



Safety Bulletin

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A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

The final Safety Bulletin for 2020 is provided in the context of hoping you are safe and well!

This time of year presents us with an opportunity for reflection and assessment, so here are some of my thoughts on the management of health and safety over the past 12 months.

In late 2019, ReturnToWorkSA commenced a WHS Evaluation of our Safety Management System to ensure its compliance with legislation, conformity to the Performance Standards for Self-Insured Employers, and its implementation at all worksites.

Based on defined considerations, the recommended term of renewal is three years. This is a credit to the sectors and the hard work from both their WHS Coordinators and the WHS Consultants.

In January, we farewell Executive Manager Kathy Grieve, after 15 years service with the unit and welcomed Debbie Nation into the position.

During COVID-19 lockdown the CSH&W SA unit reviewed the CCES Safety Management System. Working from home, the team:

- Reviewed 31 procedures
- Updated the procedure template
- Reviewed 71 forms
- Updated the form template
- Developed 27 guidance documents
- Developed 2 audit tools
- Reviewed 85 risk assessment templates
- Reviewed 15 SOP templates

In June we had two of the CSH&W SA Unit Team Members resign, Dave Barrett and Freddie Wright both moving

onto SafeWorkSA.

In August we welcomed to the Unit Dave Parsons and Lucas Parfitt.



The New Team

From left: Dave Parsons, Chris Donnelly, Lisa Nowak, Jayne Ryan, Debbie Nation, & Lucas Parfitt. Missing in action Keith Johns (he doesn't like his photo taken)

As I close for 2020, I remind you that it is the time of year to be aware of what you are doing and how you are going to go about various activities, consider your risks, think through the activity, plan and safely complete the actions ... and definitely enjoy them.

As always, if you have any safety issues you wish to raise I can be contacted at: dpwest@centacare.org.au.

Finally, thank you all for your work in our varied workplaces during a very different 2020 and I wish you and your families a safe and blessed Christmas.

Dale P West
Chairperson SIGC

How Safety Professionals Can Increase Impact

The most difficult step is also the most critical when it comes to being effective as a safety professional. If you want to improve how you work, you need more space. Getting to know people, building effective relationships, and understanding the challenges in their roles requires time.

As safety professionals, you need to know what's going on in your organisation. If you're in meetings from 9am to 5pm, that's going to be impossible. Understanding people and their work means taking the time to enquire and investigate and collaborate on solutions. You need to follow the trail of weak signals to proactively manage emerging and future safety risks.

To be an effective safety professional, you need upwards of 50% of your role allocated to white space, where you have time to pick up the phone, follow a hunch, get out into the field and see what's going on – focus on current and *future* work, which is your job after all.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Safety Publication, OHS Professional, September 2020.

Snakes at Worksites

With warmer weather snakes are more likely to be active.

The greatest risk of snake bite from venomous snakes is by people trying to kill or handle them. This is why only an expert should even contemplate handling a snake. A number of risk factors may increase the likelihood of encountering snakes, such as:

- long grass;
- snake habitats such as ponds, piles of timber and sheets of galvanized iron;
- presence of vermin that attracts snakes.

Prevention strategies:

- ensure long grass is cut back;
- remove access to water within the site where possible;
- remove habitats such as ponds, piles of timber and sheets of galvanized iron;
- maintain clean yards and surroundings to reduce the mice population;
- ensure an action plan is ready should a snake bite occur;
- ensure that first aid procedures and hospital/doctor/ambulance phone numbers are clearly displayed in the staff room;
- provide specific instructions regarding the correct procedures to adopt if encountering a snake.

Response when encountering a snake:

- remain calm and motionless in the first instance;
- leave the snake alone and give it the opportunity to escape;
- move slowly to a safe distance observing the position of the snake at all times;
- alert people at the worksite (advise them to stay calm and keep away);
- if possible, monitor the snake from a safe distance (at least 5 metres away);
- if the snake remains and is perceived to be a threat, contact your workplace manager who should arrange for a licensed local herpetologist who can attend to catch and relocate the snake.

Recovery actions:

- conduct a primary survey (DRSABCD);
- immediately apply a firm bandage over the bite marks or scratches;
- apply Pressure Immobilisation Technique;
- maintain continued pressure and immobilise, ensuring the patient doesn't move
- rest and reassure patient;
- call an ambulance – 000 (triple zero) or arrange transport if isolated;
- do not wash bite as a venom sample can be used to identify the snake;
- do not cut or suck the bite to drain venom;
- do not apply a tourniquet;
- be prepared – resuscitation may be required.

Research shows very little venom reaches the circulatory system if the pressure immobilization technique is applied immediately and maintained.

Other considerations:

Sites should review any risk management plans or Emergency Management Plans for areas where snakes are known to frequent or the environment would be conducive to snakes.

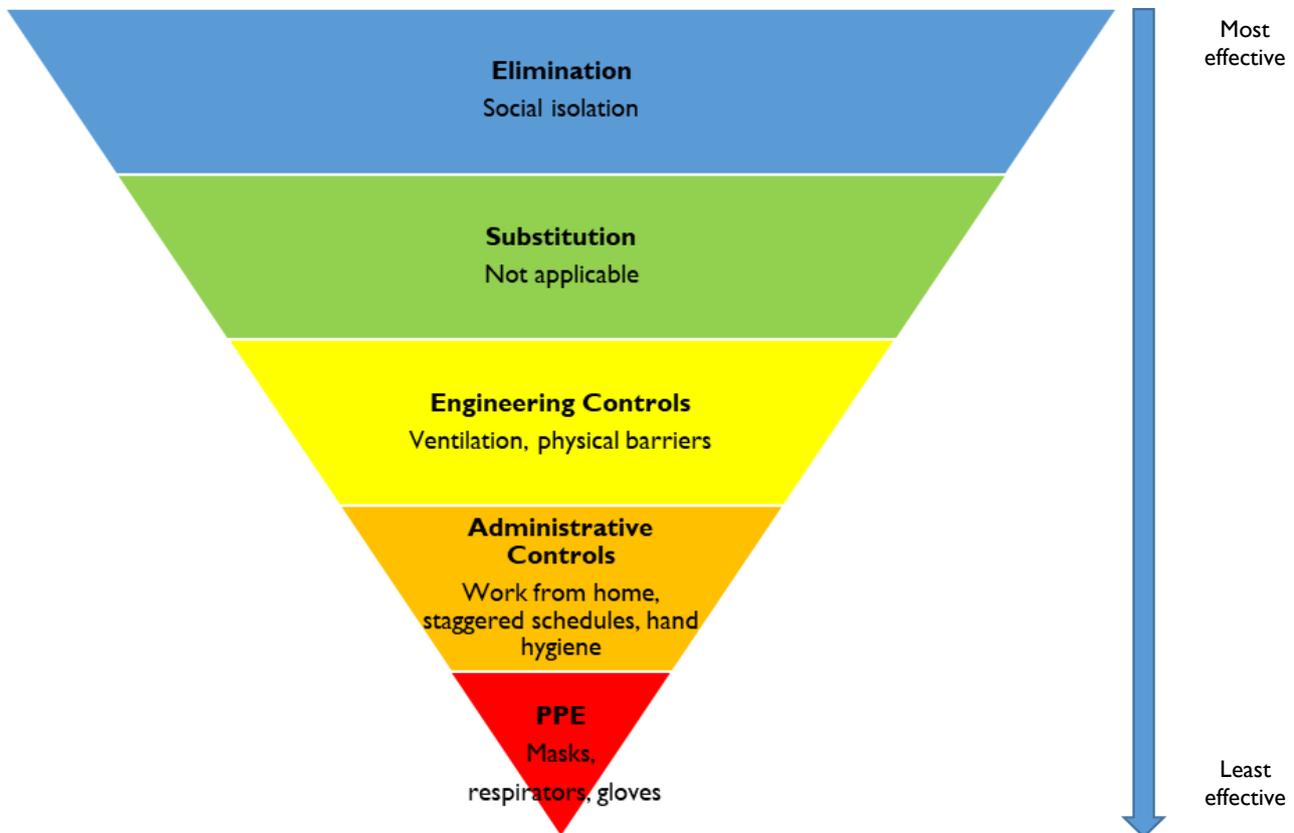
Where necessary, risk assessments should consider the risk of snakes. The relevant risk assessments and risk management plans should document any hazards related to snakes, as well as the controls that will be adopted so that the risk of these hazards is reduced to as low as reasonably practicable.

Sites can purchase a snake bite kit as an addition to first aid kits. These additional modules have extra bandages and equipment for responding to snake bite emergencies.



Applying the Hierarchy of Controls to COVID-19

In Safety we often talk about the hierarchy of controls when talking about hazard / risk management. Can we eliminate the hazard? Can we substitute for something less hazardous etc. Here is an example of applying the hierarchy of controls for COVID-19.



Falls Through Fragile Roofing

SafeWork SA is issuing a reminder to building owners and contractors about the importance of managing risk of falls. SafeWork SA inspectors recently attended two separate incidents that resulted in serious injuries. Both incidents could have been fatal.



The first incident occurred when a contractor fell backwards through an unprotected skylight, falling 4.6m and sustaining multiple fractures. The contractor was inspecting anchor points on the roof at the time.

The second incident occurred when a worker fell through poly sheeting, falling 4.6m onto a concrete floor below.



These two cases follow similar incidents in December 2019 where a worker was fatally injured and in January 2020 another worker was seriously injured.

SafeWork SA issued a [safety alert](#) at this time to businesses and workers about managing the risk of fall from a fragile roof. These two further recent incidents had the potential to be more serious and SafeWork SA again remind businesses to be alert to the hazards and risks involved with fragile roof material and ensure that controls are in place to eliminate the risk.

Go to the SafeWork SA [fragile roofing page](#) for information on risk management controls. The four-part educational video series on [managing risk of falls](#) provide guidance to manage the risk when working at heights to comply with work health safety responsibilities.

Source: SafeWork SA

Good News Story—St Dominic's Priory School

During this time of shutdowns and physical distancing it can be difficult to remember the positive connections we have in our lives.

CONNECTING HEARTS, NOT HANDS is art work put together by the St. Dominic's girls to remind us of people who need our ongoing support. The idea was to use their creative skills to express positive ways of living with COVID despite physical distancing. We were reminded that we can still be socially active to help make a difference in the lives of others.

Last term our students had images of boys and girls in India pinned to their blazers or tucked on desks to support them by purchasing meals for those in need. It was a thoughtful and meaningful activity that evoked important conversations about how we can be socially active to help make a difference to the lives of others.

These pieces of art work will be displayed at the Mary Potter Hospice and Calvary Hospital, the Royal Adelaide Hospital, Mannum Medical Clinic, Helping Hand Aged Care, and our own school Library.

Other ways we have been bringing awareness of COVID-19 to our whole school community (including staff, students and parents) is by using some **free online** courses.

COVID-19 – Safety at Work – takes about 15 minutes to complete - You will get an email confirmation that you have completed this one. <https://www.sentrient.com.au/course/covid-19-safety-at-work.html>

Hand Hygiene Australia – takes about 20 minutes to complete - You will get emailed a certificate from this course. www.hha.org.au

COVID-19 – Safety for students – takes about 15 minutes to complete - You will get emailed a certificate from this course. <https://www.sentrient.com.au/compliance-courses/coronavirus-covid-19-safety-for-students>



Special thanks to Sally Hermel at St Dominic's Priory School for sharing her good news story. If you have a positive story from your site that you would like to share in the next bulletin, please email your WHS Consultant.

Parish Reminder

Hazard Management

Have you completed your workplace inspections (one required every six (6) months)?

Workplace Inspections are a useful tool to help prevent incidents, injuries and illnesses. Through a critical examination of the workplace, inspections help to identify and record hazards for corrective action. Workplace Inspection Form can be located <https://www.cshwsa.org.au/forms/>.

Management of Hazardous Chemicals

Have you updated your safety data sheets (must be five (5) years old or less from the Issue Date)?

Safety data sheets are important in helping you to make the workplace safe and to protect the environment. More specifically a safety data sheet contains information to help you complete a risk assessment and put in mitigations to reduce the risk of injury / illness. Safety data sheets can be sourced through the supplier of the chemical. If unavailable please contact your CSH&W SA Consultant.

Management of Plant

Have you reviewed your plant register and implemented a preventative maintenance schedule?

Normal wear and tear can result in lower machine efficiency. Preventive maintenance assures optimal working conditions and conserves the life span of the equipment and avoid any unplanned maintenance activity. Plant register can be located <https://www.cshwsa.org.au/forms/>.

Electricity

All hand held portable electrical equipment must be tested annually e.g. laptop computers, shredders, kettles, urns etc.

Any fixed electrical equipment must be tested 5 yearly e.g. fridges, microwaves etc. Documentation to be kept on file.

Residual Safety Devices (RCD's) (or safety switches) must be push button tested every 6 months, and time tested every 2 years. Documentation to be kept on file.

