

# SURVIVAL TIPS

Suggestions to keep you healthy and free of injury

## Uncontrolled energy

**A vital part of any health and safety programme is the identification and control of all significant hazards. One way of identifying hazards is to locate the various sources of 'energy' in your workplace. In any of these energies become uncontrolled then the chance or risk of injury increases.**

**All work requires energy, but if that energy becomes uncontrolled it may cause severe injury or major property damage. All injuries are caused by contact with a source of energy above the threshold limit of your body. As all the different energies are invisible, you need to know what they are in order to carry out a complete hazard audit of your workplace.**

**Sources of energy at your workplace include: bio-mechanical; gravity; kinetic; mechanical; electrical; chemical; acoustical; pressure; microbiological; radiation and thermal.**

**You have the right to know.**

Your employer must inform you of all significant hazards in your work environment, and involve employees in developing procedures to eliminate, isolate or minimise them. In terms of an energy check, take a look around your workplace for:

### **Tip 1: Bio-Mechanical energy**

- Avoid lifting tasks where you may suffer from over-exertion and overextending when moving objects.
- Discuss with your

supervisor if you need mechanical aids.

### **Tip 2: Gravity Energy**

Check for situations where you might be struck by an object, eg

- Falling objects - ensure secure storage.

### **Tip 3: Kinetic energy**

Check for situations where you might be striking against an object, eg.

- Watch for moving objects such as people
- Obstruction in walkways
- Mobile plant - keep space between pedestrians and moving machines with walkways.

### **Tip 4: Mechanical energy**

Check for situations where you might be caught between the moving parts of a machine, causing crush or pinching to fingers - always ensure all guards are in place.

Check also for tasks or situations where you might be caught on a stationary or moving object such as protrusions from buildings or machines.

### **Tip 5: Gravity energy**

Same level fall: look out for wet floors, spills where you might slip, trip, or lose your balance on the surface on which you are standing or walking.

Different level fall: look out for situations where you might slip, trip, or lose your balance and fall to a level below the surface on which you are standing or walking. Check ladders, and never

climb on building structures.

### **Tip 6: Electrical and Thermal energy**

Check for situations where you might come into contact with harmful energy sources such as hot liquids, live electrical equipment etc

### **Tip 7: Be aware of Chemical, Radiation and Microbiological energy, eg**

- Use and store solvents and acids safely
- Avoid excessive sun exposure
- Control bacteria and viruses with effective hygiene

### **Tip 8: Health exposures**

Are you exposed to harmful chemicals, either short term (acute) or long term (chronic)? Check workplace for harmful dusts, noise, noxious vapours and anything that impacts on your health. Report any problems immediately.

### **Tip 9: Stress**

Is anyone either suffering from work overload, bullying or other intimidating behaviour? Such issues are now identified as hazards and should be reported.

**Disclaimer:** these survival tips are general in nature and are not intended to be comprehensive. Always take into account your own particular circumstances. If you have any questions, please discuss them with your supervisor.

*These survival tips supplied by the New Zealand Safety Council, [www.safetycouncil.org.nz](http://www.safetycouncil.org.nz) or email [info@safetycouncil.org.nz](mailto:info@safetycouncil.org.nz)*