HSE Managers Safety Prep

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Practice Questions

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1. According to the waste hierarchy, which option should be prioritised FIRST when managing construction waste?

A. Recycling of waste materials
B. Energy recovery from waste
C. Disposal in a licensed landfill
D. Prevention of waste generation

2. A site manager discovers an oil spill from a generator near a surface water drain. What is the MOST immediate action required?

A. Complete a RIDDOR report within 15 days
B. Update the environmental impact assessment
C. Contain the spill using absorbent materials and block the drain
D. Report the incident to the Environment Agency

3. Under duty of care requirements for waste, what information MUST accompany every transfer of construction waste?

A. An HSE notification form
B. A written waste transfer note
C. A COSHH assessment for the waste
D. A permit to work authorization

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4. During excavation works, a site operative discovers what appears to be archaeological artifacts. What is the correct immediate response?

A. Stop work in the area and notify the client immediately
B. Continue working but photograph the items
C. Remove the artifacts and store them safely on site
D. Complete the excavation quickly to avoid delays

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5. What is the PRIMARY purpose of implementing dust suppression measures such as water sprays during demolition activities?

A. To reduce noise levels from demolition equipment
B. To cool down heated materials during cutting
C. To prevent static electricity buildup
D. To prevent dust becoming airborne and affecting air quality

6. Which control measure is MOST effective for reducing carbon emissions from construction site transport operations?

A. Installing larger fuel tanks on delivery vehicles
B. Scheduling all deliveries during night hours
C. Consolidating deliveries to reduce vehicle movements
D. Painting vehicles in light colours to reflect heat

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7. A construction site is located near a river. What measure is MOST important for preventing silt-laden water from entering the watercourse?

A. Increase the frequency of waste collections
B. Install silt fences and settlement ponds at site boundaries
C. Use only electric-powered equipment on site
D. Schedule earthworks during dry weather only

8. What is the nesting bird season in the UK during which vegetation clearance should generally be avoided?

A. March to August inclusive
B. January to April inclusive
C. June to October inclusive
D. September to February inclusive

9. When storing diesel fuel in bunded tanks on a construction site, what is the minimum capacity the bund must provide?

A. 50% of the total fuel stored
B. Equal to the tank capacity
C. 75% of the largest tank capacity
D. 110% of the largest tank capacity

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10. A site is experiencing complaints about construction noise affecting nearby residential properties. Which action addresses this MOST effectively?

A. Increase working hours to complete the project faster
B. Switch all equipment to petrol-powered alternatives
C. Obtain Section 61 consent from the local authority for working hours and noise levels
D. Issue ear defenders to all nearby residents

11. Which waste stream on a construction site is classified as hazardous and requires a special consignment note for disposal?

A. General mixed packaging waste
B. Asbestos-containing materials
C. Uncontaminated timber off-cuts
D. Crushed concrete and brick rubble

12. What is the PRIMARY environmental benefit of using reclaimed or recycled materials in construction projects?

A. Reduced demand for virgin raw materials and associated extraction impacts
B. Lower insurance premiums for the project
C. Elimination of all site waste disposal costs
D. Reduced need for environmental permits

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13. During piling operations near residential areas, what is the BEST method to minimise vibration impact on surrounding structures?

A. Increase the weight of the piling hammer
B. Conduct all piling during night hours
C. Apply oil to piles before driving
D. Use continuous flight auger piling instead of driven piles

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14. What is the correct procedure if a construction site discovers ground contamination that was not identified during the preliminary site investigation?

A. Cover the contamination with clean fill material
B. Dilute the contamination with water to reduce concentration
C. Stop work and notify the local authority environmental health department
D. Continue work and record the finding in the site diary only

15. Which document provides the legal framework for protecting Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) from construction impacts?

A. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
B. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
C. Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
D. Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015

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16. When implementing a dust monitoring programme near sensitive receptors, where should monitoring equipment be positioned?

A. At the site boundary nearest to sensitive receptors
B. At the centre of the construction site
C. Inside the site offices for easy access
D. At the furthest point from any dust-generating activity

17. What is the PRIMARY environmental objective of implementing a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) on a construction project?

A. To eliminate the need for waste disposal licenses
B. To transfer all waste responsibilities to subcontractors
C. To reduce the need for welfare facilities
D. To identify opportunities to reduce, reuse and recycle waste

18. A concrete washout area must be established on site. Which design feature is MOST critical for environmental protection?

A. Direct connection to the main drainage system
B. Positioning adjacent to welfare facilities
C. A sealed impermeable base with containment to prevent runoff
D. Location at the highest point on site for visibility

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19. Under the Environmental Permitting Regulations, which activity on a construction site would typically require an environmental permit?

A. Providing temporary welfare facilities for workers
B. Operating a mobile crushing and screening plant for waste materials
C. Using a tower crane for lifting operations
D. Storing hand tools in a locked container

20. What is the MOST effective method for preventing light pollution from night-time construction activities affecting nearby residential areas?

A. Use directional lighting with cowls and hoods to minimise light spill
B. Increase lighting levels to complete work more quickly
C. Use only red-coloured lighting during night work
D. Install lights at maximum height to spread illumination widely

21. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, an employer must prepare a written health and safety policy when the organization employs how many people?

A. Ten or more employees
B. Twenty or more employees
C. One or more employees
D. Five or more employees

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22. A site manager discovers that a subcontractor's worker has suffered a broken leg in a fall from height. Within what timeframe must the principal contractor report this injury to the HSE under RIDDOR?

A. Within 24 hours
B. Within 10 days
C. 15 days of the incident
D. Immediately by telephone

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23. Which CDM 2015 duty holder is responsible for ensuring that the pre-construction information is prepared and provided to designers and contractors?

A. The project manager
B. The client
C. The principal designer
D. The principal contractor

24. An HSE inspector serves an Improvement Notice on a construction site. What is the legal consequence if the principal contractor fails to comply within the specified timeframe?

A. Criminal prosecution with potential unlimited fine
B. The notice automatically becomes a Prohibition Notice
C. A warning letter is issued with an extended deadline
D. The site insurance becomes void

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25. According to HSG65 guidance on managing for health and safety, which phase of the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle involves setting objectives and identifying hazards?

A. Do
B. Check
C. Act
D. Plan

26. A project involves significant structural alterations to an occupied school building. Under CDM 2015, at what stage must the client appoint a principal designer?

A. When construction phase begins
B. Only when requested by the principal contractor
C. As soon as practicable after deciding more than one contractor will work on the project
D. After planning permission is granted

27. During a risk assessment for working at height, the site manager identifies multiple control options. According to the Work at Height Regulations hierarchy of controls, which measure should be considered FIRST?

A. Conduct additional training for workers
B. Avoid work at height entirely
C. Provide personal fall arrest equipment
D. Install collective fall protection systems

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28. A fatality occurs when a trench collapses on a worker. Under CDM 2015, who can be held criminally liable for gross negligence manslaughter if their breach of duty caused the death?

A. Both the company and individual directors or managers
B. Only the company as a legal entity
C. Only the site foreman directly supervising
D. Only the HSE manager

29. A method statement for crane operations must be reviewed and approved before work begins. Who has the PRIMARY responsibility under CDM 2015 to ensure this process occurs?

A. The crane operator
B. The principal designer
C. The appointed person for lifting operations
D. The principal contractor

30. What is the MAIN purpose of a permit-to-work system for controlling high-risk construction activities?

A. To satisfy insurance requirements for dangerous activities
B. To create a record for HSE inspections only
C. To provide formal documented authorization ensuring controls are in place before work starts
D. To transfer legal liability from the employer to the worker

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Answer Key & Explanations

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1. D — Prevention of waste generation
The waste hierarchy prioritises prevention as the first and most preferred option, followed by preparing for reuse, recycling, other recovery, and finally disposal as the least preferred option.

2. C — Contain the spill using absorbent materials and block the drain
Preventing pollution from entering watercourses is the immediate priority. Containment stops the spread and protects the environment from contamination, which must be done before cleanup or reporting.

3. B — A written waste transfer note
The duty of care regulations require a waste transfer note to accompany all waste transfers. This document records details of the waste, parties involved, and ensures traceability throughout the waste chain.

4. A — Stop work in the area and notify the client immediately
When potential archaeological finds are discovered, work in that area must stop immediately to prevent damage to artifacts. The client and relevant archaeological authorities must then be notified as per planning conditions.

5. D — To prevent dust becoming airborne and affecting air quality
Water suppression during demolition controls airborne dust particles at source, preventing them from becoming airborne and affecting air quality. This protects workers and the surrounding community from respiratory hazards.

6. C — Consolidating deliveries to reduce vehicle movements
Consolidating deliveries reduces the number of vehicle movements to and from site, directly cutting fuel consumption and associated carbon emissions. This is a highly effective emission reduction strategy.

7. B — Install silt fences and settlement ponds at site boundaries
Silt fences and settlement ponds are specifically designed to filter and settle suspended solids from surface water runoff before it reaches watercourses, preventing pollution and protecting aquatic ecosystems.

8. A — March to August inclusive
The nesting bird season in the UK typically runs from March to August. During this period, all nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, and vegetation clearance should be avoided or preceded by ecological surveys.

9. D — 110% of the largest tank capacity
Environmental regulations require bunds to have a capacity of at least 110% of the largest tank, or 25% of total capacity for multiple tanks, whichever is greater. This ensures adequate containment in case of tank failure or overfilling.

10. C — Obtain Section 61 consent from the local authority for working hours and noise levels
A Section 61 consent under the Control of Pollution Act allows agreement on acceptable noise levels and

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working hours with the local authority, providing legal protection when operating within agreed parameters and addressing community concerns.

11. B — Asbestos-containing materials
Asbestos-containing materials are classified as hazardous waste under environmental regulations and must be disposed of using special consignment notes that track the waste from cradle to grave, ensuring proper handling and disposal.

12. A — Reduced demand for virgin raw materials and associated extraction impacts
Using reclaimed or recycled materials reduces demand for virgin raw materials, thereby reducing extraction impacts, embodied carbon from manufacturing, and waste to landfill, making it a key sustainability practice.

13. D — Use continuous flight auger piling instead of driven piles
Continuous flight auger (CFA) piling screws piles into the ground rather than using impact or vibration, significantly reducing ground-borne vibration and its effects on nearby structures compared to driven piling methods.

14. C — Stop work and notify the local authority environmental health department
Unexpected contamination must be reported to the local authority environmental health department as it may pose risks to human health, controlled waters, or the environment. Work should stop in the affected area pending assessment.

15. B — Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 provides the primary legal framework for protecting SSSIs in the UK. Construction activities near or affecting SSSIs require consent from Natural England or equivalent bodies.

16. A — At the site boundary nearest to sensitive receptors
Dust monitors must be placed at the site boundary nearest to sensitive receptors to accurately measure potential exposure levels at the point where dust leaves the site and affects the community or environment.

17. D — To identify opportunities to reduce, reuse and recycle waste
A Site Waste Management Plan aims to reduce waste generation and increase reuse and recycling rates, tracking waste throughout the project to drive behavioural change and improve resource efficiency.

18. C — A sealed impermeable base with containment to prevent runoff
Concrete washout is highly alkaline and can cause severe pollution if it enters watercourses or ground. A sealed, impermeable base with containment prevents contaminated water from leaching into soil or drainage systems.

19. B — Operating a mobile crushing and screening plant for waste materials
Operating a mobile crushing and screening plant to process waste materials typically requires an environmental permit as it constitutes a waste operation under the Environmental Permitting Regulations, controlling emissions and waste management.

20. A — Use directional lighting with cowls and hoods to minimise light spill
Directional cowls, hoods and shields on lighting fixtures prevent light spill beyond the work area by focusing illumination downward and onto the work zone only, minimising sky glow and nuisance to nearby properties.

21. D — Five or more employees
Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires employers with five or more employees to

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prepare and maintain a written health and safety policy statement.

22. C — 15 days of the incident
RIDDOR requires that injuries resulting in over seven days' incapacitation (not counting the day of the accident) must be reported within 15 days. A broken leg resulting from a fall is also an over-seven-day injury that must be reported.

23. B — The client
Under CDM 2015, the client has the duty to ensure that pre-construction information is prepared and provided to all designers and contractors appointed to the project.

24. A — Criminal prosecution with potential unlimited fine
Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice within the specified time is a criminal offence that can result in prosecution, potentially leading to unlimited fines in the Crown Court.

25. D — Plan
The Plan phase of the PDCA cycle involves planning by setting policy, objectives, establishing processes, identifying hazards, and assessing risks to determine necessary controls.

26. C — As soon as practicable after deciding more than one contractor will work on the project
CDM 2015 requires the client to appoint the principal designer as soon as practicable after it is clear that more than one contractor will be working on the project, and before the construction phase begins.

27. B — Avoid work at height entirely
The Work at Height Regulations require a hierarchy of controls where work should first be avoided at height if reasonably practicable. Only when this is not possible should other control measures be considered.

28. A — Both the company and individual directors or managers
Under CDM 2015 and the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007, both the organization (corporate liability) and individual directors or managers can face criminal charges including manslaughter if their gross negligence caused a fatality.

29. D — The principal contractor
The principal contractor has the primary responsibility under CDM 2015 to plan, manage, and monitor the construction phase, which includes ensuring method statements are prepared, reviewed, and approved before high-risk work begins.

30. C — To provide formal documented authorization ensuring controls are in place before work starts
A permit-to-work system provides formal written control to ensure all hazards are identified, assessed, and that appropriate precautions are in place before high-risk work begins. It ensures communication and authorization.

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