

EPA and WorkSafe NZ

In April the EPA held their annual conference in Wellington for industry, test certifiers and government. The conference was well attended and covered a range of topics with the main theme being the impending changes to the governance regime around Health & Safety and Hazardous Substances.

So what is actually going to happen?

The impending "Health and Safety at Work Act" will bring changes to the current HSNO Act. These changes will be set by WorkSafe NZ who will take ownership of all HSNO Guides and Codes of Practice from 1 September 2014. Thereafter WorkSafe will review the HSNO Act and decide on the HSNO Controls for the workplace. These controls are expected to be in plain English and in play by 1 April 2015.

So what will be different?

The EPA will now be responsible for Packaging and Labelling; Safety Data

Sheets; and Consumers (not the workplace) and Importers and Manufacturers.

At a recent EPA seminar it was revealed that the classification system for Hazardous substances will soon re-align itself with the GHS system. This will mean a change, particularly to Safety Data Sheets although not a major one which we will keep you informed of.

How will this affect you?

The culture of Hazardous Substance accountability will increase where-by the Person Conducting a Business Undertaking (PCBU) will now be more engaged and responsible with Hazard identification and compliance.

For the moment everything is a work in progress and business as usual where WorkSafe NZ and the EPA will continue to keep us informed as developments arise.

Health Monitoring

With the introduction of the Health and Safety at Work Act next year, the importance of continual monitoring will be something the Person in Charge or the Person Conducting a Business Undertaking (PCBU) will need to take more seriously.

Gone will be the days when a Spray Painter doesn't wear their mask. Going forward it will be the PCBU's responsibility to ensure the safety of all employees by putting in place a system of health monitoring. For Highly Hazardous industries this may mean periodic checks by an Occupational Health Nurse to take blood pressure or conduct a general health check,

especially where toxic substances are involved. Thus it is the responsibility of the Manager to ensure all employees comply with the Health and Safety rules even if an employee won't follow them. In Victoria, Australia WorkSafe fines the PCBU and also the employee for indiscretions.

Of particular interest will be industries that use solvents, thinners and flammable paints for inks. If you are in these industries does your team wear their PPE gear and have you appropriate ventilation? Do you check up on their health and what access to an Occupational Health Nurse do you have?

Approved Handler Certification

As a result of increased enforcement and potential health and safety changes, we have just had to run an extra additional training days. If your Approved Handlers are soon to expire or you require

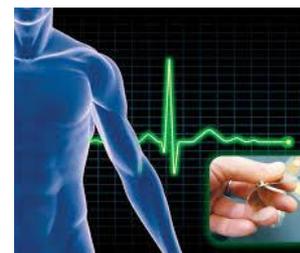
additional coverage, check our website now and book ahead for January 2015. Our first course of 2015 will take place in Auckland on Tuesday, 20th January.



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