

FACT SHEET

Using mobile phones safely

Background

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recently reported on the risks of exposure to radio-frequency electromagnetic radiation, including the radiation that is emitted by mobile phones.

The WHO advised that exposure to such radiation during the heavy use of mobile phones should be considered as a possible carcinogen. However, for this to be confirmed, the WHO also advised that further research was needed.

Because of their potential to distract a driver or rider when they're on the road, the use of mobile phones can also be a hazard when operating a motor vehicle. To address this, the NSW Government has made it illegal for motorists to use hand-held mobile phones when they're driving. Although their use is not illegal, the excessive use of 'hands-free' mobile phones when operating a vehicle can also affect a driver's concentration.

Action required

If you employ people who use mobile phones when they're working, you must, as far as is reasonably practicable, control any risks concerned with their usage. This includes:

- checking all specifications and radiation emission levels and following safety instructions when buying mobile phones for your workers
- encouraging your workers to limit their use of hand-held mobile phones
- assessing current road rules and health and safety risk management principles before using 'hands-free' mobile phones
- ensuring that your workers are aware that the use of hand-held mobile phones when operating a vehicle is illegal.

More information

- Visit the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) website – arpansa.gov.au
- Visit the International Agency for Research on Cancer website – iarc.fr
- Visit the NSW Roads and Traffic Authority website – rta.nsw.gov.au
- Call WorkCover on **13 10 50**
- Visit the WorkCover website – workcover.nsw.gov.au

Disclaimer

This publication may contain occupational health and safety and workers compensation information. It may include some of your obligations under the various legislations that WorkCover NSW administers. To ensure you comply with your legal obligations you must refer to the appropriate legislation.

Information on the latest laws can be checked by visiting the NSW legislation website (www.legislation.nsw.gov.au).

This publication does not represent a comprehensive statement of the law as it applies to particular problems or to individuals or as a substitute for legal advice. You should seek independent legal advice if you need assistance on the application of the law to your situation.

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