



Waipapa
Taumata Rau
**University
of Auckland**

Te Korowai Whakaruruhau

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service



September 2025

Kia ora Koutou,

As winter gently loosens its grip on Aotearoa New Zealand, it's the perfect time to refresh, reset, and prepare for warmer weather and lighter days. With daylight saving beginning, the shift in time can affect sleep patterns, concentration, and fatigue levels, which may increase risks at work and on the road. It's a good time to adjust routines, allow a little extra rest where possible, take extra care when driving, and even use the clock change as a prompt to check smoke alarms and other safety equipment at home.

In this issue we look at:

- Highlights from the HSW Rep Conference 2025
- HSW Rep community of interest (CoI)
- Mental Health Awareness Week 4-12 October
- Key Benefits of Reporting Health and Safety Issues
- Battery Recycling
- Dates in September/ October
- Whakatauki

Our goal is to support you with relevant, actionable content that adds value for you. You can find [previous editions of this newsletter](#) on our website.

Angus Clark
Associate Director – HSW

Highlights from the HSW Rep Conference 2025

On 2 September 2025, 79 HSW Representatives from across Waipapa Taumata Rau gathered for our annual conference. The theme — Connected Communities, Safer Environments: See Something, Say Something, Do Something — set the tone for a day of engaging conversations and practical insights.



Andrew Phipps opened the conference by highlighting collaboration, people leadership, and the crucial role our Reps play in shaping safer workplaces.

Hans Key introduced the Puataunofu Programme, supporting workers through Pacific values of storytelling, connection, and care, and emphasised the importance of mentally healthy workplaces.



Bex Baddeley and Matt Kynoch from Fire and Emergency New Zealand brought a practical session on fire

safety, reinforcing the importance of working smoke alarms, safe cooking practices, and clear escape plans.



Jon Harper Slade from CHASNZ presented the Energy Wheel, reframing hazard recognition through energy transfer and making hazard identification more structured and effective.



John Collins, Occupational Health Physiotherapist from Active Plus shared valuable reminders on workstation ergonomics, posture, breaks, and stretching with the simple message: 'fit the workstation to the person, not the other way around.'

Veema Lodhia, Hoi Kwon and Vincent Wang from Exercise Science showcased cutting-edge research in neuroscience and rehabilitation, from the PREP2 algorithm to the MindPod Dolphin rehabilitation game, while also offering workplace wellness tips.



David Wood from WellNZ spoke on the University's Accredited Employer Programme (AEP), outlining staff rights, manager responsibilities, and positive outcomes from early intervention.

Guillermo Merelo invited us to consider Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in health, safety and wellbeing, encouraging us to look through a different lens to achieve equitable safety outcomes and psychological safety.

Finally, Angus Clark closed the day with a focus on critical risk management, highlighting the importance of unified governance, accountability, and culture when managing life-changing risks.

Throughout the week, we'll be sharing suggested daily activities on [Campus Korero](#), so feel free to pass these on to your teams. You can also find more resources on the [Mental Health Awareness Week website](#).

Why reporting health safety wellbeing concerns matter

Establishing a workplace culture where health and safety reporting is actively encouraged, genuinely valued, and consistently acted upon is essential to protecting people and preventing harm. Below are some of the key benefits of reporting health and safety issues:

Prevents Future Incidents

- Reporting hazards, near misses, and unsafe conditions helps identify risks before they lead to injuries or accidents.
- It allows organisations to take corrective action early, reducing the likelihood of recurrence.

Raises Awareness

- When employees report issues, it highlights threats that may have gone unnoticed—like faulty equipment, poor lighting, or even workplace bullying.
- This fosters a culture of vigilance and shared responsibility.

Improves Safety Procedures

- Reports provide real-world data that can be used to refine training, update safety protocols, and improve emergency responses.

Identifies Trends

- Tracking incidents over time reveals patterns—such as recurring hazards or common causes of accidents—which can guide long-term safety strategies.

Ensures Legal Compliance

- In many regions, certain incidents must be reported by law. Proper documentation helps organisations meet regulatory requirements and avoid penalties.

Promotes Accountability

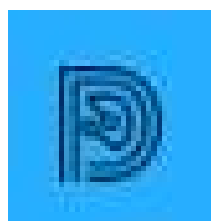
- A transparent reporting system shows that management is listening and acting on concerns, which boosts employee trust and morale.

Creates Urgency for Action

- Timely reports prompt swift investigations and interventions, ensuring that risks are addressed before they escalate.

(Working Wise NZ & WorkSafe Queensland, AU)

University of Auckland- Waipapa Taumata Rau reporting tool is known as Damstra



Damstra is the University of Auckland's reporting tool. You can [report an injury, incident or observation](#).

Effective reporting leads to a stronger safety culture. Reporting helps identify health, safety, and wellbeing trends and prevents future incidents.



Why battery recycling matters

Batteries power our modern lives—from phones and laptops to toys and tools—but when they're no longer useful, they can pose serious risks if not disposed of properly. Recycling batteries is a simple yet powerful way to protect our environment, conserve resources, and reduce harm to human health.

Environmental Protection

Used batteries contain heavy metals and toxic chemicals like lead, cadmium, and mercury. If thrown into landfills, these substances can leak into soil and waterways, contaminating ecosystems and endangering wildlife. Recycling prevents this pollution and ensures hazardous materials are handled safely.

Resource Recovery

Batteries are packed with valuable materials such as lithium, nickel, and cobalt. By recycling, we can recover and reuse these finite resources, reducing the need for mining and lowering the environmental footprint of manufacturing new batteries.

Fire and Safety Risks

Improperly discarded batteries—especially lithium-ion types—can spark fires in waste facilities and collection trucks. Recycling through proper channels eliminates this risk and keeps waste workers and communities safe.

A Step Toward Sustainability

Recycling batteries supports a circular economy, where products are reused and repurposed rather than wasted. It's a small action with a big impact, helping us move toward a more sustainable future.

If your department has old batteries for disposal/recycling, you should contact:

Customer Services:

Interwaste (International Waste Limited)

Phone: 0800 10 21 31

Email: aucklandservice@interwaste.co.nz

And follow the instructions on the University of Auckland [process for recycling batteries](#).

Dates in September /October

- [Blue September](#): Prostate awareness month
- Mental Health Awareness Week 4-12 October



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Whakatauki

Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi.
With your food basket and my food basket, the people will thrive.



(Rotorua Lakes Council)

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter.