

SAFE AT WORK WORKER INFORMATION



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WORK
SAFE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this presentation is to explain your rights and responsibilities on the job and the expectations the Ontario Health and Safety Act (OHSA) expects from the employer, supervisor and you

INTRODUCTION

- **Everyone in the workplace, has different but important duties to keep the workplace safe. Because employers have the most authority in the workplace, they have the greatest responsibility but it's important for your own safety that you understand everyone's health and safety duties, including yours.**
- **Preventing injuries and illnesses at work starts here, with the things you learn. One of our duties under the OHSA is to give you specific information and instructions about how to stay safe on the job. What you learn from this program will help you start to understand those instructions. We hope you will use what you learn here every day of your working life.**

EVERYONE HAS A ROLE IN SAFETY

- A new job is a chance for a fresh start. You're learning new skills and meeting new people. But every job has hazards, no matter how safe it looks.
- The number of people in Ontario who suffer a work-related illness or injury each year would fill the seats of a dozen big hockey arenas.

QUIZZ

- From the list below, who do you think is more likely to get hurt or sick on the job?
- New and young workers
- Experienced workers

Explain why you think so.



HOW OHSA WORKS

- The OHSA is a set of laws that spells out the duties of employers, supervisors and the rights and duties of workers.
- There are different Regulations that are attached to the OHSA, containing detailed laws about how to make the workplace safe in specific situations.
- Several regulations explain what is needed to work safely with chemicals and other hazardous materials. This includes training, warning labels on products and information sheets.
- There are regulations for different types of workplaces, such as construction projects, health care facilities, industrial establishments and mines.
- There are inspectors from the Ministry of Labour who make sure the laws are followed and may issue orders or lay charges if they aren't.
- The whole point of the OHSA and Regulations is to keep workers from getting hurt or sick on the job.
- If a person is convicted of breaking the law, there are penalties such as fines or time in prison.

DUTIES

- **The OHSA gives everyone in the workplace duties. They are connected to the level of authority each person has. To sort out all the duties in a workplace, the OHSA breaks them down to three main levels of authority:**
- the employer (who is in charge of everyone)
- the supervisor
- the worker (you).
- To which of these three people do you think the OHSA gives the most duties?
- The Employer
- The Supervisor
- The Employee

Explain your reasoning

Employer Duties

Here are some of the things the OHSA says every employer has to do as part of their job:

- Make sure workers know about hazards and dangers in the workplace and how to work safely.
- Make sure every supervisor knows how to take care of health and safety on the job.
- Create health and safety policies and procedures for the workplace.
- Make sure everyone knows and follows the health and safety procedures.
- Make sure workers wear and use the right protective equipment.
- Do everything reasonable to keep workers from getting hurt or sick on the job.

SUPERVISORS' DUTIES

- Here are some things the supervisor has to do as part of their job:
- Tell workers about hazards and dangers in the workplace and show them how to work safely.
- Make sure workers follow the law and the workplace health and safety policies and procedures.
- Make sure workers wear and use the right protective equipment.
- Do everything reasonable to keep workers from getting hurt or sick on the job.

YOUR DUTIES

Every worker has to do as part of their job:

- Follow the law and the workplace health and safety policies and procedures.
- Always wear or use the protective equipment that the employer requires.
- Work and act in a way that won't hurt the company or any other worker.
- Report any hazard you find in the workplace to the supervisor.

QUIZZ

- Suppose you have been asked to do something that you don't know very much about. What should your employer and your supervisor do to make sure you are able to do it safely? Explain.
- **The Act says that your supervisor and your employer have to “take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for your protection.” That means they have to do everything that is reasonable to protect you on the job.**

YOUR RIGHTS

- Your employer has the responsibility to make the workplace as safe as possible and to tell you about any hazards in the work you do. Your supervisor has the same duty. They also have to make sure you know how to avoid those dangers and work safely. **You have the right under the OHSA to be told about the hazards in the work you do and to be instructed on how to do your work safely.**
- If someone asks you to do work that you don't know enough about, your employer and supervisor are responsible for making sure you know how to do the work safely. That's why you have the right to speak up and ask questions – even if you are shy or unsure. People can get hurt on the job if they don't have the right information and training.
- You should never have to worry that you will get into trouble for asking questions or reporting a problem. **It's against the law for your employer or your supervisor to punish you in any way for doing what the OHSA says or for asking your employer or supervisor to do what the OHSA expects them to do. This is called a "reprisal." It's even against the law for your supervisor or employer to *threaten to punish or fire you for doing these things.***
- You also have a right to refuse to do unsafe work if you have reason to believe it puts you or a fellow worker in danger. We will look at this right and your protection from reprisals in more detail later.

ANOTHER QUIZZ

Before we move on to Step 2 of the program, here is a short quiz on the material we have just covered.

- The number of people in Ontario who suffer a work-related illness or injury each year would fill the seats of a dozen big hockey arenas. **TRUE or FALSE?**
- **TRUE**
- New workers are less likely to get hurt on the job than people who have been on the job longer. **TRUE or FALSE?**
- **FALSE 2**
- The Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations tell everyone from the employer to the newest worker how to make the workplace safer. **TRUE or FALSE?**
- **TRUE**
- The OHSA puts the greatest responsibility on the employer to make sure no one gets hurt or sick on the job. **TRUE or FALSE?**
- **TRUE**
- It's against the law for my employer to fire or punish me for doing what the OHSA says. **TRUE or FALSE?**
- **TRUE**

ABOUT HAZARDS

- Some people say that what you don't know can't hurt you. That's not true at work. On some jobs, what you don't know can kill you. **A hazard is anything in the workplace that could hurt you or the people you work with.**
- All of us have heard about a worker or group of workers who were killed on the job. We have heard of workers falling from heights, getting caught in equipment or being electrocuted and burned. Unfortunately, this kind of event happens not once or twice but *dozens of times each year in Ontario.*
- **There is a hazard at the root of every work-related death, injury or sickness. A hazard can take many forms. Sometimes more than one hazard can combine to make an even bigger hazard. You need to know about the hazards in your workplace *before you start working.***
- Think about the people you know. Do you know someone who has been hurt or killed at work? What was the hazard at the root of it? How did it affect you? How did it affect their family? Make some notes about your story.

COMMON WORKPLACE HAZARDS

- Here are some of the most common hazards in Ontario workplaces:
- **Repeating the same movements over and over, especially if you are in an awkward position or you use a lot of force. Think of someone who bends down all day, or someone who lifts heavy things over and over again, especially above the shoulders or below the knees.**
- **Slipping, tripping or falling. Think of something as simple as spilled coffee on the floor, a cluttered work area, or a raised platform with no guardrails.**
- **Working near motorized vehicles. Think of being hit by a dump truck that is backing up on a construction site... or someone getting hit by a forklift truck in a warehouse or on a loading dock.**
- **Using or working near machinery. Over the years, many workers have been killed or seriously injured by the equipment they operated.**
- **Workplace violence. It can happen in many workplaces such as to a gas station attendant working alone at night, or to a health care worker or a home care worker in those settings.**

QUIZZ

- Can you think of any other common workplace hazards – especially ones in your own job? Here are a couple of possible examples. Try to list a few others.
- Loud noise (Hearing loss)
- No lighting (Can't see hazards)
- An extension cord laying on the floor to reach a computer cord (tripping)
- Machine guard left off due to routine maintenance work
- Typing all day long (repetitive strain motion)
- **You also need to think about less visible hazards related to your work – things like chemicals, fumes, and toxic dust. Germs and viruses in labs and healthcare workplaces can make you sick.**
- **Some of these hazards can make you very sick. Sometimes they make you sick right away; other times you don't know that you are sick until months or even years later. That's why it's important to know about these hazards now.**

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT?

- It's the **employer's** duty to make sure that the supervisor knows enough and has enough experience and training to keep workers safe and healthy while they work.
- It's the **employer's** and supervisor's duty to inform workers of health and safety hazards.
- It's the **worker's** duty to report hazards they know of to the supervisor or employer as soon as possible so they can fix it.
- Employers, supervisors and workers work together to make the workplace safer.
- Here are four important questions about your job that you need to know the answers to. If you don't know, ask your supervisor:
- **What are the hazards of this job?**
- **Is there any special training needed for this job?**
- **Do I have the right protective equipment for this job?**
- **If I have any questions about safety, who do I ask?**

OTHER QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Think of other health and safety questions you should ask? Here are a couple of examples.
- How do I report an injury?
- What do I do in an emergency?

Try listing a few others.

- Where is the nearest fire exit?
- How do I avoid back and neck strains?
- Who is our emergency first aid person?

PROTECTING FROM HAZARDS

- There are many ways that we can protect you from workplace hazards. The best way is to get rid of or eliminate the hazard completely. A good example is replacing a toxic cleaning chemical with one that is non-toxic.
- If the hazard can't be eliminated, we can try to reduce the hazard. This can be done by reducing how much of the hazard you are exposed to. An example of this is turning up the ventilation system in an office, or putting a barrier around a dangerous piece of equipment. These are called "engineering controls."
- Another way to reduce hazards is to reduce how long or how often you come in contact with the hazard. This can be done by arranging the work differently so that you are not exposed as long. These are called "administrative or work practice controls."
- If the hazard still exists after trying to control it through elimination, engineering controls and administrative or work practice controls, your employer may require you to use protective equipment and/or protective devices.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- The OHSA says that one of your duties as a worker is always to wear or use the protective equipment that your employer requires.
- You may think that a hardhat, safety glasses, steel-toed boots or some other protective clothing or equipment are uncomfortable or slow you down. But if the OHSA or your employer says you have to wear or use these things to do the work, you have to.
- Some of the machinery in your workplace may have a guard. The guard protects you from coming in contact with a moving part. If your employer or one of the OHS Regulations says that the guard has to be used, it has to be used. **The OHSA says that you must never remove or disable any protective device that is required. If the device has to come off for any reason, you should not use the equipment without a replacement device. Taking shortcuts by removing guards is unsafe – and it's against the law.**
- The OHSA says you have to make sure you don't use any equipment or machine in a way that could hurt you or any other worker. You also can't act or behave in a way that could hurt you or anyone else. That means no playing games, pranks or acting in other ways that could hurt someone.

FINDING OUT ABOUT HAZARDS

- There are other ways you can find out about hazards in your workplace. Your employer may have some of the workplace health and safety procedures in writing. These procedures are about the work you do and the machines and equipment you use. Your employer has to make sure that you know and understand them when you start work. Your employer is also responsible for making sure the procedures are followed by everyone.
- **The law says every worker has to have information and training about chemicals or hazardous materials in the workplace. The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS 2015 or Global Harmonization System - GHS) Regulation says that you need to receive information and instruction on how to use, store and get rid of hazardous materials safely. This information is available on warning labels and information sheets.**
- **Operate equipment safely: One way to get information on the safe use of machinery is from the operator's manual. It tells you about hazards and has instructions on how to use the equipment safely. Your employer should make sure anyone can check the manual if they need information. If there is no manual available for the equipment you are using, you should ask your supervisor for information on how to operate the equipment safely.**
- **Another important way that you can learn about hazards is through training. Sometimes your employer will give you the training at your workplace; sometimes you will be sent somewhere else for training. Your employer also has to tell you how and where to get first aid, and what to do in an emergency.**
- **In a safe and healthy workplace, everyone knows about hazards. If you see a hazard on the job or a "close call", report it to your supervisor or employer right away. That way, someone who knows how to fix it can deal with it so that no one gets hurt. "Prevention Starts Here" when everyone knows about hazards.**

NEXT QUIZZ

- The Occupational Health and Safety Act says that you have the right to know about hazards in your workplace. **True or False**
- **TRUE**
- If a hazard can make you sick, you will always start to feel sick right away. **True or False**
- **FALSE**
- To keep from getting hurt on the job, you need to find out about the hazards while you're working. **True or False**
- **FALSE**
- If you have any doubts about the safety of the work you're doing, you should keep those doubts to yourself. **True or False**
- **FALSE**
- If you see a hazard while you're working, you should report it to your supervisor or employer right away. **True or False**
- **TRUE**

WHAT OHSA COVERS

ORGANIZATION	PURPOSE
• Ministry of Labour	Enforces the OHSA
• Health and Safety Ontario	Health and safety training
• Workplace Safety and Insurance Board	Insurance benefits for injured or sick workers
• Workers Health and Safety Centre	Occupational health and safety consulting, training, products and services
• Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers	Medical clinics for injured or sick workers

CONTACT INFORMATION

- **Call the Ministry of Labour at 1-877-202-0008**
- Report critical injuries, fatalities, work refusals anytime.
- Workplace health and safety information, weekdays 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Emergency? Always call 911 immediately.
- Find out more:
www.ontario.ca/healthandsafetyatwork