



Safety Week

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ADVERTISING

A limited amount of advertising has been approved by the Safety Institute of Australia.

If you want to advertise to over 3,000 safety professionals in Australia, please contact Joanne at the SIA Secretariat through natadmin@sia.org.au

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Investigation into possible cancer cluster at UNSW

SYDNEY, May 12 2007

The University of NSW (UNSW) is to launch an external investigation into reports of a high incidence of cancer among staff working in one of its faculty buildings.

A university spokeswoman today confirmed UNSW would appoint an epidemiologist to examine cancer cluster concerns raised this week by workers in the Morven Brown Building.

It houses the faculty of arts and social sciences, including the schools of English, history and philosophy.

The investigation will first determine whether there is a higher rate of cancer among staff in the building than in the wider community.

"The university wants to move to address the staff's concerns," the spokeswoman said.

The National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) said staff members had complained to the university about "what appeared to be an abnormal number of people having cancer diagnosis", including some who had died.

The NETU, however, does not know how many staff who work in the building have been diagnosed with the disease.

"There have been a number of cancers diagnosed, including breast cancer," NTEU NSW secretary Chris Game said.

"We're pleased the university is acting on this very quickly, but our concern is the brief of the epidemiologist should be to investigate all of the notified cancers, rather than just be confined to one cancer.

"That would be important if you're going to actually ascertain if a cancer cluster is occurring."

AAP

Men fall 3.8 metres at Preston carpet works

9 May 2007

Two men have been taken to the Royal Melbourne Hospital, one with spinal injuries,

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QUEENSLAND SAFETY CONFERENCE

Dates: 19-21 June 2007
Venue: Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre
Website: www.qldsafetyshow.com.au
Early Bird Rate ends 18 May 2007

Presented by  Safety Institute of Australia (Qld & NT Division)

Principal Sponsor  Queensland Government Department of Employment and Industrial Relations



SafetyWeek Changes

You might have noticed some changes to the Safety Institute's weekly OHS bulletin.

The supply contract for the bulletin has been renewed for another year and the National President wanted a title change so we thought that this would be a good opportunity for an updated format.

Please let me know your thoughts.

As part of the contract, there are some increased obligations on both sides. This year you will see

- Advance information other SIA publications
- Short exclusive interviews with SIA Fellows on safety matters
- Classified job ads
- Information and reports on SIA events around Australia
- Contributions from state SIA divisions

Technology Upgrade

SafetyWeek will also have a technology upgrade over the next few issues. The file will be configured to version 6 of Acrobat Reader for increased compression. This will allow for higher resolution at smaller file sizes.

PDF File Readers

As one reader has suggested, there are a range of PDF reader softwares available for free from the Internet. We encourage you to find the best and cheapest solution that meets your needs.

Broadband

With the growth of broadband internet services, the National President has agreed to the inclusion of more pictorial content. This will include photographs of events, publications, and press photographs where appropriate.

Advertising

There is the possibility of

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after falling 3.8 metres at a Preston carpet manufacturing business yesterday.

WorkSafe inspectors and investigators are at the company in Cope St, Preston. The incident happened around 11.15am.

The two men were dismantling a piece of equipment when a piece shifted causing them to fall on to a concrete floor.

The most seriously injured man has a fractured collar bone and spinal injuries.

The incident follows two falls fatalities at the weekend.

A plasterer aged in his 60s died at the Alfred Hospital on Saturday after a fall at a Northcote house on Friday.

On Sunday, a man who was also in his 60s died at Quambatook in the state's north after falling from a ladder.

WorkSafe's acting Executive Director, Eric Windholz, said ensuring safe work practices was a matter of life and death.

"With two fatalities in the past four days and another serious incident – now is the time to make sure anyone working at height has appropriate protection."

"Without it, the chance of death or permanent injury is high. There have been fatalities from falling off stepladders in shops, but the risks increase greatly as the height does.

"Before it happens you can never tell whether you'll get up and walk away, end up in a wheelchair or die.

"What you can do is ensure appropriate steps are taken to reduce the risk of a fall as far as practicable."

Source: WorkSafe

Concern over actions during holdup

May 9, 2007

WorkSafe is investigating the armed holdup at Kenwick last night during which the robber was overpowered by staff of the store.

WorkSafe WA Commissioner Nina Lyhne said today that tackling a would-be robber was definitely not the preferred course of action.

"We're very concerned that people may get the impression that attempting to overpower an armed robber is a good idea," she said.

"If a person is desperate enough to commit an armed robbery, you can never be sure how violent that person may become.

"WorkSafe requires that safe systems of work are in place in all workplaces, and that staff are properly instructed and trained in these safe systems.

"In workplaces such as late-night food outlets, chemists and service stations – places where robberies are a foreseeable possibility – the employer needs to have an established armed holdup procedure, with all staff trained in its use.

"Statistics suggest that staff who do not cooperate with robbers are far more likely to be injured or killed than staff who do cooperate.

"The best course of action is to cooperate with the robber - it is never worth putting yourself and others at risk in these situations by trying to be a hero."

Source: DOCEP

Queensland Workers' Compensation Rate Lowest In Australia

13 May 2007

Queensland employers enjoying the lowest rates of all workers' compensation premiums

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including classified ads in the bulletin. This is under discussion but will be controlled by the SIA itself. Workplace Safety Services receives no income from advertising in SafetyWeek. All advertising is authorised by the SIA with all revenue going to the SIA.

Having said this we encourage advertising inquiries to the SIA Secretariat on 03 8336 1995.

Privacy

While on administrative matters, it is worth reiterating that the publishers have no access to SIA member details. The PDF file is distributed through the SIA Secretariat.

Letters

It is very important that the voices of SIA members are heard and listened to. There are formal communication avenues through State Divisions that we strongly encourage you to follow but there may also be safety-related issues and opinions that you want share with your safety colleagues. Please consider sending a letter to the editor

Distribution

SafetyWeek is a publication provided to SIA members and funded by the SIA National Board. It is an important part of the value of your SIA membership and a way of maintaining a suitable level of professionalism.

For this reason, the bulletin cannot be forwarded to anyone without the written permission of the SIA and the publisher. If there is an article you are interested in reproducing, contact the Editor through the SIA Secretariat and, if copyright allows for reproduction, we will see what we can do.

Editor

On a personal note, I am very pleased that the SIA has chosen to continue supporting **SafetyWeek**. It has always

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in Australia are to have their rates cut even further, Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure Anna Bligh announced today.

The WorkCover Queensland fund will be cut to an average premium rate of \$1.15 for every \$100 an employer pays in wages, saving business well over \$30 million a year.

The new rate is down 4.2% from \$1.20 last year and significantly down from the \$2.14 rate the Beattie Labor Government inherited when it took office in 1998.

“This is fantastic news for Queensland employers who now have had the lowest average premium rate of any Australian state for eight years and received premium rate cuts for the past three consecutive years,” Ms Bligh said.

Ms Bligh said WorkCover Queensland was committed to a successful balance between benefits for injured workers and low premiums for employers, so while premiums have remained low, benefits to injured workers have actually increased.

“The Queensland scheme is one of the country’s most worker friendly, including entitlements to benefits that many other states and the Commonwealth schemes do not provide, including for journey and recess claims,” she said.

“Queensland’s average premium rate in 2007/08 will be 21% lower than Victoria, which only recently trumpeted its new lower rate at \$1.46.

“In the last two years the Government has legislated to increase death benefits for workers’ dependents, increased lump sums and boosted the time a job for seriously injured workers is held open from six to twelve months.

Source: Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure

Farmer crushed by tree branch

PERTH, May 11 2007

A farmer has been crushed to death by a tree branch he was cutting from a fallen tree in the south-west of Western Australia.

The 72-year-old Cookernup man was working with his son to cut up the fallen tree when the accident happened yesterday.

WA safety watchdog WorkSafe sent investigators to the farm, near Harvey, 140km south of Perth today.

AAP

Investigation into playground chemical emergency

ADELAIDE, May 11 2007

Samples will be taken today of a herbicide spread over a slide at a popular children’s playground north of Adelaide as investigations continue into the chemical emergency.

Police and Country Fire Service volunteers have conducted a major search of the St Kilda playground after 61 primary school children aged eight and nine and 14 adults were taken to Adelaide hospitals yesterday because of potential exposure.

The emergency was sparked when a five-year-old child used the slide and came into contact with a sticky black substance which has been identified as a type of organophosphate compound.

Health authorities described the chemical as poisonous if swallowed and also toxic if absorbed through the skin.

A police spokesman said detectives would take control of the scene today with physical evidence police taking samples and examining the contaminated area more closely.

“Yesterday we were more interested and more concerned about the health and safety of the people involved,” the spokesman said.

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been important for me, as a Fellow of the SIA, to ensure that SIA members get professional information in a professional manner. We like to promote ourselves as the leading OHS professional body in Australia. In a small way **SafetyWeek** is part of that professionalism. Thanks again for your support

Kevin Jones FSIA
Editor

Information from the SIA Secretariat

Victoria Division Elections

Nominations for the Victoria Division Elections will be mailed out to members this Friday, 18th May 2007. Nominations will only be accepted from financial members of the Institute.

If you have changed your address recently and have not notified the SIA Secretariat please do so by Friday 18 May.

The Secretariat's email address is natadmin@sia.org.au and the phone number is 03 8336 1995

From National Technical Chair

Victorian Radiation Action 2005 to come into force 1st Sept 2007

The Victorian Health Department have organized a series of information seminars to be held this month

[www.health.vic.gov.au/
environment/radiation/
legimplementation.htm](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/environment/radiation/legimplementation.htm)

The enrollment details are near the bottom of the page in the above link.

Regards,

Jonathan Amies
National Technical Chair

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"This morning the investigation kicks off in earnest, starting with the physical evidence section, checking the contaminated area, doing some swabs and finding out what in fact is up there."

Of those taken to hospital only four children were admitted overnight because they felt unwell.

They were expected to be discharged today.

However a health department spokesman said all those involved had been advised to watch for further symptoms including nausea, headaches or feeling generally unwell.

"If they or any people who have been to the St Kilda playground have those symptoms they should present to hospital for a check-up," the spokesman said. AAP

Students set to get creative about young worker safety 10 May 2007

WorkCover NSW Chief Executive Officer, Jon Blackwell, today encouraged secondary and tertiary students across the State to enter the 2007 Young Workers Poster Competition.

"The poster competition aims to raise awareness of occupational health and safety risks for workers aged under 25, and the theme for 2007 is Safe manual handling. Smart move. Because of their inexperience, young workers are at a higher risk of being injured on the job than most other age groups."

Almost 14 per cent of NSW workplace injuries occur among the state's 210,000 young workers, with more than 20 injuries recorded each day.

"It is imperative for employers to consider the inexperience of young workers by educating them about safety issues and anticipating, eliminating and controlling risks in the workplace. Although continued improvement in occupational health and safety has seen injuries and fatalities in NSW fall to their lowest level in 18 years, it is important that young workers are given the necessary support to perform their work safely," Mr Blackwell said.

"More than 300 students across NSW entered the 2006 competition and it was encouraging to see the diverse and original approaches in educating young workers about workplace safety. The competition will also help improve safety awareness among students before they enter the workforce," Mr Blackwell said.

The competition is open to students aged between 15 and 25 and entries can be lodged in either the secondary or tertiary category with prizes including:

Secondary category: winner \$2000, ten runners-up \$500, ten runners-up iPod nano.

Tertiary category: winner \$3,000, second place \$2,000 and third place \$1,000 with ten runners-up receiving iPod nanos.

This year's competition will include two new awards, the Industry Choice Award and Peoples Choice Award with winners of each category receiving an iPod nano.

The 2007 WorkCover NSW Young Workers Poster Competition will open today, May 10, and entries will be accepted until 15 June 2007.

Entry forms are available from your school, college or university and from the website at www.youngworkers.com.au

Source: WorkCover NSW

WorkCover Warns of Forklift Dangers 11 May 2007

In response to an incident at a construction site this week where a truck driver was struck by a load falling from a forklift sustaining serious injury, ACT WorkCover is

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March Edition of SAFETY IN AUSTRALIA

If you have not received your copy of SAFETY IN AUSTRALIA - MARCH EDITION please contact the SIA Secretariat on 03 8336 1995 or at natadmin@sia.org.au



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issuing a warning to remind employers, employees and third parties of the dangers surrounding forklifts.

The forklift truck has the potential to be one of the most dangerous pieces of equipment in a workplace with a medium sized forklift weighing in excess of 5 tonne.

ACT WorkCover acting Occupational Health and Safety Commissioner Steven Hart said "that ensuring the safety of workers, pedestrians, delivery drivers and the use of exclusion zones is a critical aspect of traffic management within a workplace where these machines operate."

Protecting pedestrians at the workplace requires decisive action to prevent, not just discourage, pedestrians and forklifts from coming into close proximity.

"Raising and lowering loads whilst driving, travelling too fast, improperly secured loads and being operated on uneven ground are often factors in forklift incidents. Operators of a forklift must hold a license or be under direct supervision of a license holder".

Mr Hart said "Over recent years there have been a number of serious injuries sustained by workers that have been struck by moving forklifts, have fallen from make shift working platforms attached to the raised tines and in one of the most serious incidents a truck driver had his left leg amputated from the knee down when a pack of steel in excess of 800 kgs was dropped onto his leg".

To be effective a forklift must be manoeuvrable. To achieve manoeuvrability, forklifts are designed to be compact, making them less stable than other vehicles and mobile plant.

Inspectors will be increasing their level of scrutiny on sites visited where forklifts are in operation.

Further information on forklift safety is available on the ACT WorkCover website http://www.workcover.act.gov.au/pdfs/guides_cop/Forklift_Safety_Booklet.pdf

Source: ACT WorkCover

New automatic braking system to be tried on Sydney trains

SYDNEY, May 14 2007

A new automatic braking system will be trialled on Sydney's CityRail train network later this year.

The NSW government says three companies have been awarded contacts to conduct trials of an Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system. ATP systems override train controls to apply the brakes if the driver has not slowed down enough when approaching a kerb, corner or red light.

The trial will cost \$13 million and be conducted on the Blue Mountains line from September until January 2008.

"It's that extra safety measure to provide comfort for passengers and commuters," Mr Iemma said. "This trial will include the Blue Mountains line, which has a number of curves and bends and is an appropriate line to test this system."

NSW Transport Minister John Watkins said the trial was another step towards implementing the government's response to the McInerney inquiry into the Waterfall train disaster in 2003, which killed six people.

"We owe it to the victims and the families of the victims of that Waterfall disaster," he told reporters.

The three companies selected to compete in the trial are InterOp,

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Adobe Acrobat V7.08 Information

Some readers have expressed difficulty in upgrading to the latest version of Acrobat Reader with one of the problems being that the download can be over 20 megabytes - a substantial burden to dial-up internet connections.

Safety At Work publishers are now allowed to distribute the latest edition of Acrobat Reader on a CD. If you want a copy of Acrobat Reader 7.08 please email me at jonesk@sia.org.au and include your full postal address. A CD will be mailed to you shortly after.

The CD won't be pretty as it is a burnt copy of the software that Adobe permits us to distribute. It is not allowed to be given to anyone other than the person requesting the CD and all CDs will be checked for viruses before distribution. For those readers who are unconcerned about download limits, the latest version of Acrobat Reader is available for free from <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

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Siemens and a consortium of Alstom and United Group. Following the trial, an assessment will be made of the three systems, with a decision likely to be made in mid-2008.

AAP

Ashland and Cargill to combine talents for bio-based chemical joint venture

8 May 2007

Ashland Inc. and Cargill have agreed in principle to create a new joint venture devoted solely to the development and production of biobased chemicals. The parties intend for the new stand-alone entity to become a leading global supplier of chemicals from renewable sources.

The venture's first product will be propylene glycol (PG). Using both licensed and proprietary technology, the joint venture will produce high-grade propylene glycol from glycerin, an abundant co-product of biodiesel production. The joint venture expects to provide global manufacturing and marketing of biobased PG, starting with a 65,000 metric ton-per-year plant at a yet-to-be-finalized location in Europe.

With a 50-50 ownership structure, Cargill and Ashland will bring to the new venture their unique technology, innovation and expertise in bioprocessing, along with chemical formulation, supply chain management and market analysis. The venture anticipates a combined initial capital investment in the range of \$80 million to \$100 million. Details on the name, leadership and development plans are expected to be announced later in 2007.

The joint venture will combine the complementary experience and skill sets of both parent companies. "Cargill's expertise in converting vegetable-based oils is world-class, its global reach is unmatched and its glycerin supply chain expertise will promote a quick market rollout. All this will provide a competitive advantage over other manufacturers attempting to produce any product derived from vegetable oils," said Dave Jones, director of bioproducts, Ashland Inc.

According to Ashland market consultants, annual global production for propylene glycol totals more than 1.4 million metric tons, and research shows that global demand growing at a 3-percent to 7-percent rate. Propylene glycol is a common ingredient in a variety of resins, lubricants, cosmetics, paints, detergents and antifreeze. Today, propylene glycol is produced from propylene oxide, a petroleum-based intermediate.

Laboratory tests of the proprietary production method have shown the biobased propylene glycol product will feature a high level of purity. In testing, the process to be used by the joint venture is efficient and produces fewer byproducts than other alternative approaches to making renewable propylene glycol.

Source: Ashland and Cargill

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