September 2012 Edition 2

From the Director

Welcome to the second edition of our quarterly Health and Safety newsletter!

On 5 August, over 17500 people attended Curtin O Day. I'd like to thank the coordinators and volunteers for their efforts in making the event both enjoyable and safe for everyone involved.

Thank you for the feedback and suggestions on articles for the newsletter. Please continue to email us at healthandsafety@curtin.edu.au with any thoughts or suggestions.

Stay safe everyone,

Nelly Gaasdalen
Director, Health and Safety

Loading Docks and Forklifts

Curtin University is a busy workplace and receives numerous deliveries of items such as computers, food, furniture and even hazardous substances to loading docks located throughout campus.
The use of loading docks and forklifts present an increased risk of injury and property damage and require specific controls to help minimise the risks. Unfortunately there have been two serious incidents involving loading docks and forklifts at Curtin in the past 6 months. These events would have been avoided if the correct training and risk assessments were completed.
If you receive deliveries and/or work with forklifts, it is essential that you:

- Create and/or review Health and Safety Risk Assessments to identify specific risks and controls. i.e. 'Take 5' minutes and complete a Job Safety Analysis (JSA) before you commence any task or activity. Keep these in a central location or with the equipment.
- Familiarise yourself with the equipment operating manuals and complete any equipment specific training (including licencing requirements) if required.
- Ensure that the loading dock and equipment are maintained and serviced as required and that the records are easily accessible.
- Ensure that you are fit for work and that you are wearing the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) prescribed for the task.
- Participate in manual handling training.

Source: WorkSafe WA

Smokefree Campus

Health and Safety participated in Guild Day on the 18th of July to raise awareness of the Smokefree Campus initiative. Team members helped spread the word by distributing Smokefree 2012 pens, stickers, book-marks and information leaflets to students and staff. This initiative has been well received by staff, students, contractors and visitors to Curtin University.

Written by: Amy Bowater

Spills Management

Spills that are not managed correctly have the potential to cause serious injury to people and/or harm the environment. It is important to know how to deal with spills no matter how big or small. A small spill can be just as dangerous as a large one depending on the substance.
A spills management plan will assist in developing strategies to minimise the risks associated with spills, as well as avoiding dangerous clean-ups. At its simplest, it will outline steps that should be taken when a spill occurs (stop, analyse, contain, report, clean up and record).
A spill kit should be made available where assessed as necessary. A spill kit will contain items needed for clean-up such as instructions, personal protective equipment, absorbent pads, pillows and reactants. All staff should be made aware of the locations of spill kits and be trained in their use.
A SDS (Safety Data Sheet) must be available for every chemical in the workplace. The SDS contains information on clean-up procedures and safety precautions required. For further information and training please contact Health and Safety.

Sources: Green Stamp, University of Melbourne, Chemsafe

Personal Protective Equipment

Although widely used, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is the least effective method of reducing the risks associated with an activity. While PPE does provide a barrier between the worker and exposure, it can only do so when properly selected, used and maintained. So remember, only use PPE as a last resort or in conjunction with other more effective control measures.

Source: AIOH

H & S Staff Update

Sadly in August we said goodbye to Amy Bowater who left us to take up a new position with the ORD. Congrats Amy, we wish you all the best in your new role!

We also welcome
Jessica Farris-White, H&S Advisor, Admin and
Ife Freeman H&S Advisor, Health Sciences.
H & S Team details can be found here.

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Risk Assessments

A risk assessment is an essential tool for maintaining a safe workplace. Completion is vital prior to the commencement of any new work activity/event to ensure that all risks have been considered and suitable risk control measures have been implemented to ensure the safety of participants.

Risk assessments identify hazards associated with an activity/event (i.e. any source of potential damage, harm or adverse health effects), assesses the level of risk associated with the activity (with current controls) and details additional actions/control measures required to reduce the risk to a level that is 'as low as reasonably practicable' (ALARP).

As a person in charge of a workplace it is your duty of care (Regulation 3.1 of the Occupational Safety & Health Act 1984) to:

- ✔ Identify the hazards in the workplace
- ✔ Assess the risk of injury or harm to any person who may enter the workplace and
- ✔ Consider the means by which the risk may be reduced.

Please note: At Curtin, a 'person in charge of the workplace' includes Managers, Supervisors, Unit Co-ordinators or Lecturers, etc. and any 'responsible person' assigning the task/work.

There are a range of Risk Assessments available on the Health and Safety Website in the H&S Toolkit for you to use.
For assistance, please contact your Health & Safety Advisor, H & S Team details can be found here.

'Spot' the hazard 'Assess' the risk 'Manage' the risk

Source: Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 & Occupational Safety & Health Regulations 1996

Did you know…….

* David Beckham, Dennis Rodman, and Libby Trickett all have asthma?
* Over 2 million Australians have asthma – about 1 in 10 adults and about 1 in 9 or 10 children.
* More boys than girls have asthma, but after about age 15 it's more common in women than men.
* Many people with asthma (around 80%) also have allergies like hay fever.
* Hospital visits for asthma peak in February and May for children, and in winter for adults.
* If you have asthma, you may be more vulnerable to complications from seasonal flu and it is recommended that you should get the Flu Vaccination.
* With good management, people with asthma can lead normal, healthy lives.

Key steps for Effective Asthma Management:

1. Understand and avoid your asthma triggers
2. See your doctor for regular check-ups and work together to manage your asthma
3. Follow your personal written asthma action plan, developed with your doctor
4. Use your medications as prescribed, even when you feel well
5. Make sure you are using your inhaler (puffer) correctly
6. Live a healthy lifestyle – stop smoking, follow a balanced diet and exercise regularly

Source: Asthma Foundation

Want to Know More?

healthandsafety.curtin.edu.au
PPE
Asbestos in the Workplace
Ergonomics and Manual Tasks
Asthma Foundation
getyourpuffback.com.au

Asbestos

Asbestos is a naturally-occurring fibrous silicate mineral, known for its versatility, because it is able to withstand heat, erosion and decay and has fire and water resistant properties. Asbestos fibres become a health risk when they are released into the air and breathed in. Asbestos is described as either "bonded" or "friable".

Bonded asbestos cannot be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to a powder by hand pressure when dry and was commonly used in buildings, eg: roofing or compressed asbestos cement sheets; water, drainage and flue pipes; and floor tiles. If fire, hail, or direct activities such as water blasting and drilling damages bonded asbestos, it may become friable asbestos material.

Friable asbestos material is any material that contains asbestos and is in the form of a powder or can be crumbled, pulverised or reduced to powder by hand pressure when dry. It was mainly used in industrial applications such as pipe lagging, sprayed limpet and asbestos cloth and rope. Friable asbestos can only be removed by a licenced asbestos removalist with a friable asbestos licence.

Within the University environment, Health and Safety recommend that you **don't**

- cut it!	- drill it!	- drop it!	- sand it!
- saw it!	- scrape it!	- scrub it!	- dismantle it!
- water blast it!	- demolish it!	- dump it!	

We recommend that you **do**:

- Contact the Health and Safety department for advice on 9266 4900 or healthandsafety@curtin.edu.au, and
- Review the Asbestos Management Register for a comprehensive list of Asbestos Containing Material for all Campuses.

If you were to consider removing a small amount of asbestos yourself at home, review the Fibro & Asbestos – A renovator and homeowners guide for comprehensive information relating to asbestos removal.

Source: WorkCover NSW

Health and Safety Committee Meetings

CBS	18 Sept	10:00am -12:00pm
	16 Oct	10:00am -12:00pm
Health Sciences	19 Nov	2:30pm - 3:30pm
UHSC	17 Oct	12.00pm - 2.00pm

Health and Safety Events

National Safe Work Month 1 - 31 Oct 2012

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