



Press release

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For immediate release

A load of old cobbles

Royal Mail's 'wrong kind of road' highlights a serious problem

The residents of Bilton Terrace in Bideford in North Devon were reported to have been up in arms at Royal Mail's refusal to deliver their mail on the grounds that their cobbled street is 'too dangerous'. Deliveries were apparently suspended before Christmas after their regular postman slipped on the 280 year-old lane while on his rounds, and Royal Mail is now delivering its letters and parcels to 53 year old Mrs Sally Bellamy, who then distributes them to houses further up the picturesque lane – despite suffering from arthritis of the spine. Meanwhile, Royal Mail is said to be claiming that the road is in a poor state of repair and is dangerous in wet or icy conditions, adding that they "continue to seek a solution".

While easy to dismiss as another example of 'Health and Safety Gone Mad', this woeful tale does highlight a serious point. The dangers of cobbled street surfaces were possibly overstated in this instance, but it is the more innocuous, 'every day' floors which are often more unsafe. An obviously uneven surface clearly ought to be negotiated with care, but flat, hard floors while less visibly hazardous to the unsuspecting pedestrian, are potentially much more slippery. The wet and icy conditions experienced by all areas of the country earlier this year highlighted this point as hospital fracture clinics filled to overflowing with people who had suffered slips and trips – not just outdoors in the icy conditions but also inside, as moisture carried indoors by footwear contaminated hard surfaces and made them much more hazardous. In today's litigious society this leaves companies and public organisations vulnerable to expensive compensation claims caused by accidents on their premises.

Steven Phillips, Managing Director of flooring care specialists Bonasystems explains:

“All hard floors in wet environments carry an especially high risk and what is frequently not understood is that installing non-slip flooring is not enough, because without daily maintenance the surfaces still present a slipping hazard. Certainly indoors, many distressing accidents can be avoided and companies and public organisations will want to do everything they can to avoid compensation claims caused by accidents on their premises.

“One of the problems we’ve found is that organisations don’t test for – and therefore don’t know – the degree to which their floors are slip resistant when they are dry, let alone when they are wet. As part of their ongoing health & safety programmes all organisations should have anti-slip strategies. Factories, leisure clubs, shopping malls, transport hubs, hospitals and nursing homes are among the premises which should be rigorously evaluating the safety of their floor surfaces to minimise slipping hazards.”

For further information and a free slip-risk assessment report, visit www.bonasystems.com.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

- Founded in 1990, Bonasystems Limited is based in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire and aims to help clients achieve ‘safe, clean, germ-free surfaces’
- Its commercial cleaning, restoration and protection products and processes include:
 - BONACLEAN – specialist floor and wall cleaner for limescale and calcium removal
 - BONAGRIP – contract-applied non-slip chemical process for ceramic, porcelain and natural hard surface floors
 - BONAPRO 1, 2 & 3 – cleans and restores hard floors after deeply ingrained soiling
 - BONAMAIN+ – cleaner that also helps combat the transmission of infections
 - BONACLEAN GEL & BONAMAIN+ GEL – for textured rubber floor surfaces
 - BONADECOR – cleaner to remove oil, grease and scuff marks from most floors
 - BONASEAL – breathable sealant to protect natural and porous hard surfaces
- Products are Compliant with US, European and UK health and safety standards

- Approval by leading Spanish and Italian tile manufacturers
- Corporate member of the CSSA, Fitness Industry Association and CERAM
- Blue chip customers in seven European countries and Middle East with expansion planned into the US and other global markets

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