

NEWS LETTER

Drugs and Alcohol in the workplace

WORK INJURY?

The Union is aware of several instances where the employer is challenging whether or not an injury occurred in the workplace.

Workers need to ensure that they report ANY INCIDENT, no matter how trivial it may seem as this greatly enhances your chances of having fewer problems gaining cover and entitlements.

**REPORT! REPORT!
REPORT!**

WORK DEATH
TOLL for the year
1 July 2010 -
June 2011

(SOURCE—Safeguard
Magazine)

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This issue continues to be a problem for the Union and Union members alike.

Members should note that the Union does not condone any worker reporting for work with his/her abilities and/or judgment impaired by alcohol or drugs to the degree that either their own safety could be at risk, or the safety of any other person they might come into contact with in the course of their work.

The use of drugs and alcohol, even if consumed outside the workplace, can lead to employee impairment while at work. Poor concentration, carelessness, risk-taking behaviour and errors in judgment can occur. Drug and alcohol abuse not only affects work performance, but also results in higher rates of injuries, fatalities and absenteeism as well as reduced productivity.

We ask members to seriously think about this matter, can you afford to lose your job? Think about what might happen to you and your family if you lose your job because your drug or alcohol use caused problems at work.

Most employers have access to assistance for workers wanting to get help for problems with drugs and/or alcohol, you just have to ask. If you don't feel comfortable talking to your employer, [talk to your Union delegate or Shed Secretary or elected health and safety rep—they can also help you.](#)

The [Drug and Alcohol Helpline on 0800 787 797](#) is a good place to get help.





Got problems at work with ACC, and you're a Union member—see your plant/on site secretary first and as soon as possible.

If they can't help you, they can access the

CTU Injury Advocacy Service on 0800 486 466

for expert advice and assistance.



General Secretary—*Dave Eastlake*

A belated Happy New Year to all members. The export season is under way and at different levels as far as stock availability is concerned. While the North Island is struggling to get reasonable weeks work, pressure is on in the South with overtime being worked this January. As we all know the stock can only be processed once so the weather in this case is dictating when/if this will happen.

Last year was a really testing one for us here in Christchurch. Our year got pretty shaken in February and as a result of the earthquakes we lost our National Office, with only 40 minutes to retrieve items before the building was demolished in late November a lot of historical documents of our Union have been confined to the rubbish tip! After a period of working from our respective kitchens, we relocated temporarily to the office block of the closed Canterbury meat plant (SFF). This move is only just adequate and planning of a new Trade Union Centre is a long way off yet.

As well as losing our offices, Amanda's home is to be demolished and Sherryl's home is also on the list for possible demolition and has been further affected by the recent bout of quakes. Fingers crossed for a more settled 2012!

Good news just before Christmas—we reached a settlement in the CMP Rangitikei lockout dispute. Congratulations to our affected members for the way they stood up during the lock out and a big thanks to all members who contributed money and goods to assist them. What an effort from the wider trade union members! As well as letters of support from all over the globe, in excess of \$150,000 was collected to support the locked out workers.

We have a busy workload ahead of us for this year, stock prospects look pretty much the same as last year which is not that bright for those working on mutton and lamb, and for me it's off to the retirement paddock mid year.

Regards, Dave
UNITED WE STAND

Key annual statistics for 2010

75 workers killed at work

5,945 serious harm notifications

54 cases where an employer was successfully prosecuted for breaches of health and safety legislation.

ACC

Some employer's are continuing to decline claims on the basis that the accident was not reported or was reported some time after the accident—this is not a valid reason to decline a claim, and as such the employer *cannot decline* a claim solely on that basis.

Having said that, please make sure that you do report all injuries, however if there are compelling reasons that prevent you from doing so at the time the employer cannot simply refuse to accept the claim.



Photo above shows the TUC Building in the process of being demolished (Photo—Amanda Stephens)

NEW ZEALAND MEATWORKERS UNION

NATIONAL OFFICE,
TEMPORARILY AT 55 BELFAST ROAD,
CHRISTCHURCH

Website:
Nzmeatworkersunion
.co.nz



Bits 'n' Pieces/Odds 'n' Sods

Alliance Group Ltd was fined \$31,000 and ordered to pay reparations of \$20,336 under s6 of the HSE Act after a worker fell while cleaning. The man fell from a boning stand he was using to clean walls, falling 1.54m to a tiled floor below breaking both arms, breaking his ribs and receiving a cut to the head. The DOL said the company had failed to identify the hazard and the gaps between the guard rails could have been narrowed by putting in a moveable guard. (*Gore DC, April 21*)

Taylor Preston Ltd was fined \$30,000 and ordered to pay reparations of \$5,000 under s6 and s26 of the HSE Act when an employee's finger was partially amputated and the company interfered with the accident scene. Due to a lack of guards on a cutter the man's finger was partly amputated and the company had cleaned and removed the hock cutter before a formal investigation was made. (*Wellington DC, April 13*)

Ravensdown Fertiliser Co-op Ltd was fined \$40,000 and ordered to pay reparations of \$25,000 under s6 of the HSE Act after an employee got caught in a conveyor belt. His arm was amputated and he suffered a broken jaw, facial lacerations and a lost tooth. While the Court heard another employee had contributed to the accident, by removing a guard, it was held that checks should have been performed. (*Timaru DC, May 12*)

Silver Fern Farms was fined \$40,000 and ordered to pay reparations of \$20,000 under s18(1)(a) after an employee of a contractor had her arm caught in an infeed conveyor. The employee was attempting to clear grease from an exposed roller, glove got snagged, the company had not identified the ex-

posed rollers as a hazard and the conveyor was not adequately guarded. (*Wanganui DC, Feb 10, 2011*)

CANCER IN MEATWORKERS—STUDY

You may recall an initial study into cancer in Meatworkers took place a few years ago.

The result of that study showed that there was reason for further study.

Funding has now been secured by Massey University to continue the work they had started, and they are currently in the process of contacting meat industry employer's to obtain workplace access for the environmental part of the study.

The Meat Industry Health & Safety Forum has already recommended to the MIA council that the study be supported by it's membership. The Union has already indicated it's support for the study.

In the near future, employees/Union members may be asked to volunteer blood samples towards this and you will be kept informed of when this could happen.

