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All training centres above offer IPAF/PASMA approved and audited courses. European directives require that all staff are fully and adequately trained in the safe use of the equipment they operate.

SpanSet launches wind turbine facility

Harness and training specialist SpanSet has opened a wind turbine training facility at its UK headquarters in Middlewich, for those working on wind turbines.

The purpose built indoor facility features two wind turbine simulators facing in opposing directions providing front and rear specific training, allowing the company to provide both RenewableUK and Global Wind Organisation (GWO) accredited height safety and rescue training courses. The practical and theory-based courses have been designed to provide an awareness of working height, how to select and maintain personal protection equipment, the laws and regulations as well as the emergency rescue procedures. The company has also developed a range of additional courses which include wind turbine hub and yaw rescue, blade access training and wind turbine transition piece access and rescue.

In an attempt to provide a realistic working environment the simulators fully replicate wind turbines in terms of anchor points, front, side and rear entrances, ladder access and trap doors. Stairs located to the side are only used by instructors allowing them to communicate freely at the same level rather than having to shout advice from the ground.

SpanSet has also introduced a new indoor drop test facility as well as 'confined space' apparatus. The company said: "Onsite training saves both time and costs, as trainees no longer have to spend the majority of the day and session travelling to these remote places.



Spanset's new wind turbine training facility

Drayton executes evacuation drills

With over 40 rides and attractions at the Drayton Manor theme park in the UK, carrying out a full evacuation drill is no small operation. However, working in conjunction with the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, the Drayton Manor team rehearsed the evacuation and rescue procedures for all 40 rides, including its 55 metre Apocalypse drop tower.

Equipped with Zero-G rigger harnesses, a 135ft JLG 1350SJP Ultra Boom and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service's 32 metre Bronto F32RL ladder platform, the team also simulated the rescue of a passenger stranded on the gondola ride which passes over the theme park's lake. Using the Ultra Boom the rescuers attached themselves to the gondola's steel cables then manually traversed across to the gondola. All those involved had received both in-house and external training with some staff having successfully completed an Industrial Rope Access Trade Association (IRATA) course.

(The company is also looking into the possibility of purchasing slightly smaller machine used for lower evacuations and general maintenance.)



Suspended over Drayton Manor lake rescuing a stranded passenger from the cable car



Wayne Mallon working on the third storey of the Milsoms hotel without any form of access or safety equipment

Window cleaning freestyler fined

The man who was filmed cleaning hotel windows in the UK without any form of access or safety equipment has been fined £2,000 after pleading guilty to three health and safety charges. Loch Fyne, the firm which owns the Milsoms hotel in Bath, has also been fined £15,000 and ordered to pay costs of £3,023 after admitting a breach of health and safety law. The video of Wayne Terence Mallon, the self-employed window-cleaner trading as Terry Mallon and Sons Cleaning Services, came to the attention of the health and safety team at Bath and Banes Council after it emerged on YouTube last September: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rjs1mXTWL6M

Council representative Robin Wood said: "If a suitable risk assessment had been carried out, Mr Mallon would not have endangered himself or others below in the way he did. There were a number of documents in place to make sure a risk assessment was possible but they were not being used and had not been checked by the company for more than eight years."

A spokesman for Loch Fyne said: "We are grateful that this isolated incident was brought to our attention. As a result we have put tighter measures in place to prevent anything similar happening again, including stricter procedures for our restaurant manager to follow when using external contractors."

Who trained him then?

Spotted by a reader in Ireland, an electrician making do with what he had, wrong on so many levels - perhaps his Hi-viz vest will ward off danger?

