

MEDIA RELEASE



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Outdoor workers now safer at work

Tasmanian building and construction employees will now be safer from overexposure to the sun's deadly UV rays in the workplace.

Cancer Council Tasmania today launched the first industry-wide education program to create sun safe workplaces, in conjunction with the Tasmanian Building and Construction Industry Training Board (TBCITB), Work Cover Tasmania and the Local Government Association of Tasmania.

Cancer Council Tasmania CEO Lawson Ride said outdoor workers were at greater risk of developing skin cancer than others due to greater sun exposure.

"Workers and their employers must recognise that the sun is potentially as toxic and deadly as chemicals or heavy machinery," he said.

"Outdoor workers can die from skin cancer caused by sun exposure at work."

There are 1.2 million outdoor workers nationwide and they need to be protected, Mr Ride said.

"Around 800 workers in Tasmania alone are diagnosed with skin cancer each year," he said.

"Skin damage from the sun is permanent and irreversible, and increases with each exposure."

Mr Ride said about 34,000 skin cancers and 200 melanomas were caused by sun exposure in the Australian workplace every year.

"We know how to prevent skin cancer so there's no reason why outdoor workers have to be at more risk of developing skin cancer than other workers," he said.

Sun Safe Workplace is a major educational campaign for workers in the building and construction industry to promote protection against harmful effects of solar UV exposure.

It incorporates on-line and face-to-face training for management and OH & S personnel to adopt sun protection programs in their workplaces.

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