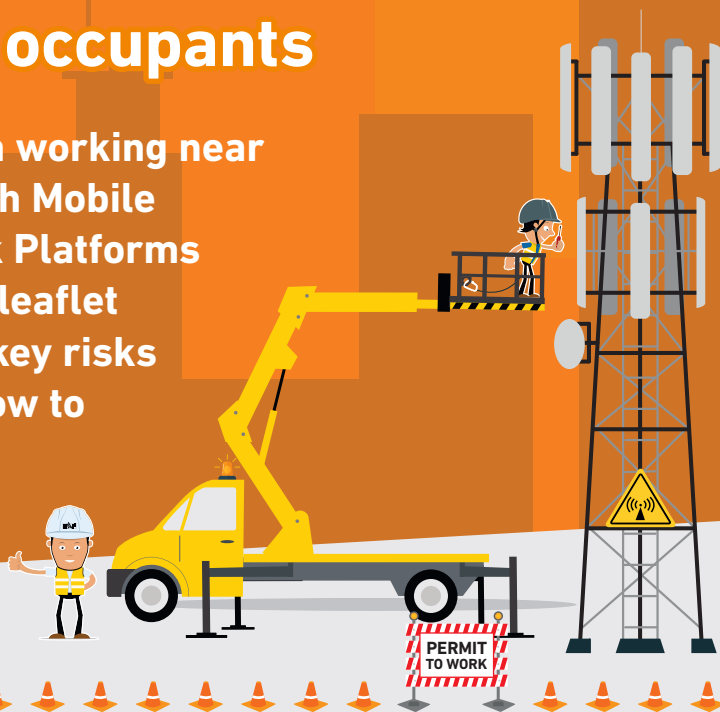


Radio Frequency (RF) risks to MEWP operators and platform occupants

Stay safe when working near RF sources with Mobile Elevating Work Platforms (MEWPs). This leaflet highlights the key risks from RF and how to avoid them.



Working at height alongside sources of Radio-Frequency (RF) radiation can be high risk, especially as many people are unaware of the dangers posed. It is essential that the MEWP and its personnel are positioned at a safe distance and that advice from the mast or antenna owner is sought prior to working.





What is RF Radiation?

RF radiation is a type of non-ionizing radiation that causes molecules to vibrate, which generates heat. Common uses of RF radiation include:

- Microwave ovens
- Radar
- Medical appliances
- Telecommunications and broadcast services.

The main effects of exposure to RF are related to heating (sometimes called thermal effects). High doses of RF radiation can raise body temperature, even to the point of being fatal. Focusing RF radiation on one area of the body can lead to burns and the breakdown of tissue.

Who is at risk?

- MEWP Operators
- Roofers
- Electricians
- Builders
- Scaffolders

In fact, anyone who works on or near rooftops, sides of building or other locations where RF generating sources are located. From the ground you may be safe, but once you start to ascend the risks change and sources are often hidden.

What should be done?

- Carry out RF awareness training to better understand the risks.
- Adhere to your employers RF risk assessment and safe work method statement.
- Never work in front of an antenna until you can prove it has been isolated and made safe.
- Always follow local/regional guidance in the area you are working in.
- Be vigilant and look out for antennas or signs warning of the presence of antennas - adhere to any warning signs or instructions.
- Descend and seek further advice if antennas are observed or if symptoms of exposure are felt, such as sweating extensively, increased pulse rate, nausea or headaches.
- If in doubt, cease work and ask your employer and the antenna owner for information.
- Do not re-start until you know RF sources have been depowered or have been made safe.

Further guidance that provides more detail on RF risks and safe operating procedures when using MEWPs near RF sources visit www.ipaf.org/resources



For more information on all of IPAF's safety campaigns and links to relevant technical guidance visit www.ipaf.org/safe or find your nearest office or representative via www.ipaf.org/contact.

