

### Toolbox Talk

This Toolbox Talk is to assist you in leading a discussion around UV & Skin Cancer Safety particularly for those who spend time outside.

This toolbox talk is to be delivered by all site managers or delegates to relevant supervisors, coordinators, team leaders, workers & customers.

#### Key messages

Working outdoors exposes you to up to 10 times more UV radiation than indoor workers. This may include time traveling in a vehicle.

If you regularly work outdoors protection is recommended all year round, regardless of UV level.

Both employers and workers share a 'duty of care' to reduce workplace exposure to UV radiation.

- a) Where possible, move tasks indoors or in the shade and take breaks in the shade, particularly in the middle of the day when UV is highest.
- b) Wear suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect yourself from the sun:
- c) Long-sleeved shirt with a collar and long pants
- d) A broad-brimmed hat or a hardhat attachment
- e) Sunscreen
- f) Sunglasses or safety glasses that meet the Australian Standard.

Check all your skin regularly – not just sun-exposed skin.

See your GP immediately if you notice a new or changing spot.

#### Why should you care?

More than 2,000 Australians die from skin cancers every year, but most skin cancers can be prevented. To put it in perspective, more people die from skin cancer than on our roads each year.

If your job is outdoors you are exposed to a lot of UV at work. Outdoor workers get up to 10 times more UV exposure than indoor workers. UV radiation also causes serious damage to your eyes, as well as dryness, wrinkling and premature ageing of your skin.

*Australia receives high levels of UV radiation. "Being located close to the ozone hole over the Antarctic means that much higher, more severe levels of UV radiation get through to ground level."*

Risk factors:

### Who is at risk of getting skin cancer?

Almost all (95%) skin cancers are caused by UV damage. Anyone can get skin cancer, but your risk is higher if you:

- work outdoors
- have fair skin that burns easily
- have many moles on your skin
- have a history of bad sunburn
- have had a skin cancer already or have a family history of Skin cancer
- spend a lot of time outdoors, unprotected
- Suntan use/have used solariums.

### UV radiation what is UV?

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a form of energy that comes from the sun and some artificial sources (e.g. solariums)

We can feel the temperature and see the sun's light, but we can't see or feel UV radiation.

UV can be high on cool or cloudy days, so don't be fooled.

To check what the UV level is check with the Bureau of Meteorology or the free SunSmart app.

Sun protection is usually recommended once the UV level hits 3. However, if you work outdoors you get regular UV exposure and should use sun protection every day to stop UV damage adding up over time.

### Reduce the Risk:

How can you reduce your exposure to UV radiation?

- Work under shade where possible
- Move the work inside.
- Work at the beginning or end of the day
- Use Sun protective PPE
- Avoid reflective surfaces such as water, concrete, sand, Roofing iron and snow.

### **PPE:**

Slip on a long-sleeved shirt with collar and trousers

Slop sunscreen on 20 minutes before going out in the sun and reapply every two hours (Choose a SPF of 30 or higher)

Smear on Lip balm with SPF of 30 or higher.

Slap on a hat that shades the face, head, ears and neck.

Slide on good quality wraparound sunglasses

### **Get to know your own skin:**

- Check your skin regularly, look for
- A new spot
- A spot that looks different to ones around it
- Spot, mole or freckle that has changed in shape or color.
- Any spot that you are worried about i.e. won't heal.

### **Don't delay get checked by your Dr.**

Legislation:

UV radiation is a known cause of workplace injury and disease. Therefore, to meet WH&S requirements all businesses employing outside workers should address UV radiation as a workplace hazard and develop and implement control measures (including PPE) to ensure that workers are protected. Workers also have a responsibility to take care of their own health and comply with reasonable health and safety policies in relation to UV protection

Resource: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/workers/health-and-wellbeing/heat-and-uv>

