

# SAFETY LESSONS LEARNED ALERT

## We're seeing an increase in work related violence

Issued: 16/07/20

Since COVID-19 lockdowns began to be lifted, our Trade Unions are informing us that some colleagues working with the public are experiencing an increase in threatening behaviour.

### Information sharing:

Since lockdown has been eased by the Government, we're starting to see an increase in work related violence incidents. This is both in our communities and our visitor sites and has ranged from verbal abuse to spitting.

This is totally unacceptable and you do not have to tolerate this kind of treatment. The **Work-Related Violence Standard** and accompanying **violence at work model risk assessment** and **toolbox talk** explains what to do if you feel threatened or are subjected to threats, abuse or assault.

- Use the violence at work model risk assessment to identify situations when the risk of encountering violence might be higher, such as when you know a customer might not be satisfied with the outcome of a decision.
- Be vigilant and trust your instincts. Watch out for facial expressions (Direct prolonged eye contact, accelerated breathing) Body Posture (Fists clenched or unclenched, shoulders tense) Be mindful of personal space, maintaining this could help with an exit strategy should it be required.
- Any physical violence or threat of physical violence must be reported to the Police immediately (this includes spitting or coughing)
- Repeated verbal abuse or harassment can also be reported to the Police

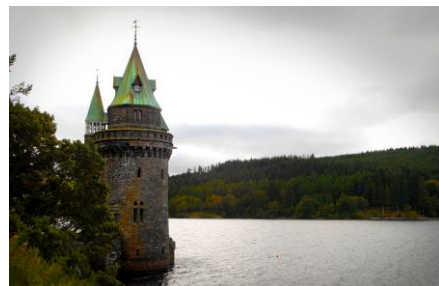
- All incidents must be raised on Safety Net so that we can investigate, identify hot spots and devise ways to protect you if necessary. An incident is anything that makes you feel uncomfortable and could be anything from a minor case of disrespect to a criminal act – Select Event Category, **Assaulted by Person** and then select one of the following Sub-Event Categories:

- Held against will
- Physically
- Refused Access
- Refused Exit
- Verbal or written/graphic

Any colleagues wishing to book on to 'Personal Safety Awareness' training can do so through SAP. You can also email [H&Straining@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:H&Straining@severntrent.co.uk) if you require further assistance with booking this training.

We should look out for and support any colleague who has been a victim of work-related violence. Help is available if needed, you can refer colleagues to a Mental Health First Aider or use the [Employee Assistance Programme](#) if required.

Further Guidance can be found on the **Work-Related Violence Standard** and the **Lone Working Standard**.



Key contact:

Your local HSW Technical Expert

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