

HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL NEWSLETTER

Leptospirosis / Weil's Disease

What is it and how might you catch it?

- Serious and sometimes fatal infection
- Transmitted to humans by contact with:
 - urine from infected rats or cattle or
 - contaminated water, such as in sewers, ditches, ponds and slow-flowing rivers, or anywhere where rats have been.
- The bacteria gets into your body through cuts, scratches and through the lining of the mouth, throat and eyes.



The disease starts as a flu-like illness with a persistent and severe headache. See your Doctor if you feel unwell after working near water, handling animals or working in an area where there may be rats. Tell the Doctor about your work.

How can you prevent it?

- Get rid of rats – don't touch them with unprotected hands.
- Keep sites clean to discourage rats. Empty bins regularly. Don't leave food lying around.
- Cover all cuts and broken skin with waterproof plasters before and during work. Wear protective clothing.
- Wash your hands after handling any animals, contaminated clothing or any other materials, and ALWAYS wash your hands before eating, drinking or smoking.
- Leptospirosis is much less severe if it is treated promptly, so see your Doctor straightaway.
- If you are diagnosed with Leptospirosis, tell your Employer.

PLANT & VEHICLE BASIC RULES

- Don't use unless trained and authorised to.
- Carry out pre-use checks. Report any defects.
- Obey site rules e.g. routes and one-way systems.
- Drive within speed limits and road conditions.
- Use parking brake when parked. Chock wheels if necessary.
- Do NOT leave keys in unattended vehicles / plant.
- Always wear a seat belt if one is fitted.
- Don't carry passengers unless the plant / vehicle is designed to do so.
- If walking or driving near any machine on site, always get the operator's attention and thumbs up before passing it.
- Dumper operators must completely dismount and stand clear of dumper before it is loaded.

Environmental Noise

- Stick to sites' working hours and time restrictions e.g. don't start up noisy plant before 8am.
- Discourage delivery/skip vehicles arriving before 8am.
- Correctly use and maintain compressors, generators, power tools, etc.
- Use on-site parking where possible – avoid parking in front of people's homes if you can.
- No radios on sites without written permission.
- Don't swear/shout/etc near residents or passers-by.
- Reduce noise however you can – e.g. use a hydraulic block splitter rather than a cut-off saw to cut blocks.
- When driving, do so considerately and avoid over-revving.

Environmental Dust

- Maintain a high standard of housekeeping on site.
- Cover wagons/skips before they leave site.
- Where provided, use wheel-washing facilities.
- Damp down stockpiles and unmade haul roads, and keep other roads clean using road sweepers.
- Only use tools designed to minimise dust – e.g. tools with water suppression or vacuum attachments.
- Avoid dry brushing where possible – wet surfaces before sweeping.
- Promptly and properly dispose of materials – e.g. don't leave open/empty bags of cement or fine sand lying around.
- Cover or dampen skips and rubble piles.

Wherever we work there are likely to be neighbours in some form. We have a legal duty under the Environmental Protection Act to minimise nuisances such as noise and dust.