

ETU OHS REPS NEWSLETTER



WORKPLACE FATALITIES

Unfortunately 2010 has continued where 2009 finished off with 2 fatalities within a week.

WorkSafe Victoria is calling on Victorian employers and workers to make a concerted effort to create safe workplaces this year as a result of 30 deaths in 2009, up from 21 in 2008 the highest figure since 2002 when 34 workers died.

WorkSafe's acting Executive Director, Cath Duane, said "What we're asking workers to do is say 'I'm no longer going to do 'x' which I know is dangerous'. We expect employers to not allow dangerous practices to continue".

"The thousands of workers, employers, workmates and families touched by workplace deaths and the tens, perhaps hundreds, of thousands, affected by workplace injuries are testament to the community's opportunity to do a lot better".

"If employers and workers make the effort to review existing work practices and see if they're consistent with current standards and consult on safety issues they will make Victoria safer," Ms Duane said.

All employers must, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide and maintain for employees of the employer a working environment that is safe and without risks to health and is in contravention of the OH&S Act if the employer fails to do any of the following—

(a) provide or maintain plant or systems of work that are, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health;

(b) make arrangements for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, safety and the absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage or transport of plant or substances;

(c) maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, each workplace under the

employer's management and control in a condition that is safe and without risks to health;

(d) provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, adequate facilities for the welfare of employees at any workplace under the management and control of the employer;

(e) provide such information, instruction, training or supervision to employees of the employer as is necessary to enable those persons to perform their work in a way that is safe and without risks to health.

All employers must so far as is reasonably practicable, identify any task that an employee is required to undertake at a workplace that involves a hazard.

All employers must ensure that if an employee is required to undertake a task at the workplace that involves a risk, that the risk is controlled so far as is reasonably practicable.

The order in which the control strategies should be considered for each hazard is to eliminate or where elimination is not possible to minimise the risk to as low as possible is called the Hierarchy of Hazard Control.

All employers need to as far as is reasonably practicable use the highest level of control, for instance to control the risk associated with the hazard of working at height a ladder would be one of the very last control measures and would only be considered where it is established that the work task can not be undertaken on the ground, from a scaffold, boom / scissor lift or mobile scaffold etc.

Every situation is different and no one control will be effective for all risks and hazards, for example a level surface will have different controls from broken ground, as will a dry surface compared to a wet one, work in an open area compared to that of work to be undertaken near the live edge of a multi story building.

NEWS

The Electrical Safety (Installations) Regulations have changed. A new version came into force on the 1st January of this year. There are substantial changes that have occurred to the regulations. See ESV web site to download a copy of the new regulations (www.esv.vic.gov.au).

Some of the changes are:

- Network assets have been included in the regulations
- In addition to the existing prescribed electrical installation work the following are now also prescribed
 1. Supports for overhead service lines (including any poles).
 2. Circuit protective devices, switchgear, control-gear, circuit breakers and wiring systems of the main switchboard for new or replaced switchboards on the initial inspection.
 3. Sub-mains, earthing systems and any distribution boards related to the control of individual occupiers' portions of multiple installations.
 4. Circuit protective devices, switchgear, control-gear, wiring systems and accessories (other than fire detection and alarm systems) installed to provide control and protection of passenger lifts, fire pumps (excluding pumps for fire hose reels where those hose reels are not the sole means of fire protection) and air handling systems intended to exhaust and control the spread of fire and smoke.
 5. Part 1 solution installed in an electrical installation.

6. All or part of any fixed electrical equipment operated at any voltage installed in a patient area of hospitals, medical and dental practices and dialyzing locations.

- Premises where a consumer electricity generation system are installed or connected shall have clearly and permanently marked sign on all switchboards that will be energised by the consumer electricity generation system and any fire indicator panels, stating "**Warning—this premises contains an electricity generation system**" and the location of the of the isolation switch or switches.
- Emergency restoration of Private electric aerial lines in high bushfire risk areas
- There are also requirements on electrical inspectors:
 - Must ensure details on COES are accurate and legible
 - Must retain a copy of a COES for 3 years after the date of inspection
 - Inspectors must not inspect their own work
 - Must not inspect work if involved with the design of the work
- A responsible person must ensure that the prescribed electrical installation work that they are responsible for is not inspected by a licensed electrical inspector inspecting who is employed by or a related body corporate (cooperate director or business owner) of the responsible person.

2010 Calendar

EEIT OHS MEETING DATES

10AM –12PM

Melbourne –

24th February

21st April

23rd June

25th August

20th October

Held at:

ETU Office

200 Arden Street
North Melbourne

OHS REP TRAINING

Contact Tanya—0393269377 to book into the courses below.

Initial 5 Day OHS REPS Course

March 10, 11, 16, 17, 18

July 7, 8, 13, 14, 15

October 6, 7, 12, 13, 14

1 Day Refresher OHS Rep Course

Melbourne

April 14

July 21

October 27

Country

March 24 Geelong

May 26 Morwell

July 28 Portland

September 22 Shepparton

November 24 Mildura