

INCIDENT TYPE:

SITE WELFARE UNIT GENERATOR EXHAUST FUMES



What happened

A recent (out of hours) incident on a construction site (not a Barhale site, but an Anglian Water Partner) has highlighted a significant risk for site personnel in cabins.

The site was closed for the day and the cabin was occupied by the security guard who due to the cold weather had closed all the windows allowing ventilation only through the ground floor vents.

The cabin in use was a steel container type which provides good insulation and has ventilation vents at ground level. The generator which was powering the cabins was placed outside the cabin and the exhaust was located close to one of the floor vents,

As a result the fumes from the exhaust entered through the vent causing the security guard to be overcome by carbon monoxide poisoning.

The security guard failed to make a pre-planned call to his head office, the site was checked and he was found and taken to hospital.

Fortunately the incident did not result in the death of the guard although it had the potential to do so.



Mess Room Toilet Generator Room

Preventing a re-occurrence

- Ensure hired portable Welfare Units are maintained regularly and they are fit for purpose - request and review paperwork
- Check extract fans and exhausts are in working order and that any fumes are vented to atmosphere
- Check for build up of soot inside the unit as this can be an indicator that the exhaust systems are not working as intended
- Always report smells of fumes or petrol inside buildings and vacate area immediately
- Where generators are used inside portable welfare units it is recommended that Carbon Monoxide sensors are fitted for early warning.