



Issue 12 • Winter / Spring 2024

The health and safety newsletter
from The Hills Group

SAFER FOR ALL



**Keep
your
cool...**

**Read our
winter driving
safety tips.**

In this issue...

- △ Prevent rollaways
- △ Don't drive distracted

- △ Winter site safety
- △ Chance to win £50

A warm welcome to issue 12 of Safer For All from The Hills Group.

As part of our ongoing commitment to exceptional health and safety, our latest edition highlights many great examples of this from around the business.

Read all about the dangers of driving distracted, how to prevent rollaways and our top tips to keep you safe on the roads this winter.

Mike Hill, Chief Executive

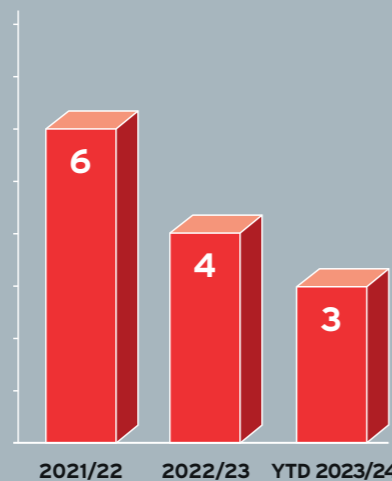


RIDDORS and Near Misses

There have been a total of three RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) incidents across the group during the financial year to date. Waste Solutions reported two incidents and Municipal Collections reported one.

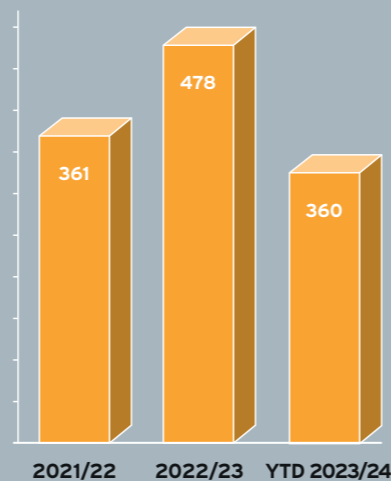
RIDDORS

(per financial year 01 May to 30 April)



NEAR MISSES

(per financial year 01 May to 30 April)



Mind your head

One in six employees suffer from poor mental health in the UK, yet the stigma surrounding the subject means many don't ask for help.

At Hills we look to provide a supportive environment and encourage employees to seek help and talk to their managers and supervisors if they need support. However we understand that sometimes this can be difficult. This is why we have set up our Wellbeing Hub to provide all employees access to information and contact details to help them navigate difficult times including links to mental health charities such as Mates in Mind.

Mates in Mind work across a number of industries, including construction, transport and logistics, to provide clear information and guidance.

Their free, confidential text support service 'BeAMate' provides 24/7 access to trained professionals who can help with a variety of mental health issues, including anxiety, stress, loneliness and depression.

Remember that all Hills employees also have access to help and support through one of the employee assistance programmes offered by Westfield Health or Health Assured.



Mental health

Wellbeing Hub



Mental health



Physical health



Financial



Lifestyle

Westfield Health

T: 0800 092 0987
www.westfieldhealth.com

health assured

T: 0800 028 0199
www.healthassured.org

hills-group.co.uk/wellbeing-hub

Winter driving

Whatever the weather, if you drive as part of your role, you will be familiar with the essential checks needed to ensure your vehicle is roadworthy before you start every journey.

Remember that driving in the winter months can be more challenging due to wintry weather and changing conditions. That's why it's essential to know how and when to adapt your driving style.



Mind the gap

Remember that your stopping distance may be up to 10 times the normal braking distance, so leave a bigger gap between you and the vehicle in front.

Take extra care

Take care to accelerate and decelerate slowly, especially in icy or snowy conditions.

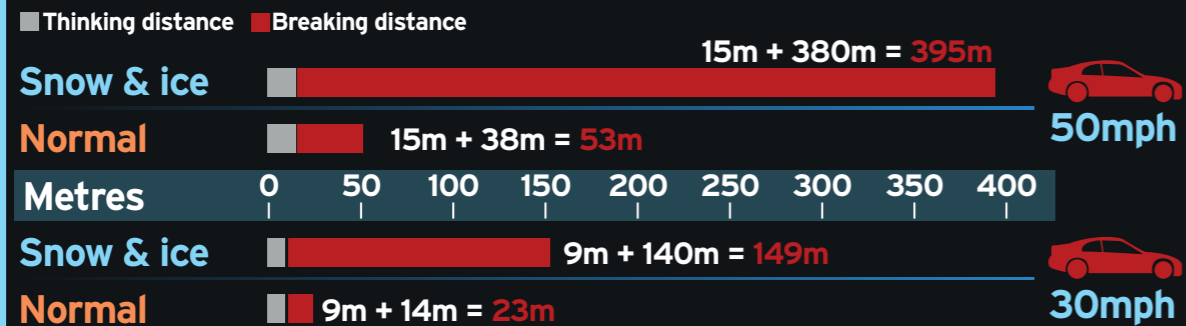
Slow and steady

Reduce your speed and only drive at speeds appropriate to the conditions.

Think ahead

Don't get caught out by changeable conditions - always allow extra time for your journey.

Stopping distances in snow and ice



Winter driving

Visibility

Heavy rain will limit your visibility and double your stopping distance. Keep well back from the vehicle in front.

Adjust your driving style

In poor conditions, avoid any harsh braking or sharp steering and slow down in plenty of time for corners and bends.

Aquaplaning

If the steering becomes unresponsive, it probably means that water is preventing the tyres from gripping the road. Ease off the accelerator and slow down gradually.

Don't chance it

Avoid driving through flood waters, but if you can't avoid them, always do so slowly and steadily, making sure to test your brakes as soon as you can afterwards.

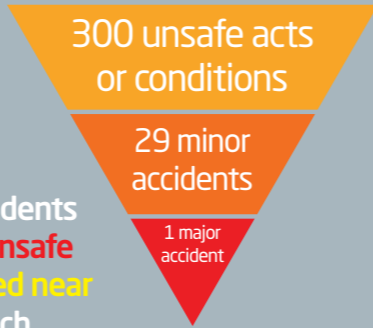
REMEMBER! Never drive into water that's moving or more than 10cm deep. If you are in any doubt about the depth of the water, don't chance it.



Near Miss reporting

You said, we did...

Heinrich's Accident Triangle theory predicts that for every 300 near miss incidents there will be 29 minor and one major accident. **Preventing unsafe acts and unsafe conditions will lead to fewer accidents.** Here is a selection of recently reported near misses and the actions taken. All near miss incidents can be viewed on eTouch.



	<p>Incident</p> <p>A customer drove through the exit instead of the entrance, which could have caused an accident.</p> <p>Reported by Melanie Beswick Honeyball HRC</p>		<p>Action taken</p> <p>The driver was reminded of the importance of adhering to site rules and following the one-way system.</p>
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	<p>Incident</p> <p>I discovered a damaged vape on the floor of the baler hall that had been incorrectly disposed of and could have caused a fire or explosion.</p> <p>Reported by Henry Newbery Sands Farm MRF</p>		<p>Action taken</p> <p>I safely disposed of the vape and arranged for fireproof bags to be made easily accessible for staff at the facility in case of a repeat occurrence.</p>
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	<p>Incident</p> <p>A sub-contractor left a forklift running with no operator.</p> <p>Reported by Raymond Brotton A Homes construction site</p>		<p>Action taken</p> <p>The forklift was shut down and the keys were removed. The incident was then reported to the assistant site manager for review.</p>
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	<p>Incident</p> <p>I found that the COSHH cupboard had been left unlocked.</p> <p>Reported by Eddie Schofield Northacre RRC</p>		<p>Action taken</p> <p>Everyone with access to the cupboard was alerted and reminded of the importance of locking the COSHH cupboard securely.</p>
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	<p>Incident</p> <p>A vehicle was speeding on site in wet weather conditions.</p> <p>Reported by Linda Ritchings Shorncliffe Quarry</p>		<p>Action taken</p> <p>The driver was reminded about the site rules and the importance of adhering to the speed limit at all times.</p>
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	<p>Incident</p> <p>I witnessed a person walking across the yard without wearing a hard hat.</p> <p>Reported by Lee Johnson Newbury Concrete</p>		<p>Action taken</p> <p>The person was reminded about the importance of wearing the correct PPE at all times. A review of the visibility of the signage was also undertaken.</p>
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	<p>Incident</p> <p>I noticed that an item of mobile plant had been left unattended with the keys in the ignition and the window open.</p> <p>Reported by Charles Sankey Swindon Concrete</p>		<p>Action taken</p> <p>The keys were removed from the mobile plant and the operator was spoken to about the incident.</p>
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Are you wearing the correct PPE?

Wintry weather, including freezing temperatures, increased wind speeds, rain, sleet and snow showers, can all increase your risk of developing cold stress, especially if you work outdoors.

That's why, in cold conditions, it's vital to ensure you wear the right PPE for the job to give you the very best protection.

- 1 High visibility clothing that is warm and waterproof (such as jackets, trousers)
- 2 Neck warmers or snoods
- 3 Warm hand protection/gloves
- 4 Thermal socks
- 5 Boots that are sturdy and have good tread



REMEMBER! PPE can differ from site to site. Always speak to your line manager or supervisor if you have any concerns about your PPE.

Contractor management

We feel it's essential to carefully select and work closely with our contractors to ensure they are suitably competent and fully committed to health and safety.

When selecting a contractor, it's important to perform the following checks to ensure that all relevant processes and procedures are in place.

Match the contractor to the job

Identify all aspects of the work required, then pick a contractor who has the skills and experience to do the job safely and competently. Remember that all contractors must be pre-vetted before undertaking any work on a Hills' site.



Consult on health and safety

Consider the health and safety implications involved and discuss how the contractor's work will affect employees.



Perform a risk assessment

Do a full risk assessment and agree with the contractor on all measures needed to control risk.



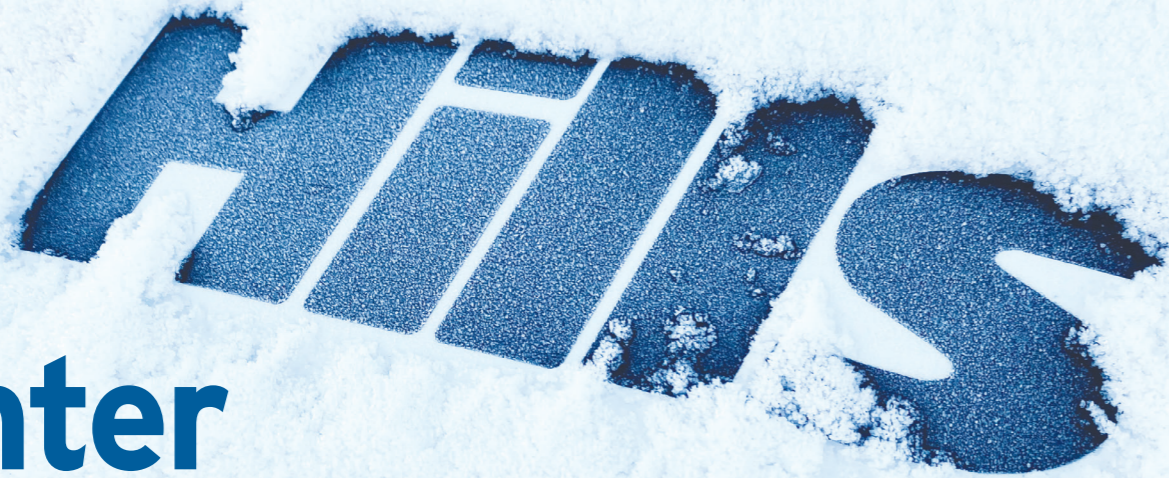
Plan in regular reviews

Supervise the contractor's work regularly in proportion to their risk level.



REMEMBER! If you see a contractor working unsafely, ask them to **STOP**, inform the site manager and report it as a Near Miss.

Winter site safety



Staying safe on site is vital, whatever the weather. Wintry conditions can mean reduced visibility, slippery surfaces, and many other potential hazards.

That's why it's important to be extra vigilant when you're on site and remember these winter safety tips.

Remember!
If you observe any untreated areas, please report them to site management.

Go Steady

Always take your time and avoid rushing around. When moving around site, take small steps to keep your centre of balance under you to minimise the risk of slips and falls.



Take Care

Snow and ice can increase the risk of slips and falls, so take extra care and avoid untreated areas of the site and keep to marked pedestrian walkways.

Be Alert

Wintry conditions can mean decreased visibility, so whether you are driving or walking, be extra vigilant at all times.



Stay Safe

Make sure you wear the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) suitable for the conditions; this includes footwear, headgear, gloves, clothing with retroreflective strips and any other additional protection required.



Driven to distraction?

Driving while distracted is the leading cause of road traffic accidents in the UK. Not only is it dangerous, but driving while distracted could see you facing penalty points, fines or losing your driving licence.



Turn it down

Listening to the radio, loud music or wearing headphones while driving could prove a distraction and diminish your ability to drive safely. Audio distractions could delay the speed of your response to external events, which could be particularly dangerous in emergency situations.



Hang it up

Using handheld mobile phones while driving is illegal, but did you know that hands-free alternatives can also be a dangerous distraction? Mobile phones can prevent you from giving the road your full attention, leading to accidents.

It's best to avoid making or answering calls altogether while driving. If this isn't possible, ensure you only use a hands-free device for short periods of time.



Remember! It's prohibited to use any form of headphone or earbud when driving or operating plant on behalf of Hills.

Prevent rollaways



A rollaway incident is where a vehicle rolls away without a driver being in control of it.

Incidents can be caused by a driver failing to fully apply the handbrake when parking on a slope or slight incline, so Hills is investing in extra safety features on our waste vehicles to help prevent this from occurring.

Commercial waste trucks are being fitted with a 'key-out' immobiliser, which means the handbrake must be applied before the keys can be removed from the ignition.

Enhanced audio warning systems have also been fitted in the majority of municipal collections vehicles. A very loud alarm, much louder than the previous alert buzzer, now warns the driver when a handbrake has not been correctly applied. These improvements, together with good working practices, can help to stop rollaways from occurring.

In the event of a rollaway: Raise the alarm to alert anyone in the path of the vehicle by shouting and waving your arms.

Unless the vehicle is at a very slow creeping pace, and you can be absolutely sure that it's safe to do so **NEVER ATTEMPT TO RE-ENTER THE CAB.**

You could be struck by the vehicle or dragged under the wheels.

How to help prevent a rollaway

- ✓ Ensure you know how to operate the parking/handbrake, including any locks and release mechanisms.
- ✓ Always perform a parking/handbrake operation test during thorough daily or first-use pre-checks.
- ✓ Always apply the handbrake when the vehicle is stationary. Even a slight incline can start a vehicle moving if the handbrake has not been applied.
- ✓ Do not rely on audio alarms and dashboard warning lights to remind you that the handbrake has not been applied.
- ✓ Stay alert and don't get distracted: even momentary lapses in concentration can have serious consequences.

We need **YOU...** to report **every** Near Miss



Why report a Near Miss?

Near Miss reporting is vital in helping to maintain high standards of health and safety across all Hills' sites. If you've seen something that isn't safe, tell us about it. It's so important to report all near misses, however big or small. If in doubt don't leave it to someone else to find, you must report it immediately.

How to report a Near Miss...



Fill in your Near Miss booklet and hand it to your line manager.



Access the Near Miss form via the icon on your company mobile or laptop.



Look out for QR code stickers around your site and scan them with your smart phone.

Safer For All coffee break

Complete both puzzles on pages 19 and 20 to be in with a chance to win one of three £50 Tesco gift cards. All correct submissions will go into a draw and winners will be selected at random. Only one entry per employee.



Wordsearch

- DISTRACTION
- VISIBILITY
- PRECAUTION
- CONTRACTOR
- REPORTING
- PROTECTIVE
- ATTENTION
- LAYERING
- SLIPPERY
- VEHICLE
- DRIVING
- PREPARE

Q	X	C	T	E	S	X	H	O	T	Z	Q	X	K	B
P	L	D	A	M	I	M	R	G	U	A	D	A	F	O
U	R	L	A	V	B	U	L	O	R	K	S	T	M	P
V	D	E	V	G	H	Z	Z	A	Q	W	B	T	J	R
G	F	I	C	I	P	G	B	H	Y	O	D	E	X	E
V	R	L	S	A	S	R	M	V	V	E	B	N	R	P
T	E	Y	V	T	U	I	O	Z	F	L	R	T	I	A
A	P	U	Y	G	R	T	B	T	W	L	L	I	K	R
V	O	D	I	D	Q	A	I	I	E	O	X	O	N	E
E	R	R	F	V	J	H	C	O	L	C	H	N	N	G
H	T	I	Y	L	Y	J	R	T	N	I	T	A	N	L
I	I	V	B	C	O	P	H	Z	I	I	T	I	Y	O
C	N	I	B	H	Z	D	S	B	G	O	D	Y	V	D
L	G	N	S	L	I	P	P	E	R	Y	N	O	J	E
E	W	G	C	O	N	T	R	A	C	T	O	R	S	M

Safer For All coffee break - Spot the hazards

Spot all nine hazards in the picture below and complete the puzzle on page 19 to be in with a chance to win one of three £50 Tesco gift cards.



Add your name and site location below, then cut off this back page and hand it to your line manager or send it via internal post to the communications and marketing department at County Park, Swindon. Alternatively, type or circle and photograph your answers, then email them to info@hills-group.co.uk Your entry must be received by Friday 26 April 2024. Only one entry per employee.

Name:

Location:

