

Health & Safety in the workplace

Are you looking after your staff???

Solvents are one of the most widely used substances in the workplace and among the most dangerous.

Organic solvents can cause cancers, heart and blood diseases, brain damage, nervous disorders, liver and kidney damage, and affect one's ability to bear healthy children.

Whether you produce solvents, use them as degreasers, or as intermediates in chemical synthesis, be sure to know what solvents are used, what their health effects are, and how to protect yourself from the hazard.

Exposure limits are not always the best clue to the toxicity of the solvent. They measure exposure at one point in time not the ongoing day to day individual exposure. It is therefore necessary to monitor the individual's health response, to be sure your staff are not at risk.

Most of the limits need to be lowered, especially for hydrocarbons. You need to insist that the company keep levels to a minimum.

Ramazzini can assess and provide recommendations for organisations using solvents.

'The *Workplace Health and Safety Strategy for New Zealand to 2015* aims to lift New Zealand's workplace health and safety performance and reduce the work toll to achieve healthy people in safe and productive workplaces'. This is the aim of the New Zealand Government in the WHSS report released in November 2007.

Ten years ago the estimated cost of accidents in the Workplace was \$4.2 billion a year according to the figures released by the Department of Labour. We can only imagine the cost the country is facing today. We have tragic statistics of Workplace fatalities in New Zealand.

Sixty-five people died in workplace accidents investigated by the Department in the year ending June 2006, compared with 47 in 2004-05, 62 in 2003-04 and 73 in both 2002-03 and 2001-02.

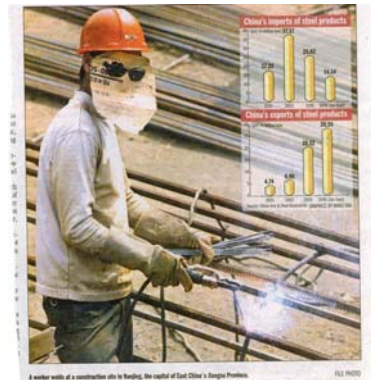
However it has been estimated that many more die from occupational diseases.

The Department of Labour suggest that "Improving health and safety not only makes workplaces safer for staff and saves lives, but also has very attractive business benefits. Businesses should view good health and safety systems not as a cost or impediment but as an investment."

Ramazzini provide specialist advice and annual health monitoring audits to assist organisations to improve their health and safety in the workplace.

It is worth the capital to reduce the risk.

See additional options for health and safety services below.



What can you do to reduce the risk in the workplace?

Ramazzini can provide your workplace with;

- 1) Risk assessments—to control and manage your risk
- 2) Health & Safety Management Plans
- 3) Health monitoring
- 4) Health surveillance
- 5) Annual audits
- 6) Specialist advice

Dr Bill Glass is Ramazzini's specialist Occupational Physician.

Dr Glass has worked in Occupational Health and Safety for the past five decades and currently contracts his expertise to Government and Private agencies. He works with Ramazzini on health surveillance and other occupational health issues for private organisations interested in the health and welfare of their employees.

Call Lee now on (03) 545 7267 to discuss your options for reducing your workplace risk.