

08456 121 141 www.lameng.com

NEW RANGE

Stihl has launched an extensive new range of chainsaws, brushcutters and groundscare tools along with new products and innovations at Saltex this year. New products include innovative chainsaws and grass trimmers, professional class leaf blowers and vacuums plus an enhanced choice of hedge trimmers introduced earlier this year. From the Group's Viking brand, exciting developments include a new range of lawn tractors arriving next year, plus more rotary rollers and a new addition to its professional lawn mower range.

www.stihl.co.uk 0800 137574

NEW PRODUCT TRIO

DJ Turfcare has launched three new products.

The Turfsaver is a new machine from the U.S. that de-thatches and overseeds (or fertilises) in one compact unit ideal for contractors and groundsmen.

Recovery is from Viano's organic range of fertilisers and restores damaged turf for the winter months, containing Humifirst - derived from organic manure - and magnesium for maintaining grass colour. New to the UK from Belgium.

The third launch is the Elephant's Trunk hedgetrimmer from Belgium, set to transform the working day of contract gardeners and groundstaff.

01483 200976 www.djturfcare.co.uk



GOOD THINGS COME IN FOUR

Italian creator Brogi Loriano has developed a new head with four chains, exclusively sold in the United Kingdom by Lamberhurst Engineering.

The Brogio 4 was created following the many requests of professional operators who wanted to cut and crush shrubs with a larger diameter than 1.5cm, who up until now were working with blades and other accessories.

08456 121 141 www.brogio.co.uk





NEW WOODCHIPPER

Bobcat has launched the new 8B Woodchipper attachment for the company's skid-steer, compact tracked and all-wheel steer loader ranges. The new 8B Woodchipper provides a simple method for reducing wood waste and grinds branches and other tree components, reducing their volume by a factor of 10 to 1.







Saltex New Products

NEW PRODUCT HAS TOTAL EFFECT

Scotts Professional launched a new liquid iron. Effect Iron FE, the latest addition to the widely-used Greenmaster Liquids range, is suitable for use in golf, sports and lawn care.

Developed over three years of testing, the blend of complexed and chelated irons works rapidly providing genuine, plant-derived green-up within three hours. It also hardens and protects each blade of grass from within the plant without promoting excessive growth.

0871 220 5353 www.scottsprofessional.co.uk

REMOTE TREATS THE PARTS THAT OTHERS CANNOT REACH

Terrain Aeration has launched the new Remote Terralift machine, the lightest, smallest most manoeuvrable member of the Airforce fleet to date.

Pedestrian operated, 60 cms wide and weighing in at just 80 kilos, the Remote Terralift can be carried up steps, turned around tight corners and taken through the narrowest entrances with ease.

01449 673783 www.terrainaeration.co.uk

OUT FRONT MOWER

As the pressure increases on contractors to reduce costs year on year, JCB launches its first ever out front mower – the FM30 - to reduce costs and improve performance on a wide variety of mowing applications.

Purpose built for specialist grounds maintenance applications, it is rugged, productive and extremely versatile. Powered by a low vibration, low noise and low emission engine the new mower is cost effective, reliable and provides day long comfort for the operator to enhance productivity.

www.jcb.com

More Saltex products will be featured next month

DIVOT BAG

The Divot Bag is a simple solution to help keep fairways in top class condition and clubs across the world are realising the benefits. The divot Bag is provided by the club and sand buckets are placed at the first tee. Players fill their divot bag with a mix of sand and seed with the view to fill divots as they play.

The divot Bag comes in a range of colours and can be personalised with the club logo printed on the front.

07500957711 www.divotbag.com

NEW RANGE

A new range of STIHL handheld leaf blowers and vacuums were launched at Saltex this year.

The new '86 class' models feature no less than four of the companies latest technologies: a new engine with stratified scavenging, new long-life air filter system, new anti-vibration system and new simplified starting system – all designed to make work easier, more efficient and more economical too.

www.stihl.com

LARGEST BEAR CAT CHIPPER

The launch of the largest Bear Cat Chipper, the CH1238DH, was celebrated at this year's Saltex. Bear Cat dealers were keen to see the new 30.5cm (12") chipper in action, as well as catching up with ECHO staff on new products planned for 2009.

The new chipper is capable of reducing wood up to a diameter of 30.5cm (12") to fine chips using four, reversible, heat-treated steel chipper blades.

www.echo.com



Bear Car 30cm Chipper



Trilo for turfcare



Trilo have a range of quality high specification groundcare equipment which offers the complete solution for scarifying, mowing, spreading and blowing. Built to an extremely high standard, the wide choice of models and numerous options available ensures you can trust Trilo to make your job easier and more efficient. With 35 years' experience and a range of quality machinery, it's easy to see why Trilo is the world-leader in vacuum sweepers.









HIRE. SALES, PARTS & SERVICE

Trilo UK Ltd

Wadebridge Farm, Landwade, Exning, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7NE Tel: (01638) 720123 sales@trilo.co.uk www.trilo.co.uk





Online jobs go to

www.bigga.org.uk

For instant online advertising please contact

Kirstin on 01347 833 832

Part month £300

Full month £500

The website is updated regularly with new vacancies

Get online now!

HUMAN RESOURCES

BIGGA's Management Support series produced by Xact www.xact.uk.com



YOUR SKIN AND WORK

Your skin is sometimes considered as the largest organ in your body. It performs a wide variety of tasks;

- As a physical barrier to the outside world, protecting you from bumps and abrasions
- · As a barrier against infection
- · Preventing water loss from the body
- · Controlling the body temperature through sweat glands.

As with other parts of the body it is important to ensure that your skin is kept healthy otherwise it cannot perform the actions it is meant to and hence protect your overall health.

When the skin is damaged by chemicals or work related issues it shows various symptoms and a breakdown of its protective actions will occur, leading to itchiness, pain, infections and possibly disease.

The most common work related skin disease is contact dermatitis from either being in contact with chemicals, oils or constant immersion in water and detergents. Symptoms can develop up to 48hrs after being in contact with the materials. It is not infectious and cannot be passed from one person to another.

Symptoms can include:

- Redness
- Itching
- Swelling
- Blistering
- Flaking and cracking of the skin

The damaged skin is painful and is then more easily attacked by chemicals and infectious organisms.

Some individuals can develop allergic dermatitis from substances handled in the workplace e.g. the metals nickel and chromium which can be found in work equipment, cement and some of the cutting fluids which are used in sawing and drilling components.

Allergic reactions can occur instantaneously on exposure to certain substance or the may take years to build up. Substances handled on a daily basis without any effect may suddenly produce an adverse skin reaction. Once sensitised any further contact will produce an immediate reaction and in many cases these will grow in severity the more often exposure occurs. Some individuals eventually have to give up their chosen profession due to the allergic response being so strong following exposure to even minute amounts of the material they are allergic to.

Employers and managers of premises should brief their staff on the hazards of dermatitis and encourage self skin examination of vulnerable areas e.g. hands, forearms and areas which may come into contact with materials. Particular attention should be paid to items of jewellery e.g. rings, where chemicals may be trapped under the item and remain in contact with the skin over a longer period of time.

The HSE recommends steps to reduce the incidence of skin damage at work, APC.

Avoid - Can you use something less harmful, use it less often, or introduce controls to keep the skin away from the hazard

Protect – Issue protective equipment such as gloves.

Provide washing facilities, mild skin cleansing creams,
drying facilities of paper towels or hot air hand driers.

Wash your hands before eating and drinking. Hands
should be washed before and after wearing gloves

Where extensive wet work or handling of solvents is carried out, moisturise the skin often during the day, at least at the start and end of the working day.

Check – Workers should check their skin on a regular basis. Problems spotted early can generally be more easily cured and will lead to less pain and suffering.

Seek medical advice if you have any concerns regarding skin condition

Dermatitis will almost always require medical help to heal up. Topical creams and protecting the skin from further contact will be required to enable the skin to regain its normal state. Thereafter, as stated, greater care will be required to prevent a recurrence.

Occupational dermatitis is a reportable disease under Reporting of Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, RIDDOR. Failure to report is a criminal act and can lead to prosecution and fines.

