

Linda to keep us fit

MEET Linda Gilbert, CALM's new health and fitness co-ordinator.

Linda is a Bachelor of Physical Education and forms part of the Risk Management section of the Human Resources branch.

She will be working with regional and district staff throughout Western Australia to raise fitness levels and encourage people to enjoy a healthy lifestyle.

Linda has made her mark already with Swan region where she worked part-time on a 12-month program, addressing low levels of fitness, the physical demands of CALM work, and stress.

Results of the program showed an overall improvement in coronary heart disease risk factors, an increase in physical fitness, decrease in percentage of body fat and

lower blood pressure.

Work practices were modified to support and reinforce a healthy work environment.

Job guidelines now specifically allow time for stretching and warming up before tasks involving heavy physical work.

The program paid particular attention to firefighters so food supplied during bush fires has been improved to provide balanced nutritional meals.

Minimum levels of physical fitness, based on task analysis of firefighting, have been recommended and encouraged among front line firefighters.

Initially, it is likely Linda will concentrate on regions and districts throughout the South West, building on the work begun at the 10 health and fitness seminars held in

1992-93.

Linda says that 540 staff took part in these seminars, many of whom reported positive results in their general health and fitness.

Beginning with May CALM NEWS, Linda will have a regular column that will cover nutrition, flexibility and strengthening exercises, skin cancer prevention, back care, smoking, and stress management. The emphasis will be on enjoying a new, healthy lifestyle.

"Finding a physical activity that's fun for the individual is the key. If you don't enjoy it, chances are you'll give up sooner," Linda says.

"For the same reason, food should be enjoyable to eat, and I can help with this, too."

Staff will not have to wait for Linda to visit their branch, region or district — they can contact her by phone on (09) 334 0397 or fax (09) 334 0478.

• *Story and photo by Verna Costello*



Linda Gilbert.



Photo by

