

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING E-UPDATE

November 2020

Dear Colleagues,

As we approach the end of a challenging year, particularly through a HSW lens, it is important to find and reflect on the positives – here are a few of many:

- The ability of the entire University to recognise the need for change and re-prioritise and focus its efforts on preparing for and responding to the effects of COVID;
- The resilience shown by our entire community;
- A renewed willingness to work across faculties and functions and artificial silos towards a common purpose;
- A strong focus on health and safety, hygiene and infection control;
- A collective sense of the importance of wellbeing as an individual, team and institutional priority;
- Initiatives at all levels to keep teams connected, relationship building and acts of kindness (see also World Kindness Day below);
- Strong leadership and positive communication at all levels;
- New ways of working, some of which had positive impacts for many

There are many positives on which to build as we adjust to the new “normal”.

AEP ACC annual audit

The University has recently been audited by ACC under the Accredited Employer Partnership Programme. We retained our Tertiary Accreditation (the highest award achievable), and this has been confirmed by ACC. This is currently worth **\$548,240.00** to the University in savings on the ACC levy, which is significant in the context of current and any potential future austerity measures.

For more information on the ACC programme and process, please see the link below.

[ACC Partnership Programme](#)

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Remote working

[Flexible ways of working](#)

“Remote working” is one option within the suite of flexible working options and refers to instances where work is done away from campus-based physical workspaces e.g. at home, or in other offices or locations.

What’s my responsibility for health and safety if I’m working remotely?

It is important that we each continue to apply appropriate health and safety practices including workstation set-up, and taking appropriate breaks, wherever we are working.

How do I make sure my remote set-up is safe and isn’t going to cause any pain?

Ensure all workstations are set-up in a way that’s comfortable including any remote/home set-ups. Guides for workstation set-up, and tips for making a home set-up comfortable, are available [in this link](#). Please also ensure you take regular breaks and report any workstation discomfort or injuries.

What do I do if I am feeling discomfort related to my remote set-up?

Talk to your manager in the first instance and report workstation discomfort and/or any injuries sustained whilst working.

Contact your HSW Manager for help if difficulties persist.

Fireworks

November the 5th is a day in New Zealand and the UK that is typically celebrated by letting off fireworks. Due to many accidents and fires that have occurred in the past, we strongly encourage people to attend public displays instead of using them at home. The sale of fireworks is strictly limited to the first five days of November, and they can only be let off on private property. They are banned in public places (such as parks and beaches) across the whole of Auckland, and must not be stored or used on University property.

Further information can be found at Fireworks safety section [Auckland Council website](#).

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Health monitoring - Hearing and lung function

Relevant faculties/service divisions will by now have received notice that the 2020 Hearing and lung function tests are scheduled to take place from 30 November to 04 December.

Why are workplace hearing and lung function tests important?

Noise is part of everyday life but loud noise can permanently damage your hearing.

If you are working in an environment where you're exposed to loud noise, an assessment should by now have been carried out to determine your exposure to risk, and you may be part of a conservation program with workplace hearing tests.

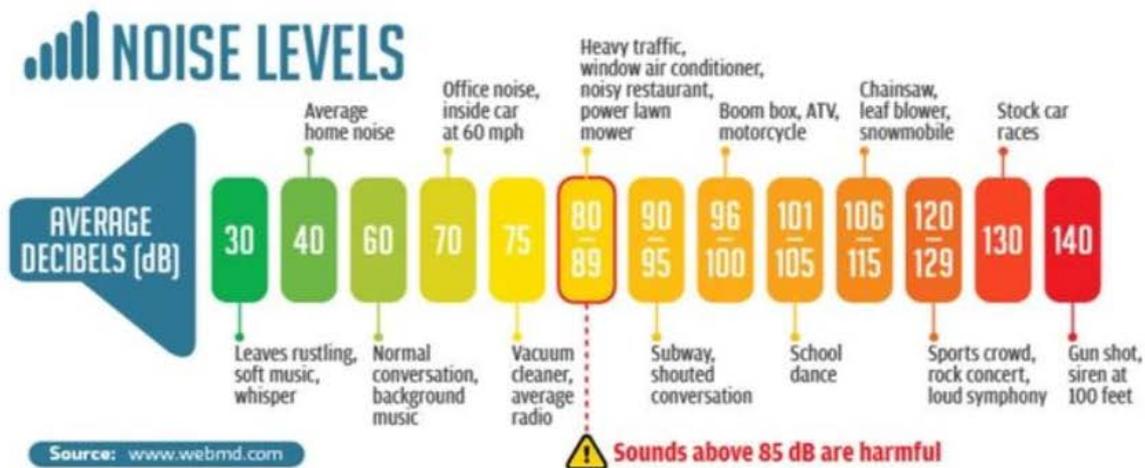
A workplace hearing test is carried out where the noise exposure on a daily basis exceeds 85dB. As an approximate guide, this is where there is a need to raise your voice in a working environment in order to speak to someone standing at arms-length away.

How does noise damage your hearing

Sounds that are too loud for too long can damage your hearing permanently. This is called noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). The louder the noise, the faster it can damage your hearing. If the noise is very loud, you could lose your ability to hear instantly. If the noise is not as loud but long-lasting, hearing damage can build slowly. NIHL can happen to anyone at any age, so it's important to start protecting your hearing and your children's hearing early.

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Levels Of Noise In Decibels (dB) Level Comparison Chart



Lung Function

The same principle applies to those who may be exposed to dusts, metal fumes, chemical vapours, and gases which affect the lungs should be given regularly scheduled lung function or spirometry tests. Spirometry testing is useful for determining if a person has lung disease, what type it is, whether a person is getting better or worse and how impaired a person's health is.

The lung's defence mechanisms can become overloaded and worn out by too much exposure to dusts and fumes for too long a time. This can allow lung tissue to be damaged. Healthy lung tissue is elastic; it can expand and contract. Some lung diseases interfere with the lungs' elastic property and make the lungs "stiff" with the lung volume restricted. Other diseases can cause airways obstruction, a narrowing of the tubes of the lung. Both lung restriction and airways obstruction can be caused by over-exposure to certain chemicals.

When you inhale, you can breathe in particles, dusts, fumes, vapours and other foreign substances. Your body has a natural defence system for ridding itself of these substances.

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Access review project

The STEM Faculties in collaboration with Property Services and the Hazard and Containment team (HSW) are working on an “Access review project” for containment laboratories. The aim is to review all the laboratories spaces and their associated access permissions, to make sure that only properly inducted and authorised personnel can enter the space. The working group also aims to design and implement consistent and clear signage across all of the Faculties so that users, visitors and contractors have a clear idea of the level of risk within the laboratory.

Continue to promote HSW online training

We would like to thank all those that completed the training on reporting and management of Health & Safety incidents promptly after going live on 01 September. For those that have not already done so, please note that the likelihood of needing to report an incident is increasing as we are back on campus,

To prepare for this, please access the following online training modules below:

- For all staff: Learn how to report incidents in this 15-minute online training module: [Creating Health & Safety Awareness](#)

Follow this up with *either* or *both* modules below. Each are an additional 15-minute module:

- For Line Managers: [Creating Health & Safety Awareness for Line Managers](#)
- For Triage Co-ordinators: [Creating Health & Safety Awareness for Triage Co-ordinators](#)

The modules can also be accessed on Career Tools directly by searching the module name. Please encourage your teams to complete the ‘Creating Health & Safety Awareness’ all staff training as soon as practical.

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World Kindness Day Friday 13 November

[World kindness day](#)

We all can agree 2020 has been a year like no other, but despite the challenges we have all witnessed some great examples of kindness in our communities both at work and at home. Whilst the end of the year is fast approaching, there is still time to reflect on this.

To mark World Kindness Day, and to help us stop for a minute and think out those around us who may be facing even greater challenges than ourselves, let's carry on displaying the wonderful acts of kindness we have displayed throughout 2020. We all have our ways of doing this, but here are 7 ways to start making kindness the norm in your daily life.



7 WAYS TO START MAKING KINDNESS THE NORM IN YOUR DAILY LIFE:

- 1 Send an uplifting text to a friend or family member.
- 2 Let that guy merge into traffic with a wave and a smile.
- 3 Include intentional moments of kindness, laughter and delight in your daily routine.
- 4 Go *slightly* outside of our comfort zone at least once a day to make someone smile.
- 5 Share a compliment with a co-worker or friend.
- 6 Reach out to a family member you haven't spoken to in awhile.
- 7 Treat someone to a cup of coffee (a friend, stranger, or even yourself).

make kindness the norm.
#WorldKindnessDay
#MakeKindnessTheNorm
www.randomactsOfKindness.org

600 x 900

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Upcoming HSW workshops

Our upcoming courses are:

Workshop	Date	Time	Location
DLP Containment workshop	Tuesday, 10 November 2020	9.00am – 12.00pm	Room 401, Level 4, Building 620, 49 Symonds Street, City Campus
Health and safety representative training stage one	Monday, 30 November and Tuesday, 01 December 2020	8.30am-4.30pm	Virtual session
Health and safety representative training stage two	Thursday, 10 December and Friday, 11 December 2020	8.30am-4.30pm	Virtual session

Bookings should be made via the Career Tools platform on the staff intranet, or via emails to OD at od@auckland.ac.nz.

This and previous issues of the HSW E-update are available [here](#).

As usual, if you have any query on anything related to health, safety or wellbeing, please do not hesitate to contact us on hsw@auckland.ac.nz.

Similarly, if you have any suggestions as to topics you would like us to cover in future e-updates, please get in touch.



Angus Clark

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