workstation! The Sportspark are running free classes in Yoga, Pilates and general fitness. Look out for the healthy meal options at Cedars and other food outlets across campus.

See http://www.reading.ac.uk/humanresources/rdgonly/health\_work\_wellbeing.htm

Sessions can be booked in advance so take advantage and book early - we look forward to seeing you there.

## Anyone for drinks?

As we approach the time of year when social events take place, this is a timely reminder of the licensing requirements for alcohol and regulated entertainment.

It is the responsibility of the person organising an event where a licence is required to apply to the appropriate local authority a minimum of ten working days before the event. The cost of a licence is £21.

You need a licence if you:

• charge to attend the event and free alcohol is provided within the entry fee, or have a cash bar

If more information is needed about the storage and use of LPG, contact Health and Safety Services.

## Gas cylinders and cryogenic gases

Senior technicians and H&SS staff attended a gas safety training course last week. This was geared towards safe use of industrial gas cylinders and regulators, and handling of cryogenic gases. This is the first step in cascading training to all staff and postgraduates students who handle or use laboratory gases. Selected key points from the training were:

- you must have standard operating procedures (SOPs) how to connect a gas regulator, filling and moving cryogenic vessels. All users must be trained in accordance with the SOP, and assessed for competency before being allowed to work unsupervised;
- •
- a if possible, use a suitable trolley;
- •

nitrogen mean that the person who designed and manufactured the attachment takes on all the legal responsibilities of a designer under Section 6 of the Health and Safety at Work

a proprietary piece of kit from reputable suppliers!

• you must have an emergency plan that takes into primarily a

catastrophic release of gas;

• if sending a cryogenic vessel in a lift, you must vent to atmosphere in a safe area, until the pressure falls below 50% of the relief valve set pressure.

## Risk assessment – two sides of the coin

In the summer term, we will be asking Schools/Directorates to provide copies of their risk registers and risk assessments. To put this exercise in perspective, here are two angles on risk assessment.

Firstly, a safety adviser acting as a consultant to a quarrying company has recently been prosecuted and fined after HSE found that he had failed to make a suitable assessment of the risk to health of employees exposed to respirable crystalline silica, arising from the processing of sandstone.

As a result he was fined £1,000 and ordered to pay costs of £700, having pleaded guilty to an offence under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

However, on the other side of the coin, it is a waste of time and resources to prepare written risk assessments for insignificant or trivial risks. As an example, many departments will use small quantities of everyday chemicals which have a hazard warning label and are supplied with a safety data sheet. In these circumstances you only need to record:

- the substances and the form in which it occurs liquid, powder, pellets, dust etc;
- the measures to be taken to adequately control exposure e.g. taking account of the information provided by the supplier, and using the substances in accordance with their accompanying instructions; and
- a statement that because the substances pose little or no risk, a detailed risk assessment is not necessary.

Where exposure to a number of different hazardous substances pose little or no risk, the employer may group together on a single record the significant findings of the assessments for all the individual substances. The record may also groupces

