



It's ok to talk openly about RCD's

An RCD sounds like a nasty, very personal and highly embarrassing disease, but you may be surprised to learn that many of us already have one.

Residual current devices (RCD's) are usually installed in homes as part of electrical safety circuitry however, what about in the workplace? Maxima personnel are often exposed to electrical hazards without really knowing it, so if you're not sure if you have the right protection perhaps it's time to talk openly with your supervisor or Maxima contact about the issue.

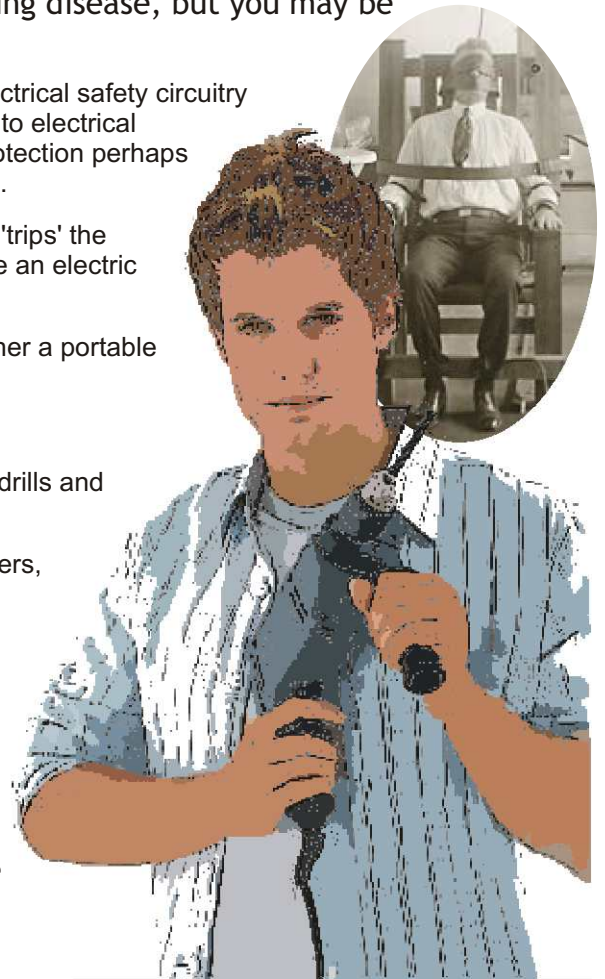
An RCD works by detecting a current leakage called an earth leakage, which 'trips' the device and turns the power off almost immediately. While you may still receive an electric shock, the duration will be very short reducing the risk of serious injury.

Depending on the type of installation, RCD protection may be provided by either a portable or fixed (non portable) device.

Examples of equipment that needs RCD protection include:

- **Hand held electrical equipment** at work including power tools such as drills and saws or in the home like hair dryers, curling wands and electrical knives.
- **Electrical plant which is moved during operation** such as jack hammers, electric lawn mowers, vacuum cleaners and floor polishers.
- **Plant which is moved between operation where damage to plant or the supply cord could reasonably occur** including electrical welders, electric cement mixers and portable bench saws.
- **Tools, equipment and appliances that could be affected by the operating environment.** For example, appliances used in wet areas such as kettles, jugs, frying pans, portable urns and extension cords.

Regardless of the type of RCD, all electrical equipment used in the workplace must be regularly tested and tagged by an authorised person.



National OHS system taking shape

Australia's system of 'federalism' gives the Commonwealth and State Governments power to make laws in different spheres and Occupational Health and Safety lays within State powers.

You may have heard talk about a new National OHS&W system and wondered how this is going to work and what it means for you, your family and co-workers.

The national harmonisation of workplace health and safety (WHS) laws has moved one step closer to becoming a reality, with the endorsement of the Model Work Health and Safety provisions by the Workplace Relations Ministers' Council on 11 December 2009. The 'Council' comprises State and Commonwealth

ministers responsible for OHS&W and it meets to discuss and (hopefully) agree on issues and actions that affect workers in all of Australia.

Currently, while each State's laws are similar, a worker or employer must make themselves aware of a number of pieces of legislation and varying regulations if they work or operate in different States.

The intent is to have the same legislation applying in Melbourne as it does in Pannawonica West Australia, which will allow employers and employees to better understand and apply their OHS&W knowledge in the workplace regardless of the State in which they happen to be working.

Under the proposal, the 'National' laws and regulations will be enacted in each

State and will be 'policed' by the State Government department responsible.

Although there has been widespread support for a 'National' system, some unions have warned of the potential to deliver a 'lowest common denominator' approach, while others have pointed to the opportunity of improving OHS&W laws in those States that currently lag.

Safe Work Australia is aiming for the Model Act and Model Regulations to be enacted nationally in December 2011. Model Regulations will be developed in 2010 and will be released for comment in late 2010. It is important to keep in mind that in the interim, the relevant current State health and safety laws will continue to apply and must be complied with.

Time to get SOPpy

Safe work procedures, sometimes referred to as SOP's (safe operating procedures), are created to make sure that workers are aware of the risks associated with their tasks and how to perform them safely, usually presenting the appropriate risk control as a step-by-step sequence.

Employers are obliged to manage the risks to workers and SOP's are seen as a useful tool to communicate this and to provide direction, however not all employers will have SOP's covering all tasks.

Does your workplace have formal safe work procedures or is your training word of mouth only?

Either way, you have a responsibility to work in a safe manner, so make sure that you understand all aspects of your job and are confident that you can perform your role without risk to yourself or anyone else. Ask questions of your immediate supervisor if you don't fully understand, or contact your Maxima consultant.

Australia leads the world.... unfortunately

Two out of three Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer by the time they are 70 and it is estimated that approximately 200 melanomas and 34,000 non-melanoma skin cancers per year are caused by occupational exposures in Australia.

Outdoor workers receive 5 to 10 times as much exposure compared with their office based counterparts, so complacency itself can be a killer.

On November 16th 2009, the Federal Government launched a major campaign to reinforce the 'sun smart' message focussing five simple behaviours:

- Seek shade
- Wear sun protective clothing that covers as much of your body as possible
- Put on a broad-brimmed hat that shades your face, neck and ears

- Wear wrap-around sunglasses
- Apply SPF30+ broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen every two hours.

On the last point, the Cancer Council of Australia reports that **"most people don't apply enough sunscreen resulting in only 50-80% of the protection stated on the product"** and suggest that you **"apply sunscreen liberally – at least a teaspoon for each limb, front and back of the body and half a teaspoon for the face, neck and ears."**

And just in case you don't know:

- Over 1,700 Australians die from skin cancer each year.
- Skin cancers account for about 80% of all new cancers diagnosed each year in Australia. Each year, Australians are 4 times more likely to develop a common skin cancer than any other form of cancer.

→ Over 430,000 Australians are treated for skin cancer each year – that's over 1,000 people every day.

→ In those aged 15–44 years, melanoma is the most common cancer, making up almost a quarter of all cancers for this age group.

→ A systematic review of the research on the link between skin cancer and solarium use concluded that using solariums before the age of 35 boosts the risk of melanoma by 75%, and also increases the risk of squamous cell carcinoma. A more recent review suggested that the increased risk of melanoma could be as much as 98%.

With figures like those, it won't be surprising if you know someone who has recently been treated and although treatment has become 'routine' and increasingly effective (over 95% of skin cancers are cured if they are diagnosed and treated early), a statistic from [sunsmart.com.au](http://www.sunsmart.com.au) indicates that only **"90% of Victorians with invasive melanoma in 2004 could expect to survive their cancer for at least 5 years."**

For more information, <http://www.cancer.org.au/cancersmartlife/style/SunSmart.htm> provides good, state specific information.

Trainees shine in the sunshine state

Four Maxima trainees were recently nominated for the Queensland Group Training Australia (GTA) Awards in various categories.

They are:

- Matthew Bishop and Michael Pivi (Trainee of the Year);
- Corie Duff (Indigenous Trainee of the Year);
- Brandon Bamin (School-based Trainee of the Year).

All were shortlisted for interview to represent Queensland at the GTA National Awards. As only three applicants were interviewed statewide

for each category, it means that all four were among the top three trainees in their category in Queensland.

Congratulations!

Corie Duff was successful in winning the Queensland Indigenous Trainee of the Year Award and will now represent Queensland and Maxima at the GTA National Awards being held on Friday, 16 April 2010 at the national conference awards dinner in Adelaide.

All of these talented trainees will also compete in the (Department of Education and Training) Queensland Training Awards, starting in July.

From left to right: Brandon Bamin, Michael Pivi, Corie Duff and Matthew Bishop.

