



## Innovation in riser safety

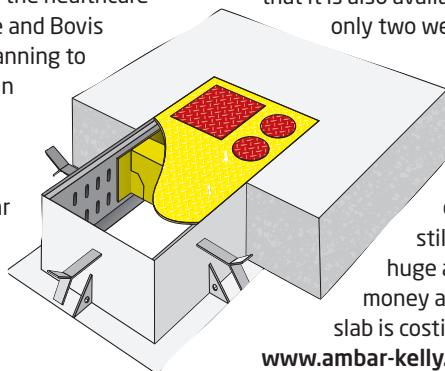
**MANAGING SAFETY** around riser shafts is a notoriously time-consuming business which can divert valuable resources from a project. An innovative new product called RiserSafe aims to eradicate that problem by plugging floor slab penetrations from the start of frame construction to completion.

Suitable for any multi-storey development, each RiserSafe unit comprises a rectangular steel frame set into the floor slab and capped by a load-bearing metal plate that can be removed to allow operatives to enter the riser.

Later during the build, the plate is replaced with one that includes holes for service pipes and ducts, which are also capped to allow operatives to stand on them safely.

Since its launch by manufacturer Ambar Kelly in October, RiserSafe has generated considerable interest. Contractor Carillion is installing it on several projects in the healthcare sector, while Mace and Bovis Lend Lease are planning to use it on projects in London.

It has also been nominated in the product of the year category at *Building* magazine's 2010 Building Awards.



Alex Bardett, managing director of Ambar Kelly, says: "I used to work as a construction manager for Laing O'Rourke and Bovis Lend Lease for over 15 years and was constantly amazed at how much time was spent managing riser safety."

Riser management typically requires a permit system, which dictates that only one person can enter a riser at a time, explains Bardett. "So you might have someone wanting to get on with building a wall, but they can't because an M&E contractor is already inside the riser."

"RiserSafe eliminates that problem because there's effectively no riser shaft, which means every floor slab is available to work on throughout the project."

Bardett adds that RiserSafe costs about half the price of using scaffolding and temporary protection works, quoting about £500 a square metre compared with £1,000. Project managers on live projects should be interested to know that it is also available with a lead time of only two weeks.

However, Bardett acknowledges that it may be a while before the industry catches on. "Most construction managers still don't appreciate the huge amounts of time and money a hole through a floor slab is costing them."

[www.ambar-kelly.com](http://www.ambar-kelly.com)

## Product news

**LIFT-TRUCK** specialist Samuk's B Series heavy-duty counterbalance forklifts now come in diesel and LPG models with lifting capacities from 1.5 to 3.5 tonnes. Both offer a clear view mast and a high driving position. Oil changes are required at 500 and 1,000 hours. The vehicle's long-life disc wheel and transmission brakes have a target working life of 8,000 hours. [www.samuk.net](http://www.samuk.net)



**CAPITAL SAFETY'S** ExoFit NEX full-body fall protection harness includes new features designed to improve safety and comfort. The Duo-Lok quick-connect buckles have an efficient locking mechanism that holds any adjustment to eliminate slippage, even when supporting heavy tool belts. A winding ratcheting torso adjuster spools the webbing to ensure the harness fits snugly, while padding and other protective elements prolong the harness's service life. [www.capital-safety.com](http://www.capital-safety.com)



## News in brief

**Firms fail to meet scaffolding standards**  
Almost 90% of scaffolding companies are failing to meet minimum industry standards set by the National Access and Scaffolding Confederation. In 2009, the NASC received applications from 65 companies, but just nine of those (11%) actually met the standards required. Most applicants were refused on the grounds of employing less than the NASC threshold of 75% directly employed labour. Others failed to meet the NASC expectation that more than 75% of scaffolding operatives are accredited to the Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme. Despite these strict criteria, the NASC has 210 member companies, equating to almost 15,000 scaffolders in the UK. [www.nasc.org.uk](http://www.nasc.org.uk)

**Report highlights advantages of SFS**  
Steel framing systems can reduce construction costs by up to 39%, according to a recent report commissioned from Faithful & Gould. It analysed the construction cost differences between traditional block work and manufacturer Metsec's framing system. The report was based on a four-storey residential building and compared the SFS against block work.

Other than cost-savings, the research highlights a number of advantages, including time savings and environmental issues. The Metsec report recommends that building users and clients consider the benefits of earlier building delivery and the resultant advantages when deciding whether to use block work or SFS. [www.metsec.com](http://www.metsec.com)

**New rules on high working sought**  
The British Safety Industry Federation (BSIF) has called for a new accreditation scheme for people working at height. "A lack of a single recognised training or accreditation scheme for people working at height is the most important cause of accidents," said the BSIF in a statement. "There is still no means to test the competency of an individual."  
The BSIF also blamed accidents linked to working at height, which account for a quarter of all major injuries in the workplace, on the range and complexity of safety equipment in use, and its misuse. David Hall, BSIF chairman, commented: "Many lives are lost due to negligence, often due to ignorance and a lack of training." [www.bsif.co.uk](http://www.bsif.co.uk)

**Training list for equipment inspectors**  
The Working at Height Safety Association has produced a list of member companies that can offer training courses for the inspection of harness and fall-protection systems. The list responds to concerns from the HSE that "competent persons" examining lifting equipment are also carrying out inspections of fall protection equipment without the necessary training. [www.wahsa.co.uk](http://www.wahsa.co.uk)