

### Destination... Conference 2019

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CONTACT: AWCI, PO Box 45098, Lower Hutt NZ FREE CALL: 0800 AWCINZ (0800 292 469) Website: www.awcinz.org.nz • Email: admin@awcinz.org.nz

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# President's report

### From the trowel of Gabriel Ataya

Firstly, the Executive Committee would like to extend their condolences and best wishes to all those affected and the families that have lost loved ones from the tragic events in Christchurch on Friday 15th March. All of us are experiencing a lot of sorrow for what occurred and don't feel that these actions represent what New Zealand stands for at all.

It has been a fast start to the year for the construction industry. It feels like we never had a break as the year started so quickly. In our business we are seeing a lot of opportunities round the country, but activity is quieter and more competitive in Christchurch which looks to be returning to preearthquake construction volumes.

There are a number of issues going on within the Industry that the AWCI is managing on behalf of the members. We are keeping a constant vigil on the Ebert Construction case, the release of the Vocation and Education training review (VET), Government procurement plus the Mainzeal case against the directors is potential good news for the industry. It just goes to show that a buoyant market isn't always a successful market so always keep a close eye on your operations.

AWCI are doing most of our advocacy and lobbying work for retentions through the Specialist Trade Contractors Federation (STCF). This combines the voices of Master Painters, Master Plumbers, the Roofing Assoc, Scaffolding Assoc and AWCI to provide significant information and lobbying to the media, Ministers and MBIE. At any time please feel free to contact Richard in the AWCI office if you have some key points that you think would be useful in this work.

Other exciting news for AWCI is our partnership with the New Zealand Certified Builders Association and combining for our second joint conference in Christchurch June 14th and 15th 2019. This means we will have dedicated AWCI speakers and content plus a huge 70 trade stand expo, over 650 attendees and access to the NZCB speakers and business content. The opportunity for AWCI members to network and develop partnerships with NZCB members is really significant and the AWCI Executive are excited about joining together at the event for



the benefit of both organisations.

There is more detail in this issue about the conference, so I urge you to come to the conference and be part of this significant milestone event. It would be great to get an increase in the number of contractors attend this year and from first-hand experience I can tell you it is very beneficial for companies of all sizes so make sure you register and get involved.

Last month we also had the running of our annual golf tournaments, with the Auckland tournament selling out and fantastic attendance in Christchurch. These events just keep on growing and next year we expect to add one or two more venues so watch out for those dates.

All in all it is great to see the continued growth of the Association. We will be keeping you up to date on the various industry events involving Ebert and Arrow international, plus the VET review so watch your email for the newsletter updates.

Thanks Gabriel

## **Construction News**

### DATES FOR NATIONAL CONFERENCE ANNOUNCED:

The 2019 joint AWCI and NZ Certified Builders national conference will be held in Christchurch on June 14th and 15th 2019.

There will be dedicated AWCI speakers and content plus a huge 70 trade stand expo, over 650 attendees and access to all the NZCB speakers and business content. The opportunity for AWCI members to network and develop partnerships with NZCB members is really significant.

### BCITO ACKNOWLEDGES RADICAL CHANGES TO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TRAINING SYSTEM

Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) Chief Executive Warwick Quinn acknowledges the significance of the changes to the vocational education training system proposed by the Minister of Education, Hon Chris Hipkins.

"Vocational training is vitally important to New Zealand's continued growth. There is no doubt that the Vocational Education Training system (VET) has experienced issues for a long time which need addressing. We also believe there are some parts which are working very well. The key is to protect what works while updating the areas which are failing to deliver for New Zealand," says Quinn.

"At a time when New Zealand needs more skilled employees in the trades, our priority is ensuring the system we develop is fit-for-purpose and will help us deliver the growth New Zealand needs across the next 20 years.

"Much of the current ITO system is working very well and the focus must be on retaining these aspects. However, we understand there are greater issues within the ITP sector and acknowledge the need for greater change there.

"We must be careful to not throw the baby out with the bathwater, and ensure we protect what is working well, particularly for high need sectors such as building and construction.

"As these changes are radical, we will now spend some time working through what they mean for vocational training, employers and apprentices, and the wider industry."

Quinn says it is important to ensure we continue to meet the immediate needs of our employers and apprentices during this consultation period.

"We believe there is an opportunity to reposition vocational-based qualifications as high-quality career pathways," he says.

"We look forward to working with the Government and industry to carefully work through the proposal."

### 5TH MARCH 2019 SECTOR REJECTS VOCATIONAL EDUCATION REFORMS

The building and construction sector has today rejected the Government's proposal to reform vocational education.

The Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO) held a sector summit in Auckland today to discuss the proposal in detail, and to understand its impact on the current and future training system. Attendees included a broad mix of industry leaders and employers who work with the ITOs and polytechs.

Two-thirds of attendees did not support the Government's proposals, voicing their concerns around the negative impact such widespread changes would have on the sector, at a time when we need to build more capacity and capability.

"The purpose of the summit was to agree the non-negotiables any new system must provide to ensure employers and apprentices stay engaged. What we have gained today is an agreed list of what industry expect to be incorporated in any future system," said Warwick Quinn, BCITO CEO.

"Today attendees made it clear that they value sector control of both the standard setting and delivery of training. While they appreciate the greater control of the standard setting under the proposals they are concerned that control of the delivery is at risk.

"They value the relationships they have with their ITOs. Under the current system, our field staff build strong relationships with every individual employer and apprentice. This allows us to customise their learning. In construction, most people learn from mentoring and support. They don't learn from books. This focus needs to be retained in any reforms, and the sector is sceptical how this will work in the new system.

"There was concern from many in the room that the smaller trades will fall through the cracks of a single, large institution. They are also concerned that advocacy work carried out by ITOs will be lost. As a result, we will struggle to attract people into the sector.

"One positive in the Government's proposal is the extended reach and control over what providers can deliver. This is one aspect we would support," says Quinn.

The industry also strongly voiced its concerns about how the transition to a new system would be managed.

"We understand what the new proposals are trying to do, but we are concerned that they may not get there. It is a lot of disruption on a promise that lacks detail.

"If we get this wrong, we risk losing a cohort of employers, and by default apprentices, which would set the sector back years. We cannot let this happen at a time when the sector faces significant skills shortages.

"The overarching question we will be asking Ministers is how they can mitigate the risks identified by industry today in any sector reform," Quinn says. "This is too important to get wrong."

Following today's discussions, BCITO will continue to consult the sector to ensure a robust response to the Government proposals.

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### KINGSPAN INSULATION WELCOMES TODD LINDSAY



Kingspan Insulation continues to make moves in the New Zealand market as it adds a key player to its team shortly after expanding its product range with its new Kooltherm K10 FM G2W White Soffit Board.

Todd Lindsay joins the team as the first New Zealand based Sales Manager and comes with a plethora of experience in the building industry and is well-known in the New Zealand market. After over 10 years in various roles at PlaceMakers and Forman Building Systems, Lindsay brings with him an extensive knowledge of the insulation market and the Kingspan Insulation product range.

"Kingspan have established themselves in New Zealand as the premium solution provider for high performance insulation for residential and commercial applications. As a customer of Kingspan, since their establishment in New Zealand almost 11 years ago, I am very excited to now be given the opportunity to lead the business here in New Zealand", commented Lindsay.

Kingspan Insulation have put an added focus on New Zealand as their success in both Australian and South East Asia market continues apace. Lindsay started in his new role on the 5th of March and is expected to hit the ground running.

"I am looking forward to building on the excellent work done to date and to strengthening our specification, distribution and installation partnerships across the country. Kingspan offers world class performance and peace of mind to building users and occupiers"

### YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO READING RONDO WALL HEIGHT TABLES

Rondo have put together a step by step example to reading wall height tables. However before we get started, there are a few things you'll need to determine:

- 1. The overall wall height;
- 2. Thickness of the plasterboard to be used;
- 3. How wide your wall is required to be
- 4. If the wall will be lined on one side or both sides

Click here to view our latest Rondo HOW video on 'how to read Rondo wall charts'.

Not convinced? Find out how this essential skill as a contractor will make your job easier.

# Essential Business Update from IRD:

### START PAYDAY FILING NOW

Has your business started payday filing yet? Payday filing will soon be compulsory, so get on board now.

All employers need to be payday filing from 1 April, which means that you will have to:

• File employment information every payday instead of an Employer monthly schedule (IR348)

• Provide new and departing employees' address information, as well as their date of birth – if they have provided it to you, and

• File electronically (from payday compatible software or through myIR) if your annual PAYE/ESCT is \$50,000 or more.

Depending on the method you choose to start payday filing, you will need to do one of the following:

- If you're using software, check if it is payday filing compatible.
- If you're filing through myIR, make sure are familiar with the new Payroll Returns account in the My business section.
- If you're filing through paper, make sure you have the new forms to fill in.

Want more information? Inland Revenue's payday filing website has plenty of resources to help, and why not register today for our webinar on 25 March? It's a great opportunity to ask our panel of IR experts any burning questions you've got about payday filing.

### **CHANGING FOR YOU**

Last month, we told you about some of the proposed changes to make our tax system more straight forward for you. Two of the proposed changes are dependent on legislation currently going through Parliament, so you should expect to hear more from us over the coming months about what the changes mean for you. For more information, visit our Changing For You website.

### GETTING READY TO SUPPORT YOU

We've been busy holding dress rehearsals to test our timing and sequencing ahead of April, when the next wave of changes to make our tax system more straightforward will come into effect.

To minimise disruption for our customers and limit the time our services will be unavailable, the dates we have chosen take advantage of the Easter and Anzac Day public holidays. So what this will mean for you is our:

core systems, our front of office



counters and our contact centres will shut down from the afternoon of Thursday 18th April 2019.

• systems and services will be back open on the morning of Friday 26th April 2019.

### UPGRADING IR'S WEBSITE – NEW CONTENT ON BETA SITE

We're completely redeveloping our website, including the look and feel, content, and the platform it sits on, to provide our customers with a great online experience. We're building content in sections on a beta, or test site, and our third round of content – income tax, will be available from early March.

We want to make the new IR website the best it can be, so, as with previous beta releases, we're keen to receive your feedback.

Payday filing

You can access the beta site via a link on the current IR website's homepage, as well as through links on the Child Support and Working for Families landing pages. In early March a link will also be available from the income tax landing page. Please take a look and complete the survey to share your thoughts.

### NEW WEBSITE GOES LIVE IN APRIL

Our new website will go live as part of our next transformation release and will be available from the morning of Friday 26 April. It will feature:

- A new homepage
- A new look and feel, and layout
- · Content previously tested on the

beta site – Working for Families, Child Support, income tax

- Global search across the new site and all content on the old site
- Seamless navigation across both the new and old sites.

Not all content will be on the new website initially, but our global search will help you find what you're after and the improved navigation and site structure will enable you to seamlessly move between the two sites.

We'll continue to test further content on the beta site and then publish to the new site in the months following the April transformation release. We hope to have all our content on the new website by late 2019.

Get ready for payday filing today – if you have any questions, please contact IRTransformation@ird.govt.nz

# Combined AWCI & NZCB Conference

### NZ Certified Builders (NZCB) and AWCI combine for one significant event



The AWCI Executive have been working hard over the past year on ways for members to grow their business and expand their profile with head contractors and building companies. One of the exciting opportunities is that AWCI and NZCB are working in partnership to combine their annual conference events into the one venue in June 2019. The combined conference event means we will have dedicated AWCI speakers and content presentations, plus a huge 70 trade stand expo, over 700 attendees and full access to the NZCB speakers and business content. AWCI members will benefit from two conferences in the one venue. The opportunity for AWCI members to network and develop partnerships with NZCB members is really significant and the AWCI Executive are excited about joining together at the event for the benefit of both organisations.



NZ Certified Builders (NZCB) and AWCI combine for one significant event

AWCI President Gabriel Ataya explains "We are very excited by this unique opportunity to partner with NZCB. Our conference will still have the Awards of Excellence, excellent ceiling and plasterboard content / speakers and a great gala dinner however in addition, AWCI members will really benefit from the NZCB speakers and content, the biggest trade stand Expo for any association conference and a massive 600 attendee's. NZCB always have some outstanding key speakers to develop your own company / business which we wouldn't normally have access to. It would be great to get an increase in the number of contractors attend this year and from first-hand experience I can't stress how beneficial the conference is for companies of all sizes, so make sure you register and get involved."

This conference is the perfect opportunity to network and develop new partnerships with NZCB members. It will also be the perfect opportunity to develop and grow your business with new information and learnings.



### **KEY INFORMATION:**

 14th and 15th June in the newly updated and re-opened Christchurch Town Hall, Christchurch

• Receive up to 12 skills maintenance points for attending

Up to 70 trade stands at the Expo

 Welcome function on Thursday 13th June for those who want to arrive on Thursday night

• The conference starts on Friday 14th June at 8am

• Lots of educational workshops with specific AWCI content and presentations

 All delegates can attend any workshop or speaker they want to

Over 700 attendee's



We will have a separate AWCI Gala dinner with Annual Awards of Excellence and GIB Workskills presentations

 Access to significant keynote speakers which will help develop and grow your business

This event is a significant milestone for AWCI and it's members. Get in now and register. Go to the AWCI website to register

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### When tools become unguided missiles

Cargo barriers are a good way of preventing an already bad situation from getting much worse



ometimes the biggest threat to people in a head-on crash is all the things that are behind them.

A collision in Hamilton in early February between two vans saw Waikato police warning tradies that unsecured tools and cargo can become painful, if not deadly missiles, in an accident.

In a Facebook posting about the crash, pictured below, the police said wood and tools came flying out of the van as it collided with another vehicle that had crossed the centre line.

"Upon impact the contents of the Toyota Hiace (including tools) have come flying forwards, towards the driver and his passenger.

"If you are a tradie or own a company this may be an opportunity to consider any improvements that you can make (in case of an emergency)."

The van driver later told The New Zealand Herald that it wasn't the wood that broke his windscreen but accepted that several tools had gone rogue. He said four tools - a clamp, a glue gun, hack saw and multi box – flew out the window but they were the only things that were unsecured in the van.

Construction safety training organisation Site Safe says putting a barrier between people and objects makes good sense, particularly for tradies and construction workers.



Tools went flying when these two vans collided on the outskirts of Hamilton in February though there was no serious injury. Photo: NZ Police

The gravitational force (g-force) on people and objects during collisions at about the 50kmh mark are usually around 20-25 times normal. So, for a brief instant, even a 1kg water bottle will have the force of 20-25 kgs as it flies forward until it hits the dashboard, the windscreen, or the back of someone's head. Otaki St. John ambulance officer Trevor Hunter has dealt with several vehicle accidents involving unsecured items including, tragically, two fatal ones. Another one, he says, was much luckier for the occupants. They were in a head-on crash which saw a large oxy acetylene cylinder fly out from the back of the van, shooting between them and burying itself in the dashboard.

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### When tools become unguided missiles

Another first responder from Otago recalls a call-out to where a vehicle had rolled. She says it wasn't the actual rolling that killed a person in the car, it was a combination of a loose tool box, a chainsaw, and other heavy items.

There are several ways to minimise the risk from such things happening. Keeping them secure is one, keeping tools and materials separated from people via a cargo barrier is another. Of the current range of cargo barriers that are available, the range from Australia's



Milford Industries is one of those that meets the NZS4034 standard for cargo barriers.

Properly fitted barriers, as well as protecting people from fast-moving

objects, may also offer extra protection if the vehicle rolls.

Site Safe also recommends that liquids are securely stowed in correct bottle containers and where possible, fuel

should be in a separate trailer.

For more information go to: www. sitesafe.org.nz



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· Squaring (walls, partitions).





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· Levelling and aligning doors and windows.

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### Don't get caught out with a capital gains tax

by Rod Grant - Business Advisor

roperty is a favoured investment in New Zealand due to the historical solid growth and given New Zealand's lack of a broad-based capital gains tax (at least historically), these gains have often been derived tax free. Most probably due to this lack of a capital gains tax, there exists a common belief that gains from property transactions are never taxable. Whilst this is true in the majority cases, there remains certain situations where the gains are moved from a capital account (non-taxable) to a revenue account (taxable). These circumstances are those which fall into the provisions of 'subpart CB' of the Income Tax Act 2007. This deals with taxpayers who dispose of an interest in land or buildings while being in the business of property development, trading or building.

If you sold it too soon, you'll pay tax on the profit you made You will no doubt be aware of the bright-line test which was enacted in October 2015 and then strengthened in March 2018. The rule basically applies an assumption that if you sell a property which is not your own home within five years (two years for properties purchased pre-March 2018) of when the interest was acquired, and/ or substantial work was carried out on the property, then you have brought or developed the property with the purpose of on-sale. In such a case, subject to some limited exemptions, the IRD will require the seller to pay tax on any profit.

#### What were your intentions?

Additionally, there are many other tests within subpart CB which are especially relevant for those within the construction and development industries. A key one of these is the intention test, which basically says that if you acquire an interest in land with the intention to sell at some stage in the future, then any gain is always taxable regardless of when the sale occurs. It's important to note that the intention test is highly subjective, and the IRD have previously stated that if it were to rely on the intention test to deem a transaction taxable, they will place weight on the notes held by banks, lawyers and other professionals from the time of purchase. Also, the intention test has no time period unlike many of the other taxing provisions. It basically treats the purchase and sale of the land like any other item purchased for resale, e.g. food for sale at a supermarket.

#### It even applies to your own home

Another key consideration for those in or associated to someone who is in the



building industry is that even the profit on your own home can be deemed to be taxable if you were to sell it within ten years of acquisition. This is regardless of your initial intention or the amount of work you may have carried out on the property while it was in your ownership

Please note that the examples above are only a small snapshot of the situations where a transaction could be deemed to be taxable. They are for information purposes only and cannot be treated as a comprehensive piece of tax advice as every situation is different. We would recommend that you seek independent and specialist advice before undertaking any property transaction, especially if you work within the construction industry.

At Crowe Horwath we have a specialist team which can assist with any queries you may have around your obligations as an employer, tax advice or changes to employment law. Please phone 0800 494 569 or visit www.crowehorwath.co.nz



AWCI

recently held it's summer Golf days in Auckland and Christchurch. Both

days were very successful with Auckland selling out very quickly and Christchurch with a large attendance. Enjoy some of the photo's from the event here.

Congratulations to the winning teams. Great people, great days and lots of prizes and food. We hope to see you all again next year.



































## Yes, you can increase your prices!



Daniel Fitzpatrick

hen was the last time you raised your rates? Last week, last year, or maybe you just can't remember...

Small increases can significantly improve your profitability – without extra work.

If you have \$1 million in sales per year. Just by increasing your prices by 5%, you would add another \$50k to your bottom line.

Yes. That means you make an extra \$50,000 per year COLD HARD CASH.

Most tradies can find this 5% if they are more efficient and/or buy better. But that's a topic for another day.

This is about putting up your prices.

It's surefire the QUICKEST way to improve your profit.

But Dan! What if I put my rates up and lose clients?

A: Even if clients freak out. And 20% of your work drops off. You'll still be making the same amount of net profit. (Yes. The same. For less work.) So would you lose 20% of your work

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from a small 5% price increase? UNLIKELY.

In fact, if you do it the right way, most clients won't even notice.

Obviously, I'm assuming you are a good tradie who does good work.

So if you're good, you want the clients who are prepared to pay a bit more for a quality job.

If someone wants to go with the cheapest option, let them. You've probably noticed the price shoppers are usually the worst kind of clients anyhow.

The truth is you will always lose some quotes.

No matter what level you set your pricing at.

So do you really want to be one of the cheapest?

I think you're worth more than that.

The thing is, most tradies haven't increased their rates for a long time. Maybe you know you should but you've just been too busy.

Or MAYBE you are worried you'll miss

out on work.

### Here's the problem, though:

a) If your rates are too low, you won't be able to make much money. It's just math.

b) To make matters worse, as your team gets bigger, you accumulate more costs (gear, training, downtime, holiday pay, etc). This MUST be built in. Otherwise it EATS INTO YOUR PROFIT. And gets you into trouble real quick.

The key is to know the margins YOU need. Then price accordingly. When you know what YOUR margins SHOULD be, you will not settle for working for peanuts.

To price it right, your quote should reflect costs + margin. Only.

The funny thing is, when crunching the numbers, I find most tradies are undercharging by at least 5% anyway.

### Next question:

Dan, if I price higher, clients might think I'm ripping them off...

A: Firstly let's be really clear. Another5% is not ripping anyone off.

Doubling your pricing. Or not doing a good job. IS.

If you believe in what you're doing, it's all about showing the customer you're worth it. That the job is going to be done right. At a fair price for both of you.

Educate your clients on why you are the right choice. Good ways to back this up even further are: Differentiate yourself with a professional image (online and offline) and your high standards. Show client success stories and reviews. Have credibility by displaying your awards, endorsements and trades association membership. And a guarantee - because you do quality work and stand behind it.

A lot of this comes down to mindset as well.

You are a professional in your industry with SPECIALIST expertise.

You are also A BUSINESS OWNER. Clearly one of your objectives is to MAKE MONEY.

A fair amount of profit for your hard work:

Means you can pay your overheads.

Meet your responsibilities.

Pay your team and your suppliers who are relying on that income.

Take care of your own family.

Draw a decent wage for yourself.

If you're doing better, you can also give more BACK to your clients.

And in your local community.

As a business coach I've seen behind the curtain of hundreds of honest companies. Let me tell you, the one thing these tradies are NOT doing is ripping people off.

It's pretty much always the other way around. Far too many tradies are not getting paid what they are worth - a return for the long hours, high stress, and high risk involved in being self employed.

That has to stop and a 5% payrise for the boss will be a great start.

Want to next level your profit? Find out the 5 simple steps to make your tradie business grow financially and get more cash in the bank. Get your free guide here:

https://nextleveltradie.co.nz/guide/

Daniel Fitzpatrick Business Coach at Next Level Tradie https://nextleveltradie.co.nz/

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### Housekeeping Toolbox Talk



### HOUSEKEEPING

An untidy site can slow production and increase the chance of an accident. A tidy site sends a strong message about the standards expected on-site. All workers must do their part to keep the worksite free of the clutter and rubbish that causes accidents.

#### MAIN POINTS

#### HAZARDS - SURFACES

 Indoor surfaces become slippery when moisture or substances are brought in from outside.

 > Spillage of oils and lubricants (oily floors may also be a fire hazard).
 > Dust build up on concrete floors can

be very slippery.

### OBSTACLES

 Loose objects on floors, stairs and platforms, and excessive material, waste or chips in the working area.
 Obstacles at height and suspended power/ light cables have the potential to catch so ensure they are clear for access.

#### WASTE

 Rubbish being irregular in shape, hard to handle and containing sharp objects.
 Waste containers that are overflowing with materials that have nails and wire sticking out.

› Waste left in work areas discourage others from keeping a site tidy.

#### LIGHTING

› Poor natural light or artificial lighting

prevent workers from seeing hazards clearly.

#### HYGIENE

 > Unhygienic smoko/lunch room and washing facilities pose a health risk and depress staff.

#### **BAD PRACTICE**

 Tools left on machines and chemicals in open containers can lead to serious injuries.

Here are some tips for keeping your site in good shape:

#### STORAGE

 Adequate and convenient space for materials and tools.

> Where possible, have a layout plan for materials and order supplies only when needed.

Clearly mark of work and storage areas and secure at night.

> Use racks when storing lengths of pipe or timber.

> Where pallets are used, do not stack too high.

#### WORK ENVIRONMENT

Facilities should be clean and up-todate.

 > Special cleaning staff or adequate time during working hours, training and cleaning equipment for workers.
 > Let workers know what their

housekeeping responsibilities are.

Use easy to clean materials.
 Lighting should be well distril

 Lighting should be well distributed and practical use of natural daylight.

#### WASTE MANAGEMENT

Appropriate waste removal facilities to prevent congestion and disorder.

Convenient containers for scrap and waste.

> Hammer in protruding nails and wire from scrap materials.

- > Use industrial vacuum cleaners to remove light dust and dirt.
- Where practicable and safe, dampen floors first when sweeping light dust, rather than sweeping dry.
- Install splash guards and drip pans.
- › Clean up waste as you go.

### MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT

 Keep tools tidy in the tool room, on the rack or bench, or when not in use.
 Inspect first aid and fire control equipment regularly.

#### **DISCUSSION POINTS**

Spend a few minutes going over any daily housekeeping activities you could do to limit hazards on your site.

www.sitesafe.org.nz

0800 SITE SAFE (748 372) New Zealand already has one of the highest minimum wages in Contents the world; and from next year, more than 200,000 Kiwi workers will benefit from an extra \$48 a week in the biggest boost to the minimum wage in its history. The cost of doing business becomes more challenging as wage increases are introduced. Small business owners will be pressured into reconsidering their staffing needs. Employsure understands the importance of New ew

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### Wages, a big cost. Employees, a bigger asset

Zealand already has one of the highest minimum wages in Contents the world; and from next year, more than 200,000 Kiwi workers will benefit from an extra \$48 a week in the biggest boost to the minimum wage in its history. The cost of doing business becomes more challenging as wage increases are introduced. Small business owners will be pressured into reconsidering their staffing needs. Employsure understands the importance of employees and how a great team, or lack of one, can make or break your business. So we've carefully put together this e-guide to help you save on costs without compromising on your biggest asset: your employees.

### Minimum wage increase

Effective 1 April 2019, the minimum wage is mandatory to be paid to an employee irrespective of the hours worked or job responsibilities. The argument for and against the minimum wage, and what rate it should be set at is still heavily debated to this day. If employers pay at the current minimum wage rates, they should start forecasting the increase to their wages bill, and increase in pay only from 1 April 2019. Adult Minimum Wage – \$17.70 Per Hour. Starting-Out Wage – \$14.16 Per Hour. Training Minimum Wage – \$14.16 Per Hour.

### Who does the minimum wage apply to?

Minimum wage rates apply to all employees aged 16 years and older who are full-time, part-time, fixedterm, casual, and work from home. The minimum wage standard applies to employees who are paid an hourly wage and salary, and most employees who earn a commission or piece rates. There are employees who are exempt from the standards of the Minimum Wage Act 1983. They include: • employees under 16 years (but they are still entitled to other minimum employment rights) • some disabled employees who hold an exemption permit from the minimum wage • inmates of a charitable institution • prisoners working in custody under the Corrections • apprentices who are under: the Maori Housing Amendment Act 1938, the New Zealand Railways Corporation Act 1981, the Defence Act

Adult Minimum Wage -	Starting Cot Wage -	Training Minimum Wage -
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1971, the Post Office Act 1959, the State Services Act 1962, or under any other Act.

Retaining your best staff under financial pressure Providing flexible working arrangements is almost twice as popular in retaining staff than a salary increase. The recent

increase in minimum wage from \$16.50 an hour to \$17.70 is the biggest boost to New Zealand's minimum wage in its history. Small business owners who employ staff on minimum wage will have to increase wages accordingly. This may prove to be a bit of a dilemma for employers as they may have less financial resources to reward their best staff.

This places additional strain on the budgets of many employers, making it near impossible to promote their best staff. With promotions out of the equation, how can employers retain their best staff?

Pocket friendly methods: Employee reward and recognition is a powerful tool in retaining employees. It moves employees from being pay check motivated, to finding purpose and drive in becoming active contributors to the growth of your business.

In a recent survey, Employsure clients were invited to share their views on the best methods to retain employees. Below are the most common and successful methods:

- Flexible working arrangements 38%
- Pay increases and bonuses 20%
- Training 16%
- Social events 2%
- Promotions 2%
- Improving health and safety 1%

### **Other Methods:**

According to recruiting experts Hays,

### Wages, a big cost. Employees, a bigger asset

voluntary staff turnover has risen in 23% of organisations in New Zealand within a year. The evidence suggests that it is getting increasingly challenging for employers to retain staff. If you're looking to retain and engage staff beyond the typical retention rates, these 5 handy tips can help.

**1. Ensure work is challenging:** Set goals for employees — when people know that they have a purpose at work and goals to achieve, they not only tend to stay longer, they also try their hardest at work.

2. Invest in professional development: Keep your staff engaged and motivate them to achieve personal development goals. Guide them and learn about their journey and make sure that they know that there is a path and direction for them. **3. Promote internally:** Internal promotions will maintain a high performer's desire and need to succeed continually, which ultimately benefits the business.

**4. Progress and performance reviews:** Regular catch ups are a helpful tool in letting your employees know that they are cared for and appreciated. It also provides a chance for employers to provide feedback and learn about the challenges that your employees are facing.

**5. Rewarding a job well done:** A basic human need. Everyone likes to feel appreciated and have their hard work acknowledged. So a simple thank you, for a job well done, can go a long way.

#### Staff Happiness

This element cannot be reiterated enough. It is absolutely essential that employers value their staff and realise that the business cannot grow with an unhappy team. There are many ways to ensure staff happiness.

For starters, ensure that your staff is comfortable in their place of work. This includes both tangible and intangible comfort. From peace of mind (knowing that they have the right support) to physical comfort (like a conducive, safe and comfortable work environment). Even little gestures can go a long way towards boosting staff morale, such as providing occasional food and drinks. Most importantly, employers should keep in mind that a happy team will be motivated to play their part in pushing a business forward.



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### Reviving a mould-making method from the past

ou may remember an article from October last year that took you on an Indiana Jones fibrous plastering journey with Steve and Carlene. Well having discovered a treasure-trove of old models and cases, it seemed only logical to make some moulds. And therein lay the dilemma. Silicone rubber is so damn expensive that short of winning Lotto, making a whole swag of moulds for minimal casts just seemed a bit extravagant. Enter Bryce - who had recently faced a similar dilemma where just a few casts were required with only a model and no mould. He fished back in his memory banks and remembered seeing very old gelatine moulds when he was a young fella and hearing old plasterers talking about them back in the day. (Dates have been removed to keep you guessing just how far back we're talking!)

Bryce got googling, found some recipes, watched some You Tube, and figured it couldn't be that difficult to bring back a technique from yesteryear.



*Pic 1. Bryce's special recipe on a post-it note on top of the container of glycerine.* 

### Things that Bryce learnt along the way:

• The internet is a mine of information but the recipes probably don't replicate exactly what old fibrous plaster manufacturers would have done.

• Honey makes the gelatine mixture taste really good! (A whole new twist on gummy bears.)

- The gelatine mixture can be used over and over again. Simply cut it up and melt in a saucepan over heat, and run it through a sieve into old ice-cream containers. (But it needs to be kept in the fridge or it will go mouldy.)
- The moulds seem to only be good for a few casts. They are easy to tear and seem to be affected by the plaster's hydration process.

Armed with this information, Bryce and Janeen came to Wellington to share the fibrous love with Steve and Carlene. They experimented on a couple of models and cases that Steve had acquired from Hanmer and repaired in anticipation of moulding. After some trial and error, here is what the curious fibrous troupe discovered:

• The addition of honey may be a modern interpretation of the traditional recipe. It could even be a red-herring with the natural sugars in honey acting as a retarder to the face of the plaster. When the cast is released from the mould, the face is easily damaged and is chalky to the touch (although when fully cured there appears to be no detrimental effect to the strength or hardness of the face).

• The heat generated during the hydration process can start to melt the face of the mould and intricate detail can be lost (or lose crispness).

 Generous application of release agent on the model and case is necessary

 especially for large and intricate models as the suction between the model, gelatine mould and case is impressive.

• It is important to seal the joint between the case and the base of the model with plenty of clay. The smallest of leaks has the ability to turn into a steady flow of the liquid gelatine mixture. Similarly, being on-hand with plenty of clay to block-up the pour/ air holes on the top of the case once the gelatine has reached their levels is imperative. (As is keeping the pressure on the clay as the pressure generated inside the case has the potential to "blow" the clay off and like a volcano, a molten flow of gelatine will erupt!)



*Pic 2. The two old masters at work pouring the gelatine mixture.* 



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# Reviving a mould-making method from the past

### continued...



Pic 3. Close-up of the detail on the gelatine mould.



Pic 4. First cast

After a fun weekend of trial and error, the team spent some time pawing through a collection of old books including:

- Plastering Plain and Decorative (William Millar 1897)
- Clay Modelling and Plaster Casting (Paul N Hasluck 1905)
- Solid and Fibrous Plastering (W Verrall 1957)

There were a number of references to gelatine moulding but no recipe (damnit)! There were some explanations that confirmed many of the observations and challenges faced but not necessarily answers. And reading text from the late 1800s/early 1900s provied a few challenges in itself.

So if there are any old fibrous plasterers, bucket chemists or just plain clever buggers out there who want to join this latest fibrous plastering quest to bring back an mould-making method from the past, get in touch. The lads are keen to crack this one and add it as a new chapter to the Fibrous Plaster Apprentice's text book that has recently been reviewed and republished.

### Check out www.awcinz.org.nz for information on

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President	.Gabriel Ataya	.021 937 966	g.ataya@licensed.nz
Vice President	.Stuart Phelps	021 716 310	.stuart@taurangaplasterers.co.nz

### Regions:

Auckland	Gabriel Ataya	021 937 966	g.ataya@licensed.nz
Waikato	.Mike Dutton	027 8390331	
Lower North Island	.Hedda Oosterhoff	021 270 1599	hedda@tr-interiorsystems.co.nz
South Island	Chris Hughes	027 662 8097	chris.hughes@hushinteriors.co.nz
Bay of Plenty	.Stuart Phelps	021 716 310	stuart@taurangaplasterers.co.nz

### Technical:

Plasterboard	Peter Lucas	021 857 673	peterlucas1982@gmail.com
Ceilings	Nick Molcisi	09 636 5110	nick.molcisi@rondo.com.au
Fibrous Plaster	Pauline Sutton	0274879918	pauline.Sutton@bcito.org.nz
Partitioning	Andrew Clemmet	027 2861 240	AndrewC@potters.co.nz
Fibre Cement	Singh Kamboj	0212799538	singh.kamboj@jameshardie.co.nz

### Manufacturers:

Plasterboard	Peter Collins		peterc@gib.co.nz
Ceilings	John Keen	021 963 033	john.keen@usgboral.com
Fibrous Plaster	Terry McKain		tmckain@xtra.co.nz
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