



Talk It and Walk It

Est. 1996



SOS – Switched Onto Safety

Winter Newsletter 2021

What Have We Been Doing?

Cooler weather has now arrived, winter is upon us.

I think this year for us will stand out to us because of the variety in the type of work and clients. We love it.

Here's something to think about for 2021:

Greater flexibility with working from home and office rather than 9-5 in the office.

What does this mean for businesses and home life? Do we love it, do we hate it? Does it give us the ability to live life in a more balanced manner?

Just thought you might like something to consider.

OMG, so much for those few months in the year where we have time for research, development and planning. Not so this time, we have been busy with:

- Chemical Inventories
- Suitability (Desktop) Audits (OSH & Quality)
- Compliance (onsite) Audits (OSH and Quality)
- Chemwatch / Chemical Management mentoring and training
- OSH, Quality and Environmental Systems auditing
- Machine / Plant Guarding Audit and Risk Assessments
- OSH Mentoring / Coaching
- Manual Handling Training

Looking towards the rest of 2021, SOS will continue to grow in terms of engaging in topical subjects and promoting discussion points through our various social media avenues including but not limited to our website – blogs, LinkedIn, FaceBook, Instagram etc.

Current Topics of Interest

Machine Guarding

We recently conducted a machine guarding audit/inspection (including Risk Assessments) on a large organisation and it got us thinking! (by the way we had a ball conducting this hazard hunt!).

We are constantly reading news articles from several media or government outlets identifying a worker being injured or an organisation being prosecuted for not having the appropriate machine guarding in place on an item of plant or machinery. Machine guarding accidents can cause fatalities and horrific lifelong injuries to the injured person/s and let alone the effect on first responders.

In Western Australia our OSH legislation i.e. either workplace or resources (Mining or Oil and Gas) clearly identify a 'duty' for hazard identification and control. We think many people / organisations do not fully understand what a hazard is. We find that many individuals' and organisations are fixated on the job/task at hand, of which they conduct on a regular basis, and that they walk past/by these hazards, without actually recognising them. Which is why our services offer "Talk it Walk it" observation walk throughs, with Officers and Directors.

[Work Related Fatalities Unsafe Design.](#)

[Safeguarding of Machinery and Plant](#)

If you would like some assistance in ensuring you have all your hazards identified, contact us, we love a great Hazard Hunt. Even better when we can empower others

Spill Management

Different types of chemical spill response equipment

Chemical spills can happen at any time in the workplace. Incidents can and do happen! It is how you and your organisation prepares for it that matters.

There are three main types of spill kits to consider when looking to protecting the environment, your workers and the organisation from any damage caused (remember you don't want to end up on the nightly news for an inadvertent incident).

1. Hydrocarbon spill kits: hydrocarbon spill kits are designed to handle hydrocarbons such as diesel, petrol and oils.
2. Hazchem Spill Kit: A Hazchem spill kit is equipped to contain and absorb spills of acids, caustics and agricultural chemicals as well as hydrocarbons such as solvents and fuels.

Our Team

[Megan LeNoir](#) – Business Manager

[Guy LeNoir](#) – Company Director / Principal

[Stuart Platt](#) – OSHQE Consultant/Auditor/Trainer

[Peter Liron](#) – Senior Consultant/Auditor

[Dr Lincoln Morton](#) – Dangerous Goods Consultant

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3. General Purpose Spill Kit: A General-Purpose spill kit is designed to absorb non-aggressive liquids and contains equipment that is suited to absorbing fuel, coolants, hydraulic fluids, solvents and other common workshop liquids.



If you need a hand figuring which type you need, drop us a line here at SOS.

Advice – Tips and Hints

Covid-19 safe rules

To say Covid-19 has caused a few disruptions in our lives and around the world is a bit of an understatement.

The virus itself affects different people in different ways. Most infected people will develop mild to moderate illness and recover without hospitalization, however, some do not as we have seen in the world news.

Safe Work Australia has updated Information for employers, small businesses and workers on staying COVID-19 safe and how to manage risks from COVID-19 in the workplace <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces>

Statistics

Falls from height

There have been several 'fall from height' incidents in the news lately from around the Globe and

nationally. One just needs to google 'fall from height' in the news tab to see how extensive the issue is. We (SOS) have talked about the dangers of working at height here extensively in the past. We all at SOS have industry qualifications and / or experience in these matters, so we know what we are talking about.

Whether 'working at height' is occurring at the workplace or activities at home, it doesn't matter. Controls should be in place to ensure or reduce the risk of incidents occurring. Our reference to 'going home' applies in both situations. There are numerous entities and government bodies that identify 'Fall from height' risks, but despite a lot of effort from a number of regulators to see a reduction in this cause of death, the numbers have remained over 20 people for the past 15 years. It does not appear that the message is getting through. But why is it still occurring? So, why do we still not get it that working at height (either at work or at home) has inherent risks.

It does not cost much to put up a barrier, bring the work to the ground, secure a ladder, put on a harness and attach it to something solid or ask for assistance when the task requires more than one person. We hope that by raising this issue once again, that this 'food for thought' will have an effect on at least one person the next time they engage in working at height activities.

<https://www.waha.org.au/injury-statistics/>

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1702/falls-from-height.pdf>



safe work
australia



Throwback History



Some things change and some things do not (situation awareness)

Environmental Spot

Why we need Environmental Protection

This earth we live on is the only option for all living things on and in it at present. Our closed environment provides us with a multitude of things for us to survive i.e. air, land, water, warmth, sunlight and food. We have to ensure that it is not only enough for us to use now, but to ensure sustainability for the future. 'Our life depends on it', literally.

It is too easy for pollution and destruction of the environment to occur from our actions (or inactions).

It is evident that some people don't want to acknowledge this, hence the reason why we need to have legislation and guidance information on how we and our organisations can protect the environment.

Things we need to think about regarding protection of the environment:

- The earth we live in is the only option for all living things on earth at present
- Our environment gives us a lot of things to live



- It is not only enough to use the resources, but we should protect them
- Our life depends on it and so does many non-living components
- It is our duty to save our environment for making a happy life and for our children's future

This is why we at SOS are very passionate about saving / preserving the environment! If you want to see what your environmental footprint is check this website out:

<https://www.footprintcalculator.org/>



Lessons Learned.

Why do we need to investigate incidents, accidents and near misses?

Identifying why incidents happen is an extremely important process with an organisation. Learning why things go wrong assists with the 'lessons learned' and 'continuous improvement process. Incident investigation / analysis processes should be documented so that consistent investigation / analysis techniques are maintained and improved.

One of the main reasons for investigating incidents is to try and identify the root cause/s that contributed to the incident or near miss occurring, so you have a greater opportunity to prevent the same type of incident from occurring again!

As stated, the investigation / analysis processes need to be systematic.

For an investigation to come to a correct conclusion you need to:

- Act as soon as possible after the incident and get the process going
- visit the site/scene before any physical evidence is disturbed (preserve the scene)
- Do not prejudice or bias the situation
- Do not remove any evidence from the scene
- Take photographs and/or sketches to assist in reconstructing the incident.

Remember, to prevent incidents from happening again, we need to learn why they happened in the first place.

If you have had any incidents recently and would like an independent transparent review, get in contact with us.

<https://masterelectricians.com.au/importance-incident-reporting-investigations#:~:text=Why%20do%20we%20need%20to%20investigate%20Incidents%3F,incident%20from%20potentially%20occurring%20again.>

Quality

Audits and Inspections, why we need to conduct them?

Audits and inspections are an important aspect of an organisation as it provides credibility to a set of HSEQ standards and gives the relevant stakeholders confidence that the organisation is conducting itself in a 'quality' manner. It can also help to improve a company's internal controls and systems.

If you would like a hand with an auditing and inspection Regime, please get in contact with us as *'We love a good audit'* 😊



Safety and Health

Commission for Occupational Safety and Health MINUTES – 7 April 2021

The safety minutes from the last WA OSH Commission meetings have been released (April 2021). The Commission is a tripartite body made up of Western Australian employee, employer and government representatives as well as occupational safety and health experts.

Discussion at this meeting revolved around;

- WorkSafe's silica compliance campaign
- COVID-19 pandemic and recovery
- The Commission Work Plan (2019-2022)
- The Proposed WA WHS laws Code of Practice review process
- An update to the Draft Violence and Aggression at Work Code of Practice
- The governments Industrial Relations Policy Commitment; and
- several standing orders.

It was interesting to note that the facilitation of legislative change requiring low dose CT scans as part of health surveillance, given these scans are more effective than X-rays at detecting early signs of silicosis. WorkSafe WA is the first regulatory body in Australia and likely worldwide to legislate the use of a low dose chest CT as health surveillance for silica workers.

If you would like to know what the commissions discussions were in full regarding these items, please see: https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/atoms/files/7_april_2021.pdf



Corner

Risk Assessments and Hazardous Substances.

I am surprised at the number of organisations that have the Chemwatch GoldFFx system or higher, which includes the Risk Assessment module, that despite it being a **legal** requirement to do risk assessments on the use of hazardous substances, that they do not do this (either by using the Chemwatch System or by some other external process).

It is important to remember that these requirements are not there to make our jobs harder, they are there to help protect us. They are meant to stop us and make us think about what we are using, how we are using it and what are the effects that these products have on us, both acutely and chronically etc. You would be surprised as to what is hazardous and how hazardous some of these products are, that we use in our everyday working life. Take the time to have a look yourself.

The Chemwatch Risk Assessment module is a quick but thorough tool (you will be amazed at how efficient time wise it is).

The new Chemwatch Mobile App, Walkabout, has also just been released. Within this app, Risk Assessment can also be conducted, while you are on the move.

If you would like to know more information about these products or need any assistance when using them, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Joke of the Day

How do you handle hazardous materials?

Asbestos you can 😊



Health and Exercise

Keeping colds and flu's at bay

- Wash your hands. Maintaining good hand hygiene is vital during the cold and flu season.
- Avoid sick people and stay at home if unwell yourself
- clean surfaces on a regular basis
- Stay warm and dry
- Boost the immune system by eating and drinking healthy
- Reduce stress (where possible)
- Stop smoking and reduce alcohol intake
- Exercise regularly.



What is going on?

Important Dates

7th June – WA Day

14th June – Queen's Birthday (ACT, NSW, NT, SA, Tas, Vic)

2nd August – Picnic Day (NT)

Contact



If we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us direct on **(08) 9295 0311** or for further details on what SOS can provide, refer to our website www.switchedontosafety.com.au

STAY SAFE AND WELL

