

# GUIDANCE ON MAINTENANCE AND STATUTORY INSPECTIONS OF EQUIPMENT DURING CORONAVIRUS

We understand that the Government restrictions relating to Coronavirus mean potential new ways of working and new employees to manage. To help during these challenging times, we've summarised the points you may wish to consider to continue working safely. As we have not been able to visit your premises we are unable to make explicit recommendations.

It's essential that statutory inspections, as well as preventative maintenance and repairs wherever possible, are still carried out during current Coronavirus restrictions. However, it's also critical they can be done safely and within the Government guidelines.

## STATUTORY INSPECTIONS

There are some safety critical and statutory inspections which will still need to be carried out by a competent person in accordance with the written scheme of examination (generally every six or twelve months), such as those for lifting equipment, pressure plant and extraction systems.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has been clear that there will not be any extensions to inspection deadlines, and these inspections must still be carried out during the lockdown period.

If your business has temporarily closed down, the HSE recommends that you provide access for the engineer to complete the thorough examination and test to provide you with ongoing compliance with Health and Safety regulations.

We would advise that wherever possible, scheduled equipment inspections should go ahead. Inspections reduce the risk of injury and loss of life, and furthermore reduce the risk of machinery malfunction and business interruption. In this difficult time, it is important to keep those businesses that can work operating.

Where inspection is not possible, the thorough examination and testing must be carried out prior to use before re-opening.

Vulcan Inspection Services (VIS) has worked in partnership with NFU Mutual to provide equipment inspections since 1997 and can help wherever there is a need for "thorough examination by an independent competent person". To find out more visit [vulcaninspectionsservices.co.uk](http://vulcaninspectionsservices.co.uk)

## OVERDUE INSPECTIONS

If an inspection becomes overdue, any equipment which is subject to thorough examination must be withdrawn from service until it has been examined by a competent person. Operation of such equipment would be an offence under the regulations.

You should ensure that you continue with inspections as scheduled if at all possible, as otherwise a backlog of inspections could occur after the lockdown is lifted, causing more disruption and delays.

If the HSE find employers are being negligent of carrying out inspection or maintenance activity, there may be penalties for the relevant business customer.



## OTHER PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE

If any of your staff are still working, then any equipment they operate must meet the usual safety standards.

To help inform your business continuity plans find out if any of your local suppliers / dealers / contractors / mobile technician services are still operating. You'll also need to consider keeping a stock of critical parts on site to avoid long delivery delays. As well, continue to follow the operator's manual checks on a daily basis and make sure your machinery is in tip top condition before you start.

Other ongoing planned preventative maintenance and / or servicing of items such as fire alarms, intruder alarms, sprinkler systems, cooking ranges, heating systems, sprinkler systems, gases and electrical wiring should continue as normal. Fire safety professionals and a number of other engineers have been given 'key worker' status, so these essential works should continue as long as they can be carried out safely and within the Government guidelines.

If your business has temporarily closed and no access can be provided in the interim, any maintenance should be undertaken before re-opening.

## OTHER USEFUL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The HSE website has further details on statutory inspections and machinery safety.

For further information visit:  
[hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk)

To find out more about the services of VIS visit [vulcaninspectionsservices.co.uk](https://www.vulcaninspectionsservices.co.uk)

In addition to this, we also have guidance on a range of risk management matters, on the NFU Mutual website.

For further information visit  
[nfumutual.co.uk/RMS](https://www.nfumutual.co.uk/RMS)

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Governmental guidance relating to the Coronavirus pandemic is updated frequently and different approaches may be taken in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland which may impact on the accuracy and validity of this guidance. We therefore do not give any warranty, whether express or implied, as to the accuracy and validity of this guidance. You are solely responsible for keeping up to date with developments relating to the Coronavirus pandemic. To keep up to date, please read the information that your Government is sharing with the public which can be found at [www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk), [www.gov.wales](https://www.gov.wales) (for Wales), [www.gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot) (for Scotland) and [www.nidirect.gov.uk](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk) (for Northern Ireland) and consult the NHS website for health advice.

This guidance is provided on the strict understanding that you accept, without limitation, that you retain sole responsibility for compliance with health and safety legislation and regulations, all other legislation and any warranties/conditions attached to your insurance policies. We have not conducted any site visits as part of producing this guidance and we have not, and are not, providing any guidance in relation to your specific set up.

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