

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE

September 2019

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the September edition of our newsletter. Whilst we aim to provide topical articles and commentary on diverse HSW-related subjects, not all of which are strictly work-related, it would be remiss of me not to update you on progress against 4 of this year's major HSW-related business and risk improvement projects, and on which many of you are involved:

Project	Description	Estimated completion	Milestones and Progress
Asbestos	Detailed surveys of all buildings to update information and develop formal local asbestos management plans. Update asbestos management systems	Q1 2019 Q3 2019 Q1 2020 Q2 2020	Completed: Overarching Asbestos management plan and Standard. New asbestos information system. Detailed field survey City Campus and Grafton In Progress: Detailed field survey of all University Buildings Updated information and building specific asbestos management plans
Improving Health and Safety	Provide tools to capture and manage health and safety risks and data on activity around incidents, risk control, competency and equipment	Q2 2021 (4 phases)	Business case submitted

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Workplace Health and Wellbeing	Establish work-related health monitoring, and improve management of health issues – return to work, mental health – and wellbeing	TBC	Business case ready for submission October 2019
HSW Web Site	Outwardly-facing web site as repository for all University HSW information accessible from “About Us” page. Revise and close down duplicate content.	Dec 2019	Emergency Information pages to go live Oct 2019

Electric shock



Has someone come into contact with a live electrical source?

Don't touch them! If you touch the person while they are still in contact with the electrical current you will also get an electric shock or could be electrocuted.

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Take action immediately

- The longer a person is in contact with the power source, the more likely the shock will be fatal.
- Isolate the power! If safe to do so, switch the power off (either at the source and unplug, or at the main power switch).
- If it is not possible to turn the power off, use an insulated object such as a broom with a dry wooden handle to push the casualty clear of the source of shock.
- Wear rubber-soled shoes if possible.
- Never choose anything even slightly damp to help rescue the casualty.
- Phone for an ambulance immediately – dial 111.
- Administer appropriate first aid such as CPR. If you have not had first aid training, the emergency operator may be able to give you directions until help arrives.

In all cases of electric shock, even if you feel fine, seek medical treatment and advice immediately.

- You may require to have an ECG to ensure electrical pathways within the heart have not been disrupted.
- Visit your local doctor or after hours medical centre.
- Report to your manager immediately.

It's important to tell others and your manager about any faulty, damaged or dangerous electrical device and make sure it is not used until it is fixed.

Always turn power off when carrying out electrical work

WorkSafe is urging employers to mitigate any risks before carrying out electrical work, after a worker was left with serious electrical burns to his hands.

In a decision released by the Invercargill District Court last April, Wallace Murray Electrical Limited was fined \$150,000 following the incident, which took place while the worker was replacing a switchboard in October 2017.

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The worker was drilling into the switchboard at the Waikiwi pumping station in Invercargill when there was an electrical explosion which left them with burns to his hands.

WorkSafe's investigation found while the worker was qualified and experienced with switchboards, the explosion was most likely caused when a fine chip of copper made contact with live terminals.

Head of Specialist Interventions Simon Humphries said an experienced worker has suffered from injury in the workplace because his employer did not ensure risks were mitigated. "Wallace Murray Electrical Limited should have identified risks associated with this job. While power to the switchboard was shut off before this work took place, power was still being supplied throughout the whole plant."

"There should have been a complete shutdown of power to the building. This is a wakeup call for the employer. They are lucky that in this instance the worker didn't suffer from far worse injuries, or death."

Notes:

- A fine of \$150,000 was imposed.
- Reparations of \$8,000 were ordered.
- Wallace Murray Electrical Limited was charged under sections 36(2), 48(1) and (2)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.
 - Being a PCBU (Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking), failed to ensure so far as was reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers who worked for the PCBU, while the workers were at work in the business or undertaking, namely switchboard installation work, did fail to comply with that duty, and that failure exposed the workers to a risk of serious injury from exposure to an arc flash.
- The maximum penalty is a fine not exceeding \$1,500,000.

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National earthquake drill

ShakeOut, our national earthquake drill, is taking place on Thursday 17 October 2019 at 1:30pm and it is a great opportunity to remind our people of the right actions to take during an earthquake. All members of the University community are requested to carry out the drill at 1:30, even if it is during a meeting, lecture or class.

The drill is: **Drop, Cover and Hold** - and if you are in a coastal area, carry out a tsunami hīkoi (evacuation) once the shaking has stopped (**If it's long and strong, get gone**).

Information about Shakeout is at <https://getready.govt.nz/involved/shakeout> and the official [Shakeout Video](#) is an excellent way to get the message across during the drill. If you live or work near the ocean, check the [Tsunami Zones](#) for your area, and make yourself aware of your safe evacuation point – remember, roads may become rapidly congested, so the best method of transport to high ground is by foot or by bike.



(2018 ShakeOut drill at Connect)

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Safety alerts and other news

Click [here](#) to stay informed regarding recent health and safety issues at the University. There is also an article by Rob Powell (HSW Manager) in the latest Safeguard magazine.

Work-related health estimates and burden of harm

Every year, there are hundreds of deaths and many thousands of hospitalisations and ACC claims caused by long-term exposure to health risks at work. In fact, the burden on workers, their families and the wider economy from work-related ill-health far outweighs the burden from work-related injuries.

Work-related health shares our focus with work-related safety. By law, businesses must manage both the health and safety risks caused by their work. That includes managing mental as well as physical health risks.

For WorkSafe, work-related health is about the way work can impact on worker health and the way worker health may impact on working safely.

WorkSafe needs to understand the impact of work-related disease so it can develop effective ways to improve worker health.

It does this using work-related health estimates and burden of harm estimates informed by comprehensive international research.

These estimates are used to compare between illness caused by long-term exposure to hazards, and illness caused by acute injury.

Work-related health estimates

WorkSafe recently revised its work-related health estimates to take into account new international research, and other information to inform decisions to improve worker health.

- Work-related health deaths are estimated at **750-900** a year.
- There are an estimated **5,000-6,000** hospitalisations each year due to work-related ill-health.

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- A worker is **15** times more likely to die from a work-related disease than from a workplace accident.

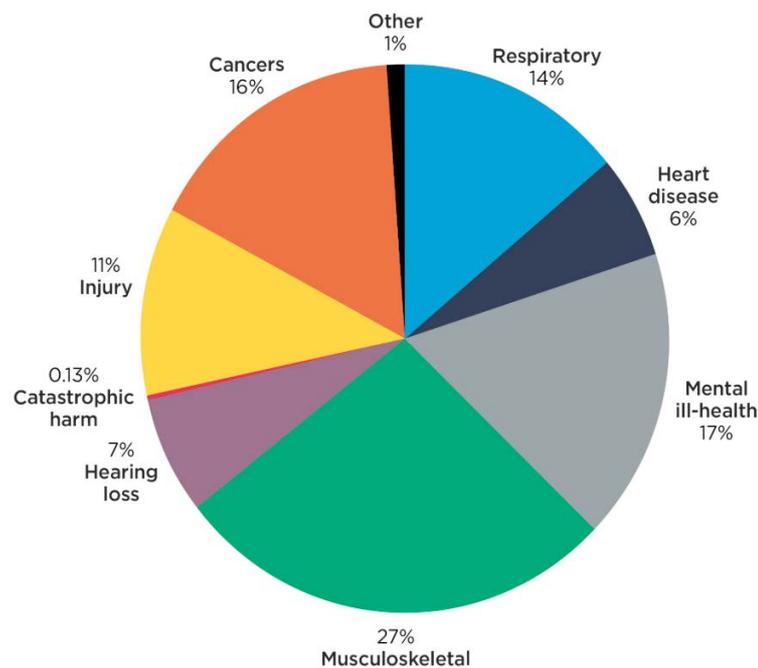
Burden of harm estimates from work-related injury and ill-health

WorkSafe has also applied a statistical measure of the quality and length of life lost to injuries and illness, using work-related health estimates and burden of harm estimates.

This measure is called DALYs (Disability-Adjusted Life Years) lost and puts a value to the burden of harm from work-related ill-health and injury.

Different diseases have different harm profiles. The measure enables comparison between diseases with different harm profiles.

It is used to determine which diseases account for the most ill-health. It also enables comparison between work-related acute injuries and work-related ill-health.



(Source: WorkSafe NZ)

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The calculations show that acute injuries (including fatalities) account for 11% of annual work-related DALYs lost. Musculoskeletal harm accounts for 27%, mental health harm 17%, cancers 16% and respiratory harm 14%.

WorkSafe has calculated that 50,000 work-related DALYs are lost annually. This translates into a social cost of at least \$2 billion each year.

This and previous issues of the HSW E-update are available [here](#).

As usual, if you have any query on anything related to health, safety or wellbeing, please do not hesitate to contact us on hsw@auckland.ac.nz.



Angus Clark

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