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### **Leptospirosis outbreak Northland**

After a spike in cases of leptospirosis in Northland, farmers are being urged to take care around animals and to vaccinate their livestock. Leptospirosis is a serious bacterial disease that can cause flu-like symptoms, such as headaches, muscle pains, and fevers – in severe cases, it causes bleeding from the lungs, meningitis or kidney failure.

WorkSafe has been advised by the Medical Officer of Health of the increase in leptospirosis notifications in Northland. Seven cases have been confirmed so far this year with another one under investigation as a suspected infection. No cases were reported last year.



### **Things that count for evidence of Health and Safety Performance**

1. Job descriptions that are properly constructed
2. Training needs analysis that relate to the job descriptions
3. Job Task Analysis that match the job descriptions
4. Personnel records for every member of staff
5. High quality meeting formats covering 20-50 items and signed off
6. Site Specific Safety Plans for each major project
7. Proof that internal site audits are actually completed and actioned.



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## News & views from Summit Systems August 2016



### **SAFETY IS OFTEN THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT YOU THINK**

More than 90% of NZ Managers are 90% confident that they have 90% of the compliance things absolutely cornered and completely fixed. Let us examine current fallacies.

1. Insurance is useful to contain risk and is the best and cheapest way. Wrong, it is the most expensive way. Most managers could save 25% of their premiums if they spend \$800 on a professional risk management audit to get an annual certificate.
2. NZQA courses are the best way to train people in Health and Safety. Wrong. Competency is near enough or scrape through to shuffle over the line. Injury Prevention courses are based on excellence and zero harms and not on competency.
3. Having health professionals treat staff for OOS and workplace pain indicates a highly responsible manager. Wrong. The highly responsive manager will have ergonomic surveys to ensure work stations and jobs are properly set up and no pain happens.
4. The best workplaces are those that are extremely tidy. Wrong. The best workplaces are those where workers are given survival tests to ensure that all workers understand the risks that they face in everyday situations and do not chose the wrong options.
5. The best workplaces are those where workers have lots of freedom and are able to participate with ideas and innovations that they wish to introduce. Wrong. The safest workplaces are those that have high discipline and have experienced workers look out for new people and ensure that they do not get trapped.
6. Trade Unions are the best way to ensure that bad bosses are rooted out. Wrong. The Unions should encourage all members to insist on having qualified Safety Officers at the ratio of one for every five workers. Safety Representatives can cause loss of jobs.
7. The best workplaces are those that have incentives for more work on time to save costs. Wrong. The best workplaces are those that have incentives for zero harms and zero defects and zero delays.
8. ACC is designed to make sure that an extra holiday is available for every worker. Wrong and ACC is now experience rated. Before long you will probably find that workers who do not have claims during the year will get half of their premium refunded at tax time.
9. The best advice for Health and Safety is on the internet and NZ Govt sites. Wrong. The best information is to be found in the International Standards and the International Regulations and the International Safety Qualifications available.

2.

## **WORKSAFE DUTY HOLDER REVIEWER (DHR) SEEKS INFORMATION - A MOST UNPLEASANT EXPERIENCE**

Sometimes, restructuring of a Department can bring new people with fresh ideas and more zeal. The Worksafe example is far from this. It is a mixture of good and bad management. It is obvious that the new Admin people (no matter what their qualifications) have little if any workplace experience and probably no HSE Inspectorial experience.

The DHR might suggest that you can do everything about the new laws yourself easily and quickly. The laws are a "piece of cake" and will be so simple it is like "falling off a log". The DHR might even tell you that Health & Safety Consultants are a waste of time. They are not properly qualified and should not be listened to. Don't waste money on them!

The DHR is likely to advise you to join a new organisation for workplace people who will associate with similar people to make rules and have conferences. The person is likely to keep on requesting information that is irrelevant and shows a lack of knowledge about cause and effect. The person will in some cases have no actual industrial experience whatsoever.

The DHR may tell you that there is an option of submitting your own information but when you do, there will be an abrupt rebuttal that it is no use whatsoever. The person will probably refer you to the Worksafe website where some articles appear to be designed to denigrate (ridicule) Occupational Safety Professionals, who do not yet belong to the H&S Association. SUMMARY: Beware of the 15-25 page Duty Holder Review that is designed to solicit the most incriminating information you could imagine. It will waste 30-50 hours of your time.

## **RECENT FINE FOR MEAT PACKING SITE**

CMP Canterbury Limited (part of the ANZCO Group) has been fined \$39,000 and ordered to pay reparation of \$68,250 in addition to \$12,000 previously paid by the company after a worker was crushed by the door of a stun box.

The company was sentenced today in the Ashburton District Court under the Health and Safety in Employment Act for failing to keep an employee safe at work. A WorkSafe investigation discovered failures by the company to identify appropriate safety controls for the door.

On 3 June 2015, the victim was doing Halal slaughtering by cutting the throats of stunned cows when one fell in an unusual position with its head still under the stun box door. As another worker passed him a captive bolt gun to assist with the kill, the door was inadvertently activated and closed, crushing the victim. He suffered two broken femurs, fractures to the lower back and a stroke as a result of his injuries. He also suffered memory loss and has yet to return to work.

Notes: The WorkSafe investigation found that:

- CMP should have installed a safety pin locking device or restraint system to stop the door from dropping while an employee was working under it.
- The manual control of the machine should have been a "hold to run" type so that it stopped immediately if hand pressure on the control button was released.
- To prevent inadvertent activation, the toggle switch of the machine should have been properly shrouded or a recessed push button control should have been used.
- The door should have been able to be stopped at any point and returned to a safe position.

3.

## **TIN FOIL IS DANGEROUS**

The Chief Executive of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) has declared a ban, under section 26 of the Building Act 2004, on retrofitting or repairing of foil insulation. The ban is specifically on the following building methods:

- The installation of foil insulation into residential buildings with an existing electrical installation (retrofitting foil insulation), and
- The repair of foil insulation in residential buildings with an existing electrical installation (e.g. stapling ripped or damaged foil back onto the floor joists of a building).

The ban follows strong feedback on the need to eliminate the risks posed by foil insulation products. These concerns were raised by submitters during consultation on proposed changes to the Residential Tenancies Act 1986 (that will require insulation and smoke alarms in rental properties).



## **WHEN FARMERS WANT HELP FROM A SAFETY PROFESSIONAL**

Mr McCone (Agriculture Programme Manager Worksafe) says while there are good health and safety consultants out there, they are not all of the same quality and effectiveness. "Farmers need to make sure they are working with a competent and qualified professional safety advisor – that may not be the first health and safety advisor they get talking to at the local field day."

To help farmers buy the right kind of support, the Health and Safety Association of New Zealand (HASANZ), the national umbrella organisation representing all workplace health and safety professions, has developed a simple checklist.

Ask them these five quick questions before making a decision:

- Which professional association do you belong to – can you confirm this?
- What qualifications and/or certification do you have?
- What relevant skills and experience do you have for this job?
- Can you give me examples of similar work you have done recently?
- Are you happy for us to contact your clients about your work for them?

