

NEWSLETTER

Issue 16 - December 2022

red rock
electrical

L I M I T E D

Message from the MD...

I was really pleased whilst reviewing the driving figures for the month of October. There was a 32% drop in registered speeding exceedances reported via the company trackers. Fleet average was 15.8 miles between exceedances, the best we've had all year. For comparison the lowest recorded this year was in February at 9 miles. I am hopeful it's an accurate sign of improvement throughout the company, so thank you to everyone for your big efforts in helping to reduce these figures. I didn't see a huge translation to improvements in fuel economy however, which suggests driving style hasn't changed much. Fuel costs continue to remain high so please can everyone stay mindful of this.

Share vehicles whenever possible, drive efficiently and as always, only use the vans for essential work-related trips.

I want to give a special mention to Colm McGuinness and Jack Cutting who put on the waders and jumped into the Dawlish Brook River to help repair the lights. You were good sports and Dawlish Town Council were very grateful for your help in getting the lights ready for winter and the big switch on in November.

Best wishes, Matt



The Brook River, Dawlish

USING LADDERS SAFELY

Falls from ladders account for around 40% of all falls from height in the UK each year. Working at height falls still remain the most common kind of workplace fatality, accounting for around a quarter of all worker deaths and 8% of all non-fatal injuries.

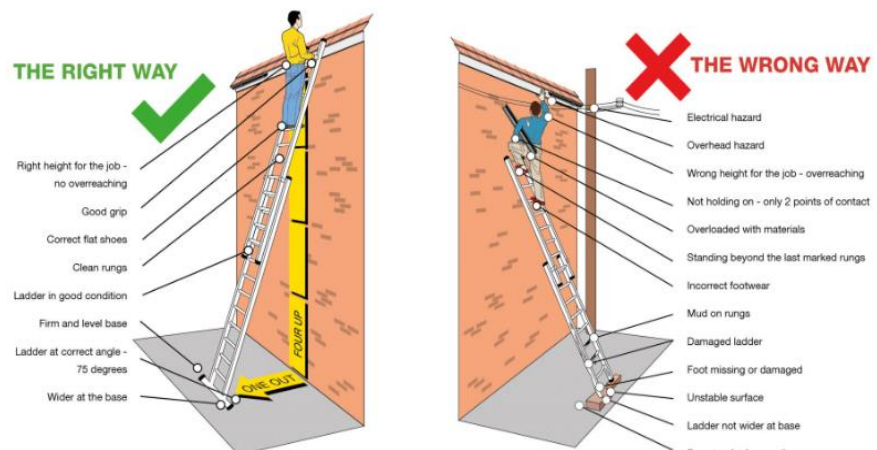
Ladders and stepladders are not banned under health and safety law. In fact, they can be a sensible and practical option for low-risk, short-duration tasks. It is important however that operators make sure they select the correct type of ladders and know how to use them safely. The law calls for a sensible, proportionate approach to managing risk. Ladders can be used for work at height when an assessment of the risk for carrying out a task has shown that using equipment offering a higher level of fall protection is not justified because of the low risk and short duration of use, or there are existing workplace features which cannot be altered. As a guide, if your task would require staying up a leaning ladder or stepladder for more than 30 minutes at a time, it is recommended you use alternative equipment. You should only use ladders in situations where they can be used safely e.g., where the ladder will be level and stable, and can be secured where it is reasonably practicable to do so.

Many of our clients have begun to request that site workers have specialist training on the safe use of ladders and stepladders. Some are even going the extra mile and will issue red cards next year, if anyone without a valid certificate and the appropriate permit is found to be using a ladder on their sites.

We have therefore acquired the services of HSS to provide in-house training to **red rock** site employees. The training will provide our delegates with the knowledge required to work safely with ladders and step ladders in the course of their daily duties. Training will also give a clear understanding of the current legislation. This Ladder Association course is recognised by The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) as the leading safety training when working with ladders. Successful completion of this course will result in the issuing of a Ladder Association Ladder User's ID card and Certificate of Training, valid for 5 years.

Ladders are an everyday tool in workplaces across the world. They're a versatile and vital piece of equipment, that can be used for a whole range of jobs. But too many people still fall from ladders. We want everyone who climbs a ladder to come back down safely.

Training will take place at Mead House on Monday 19th December 2022.



MONEY SAVING TIPS THIS WINTER

The cost of living has been increasing across the UK since early 2021. The annual rate of inflation reached 10.1% in September 2022. Increasing energy bills are set to leave many out of pocket. Here are some tips which may help you save money this winter.

Turn your central heating down by just 1 degree. British Gas says dropping the temperature by one degree could save £115 a year for the typical average home and you probably won't even notice a difference. According to The World Health Organisation, 18 degrees is enough for healthy adults. So, stick a jumper on and turn the thermostat down.

Don't overfill the kettle. Be conscious when making a cuppa. Just boil the amount of water you need and you will save energy and money over time. I.e., If you are only making one cup of tea, don't fill the kettle to the top.

Batch cook your lunch. Soups, stews and casseroles make great winter lunches and they can all be made in bulk. Preparing portions for each day has the potential for huge savings. So, skip the supermarket meal deals and save money by batch cooking.

Switch things off. Leaving computers and other electrical equipment running when you are not using them can add pennies to your energy bills. Switching devices off instead of leaving them on standby is a good idea. The Energy Saving Trust says this can save you £65 a year.

Take short showers. Some of us might prefer a long soak in the bath, but swapping to a quick shower can save you money on your bills. A 5-minute shower is likely to use 60 litres of hot water versus the 80 litres it takes to fill up a bath. That's potentially thousands of litres of water saved a year, assuming you wash more than once a week and can be quick! Cutting one minute off your shower time could also save £35 a year in energy bills. Go one better and take all your showers at the gym.

Choose energy saving appliances. Air fryers are all the rage at the moment. Unlike ovens, you don't have to wait for them to heat up and they speed up cooking time considerably. Using an air fryer not only makes your food healthier they save you energy against cooking similar meals in the oven.

Adjust your settings. Select the "Eco" settings on your washing machine if you have the option. Washing at 30C, rather than 40C or higher, will save energy. According to Curry's, up to 90% of the energy a washing machine uses is to heat the water. So, the lower temperature eco wash can use far less energy, sometimes up to 59%.

No overnight charging. The average mobile phone takes about 3 hours to fully charge. If you are guilty of leaving your phone plugged in overnight you are likely wasting money.

Switch to candles. Save money by channelling your romantic side. Switch the lights off and light a scented candle or two.

Rule-of-thumb: How much does it cost to run my appliance?

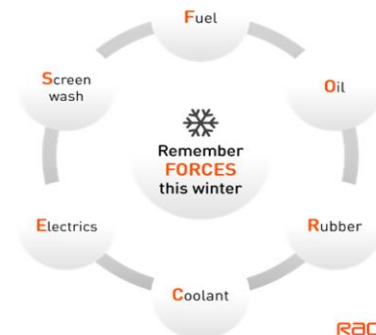


100W (a tenth of a kW) appliance on for two hours is a maximum 3.4p an hour x 2 = 6.8p.

6 SIMPLE CHECKS TO PREPARE YOUR VEHICLE FOR WINTER

Breakdowns or accidents caused by unsafe tyres will be at minimum an inconvenience, and at worst could be deadly. Make sure you're one step ahead of cold and snowy winter weather by doing a few simple checks on your vehicle today.

The RAC recommends using the acronym 'FORCES' to remember the simple winter checks:



F – Fuel Vehicles use more fuel in heavy traffic and start/stop conditions which can be regular occurrences, especially in wintry weather. It is a good idea to fill-up before setting off.

O – Oil Check your oil level using the dip stick and top-up if necessary.

R– Rubber Check your tyre tread depth and air pressure. Well-maintained tyres are vital to give you traction and grip on icy, wet surfaces. In winter your windscreen can get very dirty from rain, snow, ice and road salt. Maintaining good visibility is always imperative so check your wiper blades regularly.

C – Coolant A mixture of water and antifreeze, coolant is pumped around your engine to cool it. You should regularly check your engine coolant level and top-up if required.

E – Electrics Check your lights and indicators are all working properly. Battery problems are the reason for more RAC call-outs in winter than anything else.

S – Screen Wash Make sure you top up your screen wash. This helps to keep the windscreen free of ice and dirt. Winter poses a risk of a frozen windscreen which is another reason to ensure you use a proper anti-freeze screen wash.



No smoking in this vehicle

Smoking at work: the law!

Under the 2006 Health Act, smoking is banned in the workplace, this includes work vehicles. It is a criminal offence to smoke in our vans as they are used by more than one person. Local councils are responsible for enforcing these laws. A fixed penalty notice of £50 can be imposed on a person caught smoking in a work vehicle.

Red Rock Policy: All vehicles are smoke free, which includes the use of e cigarettes and vapes. This policy applies to all employees. You may only smoke during authorised breaks and in designated areas.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We have heard a few grumbles that our current red rock jumpers aren't particularly well liked on site. Unfortunately, health & safety rules out the option of providing popular hoodies as part of our PPE uniform.

So, what's the alternative?

You tell us. What would you like to wear instead?
Send your ideas into the office.



Looking to try a new sport or want to add to your current fitness regime...?

HARDKNOCKS ABC has room for new squad members. Whether you are interested in competing at amateur boxing tournaments or just want to get fit, all abilities are welcome.

Monday 7pm – 8:30pm
Wednesday 7pm – 8:30pm
Friday 7pm – 8:30pm

Fighting out of Benchmark Gym, Marsh Barton, Exeter.

www.facebook.com/HardKnocksBoxingExeter

DATES FOR THE DIARY!

Office Christmas Prize Draw: 4:30pm
Tuesday 20th December 2022

Office Closes: 12pm
Wednesday 21st December 2022

Office Opens:
Tuesday 3rd January 2023

CHRISTMAS PARTY 2022

Wednesday 21st December 2022

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Harry's Restaurant, Exeter

Our venue for this year's Christmas party will be the private dining room at Harry's Restaurant in Exeter. Set in the heart of the city Harry's has been gratifying appetites for 25 years. Rated as one of the best restaurants in Exeter on TripAdvisor, the restaurant has established itself to become the go-to dining den on the neighbourhood food scene. Founded in 1993 by the Pounds family, Harry's is still independently owned and run today.

