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## *Managing Safety from the Supervisor's Perspective*



### **Understanding the Four Cornerstones of Due Diligence**

April 2008

## **Managing Safety from the Supervisor's Perspective**

This infolip is designed to help supervisors manage their responsibilities for the health and safety of their workers.



A supervisor is “a person who instructs, directs, and controls workers in the performance of their duties” (Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, Part 1).

Supervisors may also include owners, managers, superintendents, charge-hands, lead hands, foremen, department heads, journeymen and trainers.

Remember: if you as a supervisor fail to take action or delay taking action, you not only condone the unsafe activity, but you also encourage it.

# 1 Safety Management Systems

Safety is just another business system, like production, quality, inventory control, accounting, or payroll. We must therefore manage safety like a business system that needs to be designed, developed, implemented and evaluated to provide effectiveness and value.

This safety management system must work within the framework of **due diligence (3)**. It does not rely on a person's memory that certain things need to get done; the "system that is in place" ensures that things get done. Consequently, an effective safety management system is not dependent on any one individual to operate. The system becomes self-sufficient.

## Evaluating a Safety Management System

Whether you are developing a new safety management system or evaluating an existing one, ask yourself some key questions:

- ✓ How do you verify the education and training of workers?
- ✓ How do you communicate safety-related issues to workers?
- ✓ Do you regularly update your safe work procedures?
- ✓ Do you have a process to identify, analyze and control risks?
- ✓ Do you have a process to learn from accident investigations?
- ✓ Can you demonstrate a safety management system exists?
- ✓ Can you demonstrate efforts to reduce workplace risks?

## Documentation and Record Keeping

**Communication (4)** and record keeping play key roles in the successful completion of supervisory duties. A question that often arises is, "How much needs to be written down?" Critical decisions and how you came to the decisions need to be documented. Other, less-critical decisions may not be as obvious; yet some also should be documented.

It is recommended that Supervisors make one purposeful entry per day such as "Checked a log book...checked on a driver loading...what was good or bad...what I did to correct the system". In assessing whether or not the test of due diligence has been met, what matters most is the quality of the documentation, not the quantity.

## Closing the Loop

An effective safety management system should alert the supervisor to both positive and negative situations. If the last record made about a worker or activity is negative, it implies that the situation continues to be negative. If you find a negative, correct it and record the correction. Go back later and, using a **Workplace Evaluation (9)**, verify that it remains a positive. If you find during a later visit that the situation has become negative again, there may be a weakness in the safety management system that needs fixing. It may be necessary to make modifications to the safety management system, such as increasing frequency/intensity of site visits.

## The Supervisor: a Safety Manager

Managing safety as a supervisor means to change the unsafe behaviour of workers through:

- ✓ **Intervention (14)**
- ✓ Positive reinforcement
- ✓ Observing and providing feedback
- ✓ Evaluating safety performance

"That which gets measured and rewarded, gets done."  
Dr. Dan Pederson

# 1 Safety Management Systems

## 2 Duties of Employers, Workers, Supervisors

### General Duties of Employers

Employers are responsible for the following:

- ✎ To ensure the health and safety of their workers and other workers on the worksite
- ✎ To ensure that workers are aware of all known or reasonably foreseeable hazards
- ✎ To establish OHS policies and programs
- ✎ To remedy hazards (both physical and human)
- ✎ To provide information, instruction, training and supervision
- ✎ To provide coordination on multi-employer worksites (e.g., put in place a written agreement with prime contractor, ensure that activities are coordinated, establish/maintain a system to ensure compliance of all employers on site)

### General Duties of Workers

Workers are responsible for the following:

- ✎ Take reasonable care to protect themselves and others
- ✎ Comply with the *Workers Compensation Act*, the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, orders, etc.
- ✎ Follow established safe work procedures
- ✎ Follow established procedures
- ✎ Ensure their safety or safety of others is not impaired
- ✎ Report any unsafe conditions or unsafe acts

### General Duties of Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for the following:

- ✎ Ensure the health and safety of their workers
- ✎ Be knowledgeable about the Act, the Regulation and the Guidelines
- ✎ Know the work process, the hazards involved and effective control measures for the hazards
- ✎ Ensure their workers are made aware of all hazards known or reasonably foreseeable
- ✎ Ensure workers comply with the Act, the Regulation, etc.

Note that the skills you require to be an effective supervisor are the same skills required for **due diligence(3)**. Therefore, as a supervisor, you may require extensive training to fulfill your responsibilities under the principles of due diligence.

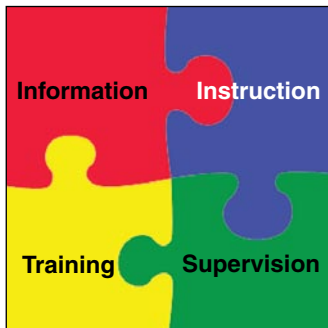
### Effective and Diligent Supervisor

Effective supervision is a planned and purposeful activity. These activities make up a systematic plan for the supervisor to follow.

- ✎ Provide/verify workers' training before undertaking new tasks
- ✎ Verify that workers' performance meets expectations for safety
- ✎ Actively seek out emerging hazards
- ✎ Record one daily entry in a Supervisor's journal or log
- ✎ Correct improper work activities and conditions
- ✎ Positively reinforce safe/proper work performance
- ✎ Ensure documentation is clear, appropriate, and frequent enough to show a systematic approach

### 3 The Four Cornerstones of Due Diligence

"Due diligence" is defined as taking all reasonable care to prevent the occurrence of an incident or event. Due diligence in safety management can be described as "a system approach that provides information, instruction, training, supervision, verification of knowledge, and correction of physical and human hazards."



The Cornerstones of Due Diligence

#### Basic Elements of Due Diligence: Information and Instruction (Education)

This part of the system ensures that workers receive the appropriate level of education they need to work safely. Education routinely takes place in classroom-type group settings, crew talks, one-on-one safety reviews, or through written or verbal directions.

#### Basic Elements of Due Diligence: Training

Training typically takes place on the job assigned. A training system includes training standards, selection of trainers, supervision during training, verification of training, and demonstrated competencies when training is completed.

#### Basic Elements of Due Diligence: Supervision

This part of the system ensures:

- ✎ Verification of training and education
- ✎ Identification and correction of hazards
- ✎ Direct observation of workers
- ✎ Correcting unsafe or unwanted behaviour
- ✎ Direction and instruction of workers
- ✎ Response to worker questions & concerns
- ✎ Documentation

As a supervisor, you must have a clear understanding of your **responsibilities (2)** within the safety management system. A mistaken belief that due diligence is merely "CYA" may distract you from meeting critical legal obligations to ensure the health and safety of your workers.

On a regular basis, evaluate existing **safety management systems (1)** for their effectiveness.

## 4 Communication

Good communication skills are essential for you as a supervisor to pass on information, to provide training and feedback, to gain understanding, to correct mistakes or unsafe behaviour, and to coordinate with other departments, projects and groups. Communication can be written, verbal, visual, or through body language, by demonstrating, or simply by leading by example. Recognize different learning styles and choose your communication tools accordingly.

Learning Style	Learning Process	Communication Tools
Visual Learner	See it to believe it	Graphics, videos, notes, illustrations, charts
Auditory Learner	Hear it, remember it	Verbal instructions, lecture, discussions
Tactual Learner	Touch it, remember it	Role play, hands on, models, computers

### Communication: A Two-Way Street

It takes two or more individuals to communicate: a speaker and a listener, or a demonstrator and an observer. Listening and observing are as important for a good supervisor as are speaking and demonstrating. In fact, nothing encourages communication more than good listening skills.

**Listening Skills:** Listen only. Don't plan your response while listening. Don't interrupt. Clarify and confirm to ensure understanding. Don't be judgmental through body language.

**Speaking Skills:** Speak slowly and clearly. Express your thoughts clearly. Make eye contact. Be respectful and tactful. Confirm understanding of your message

### Communication Styles

**Written:** Used for procedures, instructions, SOPs etc. Easy to deliver. This style can be posted or left with reader, but requires literacy and is difficult to maintain and update.

**Verbal:** Used for one-on-one, crew meetings, phone etc. This style most common, easy to do, and gives a personal touch. This approach can lead to confusion and inconsistencies.

**Visual:** This style commonly uses pictures/graphics/videos in training. It can be easy to deliver and left with trainee. This style takes time to prepare.

**Demonstration:** This style uses hands-on, on-the-job training, typically at work areas for very specific learning. This style can overcome challenges, but is time-consuming, requires a skilled trainer, and can be difficult in noisy environments.

Recognize that everyone learns differently. Therefore, effective communication often requires a combination of different styles. In the end, you must always verify workers' clear understanding of the idea or concept you were trying to communicate.



## 5 New and Young Workers

### We've all been new or young workers at some point:

- *Do you remember your first day on the job?*
- *How much did you know about safety then?*
- *Did your supervisor help you to be more comfortable in this new situation?*

Young workers need your special attention because they are at more risk of injury than their older or more experienced counterparts. The injury rate for young workers (15-24 years) is significantly higher than the injury rate for workers of all ages. Young male workers are at an even greater risk of getting injured on the job.

Especially alarming is the fact that over half of workplace accidents involving young workers occur during the first six months on the job. And it is not just young workers who are getting hurt.



Starting a new or different job can be risky for workers of any age, including older, experienced workers.

### Who are Young and New Workers?

Young workers are under 25 years of age. New workers can be any age and are:

- 🔪 New to the workplace
- 🔪 Facing hazards that have changed or developed while they were at work or absent from work
- 🔪 In a new workplace or location that has different hazards than the old one

### Factors Contributing to Higher Incident Rates

New and young workers often have very little work experience, and they are often not aware of the hazards they face and how to protect themselves. Most believe that nothing will ever happen to them. While they are often eager to impress and reluctant to ask questions, these workers often lack adequate education, training, and supervision in ways that are effective for them.

### Increased Training and Supervision

Increase education and training of new and young workers with the **“Four Steps to Reasonable Care” (7)** program. Having increased awareness and more time to become familiar with the task at hand provides new and young workers with much needed confidence in their work. Typically, new workers are under scrutiny and intense supervision for only 1–3 weeks, and then are expected to produce. However, **due diligence (3)** suggests that intense supervision should be provided for a much longer period (i.e., the first six months in the new job).

## 5 New and Young Workers



## 6 Setting the Tone for New and Young Workers

### Encourage the Right Behaviour

Employers must build a **Safety Management System (1)** to protect new and young workers. In general, young males are willing to take risks for rewards (monetary or otherwise). Young workers try to impress by staying out of the way, being low maintenance, and providing high productivity. Employers sometimes unknowingly encourage risky behaviour by favouring silent, low-maintenance go-getters who don't ask a lot of questions.

### Ask Questions

Frequently ask new and young workers questions like "What would you do if...?" These questions allow you to measure whether a worker understands and is able to apply the knowledge to the process discussed. Use good **communication skills (4)**.

By questioning a worker about process and expectations, you are measuring the worker's competency, and this demonstrates **due diligence (3)**. Record relevant questions and responses in the worker's training records or your own records. However, questions such as "Do you understand the material or process?" simply generate "Yes/No" responses and cannot be considered measures of your due diligence.

### Record Keeping

It is the **employer's responsibility (2)** to have an effective record keeping system. Employers need to prove that critical information was discussed and learned. On-site supervision records must support this process.

### Training Young Workers

Training for new and young workers must be customized and delivered in a manner that respects their learning styles and attention spans. Vary the delivery methods of important information to compensate for short attention spans. Research indicates that it takes 28 consecutive days of "exposure" for a new habit to continue. Your role as a supervisor is clear—you need to continuously reinforce new habits to change behaviours.



Understand that adults and young workers learn in different ways, and be flexible in meeting their needs. Use new, creative, and innovative ways to teach. Remember, learning is easiest when the instructor keeps the information interesting.



## 7 Reasonable Care: the Four-Step Process

### Step 1: Prepare the New/Young Worker

- ✎ Explain the job in detail and the reasons for doing it
- ✎ Actively solicit questions from the worker
- ✎ Take time to ensure full understanding
- ✎ Tailor the communication and **training style (6)** to best meet the learner's needs
- ✎ Don't overly rely on **written communication (4)**.

Effective training is a step-by-step process by which the trainer covers all necessary information in a planned and controlled way. This often takes considerable time but pays off through better understanding and fewer errors later on. Effective trainers look for ways to break the information down into smaller pieces so as not to overload the trainee. This is called the "building block" approach. Look for building blocks or activities within the assigned job, and allow workers to apply those new skills in the new job. Then let them build new skills a few at a time. Soon they will be ready to take in new knowledge again.



### Step 2: Demonstrate and Describe

- ✎ Go through a work procedure in a way that will answer as many questions the worker may (or may not) ask
- ✎ Have worker demonstrate procedure until proficient on "why" things need to be done in certain ways. Don't use terminology without defining it. Ask questions to ensure that the learner understands the objectives of the task and the safe work procedures involved.

### Step 3: Observe on the Job

- ✎ Observe worker performing job at normal speed
- ✎ Correct improper behaviour, and positively reinforce success
- ✎ Tell the worker where to get help in your absence

New and young workers may be intimidated by persons with authority. This added stress may lessen the likelihood of these workers asking questions. Give the worker the name of a backup person they can ask if you are not available.

### Step 4: Check Progress:

- ✎ Make unscheduled visits
- ✎ Ask the worker specific questions pertinent to the task
- ✎ Maintain records of your visits and what you saw—both good and bad

Use your unannounced progress checks to **ask questions (6)** like "What would you do?", and use these opportunities to educate.

## 8 Accident/Incident Analysis

Most employers analyze only serious or major injuries, minor injuries, and property damage. However, employers and supervisors could benefit equally from analysis into substandard conditions and near-misses to prevent serious incidents. The employer and supervisors need to encourage open **communication (4)** and promote the reporting of substandard behaviour and conditions so appropriate analysis can be undertaken.

Incident analysis should never focus on the individual. It should focus on the situation and the conditions that allowed the incident to happen. Remain objective—don't assume carelessness is a cause of accidents or that contradictory information indicates falsehood. Consider the entire job—don't just look for one basic cause. Look at accidents in three time phases: events leading up to the accident, the accident, and the time immediately afterward.

### Reasons for Analysis

- Prevent future incidents
- Improve morale and reduce human suffering
- Identify, correct & eliminate substandard conditions, acts, and procedures
- Reduce costs/down time
- Regulatory requirement

### Benefits of Analysis

Accident/incident analysis will result in a safer and more productive work environment. Workers will have more control over their work environment, which will improve the work atmosphere, increase productivity and lower absenteeism.

### Hurdles to Incident Reporting

Often, workers are not aware of the reporting system, or do not realize that what happened is a reportable incident, e.g., an **MSI (10)** or near-miss. Workers don't want to look stupid or make waves for fear of reprisals.

### Analysis System

Use a system to analyze reported incidents to ensure a consistent approach that includes the five principles of effective analysis (below). Effective incident analysis requires that analysts are trained. To be effective, the analysis should focus on the safety system breakdowns that allowed the incident to occur. Most causes of incidents can be traced back to failures within the safety management systems that deal with the **four cornerstones of due diligence (3)**: information, instruction, training, and/or supervision. Periodically evaluate the incident analysis system to ensure its effectiveness.

### Five Principles of Effective Analysis

- 📌 Accidents are rooted in safety system failures
- 📌 All accidents, or at least their outcomes, are preventable
- 📌 Analysis must be aimed at identifying root causes
- 📌 Proper analysis techniques are applied
- 📌 Training is provided to analysts

### Analysis Procedure

- 📌 Prepare for the analysis by following the analysis system
- 📌 Visit the scene; make accurate records (photos, drawings)
- 📌 Conduct interviews
- 📌 Evaluate evidence, draw conclusions
- 📌 Write report with recommendations    📌 Conduct follow-up

## 8 Accident/Incident Analysis

## 9 Workplace Evaluations

A workplace evaluation is a planned measurement of worksite behaviour and conditions against expectations. It is an effective tool to evaluate the effectiveness of the safety management system. To be beneficial, deficiencies found during workplace evaluations need to be traced back to their root cause, which normally exists within the safety management system. Failure to establish root causes will allow the deficiency to arise repeatedly, causing frustration and duplication of work.

Ensure that the workplace evaluation system contains standards, accountability, appropriate frequency, accountability, and follow-up. The best type of follow-up is to 1) make the necessary changes and 2) re-evaluate later to make sure the changes effectively addressed the original issue.

### Evaluating Worksites

Most accidents are caused by **substandard acts**; yet traditionally, most evaluations focus on **substandard conditions**. This may occur because conditions are easier to evaluate and take less time, and checklists can more easily be used during the evaluation.

### Evaluating Unsafe Acts

Evaluating unsafe acts can be time-consuming, as it may involve observing and questioning workers and other supervisors. It may even involve asking workers to demonstrate specific activities. Compare your findings to the safe work procedures and records of past activities, and adjust current safe work procedures accordingly. Ensure that you **communicate (4)** changes to all involved.

Behaviour happens for reasons. To change behaviour, you must change the motivators for it. The most powerful messages workers get in guiding their behaviour are often unspoken and unintended.

### Taking Action When Observing Unsafe Activities

- 📌 Safely stop work/activity—do not take action condoning it
- 📌 Identify worker, supervisor, employer
- 📌 Determine instructions given to worker, and by whom
- 📌 Determine why work was done in this manner
- 📌 Determine education/training
- 📌 Check education/training record
- 📌 Notify supervisor, employer
- 📌 Find root cause for unsafe act
- 📌 Take corrective action
- 📌 **Document (3)** the process

#### Seven Steps to Effective Evaluations

- Prepare/plan
- Make observations
- Record observations
- Determine root causes
- Make recommendations and/or take action
- Follow up (2 stages)
- Perform trend analysis

## 10 MSI Risk Assessment

Musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs) are injuries/disorders of the muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, nerves, blood vessels or related soft tissue in any body part involved in movement.

MSI Signs	Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Redness</li><li>• Swelling</li><li>• Difficulty in movement</li><li>• Skin colour change</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pain</li><li>• Joint stiffness</li><li>• Tight muscles</li><li>• Tingling feeling</li><li>• Numbness</li></ul>

MSIs are often called:

- ✎ Strains (muscles)
- ✎ Sprains (ligaments)
- ✎ Inflammation (“-itis”)
- ✎ Nerve impingement

MSIs are characterized by vague signs/symptoms combined with a gradual progression. Often, MSIs are not associated with a direct cause or a specific event, and multiple factors contribute to the injury.

### Seven Steps to Assessing MSI Risks

**Step 1: Consultation:** Consult with the joint committee or worker safety representative throughout the process. During risk assessments, consult with workers who do the work and have experienced signs and symptoms.

**Step 2: Worker Education:** Educate workers on signs and symptoms of MSI, potential health effects of MSI (early intervention), and applicable MSI risk factors in their jobs.

**Step 3: Risk Identification:** Identify factors in the workplace that may expose workers to MSI.

**Step 4: Risk Assessment:** There are basically two ways to look at a job station when assessing risk. Break down the job into steps, and analyze the body movements during each step, or break down the body into parts (head and neck, upper torso, arms and hands, trunk and legs) and watch the body part throughout the various steps of the job. Consider these risk factors:

- ✎ Characteristics of objects
- ✎ Environmental conditions
- ✎ Organization/sequence of work
- ✎ PPE or other equipment
- ✎ Local contact stress
- ✎ Layout and condition of workplace
- ✎ Duration
- ✎ Forces
- ✎ Vibration
- ✎ Repetition
- ✎ Work postures

**Step 5: Risk Control:** Minimize/eliminate the risk of MSI. Consider engineering and administrative controls over PPE.

**Step 6: Worker Training:** Train workers on:

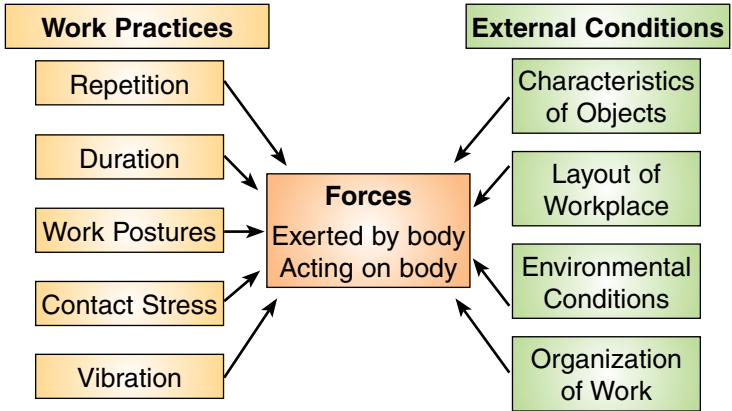
- ✎ How to use the risk control measures implemented
- ✎ New procedures intended to reduce MSI risks

**Step 7: Evaluation:**

- ✎ Evaluate the effectiveness of control efforts:
  - Track and compare number of injuries, signs and symptoms (before and after)
  - Interview workers
  - Reduction in risk factors (numbers and severity)
- ✎ Complete a program review:
  - Review old objectives
  - Set new objectives as needed

# 11 Reducing MSI Risks

Minimizing MSI risk factors means minimizing forces that are **exerted by the body**, and forces **acting on the body**. This can be achieved through mechanical aids such as lifts, hoists, carts, ramps, etc., proper lifting techniques, warm-up and stretching exercises, reduced size and weight of loads, and appropriate tools, handles, and gloves.



## Options to Minimize Risks: Repetition & Duration

- ✎ Automate work processes
- ✎ Provide job rotations
- ✎ Schedule task variety
- ✎ Vary work schedules

## Options to Minimize Risks: Work Postures

- ✎ Get closer to work; eliminate obstructions; improve access
- ✎ Use tools to extend reach
- ✎ Use devices (turntables, rollers, conveyors, electronic eyes) to bring items closer
- ✎ Change height, position, or orientation of the work item, equipment, tools or worker
- ✎ Improve sight lines and lighting
- ✎ Implement stretching and activity breaks

Be aware of **awkward positions (12)**.

## Options to Minimize Risks: Contact Stress/Vibration

Contact stress is localized, prolonged pressure on body parts, which may restrict blood flow and result in tissue damage.

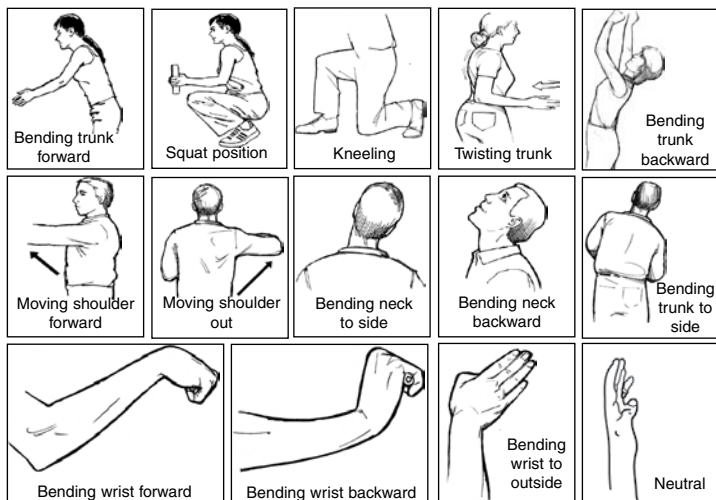
- ✎ Distribute pressure over a wider area
- ✎ Redesign tool handles
- ✎ Pad surfaces with softer material
- ✎ Round surfaces and avoid sharp corners
- ✎ Use gloves if force is not an issue
- ✎ Avoid using hand or knee for striking objects



## 12 Other MSI Considerations and Strategies

### Individual Risk Factors

MSI risks can vary considerably between two or more individuals doing the same work. Attributes such as age, physical size and fitness, lifestyle issues and individual preferences for doing the same job in a different way can increase or decrease MSI risks. **Good communication (4)** with workers will identify risks before they become problems.



### Options to Minimize Risks: Awkward Postures

These movements place the body in “non-neutral” positions.

This can increase forces exerted on the body. The farther the deviation is from “neutral,” the greater the MSI risk.

### Options to Minimize Risks: Static Postures

These are postures held for more than 60 seconds. They increase the risk of injury as they reduce nerve activity and blood supply to working muscles.

### Options to Minimize Risks: Grip Forces

- Use power grip, not pinch grip
- Handle or grip span affects the amount of force required
- Gloves may help or hinder grip

### Options to Minimize Risks: Multiple Risk Factors

Take steps to avoid bad combinations such as:

- Awkward posture and excessive force
- High repetition and excessive force
- Static posture and excessive force
- Cold temperatures and vibration





## 13 Substance Abuse

Substance abuse—misusing alcohol, illegal drugs, and/or prescription medication—has deadly effects in the workplace. According to the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, over 600,000 Canadians are dependent on alcohol and nearly 200,000 on illicit drugs.

Psychoactive substances act on the central nervous system and can change the way we think, act, and feel. While impacts on employees' memories may not dramatically affect their performance at work, impaired judgment and motor skills can have devastating effects on the impaired individual and/or their co-workers.

### Contributors to Substance Abuse

- High stress
- Low job satisfaction
- Long hours or irregular shifts
- Fatigue
- Repetitious duties
- Periods of inactivity or boredom
- Isolation
- Remote or irregular supervision

### Tangible Impacts of Substance Abuse

- Absenteeism/sick time
- Damage to equipment/machinery
- Decreased productivity/quality
- Health insurance claims/disability payments
- Increased incidents/accidents
- Internal theft
- Unnecessary overtime

### Intangible Impacts of Substance Abuse

- Increased supervisory and managerial attention
- Interpersonal friction within work force and grievances
- Employee morale
- Worker turnover
- Civil liabilities





# 14 Dealing with Substance Abuse

## Employer Duties

Employers must ensure the safety of their workers and any other workers at the workplace. They must prohibit workers known to be affected by alcohol, drugs, or other substances from remaining at work. To effectively address substance abuse in the workplace, an employer should also develop a substance abuse program that:

- ✎ Describes company policy and procedures
- ✎ Supports communication to stakeholders
- ✎ Provides management/supervisor education and training
- ✎ Gives access to resources
- ✎ Periodically evaluates the substance abuse program for effectiveness

### Company Policy must be:

- ✎ General in scope
- ✎ Simple in language
- ✎ Reasonable in application
- ✎ Clear in consequences
- ✎ Supported by key stakeholders

## Role of the Supervisor

Acquire working knowledge of your employer's policies and procedures that deal with substance abuse, and communicate these to workers. Follow accepted procedures, and be fair and consistent; become familiar with available resources. Avoid enabling, but rather use intervention where required.

## Supervisory Intervention

Intervention is making someone accountable for their actions; it addresses problems. If you suspect substance abuse by an employee, observe the job performance and behaviour. You are not expected to recognize specific effects of substances. Simply assess acceptable performance and behaviour. Take action and document departures from these mutually understood expectations. Intervene as soon as possible, or in the event of impairment on the job, intervene immediately. If possible, seek the assistance of another supervisor or manager.

### Intervention

Intervention is the most effective method in dealing with substance abuse but requires training.

## Enabling

- ✎ Any act/omission that allows a person to avoid the consequences of their behaviour.
- ✎ If you enable a worker, you may assume responsibility and accountability for that worker's actions. Enabling ultimately encourages the unwanted behavior and prolongs and may worsen the issue.
- ✎ Takes many forms such as covering up, ignoring, or giving someone a break.
- ✎ It is done with the best of intentions.
- ✎ Many different people can engage in it.

## Supervisor Training

This is crucial for the substance abuse program's success. Training should focus on identification of job performance and behaviour issues as well as effective ways to intervene.

Claims Management is the defined and consistent method used to manage a WorkSafeBC claim. It consists of 4 steps:

- Initial reporting procedures
- Incident/accident investigation
- Monitoring
- Return-to-work program

## Step 1: Initial Reporting

### Worker's Report of Injury or Occupational Disease

Workers must report all workplace injuries. The worker's report becomes part of the employer's records and will be used as part of the accident investigation.

### Employer's Report of Injury or Occupational Disease

Employers must report to WorkSafeBC every injury to a worker that is or is claimed to arise out of and in the course of employment. This must be completed within three days. Failure to report an injury is an offence under the *Workers Compensation Act*. Injuries that must be reported include:

- Worker loses consciousness following the injury
- Worker is transported, or directed by a First Aid attendant or other representative of the employer, to a hospital or other place of medical treatment, or is recommended by such person to go to such place
- The injury is one that obviously requires medical treatment
- Worker states an intention to seek medical treatment
- Worker has received medical treatment for the injury
- Worker is unable or claims to be unable by reason of the injury to return to his or her usual job function on any working day subsequent to the day of injury
- The injury or accident resulted or is claimed to have resulted in the breakage of an artificial member, eyeglasses, dentures, or a hearing aid
- Worker or WorkSafeBC has requested that an employer's report be sent to WorkSafeBC

### Physician's First Report

When a worker receives treatment from a physician for a work-related injury or disease, the physician then forwards that information to WorkSafeBC. This report does not relieve the worker's responsibility to report to the employer.

## Step 2: Investigation

While an **accident analysis (8)** looks to identify deficiencies in the safety management system, a claims investigation should confirm the accuracy of the claim or identify possible inconsistencies ("red flags"). Consider these questions:

- Is there evidence of horseplay or unauthorized activities?
- Could the injuries be the result of an assault?
- Are the timing and the nature of the injuries consistent?
- Is there possible delayed reporting & conflicting evidence?
- Could outside activities have contributed to the injuries?
- Do injuries and treatments match details?

### Employers' Advisers Office

([www.labour.gov.bc.ca/eao](http://www.labour.gov.bc.ca/eao))

- Services for Employers:
  - Assistance
  - Advice
  - Representation
  - Educational Seminars
- Services are included in Employers' premiums
- Only WorkSafeBC issues and matters
- Independent of WorkSafeBC

## Step 3: Monitoring the Claim

You should make up a file that contains all the details and **communication (4)** about the claim. This will help you remember information and details about the circumstances of the claim at a later stage, and will demonstrate your **due diligence (3)**.

Keep in touch with the worker, and contact WorkSafeBC on a regular basis. The timing for follow-up depends largely on the nature of the injury.

## Step 4: Return-to-Work Program

A return-to-work program is intended to minimize the impact of a compensable injury on a worker. Suitable employment, consistent with the worker's skills, abilities and impairment is made available to the worker as early in the claim as possible. This is important since statistics show that workers who are off duty for 12 weeks or longer have a 50% chance or less of ever returning to work again.

### Suitable Employment Needs to be:

- Productive
- Available
- Medically approved
- Not harmful
- Not slowing recovery
- Not demeaning

## Developing a Return-to-Work Program

For a successful Return-to-Work program, you need to:

- Receive senior management commitment
- Develop policy and tools
- Inventory jobs that may be appropriate to injured workers
- Complete physical abilities forms when needed (doctor)
- Identify worker's restrictions
- Be able to modify duties/workstation
- Get the co-operation of all parties (e.g., worker, union, doctor, WorkSafeBC, and supervisor)
- Be creative and accommodating

## Rehabilitation Options

Rehabilitation options can vary depending on the workforce/number of jobs of the employer and the condition of the worker. Some of the options are:

- Same employer—same job
- Same employer—modified/new job
- Same industry—related job
- Any industry, any job using existing skills
- Retraining

## **WorkSafeBC Additional Resources**

Find the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, associated policies and guidelines, and excerpts/summaries of the *Workers Compensation Act* on WorkSafeBC.com.

Some publications may also be available in print. Call (604) 232-9704 or toll-free 1-866-319-9704.

The WorkSafeBC Prevention Information Line can answer questions about workplace health and safety, worker and employer responsibilities, and reporting a workplace accident or incident. The Prevention Information Line accepts anonymous calls.

Call (604) 276-3100 in the Lower Mainland, or toll-free 1-888-621-7233 (621-SAFE) in the rest of B.C.

To find out information on young workers' safety needs, go to [www.raiseyourhand.com](http://www.raiseyourhand.com).

To view relevant WorkSafeBC Hazard Alerts, go to WorkSafeBC.com, click "Safety at Work," and then under "Quick Links," click "Hazard Alert Posters."