



# Te Korowai Whakaruruhau

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service



October 2024

Kia ora Koutou,

I am delighted to share that nominations are now open for the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Values and Te Ao Māori Principles. As these nominations close on 21 November it is now timely to remind your Service Areas and Faculties regarding the [Health, Safety & Wellbeing award](#) for exemplary contributions to, or leadership of Health, Safety & Wellbeing (HSW) culture. Nominations that highlight people or teams who are contributing to creating an environment where Health, Safety and Wellbeing is as part of how we care for one another.

In this issue we also look at:

- Mental health: look, listen, link
- New Zealand ShakeOut/*Whakahaumarū Aotearoa*
- Seasonal tiredness: What causes spring fatigue?
- Fireworks: Concerns and tips for staying safe
- Dates in October
- Courses
- HSW Community of Interest
- HSW Rep Conference 2024
- Healthy Campus Programme
- Whakatauki

Angus Clark  
Associate Director – HSW



## Mental health: look, listen, link

Health and safety reps at SafeSkills were told they have permission to "do some respectful stirring" to build momentum around mental health in the workforce.

The "permission" came from Adele Saunders, Hato Hone St John psychological health and wellbeing manager, as she outlined the role HSRs can play in helping support teams and reshape work environments to minimise psychosocial risks.

"It's about building momentum, trying to influence and encouraging conversations. The more people talking about it, the more people pushing and raising concerns, the more people have to listen to it."... "They are so challenging and not easy for anybody."

Saunders is an advocate for peer support, saying that sending in psychologists to fix a problem is an error St John itself has made in the past. She cited the deployment of two full-time psychologists to help staff following the 2019 mosque attacks. Just six sessions were used in the two weeks the psychologists were available.

"People don't go and see psychologists when the wheels wobble. They talk to people they feel connected and safe with."

Saunders encouraged a 'look, listen, link' approach to providing support, with a focus on compassion, listening, and being non-judgmental. Importantly, you shouldn't feel you have to solve anything, but instead provide "a safe space for people to land".

Where possible, she advised, if a colleague wants further professional assistance, make the referral yourself on their behalf.

"Nine times out of ten if you give them the card, text them the number, all those things, they still don't call. They are not resilient enough, so do it for them. That way you know it's done, instead of lying awake wondering. It's good for you and for them."

But she cautioned checking that you're in the right space to have the conversation first. "If you are going to ask the question – how are you, really? – you need to be prepared for the worst outcome. Are you feeling good enough to manage what might come? If you're not, who can you get to do that piece?"

Trying out support services yourself can also enable you to use 'I' statements and make it easier for others to also use the service, while leading by example and modelling self-care is crucial not only for the modelling aspect, but also for your own wellbeing.

"Making sure your wellbeing is cared for is a way of keeping your competency up, too," said Saunders.

"If you're not well, you won't be in a space to ask those questions and support others, so you have to look after yourself."



## New Zealand ShakeOut/Whakahaumarū Aotearoa – 24 October 2024



New Zealand ShakeOut is our national earthquake drill and tsunami hīkoi. ShakeOut 2024 is happening Thursday 24 October!

### What is New Zealand ShakeOut and tsunami hīkoi?

ShakeOut is a self-run earthquake and tsunami drill. It takes place across the work to remind people of the right action to take during an earthquake. You can start the drill in whatever way works for you. All you need to do is Drop, Cover and Hold for 60 seconds and practice your evacuation if you are in a tsunami evacuation zone.

## What To Do

### Drop, Cover and Hold in an earthquake

In an earthquake Drop, Cover and Hold.

1. Drop down on your hand and knees.
2. Cover your head and neck.
3. Hold on to your shelter.

Drop, Cover and Hold is the right action to take in an earthquake. It:

- stops you being knocked over,
- make you a smaller target for falling and flying objects, and
- protects your head, neck and vital organs.

Do not run outside during earthquake shaking or you risk getting hit by falling bricks and glass.

Practising Drop, Cover and Hold means you can quickly take the right action in an earthquake.

Drop, Cover and Hold if there is earthquake shaking. As soon as the shaking stops, move immediately to the nearest high ground or as far inland as you can out of tsunami evacuation zones. Even if you can't get out of your evacuation zone, go as far or as high as you can. Every metre makes a difference.

Practicing your tsunami hīkoi (evacuation) means you know where to go if there is a Long or Strong earthquake.

More information can be found on [getready.govt.nz](https://getready.govt.nz).



### **Seasonal Fatigue: What causes spring fatigue?**

Spring is a favourite season for many, full of growth and fresh life. However, many people struggle with fatigue during this season. So, what is the cause of springtime fatigue?

The exact cause of springtime fatigue has not been scientifically classified. It is suspected that hormones, blood pressure and nutrition play a major role.

Greater amounts of sunlight in spring activates the production of the mood-boosting hormone serotonin in the morning, while at the same time melatonin, which is responsible for sleep, is still highly active. The interaction of these two hormones stresses the body, leading to fatigue.

The rising temperatures also impacts body temperature and therefore blood pressure. When it gets warm, blood vessels dilate and blood pressure drops. The result is fatigue.

Heavier winter diets play a role in physical well-being in the spring. Many people eat too little fresh fruit and vegetables in winter - as a result, a deficiency of valuable vitamins and minerals develops.

Additionally, the time change in spring can lead to tiredness and fatigue adding another layer to the spring effect when it takes place later this month.

Whatever the causes behind springtime fatigue, the symptoms can be actively counteracted. What the body lacked in winter can be given back to it in spring: Sun, fresh air, exercise and a vitamin-rich diet.

(Weather and Radar USA)

### **Fireworks: Concerns and tips for staying safe**

#### **Health Concerns**

1. **Respiratory Issues:** Fireworks release smoke filled with harmful particles and gases like sulphur dioxide, carbon dioxide, and carbon monoxide. These can irritate the lungs and exacerbate conditions like asthma and COPD.
2. **Injuries:** Fireworks can cause burns, lacerations, and eye injuries. Sparklers, often considered safe, burn at around 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit and can cause severe burns.
3. **Hearing Loss:** The loud explosions can cause temporary or even permanent hearing loss.
4. **Toxic Exposure:** Fireworks contain metals like copper and lithium, which can be toxic when inhaled or when they contaminate the environment.



## Safety Concerns

1. **Fire Hazards:** Fireworks can start fires, especially in dry conditions. They are responsible for thousands of fires each year.
2. **Improper Use:** Many injuries occur when fireworks are used improperly, such as lighting them indoors, holding them in hand, or relighting malfunctioning fireworks.
3. **Illegal Fireworks:** Using illegal or homemade fireworks increases the risk of accidents and injuries.

## Concerns for Pets

1. **Stress and Anxiety:** The loud noises and bright flashes can cause significant stress and anxiety in pets. Many pets, especially dogs and cats, may hide, tremble, or try to escape.
2. **Physical Harm:** In their panic, pets can injure themselves by running into objects or trying to escape confined spaces.
3. **Lost Pets:** Pets frightened by fireworks may run away from home, leading to an increase in lost pets during fireworks seasons.

## Environmental Concerns

1. **Air Pollution:** Fireworks release pollutants like PM2.5, sulphur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides, which can degrade air quality and contribute to respiratory problems.
2. **Water Contamination:** Chemicals from fireworks can contaminate water bodies, affecting aquatic life and potentially entering the human food chain.
3. **Wildlife Disturbance:** The loud noises can disturb wildlife, causing birds to abandon their nests and mammals to flee their habitats, which can lead to injury or death.



## Safety Tips

**Leave it to the Professionals:** The safest way to enjoy fireworks is to attend public displays conducted by professionals.

**Supervision:** If using legal fireworks, ensure they are used under close adult supervision and follow all safety guidelines.

**Protective Gear:** Wear protective eyewear and keep a bucket of water nearby to extinguish any fires.

**Pet Safety:** Keep pets indoors in a safe, quiet space during fireworks displays.

(Auckland council.govt.nz, epa.govt.nz)

## Dates in October 2024

7-11 October: Save the kiwi week

16 October: Restart a heart day

21 October: Loud shirt day

24 October: New Zealand ShakeOut / *Whakahaumarū Aotearoa*

## Courses

### Incident Management & Investigation course

This course will equip individuals responsible for conducting incident investigations with the skills to effectively manage an incident scene and conduct effective investigations. Upon completion, delegates will possess the necessary skills to conduct comprehensive and concise investigation reports, contributing to a safer and more informed work environment.

#### **Key Content**

On successful completion, participants will:

- Be able to explain why workplace accidents need to be reported and investigated.
- Gain insight into the importance of incident investigation, barriers to reporting and how to overcome them.
- Understand the legal, financial, and moral aspects of investigating workplace incidents.
- Understand how to safely manage an incident scene.
- Understand the concepts of multiple causation and root-cause analysis.
- Be able to detail an incident investigation process using a hypothetical incident.
- Produce an incident investigation report based on a documented incident.
- Understand what is a Notifiable Event and what actions to take if one occurs

This course is suitable for all members of staff who are required to undertake incident investigations and health & safety representatives

### Risk Assessment

This workshop will assist staff in understanding how to undertake a successful work-related risk assessment for both activities and locations.

#### **Key Content**

By the end of this session participants will be able to:

- Know the definition of terms such as hazard, risk, likelihood, consequence
- Know how to approach the 5 steps of the risk assessment process
- Understand the importance of good preparation
- Identify significant hazards
- Identify the people who may be harmed
- Be familiar with the hierarchy of control and evaluate the suitability of existing control measures
- Know how to calculate the risk level attached to a particular hazard
- Be able to break down processes into tasks
- Understand how to communicate the risk assessment findings and the importance of doing this well
- Recognise the conditions prompting a review of risk assessment.

This risk assessment course is suitable for members of staff and postgraduate students involved in the risk assessment process. For students who would like to attend this course, pls send your name, student ID number and the faculty name to [od@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:od@auckland.ac.nz)

## HSW Community of Interest Group (CoI)

The next meeting will be held in Building 260, Room 325 (OGGB, 12 Grafton Road) from 11:30am – 12:30pm on 17 October.



This meeting will also be available online via Teams for those who cannot make it.

To join the group please email the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team via [hsw@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:hsw@auckland.ac.nz)

## Health, Safety and Wellbeing Rep Conference

The health, safety and wellbeing rep conference is coming on Thursday 14 November. This will be a half day conference from 9.00am to 1.00pm in Building 201, Room 342 at 10 Symonds Street.

Keep an eye out for an invitation and join us for an inspiring morning dedicated to enhancing health and wellbeing in the workplace! Discover the transformative impact of embracing our Te Ao Māori Principles and Values, a vital approach to nurturing staff well-being. Our inspiring guest speakers will share their experiences and provide actionable insights on how collaboration can drive meaningful and lasting change. Don't miss this opportunity to learn, connect, and strengthen our health, safety & wellbeing reps across Waipapa Taumata Rau - University of Auckland

This conference is open to all Health, Safety and Wellbeing Reps. Spaces are limited so click [here](#) to book your place.

## Healthy Campus Programme

The University has committed to a worldwide sector initiative predicated on sport as a health enabler, but wider in scope – looking at all health aspects for all members of our community. You can read more here: [Healthy Campus Programme - The University of Auckland](#)

## Your HSW team

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

## Whakatauki

He puna wai, he puna kai,  
he puna reo, he puna ora,  
ita a ita.

A spring of water, a bountiful  
spring, a spring of language,  
a spring of health – hold fast.

(Hastings District Libraries)

If you know of anyone who is interested in subscribing to our Newsletter, they can can subscribe directly by:

- ✓ sending an email to [sympa@list.auckland.ac.nz](mailto:sympa@list.auckland.ac.nz)
- ✓ with the subject **subscribe hsw-eupdate FirstName LastName**

HSW eUpdates on the web:

<https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/health-safety-wellbeing/news-updates-safety-alerts.html>

HSW eUpdates on teams:

<http://auckland.ac.nz/hsw-eupdates>

Thank you for taking the time to read your October 2024 HSW Newsletter!