

# SUNSMART Week

A North Taranaki Midweek advertising feature



**Geared up:** Paul Crighton, left, maintenance technician at Shell Todd Oil Services' production station at Kapuni is assisted by area technician, Clint Hill, during a routine maintenance on process equipment at the plant.  
Photo: CRAIG BATES

## Protecting staff working outside

**O**UTDOOR workers will be less at risk from developing skin cancer this summer because the Cancer Society is helping employers develop ways to protect staff from the sun.

"We know that UV levels in New Zealand are extreme, and that New Zealand has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world," says the society's Taranaki centre health promoter and education adviser, Elaine Jamieson.

"Outdoor workers are at high risk of developing skin cancer because they are exposed to these high levels of UVR daily for long periods."

The Cancer Society has designed kits to support the health and safety staff and management of companies to develop best practice guidelines for protecting their number one asset – their staff. "We have a very pro-active workplace safety environment in Taranaki and it is heartening to see that SunSmart is taken as seriously by many organisations as other injury protection initiatives," says Elaine.

Elaine has been working with Inframax, IWD, Fonterra, Contact Energy, Exploration Solutions, Fulton Hogan and other businesses

to raise awareness of the importance of protecting staff from the sun.

One of the organisations she works with, Shell Todd Oil Services (STOS), has a comprehensive approach to worker safety, protection and education. STOS health adviser Carolyn McAree says the company acknowledges its responsibility to help people to be SunSmart.

"We're passionate about keeping people safe in their work, and that includes being SunSmart."

"As a large employer, we have a number of staff from overseas who aren't necessarily aware of how harsh the sun in New Zealand can be. So it's important to us to take steps to get the word out and help people to take every possible step to protect themselves."

STOS initiatives to encourage sunsmart work practices include making long-sleeve overalls part of the outdoor uniform at its Maui and Kapuni sites, providing sunscreen, and offering subsidised skin checks and mole maps for staff.

This summer the company is

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NORTH TARANAKI MIDWEEK

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**Cover up:** With summer weather almost here, Taranaki Cancer Society is encouraging people to think about being SunSmart.  
Photo: FILE

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also promoting the use of neck flaps for hard hats, as well as taking part in SunSmart week and reminding staff to cover up and to use sunscreen.

Carolyn says that STOS also supports initiatives to take safety messages beyond the workplace.

"STOS has been operating in Taranaki for more than 50 years, and we're committed to promoting safer communities."

The company's wider summer safety initiatives this year include supporting Surf Life Saving Taranaki to run an intermediate training course so that there are more experienced lifeguards on

Taranaki beaches. It has also provided sun umbrellas for a number of play centres and kindergartens to help them with their SunSmart programmes.

Elaine says the Cancer Society's key messages remain the same for all the population this summer.

People should avoid spending too long in the sun between 11am and 4pm, they should wear a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses and protective clothing, and should apply sunscreen well and often.

Any unusual or changing moles should be checked by a health professional.

The society will continue to promote safety in the sun with the slogan, 'Slip, slop, slap and wrap!'