Death by breathing: Change, but more to come.

Last year, the Institute and many other agencies delivered submissions to the dust disease task force, and today’s feature article outlines the progress on this issue in the form of the new workplace exposure standard. I suspect the Victorian government’s banning of dry cutting manufactured stone is not the end of the matter, with calls in some quarters for the blanket banning of the use of manufactured stone in Australia.

More recently and early in the fire events of middle and southern NSW, we produced a discussion piece and media on the issue of respiratory protective equipment for firefighters. The subsequent extended exposure of the urban populations of our two largest cities to hazardous levels of woodsmoke (40% of our national population) - not to mention the affected areas themselves - has sharpened our national focus and we will be talking about the health impacts of this issue for some time to come. Fire seasons will be longer, and where there’s fire there’s smoke.

Have a great week.

David Clarke, CEO
Regulators take action on back of new silica dust workplace exposure standard

A majority of WHS ministers around Australia recently agreed to halve the workplace exposure standard for respirable crystalline silica to a time-weighted average of 0.05mg/m³ over an eight-hour day.

Read full story

Businesses reminded about cyclone contingency plans

With the season’s first cyclone off the North-West coast of Australia, businesses throughout WA have been reminded to ensure that contingency plans have been established and are in operation.

Read full story

Regulator issues warning about hidden hazards in fire clean-up

WorkSafe Victoria recently urged those affected by recent bushfires to be alert about unexpected hazards in the process of clean-up and recovery work.

Read full story

Focus on the journey and the destination takes care of itself

Over many years, a debate has gone on about concepts such as ‘Zero Harm’ in health and safety. Although the history and origins of Zero Harm are about generating awareness, those who have more literal interpretations don’t like its use in health and safety programs.

Read full story
VIC: safety alert issued following hot works quarry fire

WorkSafe Victoria recently issued a safety alert about the risks associated with hot works, after a hopper liner and screen caught fire at a quarry.

Read full story

SA: compliance spotlight on musculoskeletal disorders in manufacturing

Reducing musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) and related traumatic joint, muscle and tendon injuries across the manufacturing sector is the focus of a compliance and safety awareness campaign being conducted by SafeWork SA.

Read full story
NT: safety warning on switchboards and ceiling spaces

NT WorkSafe recently issued a safety alert reminding workers to switch the power off at the switchboard before entering a ceiling space of a commercial or residential building due to the electrical safety risks.

VIC: safety alert issued on remote-controlled crane operation

WorkSafe Victoria recently issued a safety alert about the use of plant or equipment, following an incident involving the death of an employee who inadvertently activated a bridge crane remote control.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We invite all NSW health and safety practitioners and professionals to join us on Thursday 6 February as we launch the OHS Body of Knowledge: Ethics Chapter. OHS professionals face many workplace ethical dilemmas and need to be vigilant and self-aware. The public expects a high standard of ethical behaviour for all professionals and has little tolerance for ethical failures as illustrated by several recent Royal Commissions into banking, aged care, and disability.

We invite all WA health and safety practitioners and professionals to join us on Thursday 6 February as we launch the OHS Body of Knowledge: Ethics Chapter. This event will provide the opportunity for OHS professionals & practitioners to discuss the importance of ethics in health and safety, explore the observed learnings of the newly released chapter, and hear from guest speakers who will share their personal accounts of workplace ethical dilemmas.

Register here

UPCOMING EVENTS

2 February  NSW Annual Planning Day
10 February  SA - Body of Knowledge: Ethics Chapter Launch
10 February  QLD - Body of Knowledge: Ethics Chapter Launch
11 February  VIC - Body of Knowledge: Ethics Chapter Launch
12 February  NSW - North West Safety Group Meeting
18 February  TAS - Body of Knowledge: Ethics Chapter Launch
19 February  ACT - Body of Knowledge: Ethics Chapter Launch
19 February  NSW - Career advice for current & aspiring Safety Professionals

INCIDENTS AND PROSECUTIONS

Maules Creek Coal prosecuted over $513,880 enforceable undertaking for
mining truck collision

The NSW Resources Regulator has commenced prosecution proceedings against Maules Creek Coal over a collision involving two trucks at the Maules Creek Mine near Narrabri on 21 April 2018.

Read full story

Blue Mountains City Council

Blue Mountains City Council recently accepted a $513,880 enforceable undertaking after it allegedly contravened sections 425(1), 429(2), 445(1) and 479(1) of the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 in NSW.

Read full story

VIC: cleaning company fined $30,000 after worker fall

A commercial kitchen cleaning company Geelong, Victoria has been fined $30,000 after a worker was seriously injured in a fall from a roof.

Read full story

Driver killed after being hit by stabilising arm on container truck

A garbage truck driver was recently killed in Victoria after a rear crane stabilising arm on another vehicle hit his truck while he was driving.

Read full story