

September 2017

Workplace issues

Key stories inside

All about incident notification

WorkSafe Month and Expo

Are you in a risky occupation?

WorkSafe
TASMANIA

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Phone:
1300 366 322

Email:
wstinfo@justice.tas.gov.au

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Throughout, the acronyms 'WHS' stands for work health and safety and 'PCBU' stands for person conducting a business or undertaking.

Building Safe and Healthy Workplaces



Welcome to the September 2017 edition of Workplace Issues. With the often cold and dark days of winter behind us, spring is a great time to focus on getting healthier, fitter and more active.

Many of us will take advantage of the longer, warmer days to get outdoors and improve our health and wellbeing. I will too, as a keen cyclist, squash and tennis player, trout fisherman and lover of the outdoors.

I'm passionate about building a healthier, safer Tasmania and have also been a long-time advocate for

healthy lifestyles through my role as Ambassador for Diabetes Australia.

With Australians spending about one third of their lives at work, it makes good sense to consider workplaces as prime opportunities to improve health and wellbeing. This in turn can also improve safety and lift business performance, as a healthy workplace is often a productive one.

The Hodgman Liberal Government is committed to supporting these positive changes by investing over \$6.4 million over the next four years through its Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan.

The plan aims to help people become more engaged in taking control of their own health and wellbeing and improve health outcomes across Tasmania. It includes workplaces turning their good intentions into sustainable healthy habits, through the Tasmania Healthy and Safe Workplace Initiative.

It's an ambitious plan, since Tasmania currently has some of the worst population health outcomes in the country, with high rates of chronic disease and health risk factors such as smoking, obesity, poor nutrition, low physical activity levels, and risky alcohol consumption. But together we can make a difference, with our workplaces also playing a role.

Workplace health and wellbeing initiatives can be as simple as organising lunchtime walking groups or ensuring healthy food options are available in the tearoom. You can take it further by organising education sessions and health check-ups. Other ideas can be found in the 'Build a wellbeing' column inside this magazine or on the WorkSafe website at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au (search for 'wellbeing resources'). Health and wellbeing will also be a key theme in WorkSafe Month 2017.

I look forward to seeing more Tasmanian workplaces embrace health and wellbeing, and enjoy the safety and business performance benefits that can result.

Finally, I should also note the wonderful work done by WorkSafe Tasmania staff and others through the Asbestos Awareness and Education campaign that has been running over the past months. The feedback received has been extremely positive, with increased traffic to the WorkSafe website and Helpline on this important public health issue. Well done to all involved!

As always, stay healthy and safe, and enjoy this edition of Workplace Issues.

What sort of incidents must you report to WorkSafe?

Between 1 January and 30 June this year, WorkSafe has received over 440 incident notifications from workplaces.

You don't need to report every incident that occurs to WorkSafe; in their caution, some workplaces are reporting insignificant injuries. So which ones must you tell us about, and how?

What to notify

Report these to WorkSafe:

- if someone dies, or
- if someone suffers a serious injury or serious illness (they require immediate hospitalisation or medical treatment), or
- if a dangerous incident occurs (for example a fire, explosion, infrastructure collapse, chemical spill or leak, electric shock).

You can find fully detailed definitions of the last two categories on the WorkSafe Tasmania website. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and choose the 'report an incident' button.

Electric shocks must be notified to both WorkSafe Tasmania and TasNetworks (call 132 004).

Triggers for notifying

Safe Work Australia has produced a fact sheet that lists various types of triggers for notification, and gives examples of things that are and are not notifiable.

The key trigger is that the incident arises out of the conduct of the business or undertaking.

Using this as a guide, it can be seen that something like a child at school falling over while playing sport, an elderly resident of a nursing home suffering a heart attack, or a minor

motor vehicle accident will not normally be notifiable.

Think in terms of an incident being caused by:

- a failure of a process
- a fault in a piece of equipment, or
- insufficient training or supervision.

This will help your decision on notification.

This fact sheet also covers public places and sporting events.

To find this fact sheet, go to www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au and search for 'incident notification'.

What doesn't need notifying

An incident is not notifiable just because it happens at or near a workplace. To be notifiable, an incident must arise out of the conduct of the business or undertaking.

Only work-related incidents are notifiable.

Incidents may happen for reasons that don't have anything to do with work or the conduct of the business or undertaking. For example:

- a worker or another person suffers a heart attack while at work, which is unrelated to work or the conduct of the business or undertaking
- an amateur athlete is injured while playing for the local soccer team and requires immediate medical treatment (this is not work)
- a person driving to work is injured in a car accident (where driving is not part of their work)
- a person with epilepsy has a seizure at work.

These kinds of incidents are not notifiable.

How to notify

You can notify WorkSafe Tasmania at any time by calling 1300 366 322.

You must follow this up within 48 hours, by lodging our Incident Notice Form to WorkSafe by email, fax or mail. Find this form on our website — go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and choose the 'report an incident' button.

You must also preserve the site of the incident until an inspector arrives. However, there are exceptions to this:

- to help an injured person
- to remove a deceased person
- when it is essential to make the site safe or to reduce the risk of a further notifiable incident happening
- when it is associated with a police investigation
- when an inspector or the regulator gives permission.

Record keeping

Finally, you must keep a record of each notifiable incident for at least five years from the day that notice of the incident is given to the regulator.

There are penalties for not doing this — just as there are penalties for not telling WorkSafe about a notifiable incident.

Even without notifying

Even when WorkSafe Tasmania may not require notification, you should still investigate and where possible, implement actions to prevent a recurrence.

How to investigate an incident

An incident investigation will help you determine the causes of an incident so you can take steps to ensure that the same incident will not happen again. Employers must investigate and document the following incidents:

- serious incidents
- incidents that result in injuries that need medical treatment
- incidents that have the potential for serious injury (for example, near misses).

Start your investigation as soon as possible, and soon as it is safe to do so.

See our article on the opposite page for details on reporting the incident to WorkSafe, which you must do immediately for certain incidents.

Who should take part in an investigation?

Everyone in the business has a role to play. Workers must report incidents to their supervisors. Employers must initiate incident investigations promptly.

If possible, investigations teams should include at least one employer representative and one worker representative.

What are the goals of investigation?

As much as possible, an investigation must:

- determine the causes of the incident
- identify any unsafe conditions, acts, or procedures that contributed to the incident
- find ways to prevent similar incidents.

How should investigations be conducted?

Interview witnesses and the people involved in the incident even if they weren't present at the incident. For example, it may be appropriate to

interview a supervisor who gave instructions at the start of the shift or a trainer who previously instructed the workers involved.

Questions to ask

The investigation should answer the following questions:

- Who was involved or injured?
- Where did the incident happen?
- When did it occur?
- What were the causes?
- Why was an unsafe act or condition allowed?
- How can similar incidents be prevented?

Factors to consider

Usually there are several factors that cause or contribute to an incident. Try to identify as many causes as possible. Factors to consider when investigating an incident include:

- unsafe or defective equipment
- unsafe environment or conditions
- poor housekeeping
- physical hazards
- poor planning
- poor instruction
- unsafe work practices
- unusual or unfamiliar work conditions
- personal factors.

What to do next

After your investigation is complete, share the findings with your WHS committee and representatives, and your staff.

Act on any recommendations for change: be that to work procedures, the workplace environment, training and supervision practices, or equipment or chemicals used.

Investigating musculoskeletal injuries

These injuries — such as sprains or strains — may require you to think about events a little differently.

They may not result from a single event such as lifting or twisting, but rather from a history of activity.

For more information on preventing and investigating musculoskeletal injuries, see the code of practice 'Hazardous manual tasks'. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for CP110.

This article is based on information from WorkSafe ACT at www.worksafe.act.gov.au.

What is an incident?

An incident is any an accident or other occurrence that resulted in (or had the potential for) causing a death, injury, occupational disease, or damage to equipment or property.

Incidents include:

- accidents in which a worker is injured or killed
- accidents in which no one is hurt but equipment or property is damaged
- near misses.

The terms 'incident' and 'accident' are often used interchangeably, but the preferred term is incident, because it includes near misses.

What is a near miss?

A near miss is an incident in which there is no injury or damage but that could have resulted in an injury or death, or damage to equipment or property. Near misses may indicate hazardous conditions or acts that need to be corrected.



New threats of silicosis

Recent media stories in Australia and overseas have profiled tradespeople developing the insidious disease silicosis, after being exposed to engineered or artificial stone products used in kitchen or bathroom benchtops.

What is silicosis?

Silicosis is a fast-acting, progressive, disabling and often fatal lung disease caused by exposure to certain silica dust. In the past the disease has been associated with mining, quarrying, drilling and foundry work; its occurrence gradually diminished as successful control measures (such as using water to keep dust down) were introduced into those workplaces.

But as these recent media stories and a NSW parliamentary inquiry have highlighted, the disease is reappearing.

According to some sources, the situation is most critical in the manufactured stone industry where workers cut and shape

kitchen, bathroom and commercial benchtops, without adequate control measures in place.

What can be done?

Silicosis is a preventable disease. If your workplace conducts this kind of work, look at what you can do to minimise your workers' exposure to dust through engineering controls and safe work procedures. Do a risk assessment of your current processes and involve your workers.

Codes of practice that you can use to guide you are:

- Abrasive blasting (CP101): While about blasting processes, it has sections on dust hazards including silica
- How to manage WHS risks (CP112): This code explains the risk assessment process in detail.

To find these go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'codes 2016'.

The American National Institute for

Occupational Safety and Health (www.cdc.gov/niosh) advises: 'Whenever possible, cutting, grinding and shaping should be done wet. Ventilation and filtration systems should be used to collect silica-containing dust at its source'.

The American Occupational Safety and Health Administration also has some general practical guidelines for minimising silica exposure. Go to www.osha.gov and search for '3176'.

The OHSReps website has a dedicated page: go to www.ohsrep.org.au/hazards/chemicals/silica to read its practical guidance.

Victims have cited lack of personal protective equipment (PPE), but PPE should always be a last resort control measure. And as one doctor has said, 'use of face masks alone are not sufficient to protect workers'. So do provide your workers with suitable PPE (determined through your risk process) and do provide adequate training on its correct use and maintenance — but do not rely on PPE as the sole protection against dust exposure.

TasNetworks warning: Working **safely** near overhead powerlines

There have been a recent spate of vehicles and plant coming into contact with overhead powerlines.

Often these contacts were the result of unauthorised entry to powerline 'no go zones', endangering the lives of machinery operators, members of the public, and causing inconvenience to the community through unnecessary power interruptions.

So if you're working, driving or doing anything in the vicinity of powerlines, it's essential that you look up, look out.

What to do

Call emergency services on 000 or TasNetworks on 132 004 immediately if your vehicle or plant equipment comes into contact with overhead powerlines.

Remain in the vehicle and ensure those in the vicinity remain at least eight metres from the lines and anything they're in contact with.

Working safely

Employers must make sure all workers and contractors are alert to surrounding powerlines and understand the importance of the 'no go zone' as part of their induction to the site.

Using safety observers or spotters will help avoid vehicle and plant equipment

crossing into the 'no go zone'.

No one may work within the three metre 'no go zone' of powerlines unless they have advised TasNetworks and received authorisation for the work.

TasNetworks encourages anyone to report any at-risk action and behaviours carried out near powerlines.

Important safety tips

- Check the location of all overhead powerlines before you start work.
- Know the exact height of your vehicle / equipment and load, especially when your tray or excavator is fully raised or extended.
- Always use an observer to monitor your clearances.
- Never allow anyone to ride on a high load when travelling beneath powerlines.
- Metal irrigation pipes being moved near powerlines should be kept below head level to avoid any possible contact.
- Jets of water from travelling irrigators should be kept clear of powerlines as they may cause the conductors to touch and could result in a loss of power supply, system disturbances or even a fire.

In any life threatening emergency, call 000.

To report faults or for further information about electricity infrastructure, call TasNetworks on 132 004.

This article is based on information provided by TasNetworks

You can find full guidance in WorkSafe's 'Guide to working safely with mobile plant near overhead and underground electrical powerlines'. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'GB137'.

Have you registered for WorkSafe Month?

This October, WorkSafe Tasmania is offering many ways for you to get involved with WHS and wellbeing.

Inaugural WorkSafer Expo

The inaugural WorkSafer Expo will be held on 23 and 24 October at Princes Wharf 1 in Salamanca, Hobart.

The expo will showcase products, services, new technologies and innovations vital to WHS and wellbeing. There'll be interactive learning opportunities, seminars, forums, networking sessions and keynote speakers, all addressing issues vital to your workplaces and industry. This free event offers a one stop shop for WHS and wellbeing.

WHS regional forums

Industry, professionals, decision makers and the community will have the opportunity to join in a facilitated discussion around engaging the community in WHS and wellbeing.

These free forums will be held in:

- Launceston: 19 October at the Hotel Grand Chancellor
- Hobart: 23 October at Princes Wharf 1 (at the WorkSafer Expo)
- Ulverstone: 31 October at Pier 01 Function Centre.

Walk for WHS and Wellbeing

This new initiative will get you moving away from your desk and onto the pavement! Join the community to celebrate WHS and wellbeing.

Better Work Tas workplace tours

Better Work Tasmania members are inviting you into their workplaces during WorkSafe Month to learn about their workplace initiatives and solutions. The initiative is built on the previous Better Work Tasmania mentoring, peer-to-peer learning and sharing initiatives.

Safe Work Australia Virtual Seminar Series

Safe Work Australia will again broadcast free online seminars that showcase the latest thinking, research, developments, and best practice in WHS. Watch these at www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au.

Betty the Asbestos Bus

Betty is making her maiden voyage to Tassie during October to deliver asbestos awareness to the Tasmanian community.

If you're a DIY renovator or tradie and see Betty, be sure to stop in and get some asbestos safety information (see the article in this edition for more details).

HSR Conference

This year's free health and safety representative Conference will be held in:

- Hobart: 17 October at the Hobart Function and Conference Centre
- Launceston: 25 October at the Tramsheds Function Centre.

If you're a HSR, come along to:

- build your knowledge about your role in the workplace
- increase your knowledge of WHS and wellbeing, workplace mental health and supporting injured workers
- get tools and resources to improve WHS and wellbeing in your workplace.

Register now!

It's not too late! For details of all these events and to register to attend, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and follow the links for WorkSafe Month 2017.



WorkSafe for next 12

WorkSafe Tasmania has outlined its business activities and priorities for the next 12 months.

These are guided by its Strategic plan (which you can find at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au under the 'About WorkSafe' link) and cover:

- work health, safety and wellbeing
- workers compensation and asbestos compensation
- licensing and accreditation for high risk activities
- dangerous goods
- industries such as the mining and farming sectors.



priorities 2 months

Some activities are internally focussed, to ensure WorkSafe processes are streamlined, efficient, and up to date with contemporary technologies.

Others could mean you'll see an inspector or an advisor visiting your workplace, to help you understand and meet your requirements under the many laws that WorkSafe administers. There'll also be a focus on engaging and educating the community towards greater awareness of WHS.

Watch this space and our website at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au for updates.



Ensuring safety for visitors to your workplace

Do you have visitors or members of the public, including family members, coming into your workplace? If so, have you thought about how to control their access to ensure their health and safety?

It's not just the safety of your workers that you need to manage. If you have site management policies or procedures, these need to clearly state how you will ensure the safety of visitors to your workplace as well.

For example, think about where visitors arrive at and enter your workplace, then consider the routes and movements of workplace vehicles such as trucks, forklifts and mobile plant. Do these operate in the same area that visitors enter? A good idea would be to have a designated car parking area away from busy operations; another option to consider is having one-way car thoroughfares.

Designate any option you implement with signage and line markings. Clear yellow lines are often used to delineate

pedestrian walkways from vehicle thoroughfares.

If there are blind corners, consider two-way mirrors, bollards and/or fencing to help prevent any incident between vehicles and people.

Have clear signage that directs visitors to your front office or reception. Sign them in and out for security and emergency management reasons (so you know who is on site).

If your visitors are moving to other locations on site, away from your reception area (and this includes contractors who are going to other areas of your site to do work), note this location on your sign-in register.

It may be appropriate to provide your visitors with personal protective equipment such as hi-vis vests (for example, if trucks, forklifts and mobile plant are operating), helmets and hearing protection, depending on the circumstances.

If your visitor is unfamiliar with the site, or is going to an area where significant hazards are present, it may be appropriate to accompany them.

If you have a workshop or warehouse at your workplace, it's important to restrict visitors from these areas. Again, have clear signage and if possible, erect a physical barrier such as a gate, roller door, chain or retractable barrier strip at the entrance and exit points.

Avoid bringing your visitors (especially children) into areas with moving machinery, or ensure they are accompanied.



Asbestos safety campaign continues

On July 11, Minister Guy Barnett launched the second phase of WorkSafe Tasmania's asbestos safety campaign.

While the first phase of the campaign was very successful at raising awareness and providing practical tools to DIY home renovators plus tradespeople, it can't be assumed that the job is done.

So the second phase builds on the awareness raised in the first phase (2 May–31 June) by rolling out more billboards in strategic locations around the state. They'll carry the campaign's

key message: 'The safest tool to use when dealing with asbestos is your phone/tablet/computer to search for information and advice'.

Some asbestos facts

Whether you're a workplace/tradesperson or a DIY renovator, if a house (or garage, shed or commercial building) was built or renovated before the 1990s, it probably contains some form of asbestos.

Asbestos was added to over 3,000 products, including (but not limited to)

those used in home areas commonly renovated or repaired:

- bathrooms
- kitchens
- under vinyl floors, behind tiles and in carpet underlay
- carports, sheds and outbuildings
- guttering, downpipes and roof sheeting

For more practical guidance about being safe working around asbestos, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety

Evaluating the asbestos campaign

At the end of the first phase of the asbestos awareness campaign, WorkSafe has evaluated the campaign's various communications activities and the response to them by DIY home renovators and tradies, the campaign's main target audiences.

How

We conducted a telephone survey and measured the analytics for channels such as our website and facebook pages.

Key findings

- There was positive recall of the campaign, especially among the DIY renovator audience.
- DIYs were more likely to take action

Look out for Betty the Asbestos bus



Coming to Tassie for the first time is Betty the asbestos bus!

Betty is a purpose built, mobile model home designed to demonstrate where asbestos might be found in and around any Australian home built or renovated before 1987. She is a community engagement and experiential awareness initiative of the Asbestos Education Committee, in partnership with the Asbestos

Diseases Research Institute (ADRI).

Betty's mission is to educate all Australians about the dangers of asbestos — so we all think smart, think safe, think 'asbestosawareness.com.au'.

Betty visits communities around Australia and for the first time, she is coming to Tasmania. She'll be visiting every local government region (except King and Flinders Islands, due to access issues).

So if you're a DIY home renovator or a tradie with questions about asbestos in homes, look out for Betty in a prime location near you!

For details of Betty's visits and where she'll be stopping, go to her facebook page at www.facebook.com/BettytheADRIhouse.

than tradespeople, and this action included looking for an asbestos assessor/removalist and going to the WorkSafe website for information.

- TV ads had a high frequency of views.
- The dedicated web page for DIYs was twice as popular as the tradespeople page.
- The asbestos assessor/removalist database web page was a popular

resource, receiving almost 50% of its views for the year during the campaign period.

- Numbers for Facebook posts were consistently high across the campaign.
- The number of asbestos-related enquiries to our Helpline call centre was high during the campaign.
- Enquiries from DIYs to the Helpline was double that of tradespeople.

What now

Practical information about asbestos safety is still available on our website. So whether you're a workplace/tradesperson or a DIY home renovator, find practical guidance about being safe working around asbestos at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety.

ASBESTOS: COLD HARD FACT NUMBER



Manufacturing and using asbestos is banned in Australia.

All types of asbestos were banned in Australian workplaces from 31 December 2003. This ban is reflected in Tasmania's work, health and safety laws.

Asbestos is still widely used in some countries. In fact, some countries may classify goods 'asbestos free' if they meet a certain low level of asbestos content. In Australia, a product with any level of asbestos is prohibited.

To get the cold hard facts on asbestos
in your home or workplace go to
www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/asbestos-safety
or call **1300 366 322**.



Putting the spotlight on risky occupations

WorkSafe Tasmania recently analysed 2016's riskiest occupations and industries by business size.

Small business

Results show that for small businesses (less than 20 workers), the riskiest combinations of occupations and industries were:

- carpenters and joiners in the construction industry
- labourers and factory process workers in the manufacturing industry
- farm, forestry and garden workers, and those working with livestock, in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries industry
- sales assistants and store persons in the retail trade industry.

The most common injury involving lost time (known as lost time injuries or LTI) to construction trades workers were soft tissue injuries caused by muscular stress while handling objects. Other common LTIs were wounds and lacerations caused by building materials, tools or machinery.

Soft tissue injuries commonly affect the knee, while wounds and lacerations frequently affect the fingers, thumb or hand.

Medium sized business

For medium sized businesses (20 to 199 workers), the riskiest occupations and industries were:

- personal carers, and health and welfare support workers, in the health care and social assistance industry
- factory process workers in the manufacturing industry
- labourers in the construction industry
- farm, forestry and garden workers in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries industry.

The most common LTI to special care workers were soft tissue injuries caused by muscular stress while assisting an adult person in care.

The most commonly affected body location was the upper or lower back followed by the shoulder.

Large business

For large businesses (200 or more workers), the riskiest occupations and industries were:

- personal carers, midwifery and nursing professionals in the health care and social assistance industry
- police, fire and emergency workers in the public administration and safety industry
- school teachers and education aides in the education and training industry
- sales assistants in the food retail trade industry.

The most common LTI to carers and health professionals were soft tissue injuries caused by body stressing while looking after adult patients or residents in care.

The second most common LTI to these occupations were anxiety and stress related disorders.

What you can do

If you're in one of these occupations or industries, WorkSafe has plenty of resources to help you make sure your workers stay safe.

A good starting point is the code of practice How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'codes 2016'.

If you need some hands-on help, get a free visit from one of our Advisors. They help small to medium sized business to better manage safety and implement solutions that are relevant, practical and affordable. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'advisors'.

You can also go to the Safe Work Australia website for comprehensive information by industry. Go to www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au and click on the 'Safety by Industry and Business' tab.

Build a safety system: Recruitment and placement

In this series, we've helped you build an effective safety management system, specific to your workplace needs. You'll find previous articles in past editions (starting from the September 2015 edition) at www.worksafe.tas.gov.au under the Resources tab.

In this edition, we look at how your safety management system needs to consider recruiting and placing new workers. It's a shorter, simpler topic this time.

Look at your recruiting procedures

Make sure:

- the job descriptions you write identify the specific requirements that are relevant to the WHS tasks that are part of the job. Our June 2016 edition covers positions descriptions in greater detail
- the processes you use to sort through job applications and interview those applicants will choose the people with the best competencies for the job.

You should only allocate WHS tasks to workers who are capable of undertaking the tasks safely. But new workers can be trained so their skills match the requirements of the task. We've covered training in our December 2016 and March 2017 editions, so check those out.

Build a wellbeing program: Linking wellbeing and safety

With Australians spending about one third of their lives at work, it makes good sense to consider the workplace as an important setting to improve health and wellbeing. In this series we'll help you build your workplace wellbeing program. In this edition, we explore in detail how wellbeing can so easily be linked to WHS — and why it's important to do so.

Safety plus wellbeing works

The benefits of workplace wellbeing easily translate into the area of workplace safety.

WHS measures require all workers to be mindful and aware of the safest choice when acting at work, and unsurprisingly, the safest choice is most often the healthiest choice. In return, workplaces can make this easier for workers by making the healthy choice the easy choice.

Follow the rules

Let's see this in action with some examples:

- correct lifting procedures reduce acute and immediate injury for workers, but also minimise overall muscle strain, reducing the chance of a subsequent injury which may not be work-related
- following guidelines around fatigue management at work not only makes for safer workers in the workplace, it also minimises the harm caused to an individual by long-term sleep debt.

By providing a workplace environment that supports making the healthy choice the easy choice, you can help mitigate the potential health risks experienced by workers and show them the importance of health in everyday life.

Get the codes

While many codes of practice concentrate on particular safety issues, some also refer to welfare or wellbeing issues.

For example, the code on Managing the Work Environment and Facilities (CP124) outlines that a workplace must provide workers with clean drinking water at all times, including for workers at mobile or remote sites. The code also encourages workplaces to provide dining facilities for eating, preparing and storing food.

This links strongly to the healthy eating and hydration messages that are encouraged when promoting workplace wellbeing.

To find this code and others, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'codes 2016'.

Making safe workers healthy workers

The following strategies may help you strengthen the link between health, safety and wellbeing in your workplace:

- if you're planning a specific wellbeing working group or committee, consider instead if it would fit into your current WHS committee. In smaller workplaces

especially, it may make sense to have both groups under the one banner; there's often an overlap in people and activities. This will save time and help integrate wellbeing into your business culture

- when reviewing your current safety procedures or introducing new ones, consider any wellbeing aspects to the procedure. For example, introducing stand-and-stretch breaks into meetings longer than 30 minutes will reduce risks associated with sitting, which will have longer-term positive health implications for your workers
- just as you'd encourage your workers employees to identify, assess and fix a WHS hazard, encourage them to identify, assess and fix a wellbeing hazard. Look for areas that might have higher health risks: for example, sedentary roles in administration or transport, or work roles with high levels of stress. Risk assessments on health issues are an important way to help identify hazards, find control measures and keep health on your workplace radar
- your duty of care extends to ensuring that workers are safe from psychological harm while at work. Traditional employee assistance programs can deal with mental and emotional wellbeing after a problem has occurred; but education, mental health awareness and a supportive workplace environment can address mental health risks at an early stage before they become a major issue.

Injury claims occurring in the last 6 months, between January and June 2017.

In the last 6 months:

There have been 3,079 claims as a result of workplace injury.

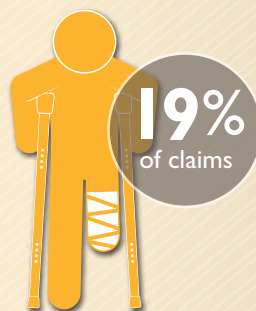
These claims have cost \$9.48 million and resulted in 18,430 days of work lost.

The average cost per claim is \$3,081 and almost 6 days were lost per claim.

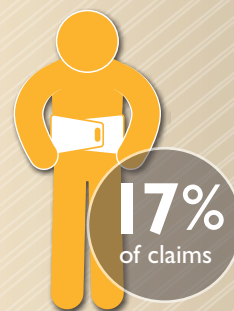
The top three types of injuries are:



Traumatic joint/ligament and muscle/tendon injury



Wounds, lacerations, amputations and internal organ damage



Musculoskeletal and connective tissue diseases

Over 7 out of 10 claims are from these 3 most common types of injuries.



Body stressing – this is the most common type of incident



Being hit by moving objects



Falls, trips and slips of a person

The top three types of incidents are:

Over 7 out of 10 claims are due to these 3 most common types of incidents.

The top three most affected industries are:



Health Care and Social Assistance



Public Administration and Safety



Construction

On average, 2 out of every 100 workers in the top 3 most affected industries had an injury claim in the last 6 months.

Data selection is based on injuries occurring in the 2017 calendar year to end of June.

Safety is good for business. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au for resources to help you



Helping injured workers to return to work

Despite injured workers facing challenges when returning to work, they don't have to do this on their own.

Good return to work outcomes are even more likely when others work together to provide the worker with ongoing support and assistance.

Typically, those involved in the return to work process include the employer, return to work co-ordinator and the treating doctor. In more complex cases, an injury management co-ordinator and/or workplace rehabilitation provider will also play a key role.

Injury management co-ordinators

Injury management co-ordinators (IMCs) oversee the entire return to work process, including:

- medical treatment
- rehabilitation
- return to work plans and injury management plans.

They act as a central contact point to ensure regular communication occurs, and foster good relationships between key parties.

IMCs become involved where an injured worker suffers a significant injury that is likely to result in total or partial incapacity for more than five working days. They're usually from the insurer's organisation, and must have completed training approved by the WorkCover Tasmania Board.

Workplace rehabilitation providers

Workplace rehabilitation providers (WRPs) can help employers and injured workers where their injury is complex or where there are difficulties with the return to work process.

Accredited WRPs are highly skilled individuals — such as occupational therapists, physiotherapists or psychologists — with expertise in addressing the physical, psychological and/or workplace barriers that may prevent an injured worker returning to work. This is achieved through delivering prescribed workplace rehabilitation services, including:

- making the initial workplace rehabilitation assessment
- assessing the functional capacity of the injured worker
- analysing the injured worker's job/tasks
- providing advice about job modification.

(For the full list of services, go to the WorkCover Board website at www.workcover.tas.gov.au, and look under the 'health providers' tab for 'workplace rehabilitation providers'.)

WRPs will typically be appointed by the insurer, employer or IMC, and must be accredited by the WorkCover Tasmania Board to deliver prescribed workplace rehabilitation services.

Sometimes the activities performed by

the IMC and WRPs combine, with the WRPs also performing rehabilitation co-ordination activities in addition to their prescribed services. These activities are undertaken on behalf of the IMC, and may include attending doctor appointments (however please note: the worker is entitled to private consultations with their doctor), preparing return to work and injury management plans, and providing a primary contact in the recovery process.

While this may be an effective means to help injured workers to return to work, it is important to remember that the IMC is responsible for ensuring these activities are completed and that accredited WRPs are the only group that can deliver prescribed services.

Ultimately everyone should strive for a collaborate approach to return to work, where there is trust, support and a willingness to regularly communicate and share information with one another.

While returning to work is not always easy, it is important to understand that work is generally good for health and wellbeing and that long-term work absence, work disability and unemployment typically have a negative impact on health and wellbeing

Accruing annual leave while on workers

The question of whether a worker continues to accrue leave while they're not working and are receiving workers compensation benefits is a complex one. The answer has historically differed depending on the state or territory they work in.

Section 130(2) of the Commonwealth Fair Work Act 2009 states that workers can't accrue leave during a period of workers compensation, unless a commonwealth, state or territory workers compensation law permits it ... and the Tasmanian Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 does not deal with accruing leave.

Workers with questions about their personal circumstances are encouraged to check the conditions of their award or agreement, and then contact their employer and/or the Fair Work Ombudsman by calling 13 13 94 or going to its website at www.fairwork.gov.au.

Five year scheme snapshot

WorkSafe recently analysed the performance of the Tasmanian workers compensation scheme over the five years between the 2012 and 2016 calendar years.

WorkSafe's analysts used its own data, plus that compiled by Safe Work Australia in the Comparative Performance Monitoring Report and the Return to Work Survey Report. The result was a snapshot of the current scheme performance from both a financial and experiential point of view.

Here's a selection of some of the key findings.

Claims

The number of claims per year, lost time claims and incidence rates (injuries per 1,000 workers) have all reduced over the five years.

For example, the number of claims per year has reduced by 21% from 9,930 in 2012 to 7,159 in 2016.

Costs

Over the five years, \$793.7 million was paid in claims costs; the average payment a year is \$158.8 million.

The cost per claim has averaged just over \$20,000.

Return to work

According to the latest Safe Work Australia Return to Work Survey (released in late 2016), 91% of injured Tasmanian workers had returned to work after an injury.

Tasmania scored well in this survey in comparison with the national average and other privately underwritten jurisdictions. For example:

- Tasmania scored third highest of the ten jurisdictions around how positive the respondents felt about their experience of the workers compensation system.
- 84% of Tasmanian respondents felt the system helped in their recovery, slightly higher than the national average of 81%
- 90% of respondents felt the medical treatment/services they received aided their return to work.

Everybody's Talking...

What are the risks associated with working in cold conditions?

Working in cold conditions is a hazard to workers. Ways they might be exposed to cold include doing outdoor work in winter months; or working in freezer plants, meat packinghouses and cold storage facilities.

Uncomfortably cold working conditions can:

- reduce mental alertness, due to cold-related discomfort
- decrease dexterity and sensitivity. As hands and feet become cold, stiff, numb and painful, a worker cannot perform manual tasks with as much dexterity or skill. Shivering also makes it difficult to perform work skilfully or accurately
- affect the deeper muscles, resulting in reduced muscular strength and stiffened joints
- increase the incidence of arthritis, rheumatism and bronchitis; muscle/tissue damage
- cause hypothermia, one of the most serious hazards of exposure to cold working conditions. It is a decrease in the core body temperature to a

level at which normal muscular and cerebral functions are impaired; it can also affect a pregnant woman's developing foetus

- cause frostbite, where tissue (usually on the hands, feet and face) is frozen during exposure to temperatures well below freezing. Damage may range from mild, superficial tissue damage to massive tissue damage and gangrene.

For all these reasons, incidents are more likely to occur in very cold working conditions. Research has found that incident rates increase as the temperature falls below 19°C.

If you're the employer with cold working environments:

- ensure appropriate personal protective equipment is issued and used
- provide facilities for workers to warm up, and encourage them to drink warm fluids such as soup or hot drinks
- introduce more frequent rest breaks
- consider delaying the work: can it be done at warmer times of the year without compromising on safety?

- educate workers about recognising the early symptoms of cold stress.

For more information read the Managing the Work Environment and Facilities code of practice. It has practical guidance on how to provide and maintain a physical work environment that is without risks to health and safety. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for CP124.

Who are competent persons for plant inspections?

Since 1 January 2013 (with the introduction of the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations 2012), the person with management or control of the item of plant has the responsibility to ensure that plant is inspected by a competent person.

A competent person is someone who has acquired (through training, qualification or experience) the knowledge and skills to carry out the task relevant to the type of plant being inspected.

WorkSafe Tasmania does not maintain a register of competent persons.

For further information, see the

guidance note Competent Persons for Inspection and Maintenance of Plant. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for GN040.

What signage do I need at my construction site?

You'll need signage that indicates particular requirements for your worksite: for example, for areas that require personal protective equipment to be worn, no smoking areas, chemical storage areas, and/or restricted access.

There is a specific requirement (regulation 308 of the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012) for larger construction sites. For construction projects costing \$250,000 or more, signs must be installed that:

- show the principal contractor's name and telephone contact numbers (including an out of hours number)
- show the location of the site office, if there is one
- are clearly visible from outside the work site or the work area of the site.

For more information, see the Safety in Construction Kit. Go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and search for 'construction'.

I've been injured at work but don't know what to do.

Go to your doctor or hospital's emergency department and get your injury treated. Get a workers compensation medical certificate from your treating doctor.

Advise your employer of your injury. They may require you to complete an incident report.

Decide whether you complete a worker's compensation claim:

- if you decide not to complete a claim, you'll be treating your injury as a personal injury and you'll be responsible for paying associated costs (doctor's fees, X-rays or scans, medication and so on). Payment for time lost from work will usually be paid as sick or other leave
- if you do lodge a worker's compensation claim, the cost of all reasonable expenses should be paid for you by your employer. For any time lost from work, you should receive compensation payments equal to your normal weekly earnings or ordinary time rate of pay. You'll need to get a 'worker's

claim for compensation' form from your employer. Complete the 'injured worker's details' section and return it to your employer, together with the workers compensation medical certificate.

Compensation payments (if you are off work) usually start within 14 days of returning the forms to your employer.

You'll receive correspondence from the insurer advising it has received your claim.

For more information, go to www.worksafe.tas.gov.au and click on the Compensation tab.

Discover new ways to stay safe and healthy at work.

WorkSafer is Tasmania's first ever Workplace Health, Safety and Wellbeing Expo. There will be engaging and interactive learning opportunities, seminars, forums, networking sessions and keynote speakers, all addressing issues vital to your workplace.

Don't miss out.



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