

Te Korowai Whakaruruhau

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service



November 2025

Kia ora Koutou,

As we head into the final stretch of the year and the days grow longer and warmer, many of us are feeling that familiar end-of-year fatigue. It's a good reminder of how important it is to look out for one another and stay connected.

In this edition, we explore the value of resilience, teamwork, and good communication. Let's keep supporting each other and continuing to uphold best practice in health, safety and wellbeing across our communities.

This will be our last newsletter for the year, so from all of us in the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team, we wish you a very happy Christmas. We hope you get the chance to switch off, recharge, and enjoy some well-earned rest over the break. Your support, commitment, and care throughout the year have truly made a difference, and we thank you.

Take care, enjoy the holidays, and we look forward to reconnecting in the new year. 🌲 ✨

In this issue we look at:

- Navigating end-of-year fatigue
- Damstra rebranding to Ideagen Workforce Safety
- MBIE Advisory on coloured sand products
- Improvement notice drives traffic safety improvements
- Height safety basics missed in preventable fall from pole
- Radiation Safety community of interest
- Dates in November
- Whakatauki

Angus Clark
Associate Director – HSW

Navigating end of year fatigue

As the year draws to a close, we're hearing that many people are feeling tired and worn out. This is not a new phenomenon— we see it every year when November and December roll around. By this point in the year, many people have not taken a decent break for several months, and yet at the same time, there's a mounting pressure to deliver those last projects, and meet final deadlines before the summer holidays can start.

Add to this the personal life events and associated stress at this time of year (Christmas to-do lists, social end-of-year gatherings, school events etc.) and the general instability that has been felt in our communities this year (flooding disasters, rising costs, and worry about the state of the world), and it's no wonder people are feeling exhausted and mentally overloaded.

If you are a people leader, it can be a struggle to motivate your team when you're suffering from end-of-year fatigue yourself. Here are six steps that The People Place have compiled that you as a manager, can take to support yourself, and your team:

1. Manage your own fatigue and stress

Set a good example; leave on time, take regular breaks, exercise, and get enough sleep. Take care of yourself, and you will be in a much better position to lead your team through the next few weeks.

2. Acknowledge wellbeing

It's important to bring your team together during stressful periods. Implement 'micro-retreats' - a brisk walk or a quick game can be just what you all need. Open up a conversation around stress, where you openly acknowledge and validate your team's feelings of exhaustion and pressure.

3. Create psychological safety

Make it clear that it's important to you as a leader to create a safe environment where your team not only feels comfortable discussing their challenges, but where they can ask for help when they need it. Lead by example; prioritise information sharing, spending time together, and getting to know each other to create this safe space.

4. Help your team to prioritise

Feeling busy can create lots of unnecessary stress. If it's not clear to a team what their priorities are, there's a risk time will be spent on non-critical things, meaning you're less likely to achieve what you need to by the end of the year.

5. Be flexible

Alleviate some of the stress your team may be feeling due to juggling competing professional and personal demands, by demonstrating that you're flexible with them doing what they need to do to manage the juggle and still deliver at work. There's no one-size fits all of what works best when it comes to flexibility.

6. Encourage time off and offer mental health support

If your people are feeling tired, make sure they take as much annual leave as possible over summer to properly relax and recharge. If you think someone in your team needs more support, promote mental health awareness and access to resources and Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) confidential counselling support.

By taking these steps, you can maximise your own and your team's wellbeing, as well as their output. This will allow you collectively to finish the year on a high and set yourselves up to start the new year with renewed energy and motivation.

You can read the full article [here](#).

(The People Place, Nov 21, 2023)

Damstra rebranding to Ideagen Workforce Safety



Damstra has rebranded to Ideagen Workforce Safety. While there are some minor changes the rebrand is mostly aesthetic.

Ideagen Workforce Safety is the UoA Health Safety & Wellbeing Reporting Tool.

All accidents and incidents, regardless of whether an injury has occurred, must be reported to your manager and an incident report (Ideagen formerly known as Damstra) completed on the day the incident occurs. This enables prompt investigation and ensures early injury management to begin, if required.

When reporting a health and safety incident or injury please ensure you also **inform your line manager within one day** of the occurrence.

To assist with identification of the person involved, please include their Staff/Student ID number and a contact phone number (if known) in the "What Happened" section. **Note that a person's legal name may differ to their preferred name.**

Managers: If an incident results in a **staff member being unable to work or only able to perform restricted duties**, the manager must ensure an incident report has been submitted in Ideagen (formerly known as Damstra).

If an incident report has not been completed, the manager must submit the report on the staff member's behalf and email uoa@wellnz.co.nz with the staff member's details and a description of the injury **on the same day they are informed**. This ensures early injury management can commence.

Further information or to report an injury, incident or observation can be found [here](#).

Ministry of Business & Industry

Advisory on coloured sand products containing asbestos



You may be aware from the news that the [Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment \(MBIE\)](#) has issued a precautionary recall for selected coloured sand products after detecting trace tremolite (a naturally occurring asbestos mineral) in some samples.

No respirable asbestos fibres have been found (the type that can cause harm), and the risk of airborne exposure is low unless the sand is mechanically crushed or pulverised.

The University has been working with areas most likely to have these products on-campus and has identified three potential areas. The products have been removed as a precaution.

To read the full University notice on this matter click on this link [Advisory on coloured sand products containing asbestos – University of Auckland](#)

From The Regulator

Improvement notice drives traffic safety improvements

This article provides an excellent example of the regulator working collaboratively to improve safety measures. Working together to improve health and safety is essential because collaboration ensures shared responsibility, better communication, and more effective solutions that protect everyone.

“A WorkSafe inspector’s recent visit to Car Compliance Workshop (CCW) in New Lynn, Auckland has sparked positive change, and praise for WorkSafe’s approach to engagement and enforcement.

Following an on-site assessment, our health and safety inspector issued an improvement notice to CCW.

An improvement notice requires a business to make changes to address a health and safety risk and sets a timeframe for them to make those changes.

This prompted the business to develop a traffic management plan for the premises, to improve traffic safety on site, particularly around vehicle transport pick-ups and deliveries.

CCW was provided with relevant WorkSafe guidance to help them:

- [Managing work site traffic – Good practice guidelines](#)
- [Safe reversing and spotting practices](#)

In their feedback afterwards, CCW called the improvement notice “a blessing in disguise”. It prompted them to collaborate with key delivery partners and others to find solutions for improving loading zones and agree safety responsibilities for key roles.



"We have found the experience an overall positive one." Photo supplied by CCW. Left to right: CCW Operations Coordinator Brooke Wannan and Site Traffic Controller Anthony Start.

CCW's general manager praised our inspector's "calm and reasonable manner" describing the experience overall as a positive one and noting her appreciation of the continuous support and encouragement from the inspector.

Their interactions also helped shift the business's perceptions of WorkSafe. "We feel confident that WorkSafe is here to help us and not out to get us."

We commend CCW for implementing improvements to their traffic management practices to keep their staff, contractors, and the public safe.

"This example shows how WorkSafe's engagement and enforcement approach can influence businesses to improve their health and safety," says WorkSafe's Head of Inspectorate Rob Pope.

(WorkSafe 22 Oct 2025)

Height safety basics missed in preventable fall from pole



There are a number of our faculties and service divisions who engage in the critical risk of working at height. The regulator has issued the following key points and learnings following KiwiRail's recent court sentencing.

WorkSafe is urging all businesses involved in work at height to reassess their safety systems after a KiwiRail worker suffered life-threatening injuries from a 10-metre fall while installing a new telecommunications pole in Whanganui (October 2023). The worker sustained multiple critical injuries, required surgery, and took 10 months to recover.

WorkSafe's investigation identified several failures by KiwiRail:

- *No specific risk assessment was completed for the new Oclyte pole, despite it differing significantly from the wooden poles previously used.*
- *No new procedures were developed to reflect the changed work method.*
- *Workers had not been trained in assessing complex work-at-height risks.*

- *A fall arrest system was installed but not used at the time of the incident.*
- *Climbing pegs on the pole were incorrectly installed.*
- *Safer alternatives, such as a mobile elevated work platform (MEWP), were not provided.*

Key learnings:

- *Any new infrastructure or equipment must trigger a fresh and thorough risk assessment — existing controls cannot be assumed to be suitable.*
- *Businesses should first consider whether work at height can be eliminated.*
- *If elimination is not possible, safer methods (MEWP, scaffolding) must be prioritised before relying on fall arrest.*
- *Fall arrest systems are a last resort, not a primary control.*
- *Proper planning, training, and adopting safer methods can prevent serious harm.*
- *State-owned enterprises are held to the same legal standards as all PCBUs.*

Legal outcome:

- *KiwiRail was sentenced on 20 November 2025 at Whanganui District Court.*
- *Penalties included a \$220,000 fine and \$28,500 reparations.*
- *KiwiRail was charged under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 for failing to ensure the safe installation of the Oclyte pole, exposing workers to the risk of death or serious injury.*

The full media communication can be read here. [Height safety basics missed in preventable fall from pole | WorkSafe](#)

Radiation Safety Community of Interest Group - A New Collaborative Platform for Safety Excellence

The newly constituted Radiation Safety Community of Interest (CoI) held its inaugural meeting, bringing together radiation safety subject matter experts and use licensees from across the University. This initiative is designed to foster collaboration between academic and professional staff, creating a shared space for dialogue, learning, and continuous improvement in radiation and laser safety. With strong cross-faculty participation, the CoI aims to move radiation safety beyond compliance—toward a proactive, community-led model. The first meeting focused on harmonizing procedures, sharing best practices, and identifying opportunities for strategic alignment with evolving regulatory standards.

We look forward to growing this network and embedding a culture of stewardship, innovation, and shared responsibility in radiation safety across Waipapa Taumata Rau.

Dates in November

Diabetes Action Month

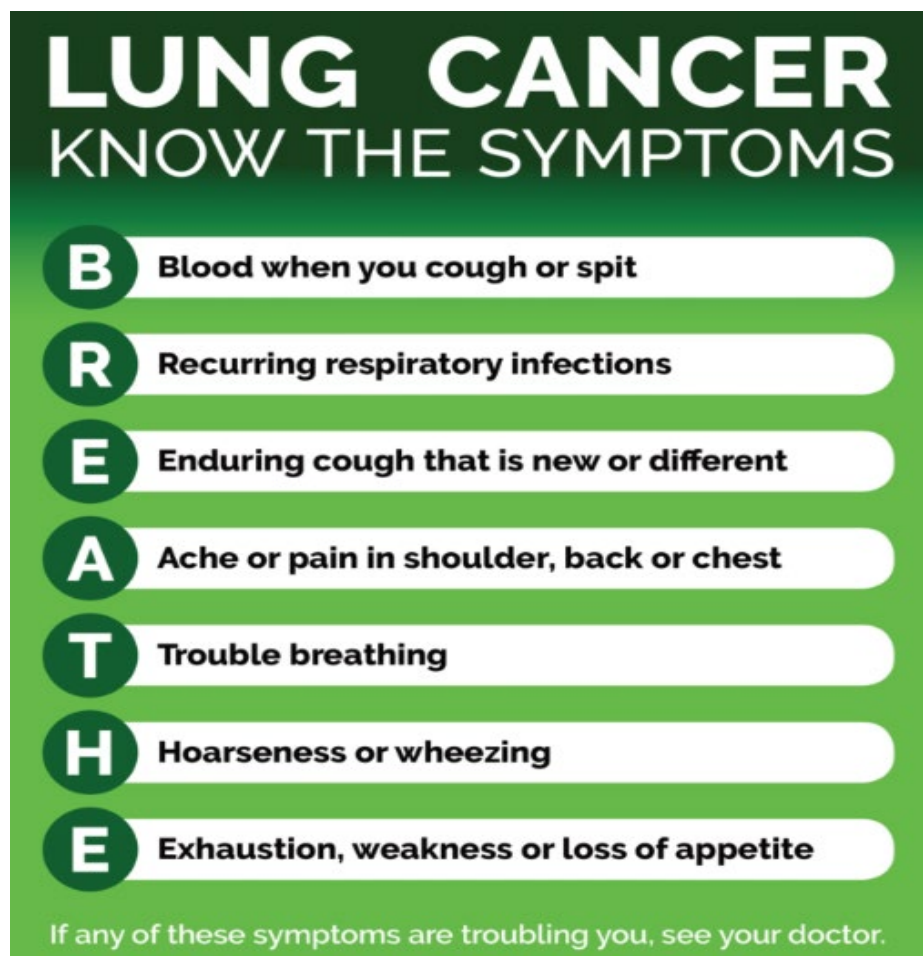
Diabetes Action Month is Diabetes New Zealand's annual campaign that encourages action, education, awareness and advocacy for New Zealanders with all types of diabetes and their whānau, as well as those at risk of diabetes.

Each year has a different theme. In 2025 the focus is on "Young People Can Get Diabetes". By raising awareness of the signs and symptoms in our young people, the aim is to empower tamariki, rangatahi, their whānau, schools, communities and health professionals, to recognise the signs of diabetes and take action. The earlier diabetes is diagnosed, the better the chances of managing it well and living a full, healthy life.

Click to know your risk and take the [quiz](#).

Lung Cancer Awareness month

During this month, organisations like the Lung Foundation NZ, the Cancer Society of New Zealand, and Te Whatu Ora focus on raising awareness about prevention, symptoms, and support for those affected by lung cancer. It serves as a reminder that lung cancer is one of the most common cancers and the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in New Zealand.



LUNG CANCER
KNOW THE SYMPTOMS

- B** Blood when you cough or spit
- R** Recurring respiratory infections
- E** Enduring cough that is new or different
- A** Ache or pain in shoulder, back or chest
- T** Trouble breathing
- H** Hoarseness or wheezing
- E** Exhaustion, weakness or loss of appetite

If any of these symptoms are troubling you, see your doctor.

HSW Rep Community of Interest Group (CoI)

The University of Auckland Health and Safety Rep Community of Interest Group currently has over 100 members. The members and its' committee represent everyone at the University and brings a level playing field of representation from across the University into the Senior Leadership HSW Committee meetings.

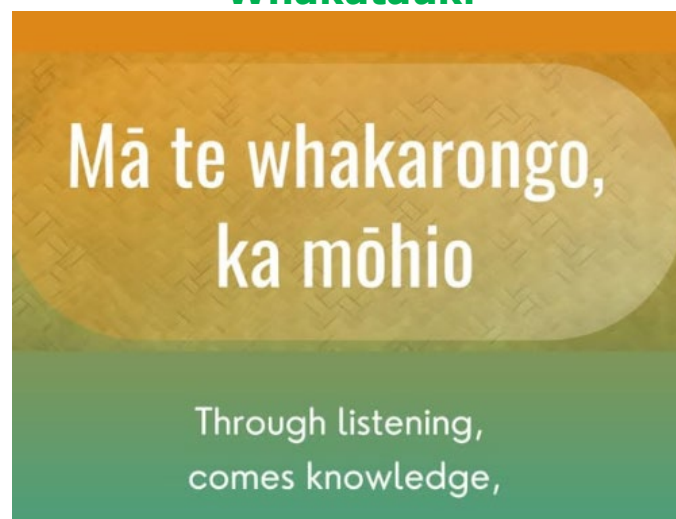


The next meeting will held in Building 250 – Room 106 on 3 December 2025. Further information on this meeting will be posted on the HSW Rep Community of Interest MS Teams page.

Meetings are hybrid to encourage inclusivity and participation across the University.

Not a member? - request to join the HSW Rep Community of Interest Group via hsw@auckland.ac.nz

Whakatauki



(LeVa - Atu Mai)

Your HSW team

Should you need to contact the University of Auckland's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team your contacts can be found [here](#)

Previous Issues of this newsletter can be found [here](#)!

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter.