



Cancer Society New Zealand  
Te Kāhui Matepukupuku o Aotearoa

National Office  
Level 2, Red Cross House  
69 Molesworth Street, Thorndon  
PO Box 12700  
Wellington 6011

Telephone: 64 4 494-7270  
Facsimile: 64 4 494-7271

Websites: [www.cancernz.org.nz](http://www.cancernz.org.nz)  
[www.daffodilday.org.nz](http://www.daffodilday.org.nz)  
[www.relayforlife.org.nz](http://www.relayforlife.org.nz)  
Email: [admin@cancer.org.nz](mailto:admin@cancer.org.nz)

## MEDIA RELEASE

Monday 9 November, 2009

### Outdoor workers urged to be sun safe

This week is SunSmart Week, and outdoor workers are being urged to play it safe at work this summer.

Cancer Society Chief Executive Dalton Kelly says unlike many of us, outdoor workers don't always have the choice of avoiding the sun and, during their working lives can be exposed to massive amounts of damaging ultraviolet radiation (UVR).

"Tens of thousands of Kiwis work outdoors in industries like construction, farming, horticulture, viticulture, for government agencies, and for local bodies.

"By the very nature of their work they often spend long periods in the sun, which puts them at risk of skin cancer."

He says the message from the Cancer Society to outdoor workers is to cover up (wear wide-brimmed hats or hard hats with a visor attachment, long-sleeved tops, sunglasses, use sunscreen and seek shade whenever possible).

"And employers have a big part to play too. Under the *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992*, employers are legally required to protect workers from workplace health hazards - and that includes the sun. This means providing sun safety gear, ensuring workers wear it and encouraging them to cooperate with workplace measures to minimise harm.

"It's about creating a workplace culture where sun safety behaviour is standard practice and employers lead by example."

New Zealand has one of the highest rates of melanoma in the world - over three times that of the United States and the UK. With over 69,000 new cases of skin cancer a year, it is the most common cancer diagnosed in this country and responsible for over 300 deaths annually.

"In recent years sun safety campaigns in New Zealand have advised people to stay out of the sun between 11 and 4 during the daylight saving months. Obviously this isn't always an option for people who work outdoors, so sun protection measures are vital."

#### Media enquiries:

Lynne St.Clair-Chapman  
National Communications Manager  
Tel 04 494 7195      Mob 027 444 4150