

No. 005/2023

9 January 2023

Our Ref: E1/23

To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

Royal Mail Group (SHE) Safety Flash FY23 001 – De-Icer Use Safety & Eye Contact:

Background and Description:

Royal Mail Group's Safety Team have issued RMG SHE Safety Flash FY23 001 following an incident where by a postman driver/OPG accidentally splashed de-icer fluid into his eyes.

An aerosol spray can of de-icer had been left loose in the rear load space of a van which subsequently leaked out. The driver picking up the van saw the leakage and leaned into the van to clean up the spillage with a cloth. In doing so the fluid was accidentally splashed into his eye causing intense stinging, irritation, discomfort and inflammation.

Impact/Injuries:

- Intense stinging, irritation, discomfort and inflammation of the eye.
- Driver taken to hospital A&E for emergency treatment.
- Full recovery was made but the incident could have led to eye damage.

Key Messages and Learning Points:

- Scrapers are the best product to clear windscreens of ice.
- De-icer should be stored onsite at the office in a cool and contained cupboard/area and taken to the van to help clear a windscreen when required. After use it should be returned to the storage area before the vehicle leaves the unit.
- De-icer containers should not be stored inside vehicles. As well as having the potential to leak and present an eye and skin injury risk, de-icer aerosol cans can be flammable. In the event of a vehicle fire, aerosols can become an explosive projectile.

Actions/PiCs:

- PiCs to brief all drivers on this SHE Flash.
- PiCs to ensure drivers do not store de-icer in vehicles.
- PiCs to supply scrapers which can be stored in vehicles.
- Care to be taken when cleaning up unknown liquid spillages. Avoid eye and skin contact. Wear gloves and other protective equipment where required. If in doubt request the assistance of a cleaner.

- In the event of Eye contact, manufacturers advise the removal of any contact lenses and to open eyelids wide apart. Continue to rinse eyes for at least 15 minutes. Seek medical attention if discomfort continues.

CWU ASR/WSR Action:

- Please ensure that this Safety Flash is communicated and brought to the attention of all appropriate members and that the actions above are deployed.

Attachment:

- Royal Mail Group (SHE) Safety Flash FY23 001 – De-Icer Use Safety & Eye Contact.

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer