



Driver's OSH during winter

In line with our mission – Safety First – we have prepared some OSH tips for those who drive during the winter.

1. **Change your tires.** Summer tires need to be replaced for the winter ones when the daily temperatures drop to +7°.
2. **Change the fluids.** Summer windshield washer fluid or engine coolant can simply freeze and that may entail fatal consequences.
3. **Take care of the visibility.** Automotive specialists recommend changing windscreen wipers before winter. Worn-out gum makes the car window blurred rather than clean.
4. **Do not forget about the rugs.** The rag rugs absorb the humidity with ease, and in consequence the mist on the car windows stays longer and is stronger.
5. **Check out the battery and remember about the wires.** If your car battery is old, the best solution would be to replace it. If you are feeling brave enough you can also equip yourself with jump leads (and a towrope, of course).
6. **Prepare useful accessories for car ploughing.** If you drive a car with a snow cap on and its windows covered with ice, you risk being fined and given penalty points.
7. **Brush your shoes down.** The snow that sticks to your shoes will turn into moisture on the rugs, which then will cause excessive fogging of the windows.
8. **Take off your jacket.** If you fasten your seat belts while wearing a downy jacket or a thick coat, they may not function properly. Seat belts must be placed as close to the body as possible in order to serve their functions properly.

9. **Take care of the road safety.** One should always remember about maintaining safe distance from other vehicles and also about not exceeding the prescribed speed.



Changes in the labour code

The amended provisions of the labour code will come into force in January 2019. One of them will concern the payment of salaries. The transfer into employee's account will constitute a basic form of payment as opposed to the form that has been prevalent until today – i.e. handing the money to the employee in person.

The currently applicable rule of the Labour Code stipulates that the salary should be paid directly to the employee in person. Other forms of payment, e.g. by bank transfer, are acceptable only if there exists such a provision in a collective bargaining agreement or if the employee has given written consent in advance. According to statistics, even though the majority of employees receive money via bank transfer, it still has not been placed on a regulatory footing.

However, it is supposed to change since the beginning of 2019. The basic form of payment will be **the payment into the employee's bank account**. Until 21 January the employers will have to inform their employees about the obligation to possess a bank account. The amended provisions therefore stipulate that the employee would have to choose from among three options:

- **payment into a bank account** – the default form;
- **payment into a basic bank account** – it is a free account for which banks collect no fees – neither for opening the account nor for its conduct;

- **cash in hand** – it is possible only on the basis of a specific application (in written or electronic form), which must be handed by the employee to the employer within 7 days of being informed about the changes.



The emission fee applicable from January 2019

The emission fee, which was introduced by the government in the Act of 6 June 2018 on the amendment of the Act on Bio-components and Liquid Biofuels and certain other Acts (Journal of Laws, Item 1356) will become effective on 1 January 2019. Motor fuels that are placed on the domestic market will be subject to this fee.

The motor fuels that are subject to the emission fee include:

- motor gasoline type CN 2710 1145, CN 2710 1149;
- Diesel oil type CN 2710 1941.

The obligation to pay the emission fee lies on:

- producers of motor fuels,
- importers of motor fuels,
- entities that making intracommunity purchases within the meaning of the regulations on excise duty on motor fuels.
- other entities subject to excise duty the regulations on excise duty on motor fuels.

The emission fee rate must be:

- motor gasoline – PLN 80 per 1000 litres,
- Diesel oils – PLN 80 per 1000 litres.



OHS: working with a display monitor

The workstation with a display monitor must be designed in a way that will fulfil the minimum OHS and ergonomics requirements, and its equipment and arrangement of the particular elements will not cause undue burden on the employee's musco-skeletal system and sight or pose any hazards.

The employee must be provided with an **adequate working space** and the basic tools and materials must be located within their reach.

The working space in a room must be easily accessible. The distance between neighbouring monitors must be at least 0.6 m, and the distance between the employee and the back of the neighbouring monitor – at least 0.8 m. Moreover, the working space must not be placed under a source of light or the line of the observation of the monitor should be parallel to the line of the windows.

The required **distance between employee's eyes and the monitor screen** must be within the range of 400-750 mm, and the design of the desk must enable adequate positioning of the working space equipment, including height adjustment of monitor and keyboard.

Moreover, **the table/desk** must have enough surface for additional working space elements, and **the chair** must be swivel and adjustable in height and back. Additionally, the angles of the seat back and armrests must also be adjustable. It should be remembered that while using a keyboard one's elbows must be placed on the armrests, NOT on the table/desk!



Lighting in the workplace – general information

A very important element of a workplace is its lighting. It has considerable impact on safe and effective performance of work duties and it also gives comfort when one uses their sight for working. The employer is obliged under OHS regulations to provide the lighting in accordance with the Polish standards.

The lighting is a physical factor of working environment which is present in every working position and is classified as bothersome. This is due to the fact that improper lighting leads to excessive eye strain, decreased productivity and it may deepen vision impairments.

The §26 Regulation of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 26 September 1997 on general rules about safety and hygiene of work (i.e. Journal of Laws 2003, No 169, Item 1650 amended) stipulates that *day lighting in particular workplaces must be adjusted to the kind of work and precision required and it must fulfil requirements specified in the Polish Standard. Moreover, regardless of day lighting in workplaces, it is necessary to provide employees with electric lighting with parameters specified in the Polish Standard.*

In accordance with the abovementioned provisions, the lighting installed in workplaces must fulfil the requirements included in the lighting standard PN-EN 12464-1:2004: Light and Lighting. Lighting of Workplaces. Part 1: Indoor workplaces.



The rules of conduct in the event of fire

Every person that notices any sign of fire is obliged to immediately alarm people remaining in the danger zone and the unit of fire protection or police by calling one of the free of charge numbers: 998 or 112.

In the event of fire, the following actions must be taken:

- Take action to distinguish the fire: immediately alarm the people remaining in the danger zone about the fire by using available measures and call the fire service,
- Unplug all electrical devices from voltage supply,
- Turn off ventilation, transport and heating system,
- Close the master valve of gas,
- Immediately take action to extinguish the fire with the use of local extinguishing media and, if necessary, help those in danger – evacuate people and belongings,
- In case of smoke, move keeping your head on the height of circa 1m (protection against smoke and heat),
- Do not use lifts during the evacuation.

All the actions are to be taken in a way that will not cause any panic in order to avoid unnecessary and fatal consequences during the time of rescuing and fire-fighting action.



Safety in crane operation

The Regulation on occupational health and safety on tower and fast-mounting cranes was signed in November this year. The majority of provisions will come into force within three months following the announcement of the document, i.e. at the end of February 2019. The new regulations are to provide the crane workers with safe working conditions.

The regulation is to provide crane operators with safe working conditions that will include the specificity of their profession. The document provides the legal grounds for monitoring the compliance with regulations concerning working conditions of those persons.

The most important stipulations include:

- A crane operator must not work for more than 8 hours a day;
- It is forbidden to operate a crane if the temperature inside of the crane's cabin is lower than 18 Celsius or higher than 28 Celsius;
- The crane's cabin must be equipped with inter alia: a communication device allowing the operator to communicate with the signalman; device enabling the reading of temperature values in the cabin and the wind speed on the height of the crane's boom;

- It is forbidden for an operator, signalman and hookman to perform the same actions simultaneously;
- It is forbidden to operate a crane at transporting multidimensional cargoes when the wind speed exceeds 10m/s .



Smog and the employer's duties in terms of OHS

The World Health Organisation considers smog as one of the biggest health risk factors in the world. Employees who perform outdoor work are the most vulnerable to the risk and in the view of the provisions the employer is obliged to protect the employees' health and life.

Article 207 § 2 of the labour code stipulates that *"the employer is obliged to protect the employees' health and life by providing them with safe and hygienic working conditions with simultaneous usage of science and technology achievements."* It means that in this particular case the employer in assessing the occupational risk must take all dangers that could be encountered in a particular work station into account, including the occurrence of smog.

However, in the provisions one will not find any regulations concerning actions that must be taken by the employer in order to minimise the risk associated with the deteriorating quality of the air. In this case, general OHS provisions must be applied, according to which outdoor work must be stopped (of course, with the right to remuneration retained). However, it is not obligatory and smog should not be identified with a direct threat to one's health or life.

Therefore, the most effective and the most reasonable action in this case would be to equip the employees with protecting half masks, which will reduce the leakage of dust into the respiratory system.



Smog-absorbing pavement

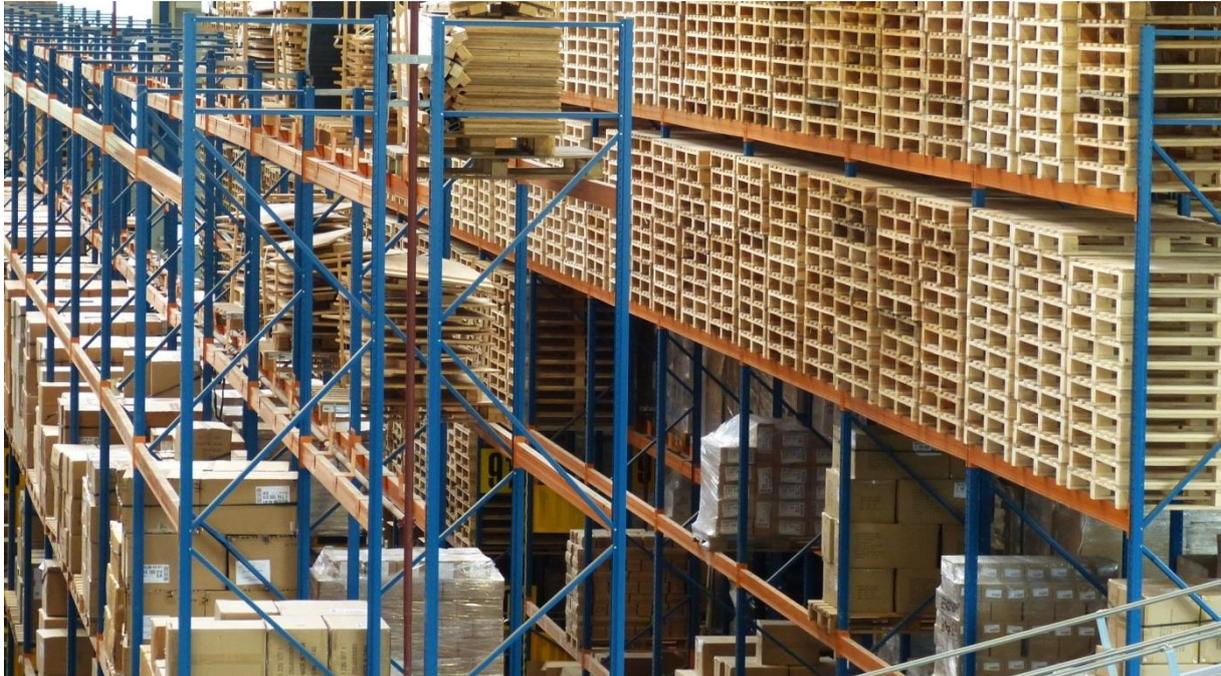
The first section of the pavement made of special, smog-absorbing flagstone has been built in Towarowa Street in Warsaw, in the vicinity of Rondo Daszyńskiego. The research conducted in this place indicates that the concentration of harmful substances has decreased by almost 30 percent.

The “smog-consuming” pavement was built by Skanska in cooperation with Municipal Roads Authority and scientific partners.

The first flagstones have been laid at a segment of 350 square metres. Testing and observations conducted in this place are optimistic. They indicate that the concentration of harmful substances has decreased by almost 30%. A significant improvement in the quality of air has also been noticed on the height of 50cm above the ground, which is of particular importance for the health of small children. That is why another 6 thousand square metres of such pavement is planned to be built.

As the MRA indicates, the flagstones are made using the TX Active technology, i.e. concrete with addition of titanium white, which thanks to the sunlight takes efficient advantage of the photo catalysis phenomenon. Harmful substances (in particular the nitrogen dioxide) are reduced on the titanium white’s surface and later on resolve into harmless compounds (similar to those used for fertilisation) and along with

rainwater flow into the ground. An additional advantage of the concrete itself is its self-cleaning properties.



OHS in high-storage warehouses

Working in high storage warehouses involves risk of encountering dangerous situations and serious accidents. Therefore, the observance of OHS provisions and providing the workplaces with adequate equipment is of paramount importance for the employer.

The storage space must be made of light, yet durable materials and equipped with specialized ramps, loading docks and manoeuvre areas. The buildings must be equipped with the most technologically advanced solutions. The employer must also observe the following OHS provisions:

- **OHS training.** Each employee is obliged to receive **induction OHS training** and later on – **the periodic OHS training**. Those employed in warehouses must be aware of the risks resulting from working conditions and comply with OHS regulations.
- The employer's duty is to provide the employees with **adequate personal protective equipment, working clothing and occupational footwear**.
- All working stations must be appropriately prepared and **the tools and vehicles must be functional and regularly serviced**.
- Those working in warehouses which contain dangerous substances must be equipped with adequate personal protective equipment **and given necessary breaks**.
- Machinery and equipment must possess **appropriate certificates**.

- The employees must be **appropriately qualified and trained** and possess certificates as a proof. Otherwise, the employers risk penalty for employing people without necessary qualifications and training.