



### **13.0 Remote Or Unoccupied Sites**

Managers should assess the risks for employees visiting remote or unoccupied sites and ensure that employees do not attend on their own if significant hazards are identified on site.

Employees should make a note of where they are going in a log book kept in reception, including the time of leaving the office and estimated time on site and shall;

- Carry a mobile telephone all times.
- Ensure the batteries are fully charged before leaving for site.
- Make contact with the office at least once every 4 hours.
- Carry a travelling first aid kit in the vehicle.
- Take a portable wash kit if required.
- Not take unnecessary risks on site.

#### **13.1 Desktop Study**

Information should be obtained about the premises prior to any employee visiting a remote or unoccupied site, e.g. the type of building, age and condition of the buildings, access, any known risks, site hazards, etc.

#### **13.2 Site Hazards**

The following hazards may be encountered on remote or unoccupied sites;

#### **13.3 Unsafe Structures/Machinery**

- Chimney stacks, gable walls or parapets, risk of collapse.
- Leaning, bulged and unrestrained walls (including boundary walls).
- Partially dismantled or damaged machinery or equipment.
- Rotten or corroded beams and columns.
- Rotten and broken floors and staircases.
- Floorboards, joists and buried timbers weakened by age, decay or attack.
- Projecting nails and screws, broken glass.
- Glazing in windows and partitions may be loose, hinges and sash cords weak or broken, glass panels in doors and wing lights may be painted over.
- Lift and services shafts, stairwells and other unguarded openings.
- Manholes, some may only have flimsy coverings, cesspools, wells and septic tanks.



### 13.4 Roofs

- Should be avoided or carefully assessed.
- Fragile asbestos cement and plastic coverings.
- Fragile roof lights (often obscured by dirt or temporary coverings).
- Low parapets or unguarded roof edges, loose copings.
- Rusted, rotten or moss covered fire escapes, access ladders and guard rails.
- Rotten roof decking and joists.
- Slippery roof coverings (slates, moss or algae covered slopes).
- Unguarded flat roofs, (never approach within 2m of an unprotected edge).
- Broken, loose, rotten and slippery crawling boards and escape ladders.
- Weak flat roofs and dust covered roof lights.
- Slippery roof surfaces.
- High winds during roof inspection.
- Poorly secured or flimsy, collapsible, sectional or fixed loft ladders.
- Concealed ceiling joists and low purlins.
- Poorly lit roof voids, (take a torch and ensure batteries are fully charged).

### 13.5 Hazardous Substances

- Asbestos, lead and other substances hazardous to health.
- PCB and PCN chemicals in electrical transformers.
- Oils and chemical spills.
- Capacitors in fluorescent lighting fittings.
- Horse hair plaster in old buildings can contain Anthrax spores.
- Contaminated water supplies.
- Contaminated air conditioning systems (Legionella).

### 13.6 Health Hazards

- Leptospirosis – carry a Weil's disease card.
- Bird droppings – avoid inhaling dust from dry bird droppings.



- Lice – may be present in bedding, soft furniture and carpets.
- Tetanus – vaccinations are advised

### **13.7 Unsafe Atmospheres**

- Confined spaces, e.g. manholes, roof voids, cellars, etc.
- Rotting vegetation which may consume oxygen and give off poisonous fumes.
- Accumulation of poisonous or flammable gases in buildings on contaminated land.
- Stores containing flammable materials, e.g. petrol, adhesives, fuel, etc.
- Hazardous substances, including toxic insecticides and fungicides.
- Gas build-up in subfloor voids.
- Lone working shall not be permitted under any circumstances.

### **13.8 Services**

- Electricity, gas, water and steam supplies.
- Overhead electrical cables.
- Awkward entrances into sub-stations and fuel stores.
- Temporary lighting installations, mains connections and generators.
- Buried cables and pipes.

### **13.9 Other Persons**

- Squatters and vagrants.
- Guard dogs.
- Discarded syringes, razor blades or other sharp objects.
- Structures weakened by vandalism or arson.
- Aggressive tenants and property owners.

### **13.10 Protecting The Public**

Employees working on site may need to inform adjoining owners, tenants in the same building, people working nearby, or the general public about aspects of the work.

- Make sure that signs are posted to inform of any danger.
- Make sure that the relevant public authorities are informed.