

**SWA WEEK** success with 150 registered workplaces  
**WORK SAFE FORUM** rated highly by large attendance  
**STAY SUN SMART** and prevent outdoor risks

PP665002100021

ISSUE 09

## Message from Nina Lyhne



**“In many ways the standard of safety and health in Western Australian workplaces is a statement about the type of society we live in – the value we put on lives and the quality of life. I believe that as a community we have set a high standard, as we should.”**

The role of WorkSafe is not always that of a visible leader, but to bring people together who can influence and drive change. Individuals, such as safety and health representatives and companies who have participated in the small business assistance program, undertaken a WorkSafe Plan assessment or have entered the Safety Awards, are great allies for WorkSafe as we work to improve safety and health in Western Australian workplaces.

Safety and health is good for business and there are significant flow-on effects to organisations and individuals such as suppliers, contractors or customers that come into contact with those who believe safety and health is a priority and demand high safety standards.

In the past twelve months, WorkSafe has introduced a range of initiatives that encourage workplaces to make safety a core value and an integral part of the way in which business is conducted. Changes in the construction industry with the introduction of national standards into WA occupational safety and health regulations and the production of resource materials like the *Subby Pack* help to improve communication on safety and health issues between all those involved in construction projects.

The introduction of the Safe design code of practice encourages designers, architects and engineers to consider safety issues at the beginning point

of projects, so potential hazards can be eliminated or controlled in the design of buildings and products. The production of a resource package for the agricultural industry assists in identifying and eliminating hazards on rural properties. The expansion of the small business assistance program helps organisations which have limited resources to integrate safety and health into the way they operate.

Proactive enforcement campaigns in a range of industry areas such as hotels and clubs, bakeries, boat lifting, furniture and cabinet making, manufacturing workshops and road transport provide information on hazards to those industries as well as enforcing the law and sending a clear message that ignoring safety and health carries legal consequences.

This issue of SafetyLine focuses on Safe Work Australia Week and the activities that were conducted during that week in individual businesses and by WorkSafe. I would like to congratulate all those who participated in raising the profile of safety and health as a community issue. I also offer my best to the winners of the WorkSafe Awards who will be entered into national awards.

As we move into the Christmas period I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a safe and happy festive season.



# Safe Work Australia Week 19-25 October 2008



Safe Work Australia Week is about preventing workplace incidents and managing injuries. Workplaces across Australia organised a range of activities and participated in events run by state government OSH organisations.

In Western Australia more than 150 organisations registered their activities with WorkSafe and received poster kits, information and promotional items. The activities included training sessions, guest speakers, toolbox meetings, safety quiz competitions, displays, workplace inspections, stretching exercises, hazards hunts, emergency evacuation drills. The registered organisations and their activities can be accessed at [www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/swaweek](http://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/swaweek)

from the University of Queensland. Prof Ellis spoke about the causes of occupational stress, how it affects your health and productivity at work and how to tackle occupational stress by improving the quality of the working environment.

Kevin Sheedy engaged the audience with his views on leadership and communication. His AFL coaching experiences and work to improve the status of Indigenous Australians and women in football were well received.

### Safe Work Breakfast

Some 140 people attended WorkSafe's breakfast launch on 17 October to hear Dr Fiona Wood speak. Dr Wood spoke very passionately about people and the value of human life. She reminded us of what can be achieved if we make our goal zero harm and think about early intervention to eliminate hazards in the first place.

Feedback and evaluation results show the majority of delegates rated the forum overall and the speakers very highly. Some of the comments from delegates are listed below.

- 'Great day – very informative.'
- 'Niki Ellis – Excellent speaker. Concurrent speakers great!'
- 'This has been a most informative event. Hope I can make it next year, many thanks.'
- 'Great conference – good networking opportunity.'
- 'Kevin Sheedy – Fantastic, humorous and serious. Good blend.'



Individual award winner Suzie Johns, Bunnings Morley, with Minister for Commerce, Troy Buswell.

### Perth Work Safe 2008 Forum

Around 570 delegates attended the annual Perth Work Safe Forum 'Come home safe' on 23 October at the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre.

A highlight of the forum was the keynote address by Professor Niki Ellis

Papers provided can be accessed at [www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/forums](http://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/forums)

### 2008 Safety Achievers

The 2008 Safety Achievers Dinner was the last event of Safe Work Australia Week. WorkSafe Plan certificates of achievement and Work Safety Awards Western Australia finalist certificates and trophies were presented by the Minister for Commerce, Troy Buswell.

The **Work Safety Awards Western Australia** recognise outstanding occupational safety and health management, solutions and innovation in Western Australian workplaces. Winners of the five categories are entered in the national Safe Work Australia Awards.

Suzie Johns from Bunnings Morley won the award for **best individual contribution to safety and health**.



Award winners from Bunnings Morley, Main Roads Western Australia, Department of Agriculture and Food WA, Southern Brake and Tyre Services Pty Ltd and APC Storage Solutions.

Continued on page 3

## WHAT'S NEW

**WorkSafe Quicklinks** – A snapshot of WorkSafe's safety and health programs, initiatives and services accessible from the website [www.worksafe.wa.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au)

### Operating reach stackers

The National High Risk Work Standards state that if a person holds a non-slewing mobile crane licence, they are able to operate a reach stacker.

Those people who have the old forklift competency certificates can still continue to operate reach stackers, until the competency certificate is converted to a licence. At that point a non-slewing mobile crane licence must be obtained.

If you require further information, please contact the WorkSafe business service centre on 9327 8728.

### MP3 players at work

Listening to MP3 players at work can be hazardous to the user's hearing and can isolate them from their working environment. Not being able to hear workplace traffic such as forklifts, or emergency alarms can lead to accidents. To learn more visit [www.worksafe.wa.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au) → safety topics → noise to view videos from WorkSafe Canada.

### Campaigns and inspections

#### Prefabricated building manufacturing industry

WorkSafe is currently undertaking an inspection program in the prefabricated building manufacturing industry with a view to reducing injuries and disease. Inspectors will visit companies that manufacture prefabricated buildings to identify any common safety risks and provide employers with information on how to comply with the requirements of occupational safety and health laws.

A guide to inspecting the workplace can be accessed at [www.worksafe.wa.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au)

#### Olive industry and regional bakeries inspections completed

WorkSafe inspectors recently conducted inspections of groves within the olive industry and regional bakeries to check compliance with the *Occupational Safety and Health Act* and Regulations.

Reports on the campaigns can be found at [www.worksafe.wa.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au) → About Us → About WorkSafe → Role of inspectors → Inspection campaigns

#### Prevention of CO poisoning

Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas emitted by operating petrol, gas and, to a lesser extent, diesel powered motors.

Common contaminated areas include:

- confined spaces around operating engines;
- automobile workshops;
- foundries;
- rooms with poorly drafted fires;
- enclosed, poorly ventilated carparks;
- poorly ventilated rooms or areas; and
- where forklifts or other industrial type vehicles are used.

The WorkSafe website contains information on identifying, eliminating and managing carbon monoxide hazards in the workplace and includes:

- **Chasing saws and carbon monoxide**

WorkSafe Scientific Inspectors have conducted extensive risk assessment testing of hand held petrol powered brick and concrete chasing saws. These tests demonstrate that carbon monoxide exposures, when using these saws, are well in excess of the legal Occupational Exposure Standards.

- **Guidance note**

The Commission for Occupational Safety and Health recently revised its Guidance note: *Prevention of carbon monoxide poisoning from petrol and gas powered equipment*.

For a copy of these documents go to [www.worksafe.wa.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au) → safety topics → hazardous substances → carbon monoxide.

## Safe Work Australia Week

*Continued from page 2*

Suzie, the Night Fill Team Leader, was nominated by her team because of her caring attitude and emphasis on working safely. Suzie encourages staff to spot and report hazards or to make small changes, and they trust her to take their concerns to management. She constantly motivates her staff to work safely, and they describe her as 'inspirational'.

Main Roads won the award for **best workplace safety and health management systems**. Main Roads has an integrated management system incorporating occupational safety and health, environment and quality, and has achieved a clear

improvement in safety and reduction in injuries.

The award for **best workplace safety and health practices in small business** was won by Albany Southern Brake and Services Pty Ltd. The company has identified hazards and made the appropriate changes in collaboration with the Motor Trade Association, and has implemented safety management systems and practices.

APC Storage Solutions won the award for **best solution to an identified workplace safety and health issue**. The company developed a mechanical aid for the installation of pallet racking

frames in response to a recognised manual handling risk when raising frames weighing up to 100kg.

The award for **best public sector leadership for injury prevention and management** was won by the Department of Agriculture and Food WA. Safety and health is integrated into all work activities, and consultation mechanisms have been established throughout the department.

Nominations for the 2009 Work Safety Awards Western Australia will open in April 2009. For more information call the Manager Promotions on 9327 8657.



# UPDATE ON CONSTRUCTION SAFETY AWARENESS TRAINING

The WorkSafe Western Australia Commission for Occupational Safety and Health has recognised the construction industry induction training conducted in South Australia, Victoria and Queensland as meeting the requirements of the Western Australian regulations. These three States deliver nationally recognised induction training, similar to the course run in WA.

This means that workers do not need to complete the WA course to be able to work in construction in WA, provided they can show evidence that they completed the induction training in their home state within the past three years.

## CHRISTMAS celebrations

The *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984* extends to work-related Christmas celebrations.

When having drinks or a celebratory meal with work colleagues, you need to consider that:

- everyone is entitled to be treated with respect;
- ground rules are set for behaviour before the event;
- the venue is as safe as possible;
- if you are serving alcohol, make sure food, non-alcoholic drinks and water are also served to encourage people to drink sensibly; and
- taxis or alternative forms of transport are available for people who may be tempted to drink and drive.

Finally, don't forget to have fun.

## WorkSafe 2009 Planner

Order your large calendar poster highlighting WorkSafe's 2009 initiatives and events by calling 9327 8777 (limit of five per organisation).



## SAFETY in the sun

Employers have a legal responsibility to provide a safe working environment, including for outdoor work. Safety and health representatives can help to increase workers' awareness of the dangers in their workplace.

### Heat stress

The effects of heat stress range from simple discomfort to life threatening illnesses such as heat stroke. To help reduce the risk of heat stroke:

- Take breaks in the shade. Use temporary portable shade if necessary.
- Plan for more work to occur in the shade in the middle of the day, when ultraviolet (UV) radiation is at its peak.
- Share and rotate tasks so the same person is not always in the sun.
- Reduce the heat load by replacing fluid loss with water, juices and other non-alcoholic drinks. Drinking 100-200ml of water at frequent intervals will be adequate to reduce fluid loss in sweating. If cramping occurs, drink a solution of one teaspoon of common salt to one litre of water, or one teaspoon of electrolyte replacement formula to one glass of water. This provides a quick source of salt replacement.
- Help your sweat evaporate by increasing air circulation.

### Skin cancer

To reduce the risk of skin cancer:

- **Slip on a shirt.** Cover as much skin as possible with lightweight UPF 50+ clothing.
- **Slop on sunscreen.** SPF30+ broad spectrum and water resistant sunscreen and lip-balm should be applied 20 minutes before going into the sun. Reapply sunscreen at least every two hours or more if you are sweating.
- **Slap on a hat.** Wear broad brimmed hats that shade your face, ears and neck or a brim attachment on your hard hat.
- **Slide on sunglasses.** Protect your eyes with wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard (refer to AS 1067:2003), or tinted safety glasses (refer to AS/NZS 1337).
- Have your skin checked regularly by a doctor and make sure you tell the doctor that you work outside.

For more information on sun safety visit [www.worksafe.wa.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au) → safety topics → diseases → diseases/health