



# Under pressure

**If your School/Department uses pressure systems or equipment, or lab gases, cylinders and regulators, you may be audited in the next few months. The standards set for the audit will be the recently published Safety Guides (SG46 parts 2, 3 and 5).**

The purpose of the audit is to confirm that gas/pressure systems in use on campus are safe and that management controls meet legislative requirements.

The first phase of the audit (in March) will cover FMD,



who will be providing hands-on training. The first course will be piloted in June.

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## Recent accidents

**Slips, trips and falls are at the top of the statistics for causing serious injuries across the University in 2009/10.**

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- Working on a two step ladder, slipped, and banged right arm, resulting in a broken elbow.
- Slipped in overflow car park, resulting in a broken arm, ligament damage, and other injuries.
- Slipped whilst cleaning stairs, resulting in a broken arm.
- Tripped on kerb in car park and fell, causing a broken wrist.
- Tripped on a wad of straw and fell, resulting in broken arm.
- Slipped whilst carrying material downstairs, aggravated a pre-existing back injury and hit head.

**Not all of these injuries were foreseeable or preventable. But the severity of the injuries should encourage all of us to think about what we are doing, and how we are doing it. In some of these cases better working practices and greater awareness could have prevented someone being hurt.**

**Given the number of slip and trip accidents, H&SS have developed a slips and trips policy. This aims to raise awareness, encourage better housekeeping, and include slip resistance of flooring materials in the design brief when specifying new or refurbished facilities. The policy is with the University Health & Safety Committee for approval.**

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## PEEPs and fire refuges

Over the last two years the University has improved the facilities available to disabled people in the event of a significant fire in university buildings. This includes evacuation lifts in new buildings (ICMA, Henley Business School and the Hopkins Building). Fire refuges have been constructed in other buildings where disabled people can access upper floors, but where the existing passenger lifts cannot be used in an emergency.

A fire refuge is a place of relative safety where a person can wait for assistance, before being helped to a place of ultimate safety i.e. normally outside the building. Whilst waiting, they need to be protected from the possible effects of a fire. All of our refuges offer at least 30 minutes protection from fire and smoke.

Refuges are normally located within a fire protected stairwell. However, in some cases due to space restrictions in the stairwell, a refuge may be situated in a corridor. Every refuge has an emergency voice communication system. This is to enable people in the refuge to alert those managing the evacuation (typically the Evacuation Officer or fire service) that they need assistance, and for them to be reassured that this assistance will be forthcoming.

One of the new communication system boxes is shown left (red box) - these are linked to the fire panel within the building and to the Security Control Room.

Fire refuge with signage and communication system

H&SS are preparing a revised version of Safety Note 28 – Emergency Evacuation of Disabled People, which will be available in April. In addition we are planning a training package for staff who will be responsible for developing and producing Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs). We envisage that this will include School Disability Advisers (for students), managers, Area Health and Safety Co-ordinators and Building Managers.

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## New Safety Guides

**The following new Safety Guides have been published on H&SS web site:**

- SG46 Management and use of work equipment
- SG46 Part 2 Pressure systems
- SG46 Part 3 Gas safety
- SG46 Part 4 Local exhaust ventilation
- SG46 Part 5 Cryogenic gases
- SG46 Part 6 Woodworking and engineering workshop machines

**Health and Safety Services**  
Governance Directorate

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# University Health and Safety Policy

1.1.1 The University of Reading is committed to the health and safety of its staff, students and visitors.

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Professor Gordon Marshall  
Vice-Chancellor  
November 2009