

# DANGEROUS DIESEL FUMES

**One person every three days is diagnosed with lung cancer caused by diesel fumes.**

Workers who are regularly exposed to diesel exhaust fumes at work can be up to 40 percent more likely to develop lung cancer.

Diesel fumes can cause lung cancer, chronic bronchitis, heart disease, stroke, respiratory infections and exacerbation of asthma.

Workers particularly at risk include diesel mechanics, vehicle service and repair and those working with diesel operated engines, generators, compressors etc.

## **PREVENTION IS ALWAYS THE BEST OPTION.**

### **What can you do in your workplace?**

- select low emission engines
- avoid contaminating fuel with lubricating oils
- reduce emissions through selection, maintenance and checking of filters
- ensure workplaces have exhaust and forced dilution ventilation

### **Exhaust systems in workshops need:**

- sufficient fan volume for the numbers of engines and extraction outlets in the workshop
- adaptors for all types of exhaust pipes
- appropriate disposal of extracted exhausts
- to make sure that the extended piping does not increase back pressure on the engine
- extraction ventilation turned on before cold starting an engine

### **In workshops careful scheduling of work is necessary to limit the time and number of idling engines:**

- regular maintenance/maintaining good engine performance is essential.

### **Look out for smoke:**

- blue smoke: caused by partly burnt fuel from badly worn engines which are poorly serviced or tuned
- black smoke: produced if there is a mechanical fault with the engine or if the engine is working near its maximum speed
- white smoke: produced when the engine is started from cold, and disappears as the engine warms up
- to prevent dermatitis minimise skin contact with diesel particulates

### **For more information:**

Cancer Council Australia - [www.cancer.org.au/news/media-releases/diesel-fumes-at-work-cause-130-lung-cancer-cases-every-year.html](http://www.cancer.org.au/news/media-releases/diesel-fumes-at-work-cause-130-lung-cancer-cases-every-year.html)

Safe Work Australia -- [www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/swa/about/publications/pages/guidance-for-managing-the-risks-of-diesel-exhaust](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/swa/about/publications/pages/guidance-for-managing-the-risks-of-diesel-exhaust)

UK HSE – Control of diesel engine exhaust emissions in the workplace [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg187.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg187.pdf)

UK HSE – Health and Safety in the motor vehicle repair and associated industries [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg261.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg261.htm)