



Welcome

Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the first edition of Safety Net for 2009. I have recently taken on the role as Executive Director of Human Resources Strategy (Training) and Chair of the Corporate Workplace Health and Safety Standing Committee. This newsletter captures matters discussed at the state-level Workplace Health and Safety Committee which was held on the 20th of March.

In conjunction with other key workplace health and safety initiatives undertaken around the state, some of the issues discussed at the state-wide meeting include action items forwarded from Regional Workplace Health and Safety Committees. This information is critical as many issues raised by workplaces and regions have a broader impact at a state-wide level. Schools should ensure that they forward similar health and safety information on to their region via the Regional Senior Workplace Health and Safety Consultants -

contacts: <http://education.qld.gov.au/health/contacts/hscontacts.html>

Thank you for your ongoing support of workplace health and safety initiatives and I encourage all workplaces to make this newsletter available to all staff and other relevant personnel.

Ross Wotherspoon

Executive Director - Human Resource Strategy (Training)

Chair - Corporate Workplace Health and Safety Standing Committee.

Corinda Cluster Professional Development Day

In late January, the Moreton Region's Organisational Health Team attended the Corinda Cluster Professional Development Day. Attendance was over 100, with representatives from Centenary SHS, Darra SS, Jindalee SS, Middle Park SS and Jamboree Heights SS. The Cluster is currently working on a 12 month wellness and health program.

Bruce Sullivan of Red Hot Relationships presented an excellent session designed to get staff contemplating their relationships within their schools. This was followed by a series of static displays manned by representatives from various organisations.

The Morton Region Organisational Health Team provided a display along with Queensland Teachers' Credit Union, Queensland Teachers Health Union, Q-Invest and Remserv.

Congratulations must go to the Corinda Cluster for organising this event and the planning for the next year of Professional Development and activities around employee health and wellbeing.

For further information contact David Hoppner - Senior Health and Safety Consultant (Moreton Region).



Schools Officer Network in Far North Queensland

Congratulations to Terry Cislowski (Mareeba SHS), Doug Thomas (Gordonvale SHS) and Peter Wilson (Bentley Park College) who have successfully established a Schools Officers' (Janitors and Grounds persons) group for far North Queensland School Officers. The group had their second meeting at the Mareeba State High School in November last year with approximately 35 Schools Officers attending.

The primary goal of the group is to provide a problem solving forum for the members, with a special focus on workplace health and safety as well as to co-ordinate a range of training and professional development opportunities. A close working relationship has also been developed with the Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE. For further information, please contact Brett Moore - Far North Queensland Region's Senior Health and Safety Consultant: <http://education.qld.gov.au/health/contacts/hscontacts.html>

Work Safe - Learn Safe - Be Safe

Website: www.education.qld.gov.au/health



Workplace Health and Safety Officer (WHSO) Training

It is a legislative requirement that all schools with 30 or more employees (including: permanent, temporary, itinerant and casuals) are required to have a trained WHSO and that these staff facilitate the completion of the workplace health and safety Annual Assessment. The primary role of the WHSO is to complete the WHS annual assessment as attached. This assessment is completed by staff undertaking the WHSO training.

The WHSO course is 7 days in duration and provides certification that is current for 5 years. After this period officers are required to undertake the recertification training which is 3 days in duration.

It is essential that schools check with their current WHSO to determine if they require the recertification training. This can be easily done by checking the "valid to:" date on their Workplace Health and Safety WHSO Card (see image), or by calling Workplace Health & Safety Queensland on ph 1300 369 915.



Who should be nominated to be our school WHSO?

If you require a new WHSO it is important to nominate the right person for the job. A competent, well-informed WHSO can provide invaluable support to their Principal and make a significant contribution to the successful management of the school. Being a WHSO has little to do with looking at cracks in the concrete, it is about setting up health and safety systems and improving the attitude of staff towards health and safety. The ideal person for the job will:

- ★ **Have credibility with staff and students**
- ★ **Be an asset on your management/finance committee**
- ★ **Be capable of writing an annual WH&S report**
- ★ **Care about staff and student welfare**
- ★ **Be highly motivated.**
- ★ **Have good interpersonal/communication skills**
- ★ **Not necessarily hold a position of responsibility at present**

Please note the high level communication and leadership skills required of staff undertaking this role.

All courses have been developed specifically for school based personnel by Education Queensland. Morning tea and lunch will be catered for.

Registration: You can register online by using the following hyperlink
<http://www.learningplace.com.au/events/default2.asp?pid=26978>

A 15% discount applies to: - Schools training a second staff member to assist their existing WHSO
 - Principals attending the course.

What is your immunisation status?

Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting people against vaccine preventable diseases. Some of these diseases can range in symptoms and illness levels from mild to very serious.

Immunisation uses the body's natural defence mechanism - the immune response - to build resistance to specific infections.

Unfortunately, as a number of people have become less vigilant regarding immunisation to maintain health, childhood diseases that were previously thought to be almost eradicated in Australia (such as measles) are re-emerging. These diseases, which can be prevented by routine childhood immunisation, are included in the [National Immunisation Program Schedule](#).

Immunisation is of particular concern in schools which have conditions under which infectious diseases can spread between staff, students and other workers.

Myths and Realities – there are many myths associated with immunisation. Immunisation Australia has prepared documentation to assist those who may be concerned about vaccinations.

[http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/2A6F1217513F4E59CA25719D001833F8/\\$File/myths-4th-edition.pdf](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/2A6F1217513F4E59CA25719D001833F8/$File/myths-4th-edition.pdf)

The National Health and Medical Research Council recommend that those who work with children should ensure that their immunisation status confirms immunity to common childhood diseases e.g. Pertussis (Whooping Cough), MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) and Varicella (Chicken Pox).

Note that those who were born since 1 January 1966 are entitled to free booster vaccine for MMR. Please consult with your local medical practitioner for further advice.



Don't let these slip through the Net

Moreton Region Principals' Meeting - March 2009

At the Moreton Region Principals meeting in March, guest speaker, Adrian Savage (Senior Lecturer of risk management from QUT) presented a 2 hour session on risk management.

This interactive session to over 100 principals provided enhanced skills and a practical tool to help school managers with their day to day risk management decision making.



Workplace Health & Safety Representatives (WHSR) Courses

Places Still Available for Term 2 Courses! - Register NOW.

Thank you to participants who attended the first WHSR Course for 2009 which was held at Sunnybank State High School in March. Feedback was again very positive and the group contributed a wealth of experiences and knowledge during the 3 days of Health and Safety Representatives Training.

WHSR Training is now available to school staff throughout the state. The training is tailor made for the school environment and delivered by departmental staff who have a in depth understanding of health and safety issues with schools.

A WHSR has particular powers and responsibilities as detailed in the *Workplace Health & Safety Act 1995*. The role of the WHSR is to represent the staff group on health and safety issues, therefore a trained WHSR is a valuable asset to your any school's Health & Safety Committee or for other consultative processes at your school.

Term 2 - 2009 WHSR Courses - Mackay, Townsville & Sunshine Coast

Mackay:	13th - 15th	May 2009	at the Mackay Regional Office
Townsville:	2nd - 4th	June 2009	at Townsville State High School
Caloundra:	16th - 18th	June 2009	at Caloundra State High School

Hurry to secure your school's position within these course. You can register NOW for all courses on line at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/health/safety/managing/whsr-form.html> .

For more information about WHSRs please refer to the website:
<http://education.qld.gov.au/health/safety/managing/whsr.html>

All interested staff, e.g. committee members are welcome to attend WHSR training with elected WHSRs given preference on places in courses if it is over-subscribed.

Contact your Regional Senior Health and Safety Consultant at the link below:
<http://education.qld.gov.au/health/contacts/hscontacts.html> or Janet Edgar on 3234 1583 for more information.

Senior Health and Safety Consultants Converge on Brisbane

Recently, departmental Senior Health and Safety Consultants from the Organisational Health Unit as well as from regions around the state met in Brisbane for professional development including training in the department's chemical management system - CHEMWATCH as well as to discuss the latest information and implications relating to the *Public Health Act 2005*. Ms Tricia Coward, Principal Advisor (Occupational Health), from WHSQ also facilitated a presentation with regards to infection control.

Many "hot issues" were raised for discussion and future state-wide action. Every school has access to a Senior Health and Safety Consultant based in their region. These staff can be contacted via the following hyperlink:
<http://education.qld.gov.au/health/contacts/hscontacts.html>



What's on the Safety Net?

Magnabend - Metal Work Machine Safety Alert

The Magnabend is a machine for folding sheet metal and is a common item used in the metal work environment. The machine is different from other folders as it clamps the work piece with a powerful electromagnet rather than by mechanical means.

The machine is essentially a long electromagnetic bed with a steel clamp bar located above. In operation, a piece of sheet metal is placed on the electromagnetic bed.

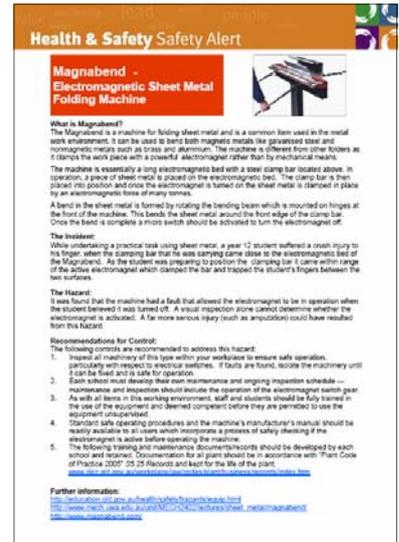
While undertaking a practical task using sheet metal, a year 12 student suffered a crush injury to their finger, when the clamping bar they were carrying came close to the electromagnetic bed of the Magnabend.

This fact sheet provides additional information relating to the machine as well as a list of control measures and further information on record keeping.

Recommendation: Inspect all machinery of this type within your workplace to ensure safe operation, particularly with respect to electrical switches. If faults are found, isolate the machinery until it can be fixed and is safe for operation.

You can access this Safety Alert at:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/magnabend-safety-alert.pdf>



Interactive Whiteboard Installation

Many schools are purchasing interactive whiteboards (IWB) for classrooms.

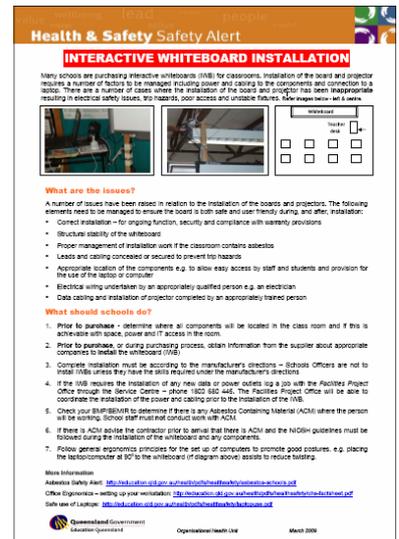
Installation of the board and projector requires a number of factors to be managed including power and cabling to the components and connection to a laptop.

There are a number of cases where the installation of the board and projector has been **inappropriate** resulting in electrical safety issues, trip hazards, poor access and unstable fixtures.

A fact sheet has been developed by the Organisational Health Unit detailing the issues that have been encountered as well as the processes that school should follow to ensure correct and safety installation of these teaching tools.

The fact sheet can be accessed at:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/interactive-whiteboards.pdf>



Review of Chemicals Used by Schools Officers

A fact sheet has been developed for use by Schools Officers. The fact sheet is designed to assist Schools Officers, school-based administration staff and Workplace Health and Safety Officers to review chemicals being used by Schools Officers.

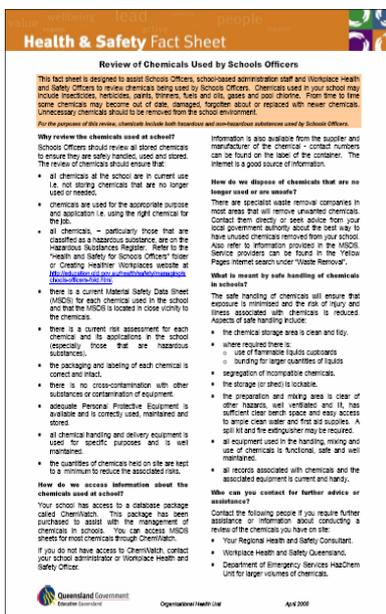
Chemicals used in your school may include insecticides, herbicides, paints, thinners, fuels and oils, and pool chlorine.

From time to time some chemicals may become out of date, damaged, forgotten about or replaced with newer chemicals. Unnecessary chemicals should be removed from the school environment.

The fact sheet provides information on:

- ★ Why review chemicals at schools,
- ★ How to assess information about chemicals,
- ★ Disposal of chemicals
- ★ Handling of chemicals in schools
- ★ Who to contact for advice or assistance.

An Annual Chemical Review Checklist is also provided on the second page of the fact sheet.



You can access this fact sheet at:

http://education.qld.gov.au/health/pdfs/healthsafety/hemical_review_factsheet.pdf