



ULTRA ACCESS February Newsletter

The proactive prevention of slips, trips and falls on the scaffold due to ice.

It's that time of the year again. Seasonally we're leaving Winter and entering Spring... but could somebody please tell the weather that, because it can't seem to make its mind up!

Statistically February is the worst month for slip, trip and fall incidents, especially on boarded scaffolding platforms, where the mixture of warmer days, allowing any frost from the previous cold night or any sleet that falls to melt into liquid form - but remaining on the surface of the boards, as its not warm enough to evaporate said water, and in turn freezing during the cold evenings / nights, turning the surface water into dangerous ice sheets the next morning.

HSE regulations on scaffolding inspections have specific rules, with mandatory inspections required to be carried out after periods of "adverse weather" being one such requirement.

Surface ice on scaffold boards caused by warming during the day and then by rapid freezing in the evening - whilst not exactly classified as "adverse weather", still poses a very real and significant risk of a slip, trip or fall incident occurring to anyone using a scaffold platform. Every employer has a duty of care, regardless of their position in the pecking order, or the role they play whilst out on site.

Principal Contractor (or their representatives), Primary Sub-Contractors, Third-Party Sub-Contractors, etc. all come under the regulations as stated within the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HASAW) - one being to provide a safe working environment for those on site.

To keep within HSE regs, our recommendation would be that the each boarded scaffold lift is observed / checked for surface ice before any works are to begin on that section of the scaffold. This could be done via a physical check / "walk" by a Site Manager, Supervisor, etc or by use of a proxy / subordinate (carrying out the check in as safe a manner as possible). And if the scaffold is deemed unsafe to be checked, then it would also be unsafe to use - until such time as any ice has melted away.

A few minutes of checks could prevent a few hours of paperwork if there was indeed a slip, trip and fall incident on the scaffold and potentially a few weeks of painful time off (or worse) for the one who had the fall...

... with falls not needing to be fatal to cause a serious safety incident... severe pain and time lost at work could result from a simple strain, or torn ligament after falling down.

Grit and salt spreading the evening before could help reduce the risk of the scaffold boards icing over the following morning.

Ultra Access can carry out a full range of scaffolding-related services with more details found at www.ultra-access.co.uk, with immaculate timekeeping, reliability and very cost effective rates. Please feel free to contact us for more information.

We hope that you have a safe and prosperous month, look forward to seeing you on the next one.

ULTRA ACCESS
Scaffold Technical Support

www.ultra-access.co.uk
UADIP: #ultacc120225