



To see news about the campaign as it is announced, click on the **BackCare European Week homepage** at www.backpain.org/hwbw.htm

This campaign is financially supported by the **European Agency for Safety and Health**. Visit their **European week homepage** for news about events across Europe at www.osha.eu.int/ew2000



European week starts on 16 October Campaign update 1

The TUC, the Forum of Private Business and BackCare, the national organisation for healthy backs are running a major joint campaign this autumn to prevent back strain in small firms, by offering small businesses access to a range of experts over a dedicated telephone help line.

Small firms in Britain are losing about 1.2 million working days and over £100 million a year because of back strain. The impact on a small firm of losing a key member of staff for weeks at a time could be catastrophic.

The three social partners have won funding from the European Agency for Safety and Health to help small firms prevent back strain, as part of the European Week for Health and Safety at Work this October, which coincides with BackCare week, from 16 October to 22 October.

Freephone number: 08000 32 00 44

From 16 October to 20 October, we are providing a national freephone telephone information line between 9am and 9pm so that small firms and their employees can contact the experts and find out what can be done to prevent and treat back strain at work.

The telephone number is 08000 32 00 44 and calls to that number will be free. Every caller will receive a copy of a specially produced campaign booklet, a booklet from the HSE on best practice in prevention, and the BackCare guide to healthy backs. They will also have the opportunity



to be contacted by an expert who can inform them about prevention, treatment and the law.

Experts will be provided by:

- **System Concepts** (ergonomic experts who can advise on how to design work and the workplace to prevent bad backs);
- **Sypol International** (health and safety consultants who can advise on legal responsibilities and good practice);
- the **British Chiropractors Association**;
- the **Chartered Society of Physiotherapy**; and
- **Irwin Mitchell** (personal injury lawyers who can advise on the law and possible damages claims)

Survey

The Forum of Private Business are currently conducting a face-to-face survey of 1500 small firm members to identify the extent of back problems, where people go for advice and the current state of knowledge about prevention. A report of the survey is being drawn up and will be published in October, just ahead of the launch of the Week.

Free posters and leaflets

Education posters about preventing back strain are currently being designed. The campaign will see 100,000 distributed to small firms (including the Forum of Private Business' 25,000 members and through trade unions). Some of the TUC/BackCare posters from last year's Health and Safety Week are still available, free from the TUC.

Order now! E-mail your request for campaign materials to otudor@tuc.org.uk, stating how many copies of the 1999 leaflet, 1999 poster and 2000 poster you require. Or phone Liz Wood on 020 7467 1250.

In addition, you can obtain copies of BackCare's Back Care for Work and Home from 16 Elmtree Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 8ST, tel: 020 8977 5474, fax: 020 8943 5318 or e-mail: back_pain@compuserve.com

Web sites

The TUC's website address is www.tuc.org.uk

European week of health and safety at work

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BackCare's website address is www.backpain.org

The Forum of Private Business' website is at www.fpb.co.uk