

**NEWS AND EVENTS**

## BICSc trains Greek hospital cleaners

BICSc has signed a training agreement with Dennis Paraskevopolous of CPT, an Athens based supplier to the Greek contract cleaning and hospital cleaning specialists.

Dennis, who is already well known for his training to IICRC standards and represents Woosafe in Greece, has now qualified as a trainer and Assessor for COPC. He attended the BCI 2004 conference where he made many helpful training contacts from around the world.

Dennis, with the help of some trainer/assessors from Ireland, hosted the first COPC training programme in Athens.

Dennis said: "The Greek cleaning industry is very fragmented and unlike the UK, does not have nationally recognised standards or qualifications for cleaning staff. The practical nature of COPC training and assessment makes it an ideal qualification for any country where English is not widely spoken."

Keith Aldis BICSc Chief Executive added: "This is precisely the type of involvement that BICSc wants to expand around the world. Our role is to assist in setting-up such schemes, training the assessors and letting the people with the local knowledge grow and deliver the concept." •



## More member benefits

Our members now have a wide range of important money saving services, available through the BICSc membership of the Northampton Chamber of Commerce

### Cut energy costs

90% of companies are paying too much for their energy, according to independent utility management company Utility Auditing Ltd.

Paul Backx, managing director said that: "Most people fail to question a utility bill because they don't understand the terminology used. As a result, we find that about ninety per cent of businesses are being overcharged, or are paying for something they don't use."

Utility Auditing works in partnership with Northamptonshire Chamber and over 40 others nationwide, to ensure that businesses don't miss out on potential savings. In the past few years, it has helped companies reduce gas and electricity bills by an average 20 per cent.

Clients using this exclusive chamber service can count on every penny of the money they save, because Utility Auditing does not charge for its analysis services, or claw back any share of the savings negotiated on a client's behalf.

### 24 hour Legal Advice Line

Chamber Members have access to qualified advice 24 hours a day 7 days a week entirely FREE of charge.

What would happen if you were faced with an escalating personnel issue, the threat of litigation over health and safety or an investigation by the Inland Revenue?

Provided by Composite Legal Expenses Ltd, a leading national consultancy, our legal advice service provides the expertise you need to protect your business. As this advice line is totally confidential, our Chamber Members know that they can use it confidently on a range of issues from Tax and VAT investigation to Employment problems.

### Healthcare Scheme

Over 192 million working days are lost each year through illness, at a cost to British business of £10.7 billion. Private Health Cover is one way to help safeguard your business profitability, and as a highly valued part of your employee benefits package, it could also help you to recruit and retain top calibre staff.

Northamptonshire Chamber in partnership with BUPA, the largest private health and care organisation in the UK, can now offer Members up to 20% off of BUPA's normal subscription rate.

### Health Cash Plan

Our health cash plan covers the cost of minor medical treatments not normally covered by the NHS or private Health Care schemes.

Premiums do not increase because of your age and claiming is simple and quick. You can even claim in some cases when the treatment you received was free of charge. Treatments covered by the plan include: dental, optical, in-patient, X-ray or scan, maternity/parental payment, acupuncture, chiropractic treatment, and homeopathy. It is backed with a 24 hour helpline.

### Fleet Assist

Roadside Assistance for company vehicles is offered at preferential rates for with savings of up to 48%.

In partnership with the AA, the UK's largest breakdown organisation we offer Members, preferential rates on a range of options.

With a choice of 5 packages, there is bound to be one that gives cover to meet your budget and recovery needs.

The Chamber Fleet Assist scheme is available to all member companies and you can cover as many cars as you like.

Contact: Kate Watts at Northamptonshire Chamber on 01604 490414 quoting BICS48. •

## UK Trade Alert

No, this is not a new scientific early warning system of alien activity in our trade. It's a really useful government initiative. No more jokes please about 'We're from the Ministry and we're here to help you' - this really does work.

www.tradeinfor.com is a free web-based email service that keeps you up to date with a variety of topics from HMCE and DEFRA affecting the importing and exporting.

It has sections on trading with the EU, finding out more about products produced and brought, codes and guides to completing import/export and

useful information for your business.

It is an easy-to-read site containing plenty of statistics, trade trends, government data links, trade related organisations around the world, statistical bulletins and fact sheets and past history relating to exchange rates of the world's currencies. •