

# GOLF COURSES

(See also : [Pesticides\(59\)](#); [Agricultural/Horticultural Amenity Equipment\(6\)](#); [Manual Handling\(52\)](#); [Electricity\(24\)](#); [Machinery Safety\(49\)](#); [COSHH\(19\)](#); [Hand-arm Vibration \(38\)](#); [Noise\(56\)](#))

## GOLF COURSES

### INTRODUCTION

The management and maintenance of golf courses rely on a wide range of tasks, each of which may present associated hazards or risks to the health, safety or welfare of employees and visitors.

The HSE has published guidance on this subject in 'Health and Safety in Golf Course Management and Maintenance' (HS(G)79) under the headings of:-

- (i) Management of health and safety
- (ii) Working environment
- (iii) Machinery
- (iv) Occupational health

The following key points are taken from this useful publication.

### SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

#### **1. Management -**

Involves setting a clear health and safety policy; risk assessment and control; training; monitoring and review of working practices; effective communication; accident recording, reporting and investigation.

#### **2. Working environment -**

- Hazards may include the use of tractors, turf maintenance machinery or chain saws etc; water-related problems of drowning or disease (e.g. leptospirosis); manual handling (e.g. mowers).
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be needed, particularly for those working with dangerous machinery and hazardous substances. This may include eye, ear, foot or hand/arm/body protection, as appropriate.
- Electrical safety of both the fixed installation and portable/transportable appliances needs to be ensured. Overhead power lines may also be a safety issue.

#### **3. Machinery -**

General principles of protection applicable to all machinery include:-

- training and competency
- proper maintenance (including cleaning)

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- effective provision and maintenance of appropriate guards
- correct use/safe working practices
- fuel safety
- security of storage/access
- use of PPE where appropriate.

Typical machinery used on golf courses, with examples of particular hazards, include:-

- Tractors : use on slopes; dangers from the Power Take Off (PTO)
- Mowers : use on slopes (particularly hover mowers)
- Turf scarifiers, slitters and spikers
- Groomers : need for careful maintenance of hydraulic controls
- Brush cutters, brush saws and grass trimmers : enhanced need for PPE (ears, eyes, feet)
- Fertiliser spreaders : effect on stability of tractor
- Sand graders :
- Other machinery e.g. chainsaws : proper training and full protective clothing essential
- Sprinkler system : electrical and hydraulic pressure hazards.

#### 4. Occupational Health -

- Certain hazardous substances used on golf courses (e.g. pesticides, cleaning agents, oils) may require an assessment of risks under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999 (COSHH). This is followed by deciding what precautions are required, and then preventing or controlling any risks. Employees should be informed/instructed/trained accordingly.
- Only approved pesticides should be used and labels should include a MAFF or HSE number. The 'conditions of use' should always be followed and anyone working with pesticides must be competent. If you use pesticides approved for agricultural use the operator may require a certificate of competence. Storage of pesticides must be in a suitably designed/constructed/located and marked location.
- Hand-arm or whole body vibration, and noise may be hazards arising from the use of tools or other equipment.

Controlling risks may be achieved by appropriate purchasing policies, changes to work procedures/systems so as to reduce exposure or, as a last resort, by the use of PPE if appropriate.

## CHECKLIST - GOLF COURSES

- |                                                                                                    |     |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| 1. Has the Committee established a health and safety policy?                                       | YES | NO |
| 2. Does the policy address safety issues of:-                                                      |     |    |
| • overall management and individual responsibilities                                               | YES | NO |
| • risk assessment and control                                                                      | YES | NO |
| • training and communication                                                                       | YES | NO |
| • safe working practices                                                                           | YES | NO |
| • accident recording, etc                                                                          | YES | NO |
| 3. Have risk assessments been carried out on hazardous activities taking place at the premises?    | YES | NO |
| 4. Have COSHH assessments been carried out on hazardous substances stored or used at the premises? | YES | NO |

## REFERENCES/FURTHER DETAILS

- \*1 Booklet HS(G)79 - Health and safety in golf course management and maintenance (HSE) ISBN 0-7176-0689-9
- \*2 Leaflet - AS24: Power takeoff and power take-off shafts (HSE)
- \*3 Leaflet - INDG317. Chainsaws at work. (HSE). ISBN 0 7176 1769 6. [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg317.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg317.pdf)
- \*4 Code of practice for the use of approved pesticides in amenity and industrial areas (1991)  
National Association of Agricultural Contractors  
National Turfgrass Council  
ISBN 1-871140-12-9
- \*5 Guidance Note GS6: Avoidance of danger from overhead electrical lines (HSE). ISBN 0 7176 1348 8.
- \*6 Leaflet AS22 (Rev): Prevention of tractors overturning (HSE) [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/as22.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/as22.pdf)

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- \* Available to view by prior arrangement at Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Environmental Health Services, Council House, Coton Road, Nuneaton. CV11 5AA
  - \*\* Free copy available from Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council at the above address.