

## **Maintaining Sports Equipment**

Reports have been made of a failure of a piece of sports equipment (basketball hoop and backboard) which could have resulted in a significant injury. In order to prevent accidents in the workplace the Corporate Health and Safety Team have produced this bulletin for your information.

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) regulation 5 requires that *'Every employer shall ensure that work equipment is maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.'*

Work equipment is defined as *"work equipment" means any machinery, appliance, apparatus, tool or installation for use at work (whether exclusively or not);* and includes sports and P.E equipment used in schools.



Failing to maintain work equipment in line with manufacturer's instructions and carried out by competent contractors can and has led to failures of equipment resulting in injury to employees, children, and visitors. The potential for significant injury from failed work equipment can be catastrophic.

Installed equipment such as basketball hoops can be overlooked as they are in situ, affixed to walls at height. It must be considered that items like basketball hoops and backboards can be subject to considerable wear and tear, for instance children and adults hanging from the hoop as well as continuing stresses from impacts. If the item has not been installed correctly, maintained appropriately, and used correctly, the installation can weaken and fail. For this reason all equipment whether fixed or moveable must be inspected.

### **Causes of work equipment failure**

- Installing work equipment incorrectly, not following manufacturer's instructions
- Installing the wrong type of equipment for its intended use and users.
- Failing to carry out manufacturers recommended maintenance schedules
- Failing to carry out periodic inspections of equipment and statutory inspections by a competent, qualified person
- Using contractors to maintain equipment who do not have the correct competencies
- Failing to make appropriate repairs to equipment when identified in periodic and statutory inspections.
- Not keeping records of inspections and maintenance schedules.

### **Avoiding work equipment failures**

Failures of work equipment are avoidable!

- Risk assess work equipment before it is purchased and installed to ensure it is appropriate for its intended use, environment and the use, wear and tear it is likely to be subject to.
- Install and maintain work equipment in line with manufacturer's instructions
- Ensure a maintenance schedule is in place and staff are aware of the maintenance needed.
- Ensure a competent, qualified contractor is engaged to carry out specialist maintenance

# Health and Safety Bulletin



- Ensure a competent, qualified inspection contractor is engaged for sports, play and PE equipment installed and used on your site.
- Ensure any inherited equipment is thoroughly examined and inspected before it is allowed to be used.
- Have a procedure in place to isolate any equipment that is found to be defective to prevent further use until appropriate measures have been taken to repair or replace the equipment.