

Safety Alert



SUBJECT: Potential failure of window side-stay restrictors

RECIPIENTS: All Council Services (including schools)

ISSUE DATE: March 2012 **REF:** HSA5

Potential failure of window side-stay restrictors

This Safety Notice is aimed at organisations and individuals, who provide facilities for vulnerable people who are at risk of falling from windows.

The Department of Health have issued a safety alert following an HSE investigation into a fatal incident where window side-stays, which were fitted with plastic spacers as part of the mechanism, failed.

The alert should be read by any organisation where window restrictors are fitted to limit window openings (usually to not more than 100mm) in order to protect vulnerable people from falling. Such organisations include NHS Trusts, care home providers and those who manage buildings where vulnerable people may be present (e.g. schools).

Problem

Certain types of side-stay window restrictors incorporate a plastic spacer which, if allowed to deteriorate and crack, may result in separation of the retaining rivet and failure of the restrictor. Even with a restrictor fitted to each side of the window, the failure of one restrictor may be enough to allow egress with high risk of injury or death.

Please see Department of Health Alert for further details and pictures.

Action

Windows fitted with this type of side-stay restrictor should be examined and where necessary remedial repairs and control measures implemented

Further information

Department of Health Alert

https://www.cas.dh.gov.uk/ViewandAcknowledgment/ViewAttachment.aspx?Attachment_id=101432

HSE Alert

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/safetybulletins/windowrestrictors.htm?ebul=safbul&cr=1/19-mar-12>

HSE falls from windows

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/healthservices/falls-windows.htm>

If you require further assistance or clarification on the subject please contact:

Mouchel Safety Adviser Tel: 01522 836714 or Corporate Health & Safety Ext:3675