

'It's no accident' is the OHS newsletter of the AMWU. Feedback and story ideas to amwu@amwu.asn.au

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MADE IN AUSTRALIA BY
AMWU MEMBERS

GREAT NEWS - CANADA ASBESTOS BAN

In late December 2016, the Canadian Government announced a ban on the importation and use of asbestos in Canada, to take effect in 2018.

AMWU National Secretary, Paul Bastian, said this was a pivotal moment in the global movement to ban asbestos.

"Asbestos use is still rampant in the developing world including Indonesia, India, and China. It continues to be a global problem and Canada's decision is a strong signal to the global community," he said.

"Until 2003, Australia imported Canadian asbestos for use in friction part manufacture, so we have a particular interest in seeing Canada implement its own ban."

"In particular, I'd like to congratulate our sister union, Unifor, who have been taking up this struggle for decades. As far back as 2003, Unifor had been calling for this importation ban. This announcement is a culmination of the work of their officials and rank-and-file activists," said Mr Bastian.

In 2017, the global community will meet under the auspices of the United Nations to consider updating the Rotterdam Convention to impose regulations on the global asbestos trade. Thus far, these moves have been hindered by the refusal of some big nations to agree.

"This move by Canada is an enormous boost to our efforts to get countries to agree to include chrysotile in the Rotterdam convention," said Mr Bastian.

Australian consumers were shocked to learn earlier this year that asbestos continues to be found in imported consumer and building products. Investigations in 2016 uncovered asbestos in consumer products including children's crayons.

"A global ban on asbestos is in our national interest. We can't afford to ban asbestos here, only to have it come through via the back door."

JOIN US:

AMWU closed Facebook group for AMWU HSRs –
www.amwu.org.au/hsrgroup



IT'S NO ACCIDENT

HEALTH AND SAFETY NEWS

JANUARY 2017



For southern areas – due to variable temperatures many workers are not acclimatised.

30 TO 32 DEGREES CELSIUS
10 minutes rest every hour

32 TO 35 DEGREES CELSIUS
15 minutes rest every hour

35 TO 38 DEGREES CELSIUS
30 minutes rest hour

OVER 38 DEGREES CELSIUS
Rest in a ventilated area until less than 38 degrees Celsius

For hotter parts of the country

36 TO 38 DEGREES CELSIUS
10 minutes rest every hour

38 TO 40 DEGREES CELSIUS
15 minutes rest every hour

40 TO 42 DEGREES CELSIUS
30 minutes rest hour

OVER 42 DEGREES CELSIUS
45 minutes break every hour and no more than 2 hours at this temperature

More of us are working in hotter temperatures - 2016 was Australia's fourth warmest year on record and amongst the 10 warmest years for all of the eastern states. Between 2005 and 2014, 13 workers died due to exposure to 'environmental heat' - five were in Queensland.

Heat stress can occur even when we are acclimatized to heat. After the 2013 death of a 38-year-old man, the Queensland Coroner recommended that -

"the construction industry to set a temperature level for halting heavy outdoor work in extreme heat in a bid to prevent worker deaths."

When work cannot be rescheduled or artificial cooling provided the AMWU recommends a regime of rest breaks in cool areas with cool drinks. The temperatures for rest breaks will vary depending upon usual temperatures and whether workers are acclimatised.

THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT HAS PRODUCED A USEFUL TOOL TO GUIDE US IN THE PREVENTION OF HEAT STRESS.

<https://fswgap.worksafe.qld.gov.au/etools/etool/heat-stress-basic-calculator-test/>

It is essential that first aid requirements are understood and applied during hot work/weather.

PLEASE PLACE ON NOTICEBOARD

10 GOLDEN RULES FOR WORK INJURY/ILLNESS



1. If you have a work injury/illness always **NOTIFY** your employer eg first aid book, register of injuries, accident report book.

2. You have the right to see your **OWN DOCTOR** for all work injuries/medical conditions. You should always see your own doctor in relation to your treatment and fitness for work, not the company doctor.

3. **NEVER** agree to an employer representative sitting in on your medical appointments, even for a work injury/illness. You can and should say no to this. This is your legal right.

4. If you need **TIME OFF WORK OR MEDICAL TREATMENT** for a work injury/illness you have a right to make a workers' compensation claim. Make sure your Doctor fills out the correct forms.

5. **NEVER** accept the advice of an employer who tells you not to lodge a workers' compensation claim – this is illegal. If in doubt, make a claim to protect yourself.

6. If in doubt contact the **AMWU Helpdesk** or your union delegate. If necessary we can refer you to legal or other expert advice.

7. If your Doctor has said you are not fit for duties, **NEVER** allow an employer representative to force you or your doctor to amend a medical certificate to say you are fit for duties.

8. **YOU** may have a workers' compensation claim for old injuries and medical conditions made worse by work. Get expert advice.

9. **NEVER** accept any lump sum or redemption payments etc. from your employer or workers' compensation insurer without seeking expert advice.

10. Safe work and full compensation rights for injured workers are not negotiable for the **AMWU**.

Your AMWU delegate is:

You can call the AMWU Helpdesk

