

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

# Safety in the Workplace

### Key Expectations

- Describe the causes and types of common injuries in the workplace.
- Recognize employee and employer responsibilities for safe working conditions.
- Understand legislation that regulates safety in the workplace.
- Know how to report unsafe working conditions and work-related injuries.
- Recognize the benefits of workers' compensation.

### Key Terms

designated substances  
Workplace Hazardous Materials  
Information System (WHMIS)  
Material Safety Data Sheets  
(MSDS)  
Joint Health and Safety  
Committee (JHSC)  
Occupational Health and  
Safety Act  
Internal Responsibility  
System (IRS)  
workers' compensation  
Workplace Safety and  
Insurance Board



## TYPES OF HAZARDS

**S**afety in the workplace should ensure good health among employees as well as freedom from injury. Most injuries on the job are caused by a combination of unsafe actions and conditions. Some literature on workplace safety discusses accidents, meaning undesired events that result in physical harm, but many safety officials favour the word “injury” in place of “accident.” The word injury suggests that events are controllable. Safety officials believe that all injuries are preventable and, therefore, controllable.

According to the Workers Health and Safety Centre and the Industrial Accident Prevention Association, most injuries among new workers happen within the first year of work. In 1994, more than 18 000 workers aged 15-16 years old were reported injured while on the job and seven young workers were killed. In 1993, more than 100 young workers lost an eye, an arm, or a leg.

Following are the major types of hazards.

### Work-Related Hazards and Injuries

Hazards	Injuries
<p><i>Physical</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electricity</li> <li>• Radiation</li> <li>• Noise and vibration strain</li> <li>• Heat and cold</li> <li>• Dust and fibres</li> <li>• Exposed moving machinery parts</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cluttered aisles</li> <li>• Improper use of equipment, poorly maintained equipment</li> <li>• Entry into confined spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe burns</li> <li>• Severe burns, radiation sickness</li> <li>• Loss of or damage to hearing, muscle strain</li> <li>• Heat, exhaustion, hypothermia</li> <li>• Breathing difficulties</li> <li>• Injury to or loss of hands, fingers, eyes, and other limbs</li> <li>• Slips, trips, and falls</li> <li>• Electrocution</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gas poisoning, suffocation, drowning</li> </ul>
<p><i>Biological</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unclean restrooms</li> <li>• Improperly stored medical waste, tainted blood</li> <li>• Mould, fungus, and mildew</li> <li>• Bacteria and viruses</li> <li>• Plants (e.g. poison ivy)</li> <li>• Insect stings reaction</li> <li>• Animal bites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to lungs</li> <li>• Cuts, scrapes, skin punctures</li> <li>• Rashes, abrasions</li> <li>• Nausea, food poisoning</li> <li>• Skin sores, rashes</li> <li>• Inflammation, poisoning, allergic reaction</li> <li>• Broken skin, rabies</li> </ul>
<p><i>Chemical</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liquids (e.g. office supplies, cleaning products, paint, acids)</li> <li>• Vapours and fumes (e.g. welding fumes, chlorine)</li> <li>• Gases (e.g. oxygen, acetylene, propane, carbon monoxide)</li> <li>• Flammable, combustible, and explosive materials (e.g. dynamite, gasoline)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe burns, scalds, blisters</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poisoning</li> <li>• Gas poisoning</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe burns, injury to or loss of limbs, hands</li> </ul>

## Preventing Physical Hazards

Most injuries both on and off the job are caused by slips, trips, and falls. Slips usually occur as a result of hidden steps, slippery surfaces (such as waxed, wet, or greasy floors), and loose flooring or carpeting. Trips are caused by clutter and obstacles in hallways or on stairs, improperly placed or secured electrical cords, dropped objects that are not picked up (such as a pencil or machine part), and poorly placed furniture. Falls are caused by improper use of ladders, makeshift ladders (such as a stack of boxes) or stools, improper use of safety equipment, and unstable platforms. All of these injuries can be foreseen and prevented. Employers should ensure that all repairs are completed, anti-slip materials are used, spills are cleaned up, and warning signs are used for wet floors or hidden steps. Employees should be alert and safety-conscious.

Employers are also responsible for ensuring that routine safety checks of equipment are conducted. Employees should use safety guards if required, wear protective gear designed to shield against injury, and follow all procedures as outlined in the operator's manual.

Fatalities and serious injuries occur too often when maintenance work on equipment or machinery is being done and the power is inadvertently turned on or valves and pipes are opened before the work is complete. The power needs to be turned off and locked to prevent the machine from being turned on prematurely. Workers should be provided with appropriate locks for this purpose, and they must also be trained in proper safety procedures.

Confined spaces include walk-in freezers, storerooms, sewers, culverts, vats, and silos. When working in a confined space, consider the following:

- Can someone outside open a line that lets in liquid, gas, or any other material by accident?
- Is there sufficient oxygen inside?
- Could there be poisonous gas?
- Could a machine accidentally start up and cause an injury?
- Can you get out safely?

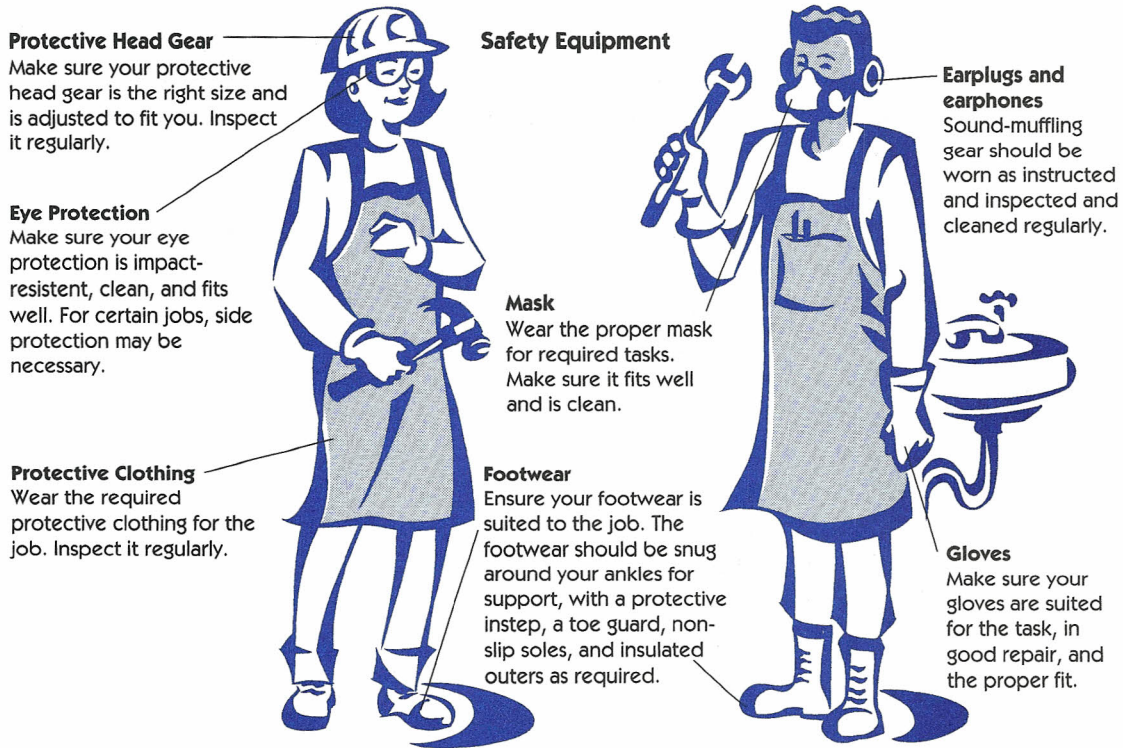
## Preventing Biological Hazards

Work areas should be kept clean at all times. Scrubbing with disinfectants and other anti-bacterial products, particularly in washrooms and kitchens, is essential. Most biological hazards are unseen. Workers are also responsible for maintaining personal hygiene. They should use antibacterial soap to wash their hands after using the washroom. When workers are ill at the workplace, they should wash their hands often and cover their mouth when sneezing or coughing to prevent spreading germs to co-workers. If a job requires protective equipment, a worker should wear it when necessary. This includes such things as masks, gloves, and safety eyeglasses or shields. If a worker is allergic to a particular substance, the person should carry medication at all times.

### Activity 1

#### Brainstorming Occupations Requiring Safety Equipment

With a partner, brainstorm occupations that require protective equipment and make a list of the safety equipment these occupations might require. Then make an extensive list by combining the class's results. Study the following illustration of safety equipment. Can you add to your list?



## Preventing Chemical Hazards

Not all chemical hazards are visible—some toxic substances cannot be seen or smelled. Chemicals and other hazardous materials must be used and stored correctly.

There are eleven extremely hazardous materials with their own strict rules governing their use that are called **designated substances** by the Ontario Ministry of Labour. Each of the designated substances has its own regulation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (asbestos has two regulations). The regulations were set up to legally control the exposure of workers to a substance. The designated substances are:

- asbestos
- asbestos on construction sites
- silica
- isocyanates
- benzene
- arsenic
- ethylene oxide
- lead
- coke oven emissions
- acrylonitrile
- mercury
- vinyl chloride

In Canada, the **Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)** is designed to protect Canadians and provide workers and employers with vital information about hazardous materials used in the workplace to promote safe working practices. Information is conveyed through labels, material safety data sheets, and worker training programs.

The WHMIS symbols are shown below.

WORKPLACE HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INFORMATION SYSTEM	
	CLASS A — Compressed gas
	CLASS B — Flammable and combustible material, including the following divisions: 1 Flammable gas      4 Flammable solid 2 Flammable liquid    5 Flammable aerosol 3 Combustible liquid   6 Reactive flammable material
	CLASS C — Oxidizing material
	CLASS D — Poisonous and infectious material, including: 1 Materials causing immediate and serious toxic effects Subdivision A: A very toxic material Subdivision B: Toxic material
	2 Materials causing other toxic effects Subdivision A: A very toxic material Subdivision B: Toxic material
	3 Biohazardous infectious materials
	CLASS E — Corrosive material
	CLASS F — Dangerously reactive material

**Activity 2**

**Learning About School Hazards**

Teachers must be WHMIS-trained. Invite your chief custodian and the staff person responsible for WHMIS training to talk to your class. Find out what chemicals are used in schools and how a person would be treated in case of an emergency while using them.

**Material Safety Data Sheets**

Employers must keep **Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)** of all hazardous products used in the workplace where workers can find them and read them. An MSDS tells you about the hazards of a product, how to use it safely, and what to do if there is an emergency. Following are some important questions to ask yourself when you read an MSDS.

1. Do you have the right MSDS for the product you are working with?
2. Is the MSDS up to date? (They are supposed to be updated every three years.)
3. Can the product burn or explode?
4. Is the chemical product unstable? If so, under what conditions?
5. Is the chemical product reactive with other chemicals? Which ones?
6. What harmful health effects are possible?
7. Do you need to wear protective clothing when handling the product? What equipment?
8. Are there special handling precautions?
9. Do you know what to do in case of a fire, explosion, spill, or leak?
10. Do you know who the first aid person is in your workplace?
11. Do you know where the emergency response equipment is and how to use it?

You should know all the answers to these questions. Your supervisor should show you how to use the product safely. Never begin to work with a hazardous product until all of the questions suggested here, and any others you can think of, have been answered in a way that you understand.

Use the following safety questionnaire to evaluate how safe you are at a part-time job, at a volunteer position, or at a work experience placement. On a sheet of paper, write the number of each statement and respond with Never, Occasionally, Almost Always, or Always.

### Activity 3

#### Assessing Your Safety Practices

#### Safety Questionnaire

1. I take time to calm down before acting when I am emotional.
2. I seek information about safe practices and procedures.
3. I focus on my tasks without distraction.
4. I remind others of safe practices.
5. I use equipment for its intended purpose only.
6. I do not cover up other people's unsafe practices.
7. I use the appropriate safety equipment.
8. I inspect my work area for safety hazards.
9. I lift items properly in order to prevent back injuries.
10. I turn off and disconnect from its electrical source all equipment before repairing or adjusting it.
11. I put items in their proper places after using them.

In small groups, compare your answers. Discuss how you can change your Never and Occasionally responses into Almost Always or Always responses.



You may wish to file a copy of your completed questionnaire and your resolutions for improving your safety habits in your portfolio.

**Activity 4****Comparing Common Causes of Injury**

Compare the list of the Top Five Causes of Injury to the Five Most Common Injuries to young workers. List the reasons why you think these injuries are common to young workers and give solutions for preventing these injuries.

**Top Five Causes of Injury to Young Workers**

1. Slips and falls
2. Overexertion
3. Struck by, or against, an object
4. Bodily reaction (toxic effects from chemicals)
5. Burns

**Five Most Common Injuries to Young Workers**

1. Sprains and strains (including back injuries)
2. Soft tissue injuries (cuts, punctures, bruises)
3. Bone fractures
4. Inflammation of the joints
5. Burns or scalds

**INJURY PREVENTION**

Preventing injury is the most important aspect of safety in the workplace. Injuries can be prevented in three ways: with proper safety education and training, with responsible behaviour by both employees and employers, and by reporting unsafe conditions.

During safety education and training:

- employees participate in a thorough workplace orientation conducted by the employer,
- all staff read the appropriate operation manuals carefully and learn the proper procedures,
- supervisors carefully monitor employees when they are learning how to operate new machinery,
- employees attend safety seminars and workshops conducted or organized by the employer,
- all staff take courses in general safety for the workplace. Some or all employees may receive training in first aid (emergency medical care or treatment),
- employees learn emergency action plans developed by their employer; for example, what to do in case of a fire, chemical hazard, or robbery.

Responsible employee behaviour is important, since injuries are often caused by individuals who conduct themselves improperly, take shortcuts, or are physically unfit. An employee who practises safe work habits will gain respect from his or her co-workers and the community. Co-workers prefer to work with a responsible person because he or she helps to reduce the risk of injury. Employers also seek responsible employees because they help prevent injuries, absenteeism, and reduced productivity, and they encourage other workers to stay in the company because of safe working practices.

Employers must also act responsibly by providing a complete safety program that includes training, safety equipment, a safe environment (for example, providing fire extinguishers, fire alarms, sprinkler systems, emergency exits, and first-aid kits), and properly maintained and serviced equipment. Every employer's safety program should include a procedure for reporting unsafe conditions. Many workplaces have established **Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSC)** that include members of management as well as employees. These committees conduct inspections, identify hazards (potentially harmful equipment or conditions), listen to or read reports from employees, make recommendations to management, and monitor clean-up operations to ensure that hazards are eliminated. Unions often play a key role in forming and maintaining health and safety committees.

Statistics show that young people who are new to the work force are the employees most likely to be injured. People who have recently been transferred to a new job are the next group most likely to be injured.

Good safety practices can prevent injuries and can even save your life. In fact, it is the legal responsibility of every worker to practise safe work habits.

### ETHICS in action

You have been trained to observe all the safety rules at your part-time job. You enjoy working there because many of your friends also work there. You begin to notice that a close friend and colleague is taking short cuts when it comes to safety. She is not wearing her safety gear nor cleaning up spills right away. You are worried she will hurt herself or others. What do you do?



By permission of Rick Detorie and Creators Syndicate.

1. View the video *Look Around: You Have Rights* about safety and young workers by The Workplace Health and Safety Agency.
2. Answer the question sheet that accompanies the video.
3. What is the primary message you received from viewing this video?
4. Which scenario affected you the most? Why?

### Activity 5

#### Viewing a Video

### Improving Your Safety Habits

Respond to the following.

- Reflect on behaviours in your life that involve unhealthy risks.
- How can you change this behaviour?





## CASE STUDY

### After the Inferno

by Tom Fennell

Heat from the inferno warmed Katie Bernard's face as she watched the flames lick the sky near her home in Hamilton, Ontario. That night she dreamed that her mouth was full of smoke and she woke up choking. "I was scared, and got into bed with my grandmother," the brown-haired nine-year-old said last week as she walked by the mass of twisted steel and charred rubble—all that was left of Plastimet Inc. recycling plant after a four-day-long fire was finally extinguished on July 13, 1997. The massive 7400-square-metre brick warehouse in the city's north end had been filled with almost 200 tonnes of plastic auto parts, vinyl, and polyurethane foam. The spiralling plume of smoke rising from the flames blasted a toxic brew of hydrogen chloride and dioxin—a deadly carcinogen—into the air.

Before the danger was fully understood, the whole neighbourhood turned out to watch the fire when it first broke out at about 7:40 p.m. on July 9. But when it became clear that the plant was full of plastics containing polyvinyl chloride, which produces dioxin when burned, Hamilton West Conservative MPP Lillian Ross tried to get the ministry of the environment and energy to dispatch high-tech monitoring equipment to the site. When she could not reach anyone, she phoned Environment Minister Norm Sterling at his home at 2:30 a.m. The gear was finally sent and Sterling has since promised to investigate the slow response.

When the wind died down on the third day and a toxic shroud of smoke settled over the neighbourhood, residents were asked to leave voluntarily. Two days later, when the almost 600 people who had fled returned, city health officials went door-to-door warning them to wash the dioxin-laden soot off their homes and to avoid eating vegetables from their gardens. Their fears increased when Matthew Bramley, a chemist with the environmental organization Greenpeace, said he was sure a massive amount of dioxin had been released. "This has to be treated as a toxic waste site," said Bramley. "This is a disaster."

Environment and health officials continued to insist that the danger to the public had been overstated.

During the first two days of the fire, dioxin levels soared, but Bill Hunter, director of environmental health with the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth, said they quickly fell back to tolerable levels. But many people in the area say they should have been evacuated as soon as the fire started, and a week after the fire, a local lawyer launched a \$200-million class action suit against the City of Hamilton, the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth, the ministry of the environment, and Plastimet. Sterling, however, still insists the whole issue has been blown out of proportion. "I am not sure it is an environmental problem," said Sterling. "I do not feel it is an urgent issue."

It is not just homeowners who are angry. Firms located in nearby buildings were also inundated with noxious pollutants. One of the hardest hit was Ball Packaging Inc., which makes metal lids for packaging. After the fire was over, dozens of workers, some wearing masks, vacuumed the building with high-tech equipment in an attempt to erase any trace of the dioxins. But the firm says it could lose as much as \$10 million if it is unable to quickly get back into production. Said plant manager John Krenos, "Obviously, our customers are going to go after us for their losses."

While the clean-up continues, Hamilton city council wants to know who is going to pay. Plastimet owner Jack Liberman has been asked to appear before the council to explain how he intends to clean up the site. Before the blaze, city fire officials had asked Plastimet to install a new sprinkler system—but Liberman had failed to act. Now officials want to ensure that other plastic recycling plants meet safety standards.

1. Outline the impact the fire had on the families in the neighbourhood and the companies nearby.
2. Who do you think is responsible for the clean up and its cost—the City of Hamilton, the province (Ministry of Environment and Energy), or Plastimet? Give your reasons.
3. What is the position on the seriousness of the matter held by Greenpeace, the environmental officials, and the health officials?
4. What steps should be taken to avoid similar fires in other plastic-producing companies by the company, the company employees, the government, and the citizens?

## REGULATING HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

The occupational health and safety section of the Canada Labour Code outlines safety regulations for the following industries that are under federal authority.

- All airlines
- Airport
- Atomic Energy Facility Bank
- Bus company\*
- Cable company
- Courier company\*
- Crown corporations
- Federal government departments
- Feed mill
- Grain elevator
- Pipeline\*
- Railway
- Radio station
- Shipping company
- Telephone company
- Television station
- Trucking company\*

\* If it transports out-of-province

### Basic Rights in the Canada Labour Code

The three basic rights outlined in the code are:

- the right to know,
- the right to participate,
- and the right to refuse dangerous work.

The right to know means that employers must inform employees of foreseeable hazards in the workplace as well as prevention measures. Employers are also responsible for displaying the Canada Labour Code in the workplace, details of the company safety program, and other health and safety information.

The right to participate means that employees may assist in identifying health and safety issues and in resolving these issues through a health and safety committee.

The right to refuse dangerous work means that if an employee has reason to believe that a situation presents a danger to herself or himself, she or he can refuse to work without disciplinary action from the employer, providing that proper reporting procedures are followed.

Similar provincial legislation exists for other industries. This legislation was the first to deal exclusively with health and safety in Canada. Under this code, employees have the right to a safe and healthy workplace. The provinces and territories have legislation that clearly outlines workplace health and safety regulations for industries that are not under federal authority. The requirements of these health and safety acts are similar to the requirements of the Canada Labour Code.

The **Occupational Health and Safety Act** describes the rights and duties of all workplace parties—the owner, the employer, supervisors, and workers. It is built on the principal of internal responsibility called the

**Internal Responsibility System (IRS).** This system is one in which all parties share the responsibility for knowing what health and safety problems are present, and then doing something about them. Under the IRS, people do not wait to be ordered by a ministry of labour inspector to look after health and safety problems; they do it on their own. One way of doing this is through a Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC).

The idea behind the Internal Responsibility System is that when it is your life and your health that are at stake, you are likely to want to do all you can to keep your workplace as safe and healthy as possible. The success of the IRS depends on everyone doing their duty.



### Requesting Safety Information

Contact your Ministry of the Department of Labour and ask them to send copies of any safety acts and regulations in the form of brochures, posters, or other printed material concerning health and safety in the workplace.



**Complete a search on the Internet for *The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)*. The home page has direct links to hundreds of safety resources, news groups, and mailing lists. Focus on the career of your choice when using this web site and download the information that is available.**

### Attitude Counts!

You must report any injury that occurs at the workplace. Some injuries are not reported for the following reasons:

- The employer might be a friend or a family friend and might be insulted if you report an injury.
- You might be afraid the supervisor will think you cannot do the job properly.
- You might think the injury is not significant.
- You might be concerned about what your co-workers think.

If you are injured, report it. Safety measures can be put into effect and prevent others from being injured in a similar way. Even if the injury seems minor, you may require more extensive medical attention a few days after the injury occurred. Reporting the injury ensures that you will be covered by insurance and be eligible for medical or rehabilitation services, and that all legal procedures are followed.

## ENFORCING SAFETY LAWS

If the Internal Responsibility System does not solve health and safety problems in the workplace, or if the Act and Regulations are not being followed, the government will enforce both provincial and federal laws. Inspectors have the power to:

- inspect any workplace,
- investigate any potential hazardous situation and work refusal,
- order compliance with the law,
- start legal action.

Everyone in the workplace must help the inspectors and co-operate with them. Any person who does not follow the act can be fined up to \$25 000, be jailed for up to one year, or both. The individual must pay, not the company. A company can be fined up to \$500 000 for not following the Act.

**CASE STUDY****Company Guilty in Blast***by Michael Hanlon*

A Canadian construction company has pleaded guilty to a charge laid by Ontario's ministry of labour nearly a year after a supervisor was killed in a propane explosion in February, 1996. Frank Monardo, 47, of North York, Ontario, was thrown 18 metres by the blast as he was about to enter a trailer on the work site at York University's sports arena complex. The charges were laid January 31, 1997, only four days before the one-year deadline for laying such charges.

As the employer on the site, PCL Constructors Canada was fined \$150 000 under the Occupational Health and Safety Act for "failing to ensure that workers were trained or instructed in the safe use and handling of propane cylinders and propane-fuelled equipment."

"It goes to show you—a human life is only worth \$150 000," said Monardo's brother-in-law, Ron

Sturge. He claimed Monardo's family was not told it could place an impact statement before the court. "The family was not told anything about what was going on," he said.

George David Smith, a PCL superintendent, also pleaded guilty and was fined \$5000 "for failing to ensure that utility torches were not left unattended while in operation or were not used in inadequately ventilated spaces."

Charges against the constructor, PCL Constructors, and another superintendent, Michael Tiernan, were withdrawn. Since the incident at York University, PCL has introduced a propane safety training program that is in use throughout the province, said a ministry of labour spokesperson.

1. What is the deadline for laying charges?
2. Why was the company found guilty?
3. Why was George David Smith also found guilty?
4. What action does PCL now take to try and prevent a situation like this from reoccurring?

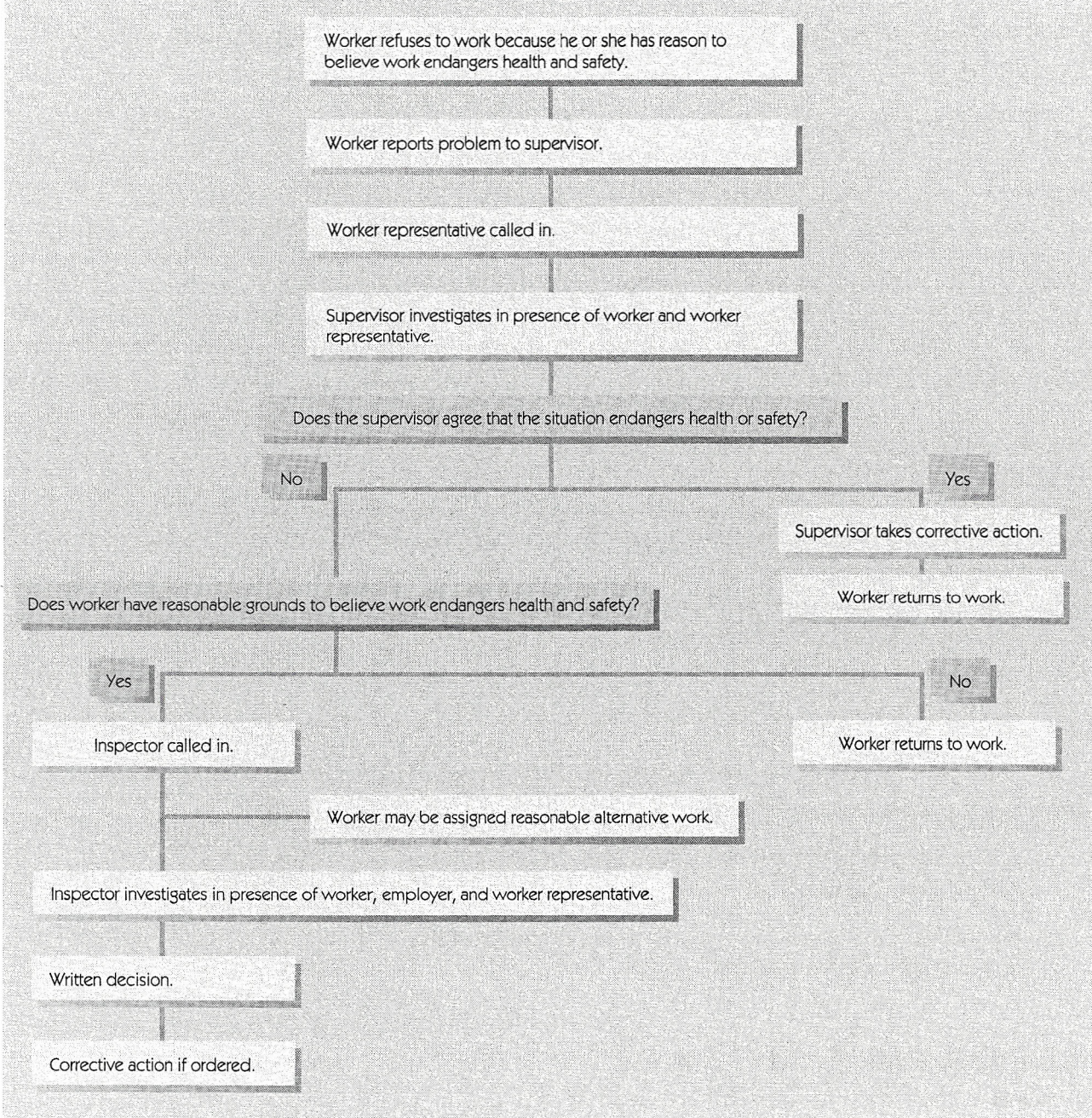
**Identifying and Evaluating Penalties**

1. What are the implications of individuals being held responsible for unsafe company practices?
2. Do you think fines are an effective means of preventing similar situations? Explain why or why not.

**REPORTING UNSAFE WORKING CONDITIONS**

Every worker must report unsafe working conditions, and the employer must respond by making the workplace safe. A worker may legally refuse to work if she or he believes that equipment, a physical condition, or another condition of the workplace presents a potential danger. Although legislated procedures for reporting unsafe conditions vary from province to province, the following procedure is typical.

**LEGAL PROCEDURE FOR UNSAFE WORK REFUSAL**



**Activity 6**

**Role-Playing Refusal to Work**

1. In groups of three or four, think of a situation in which a refusal to work may be necessary.
2. Role-play the situation, representing an employee, an employer, a co-worker, a supervisor, and a government inspector. In your role-play, find a solution for the situation and consider these questions:
  - Was the supervisor told about the danger?
  - How did the employer respond to the situation?
  - Was the co-worker knowingly working in unsafe conditions?

- Was the co-worker concerned or did he or she choose to ignore the situation?
  - Did the co-worker and employee work together to improve the situation?
3. After each group performs for the class, discuss the effectiveness of the solutions presented.

### Ensuring Your Safety

In your journal, complete the following statement.

- If I thought a work area were unsafe, I would . . .



## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

When a work-related injury or illness occurs, provincial **workers' compensation** legislation assists the employee and employer. Benefits from workers' compensation (or the **Workplace Safety and Insurance Board** in Ontario) cover the injured employee's medical costs, hospitalization, rehabilitation, and disability pension, and compensates him or her for lost income. Workers' compensation protects employers from long, expensive court cases since compensation benefits replace a worker's right to sue an employer for damages. Employers pay premiums to support the program based on the number of their employees; employees do not pay at all.

### If You Get Injured

#### The employer must . . .

- Follow the regulations of the Workers' Compensation Board or the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.
- Give first aid immediately.
- Provide emergency transportation to the doctor, hospital, or home of the injured worker if required.
- Pay the employee's full wages for the day of the injury or illness.
- Notify the Workers' Compensation Board or the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board of the injury or illness within a specific period of time using a special form.
- Offer to re-employ a seriously injured worker, perhaps in an alternative job if the damage from the injury to the employee prevents him or her from doing the original job.
- Modify the workplace to accommodate the worker's needs, if necessary.

#### The employee must . . .

- Get first aid treatment right away.
- Tell your supervisor about any injury.
- Tell your supervisor about any illness or condition that you believe happened because of work.
- Choose his or her own doctor. Once chosen, he or she may not change doctors without the permission of the Workers' Compensation Board or the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.
- Fill out and return all Workers' Compensation Board or Workplace Safety and Insurance Board forms right away. You can get the forms you need from your supervisor.

**Activity 7**

**Identifying Who Is Responsible**

From the newspaper, radio, or television reports, search for a news item outlining an occupational or industrial hazard. Copy the following chart and complete the required information as you read the report.

**News Item Report**

Hazard	Cause of the Hazard		Prevention Methods	
	Employees	Employer	Employees	Employer
<i>sample text</i>	<i>sample text</i>	<i>sample text</i>	<i>sample text</i>	<i>sample text</i>
<i>sample text</i>	<i>sample text</i>	<i>sample text</i>	<i>sample text</i>	<i>sample text</i>
<i>sample text</i>	<i>sample text</i>	<i>sample text</i>	<i>sample text</i>	<i>sample text</i>

**Activity 8**

**Researching Health and Safety Information**

1. As a class, gather and display information on health and safety policies in your area. List all possible sources of information (government departments, safety associations, Workers' Compensation Board, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, training programs and so on. Beside each, identify who will contact that source to request information. Identify who will create the display on a bulletin board or other display area in your school. You may wish to photograph the display when it is assembled.
2. Once the information has been gathered, assign someone to invite a speaker to conduct a workplace health and safety seminar for your class.



You may wish to file a written report of your involvement in organizing the health and safety display, and a photograph of the display, in your portfolio.

**Career Connection**

**Assessing Safety**

1. Use a copy of the following survey to assess safety at your part-time job or community-based learning placement. Then interview the person or committee that is responsible for safety. With your supervisor's permission, gather any brochures or other training materials your company may have that address safety issues. If your workplace has a health and safety committee or gives any safety seminars, ask if you can attend a meeting or seminar.
2. Using the information you gathered from your assessment, prepare a presentation on safety procedures at your job or placement. Highlight any protective equipment, machinery, tools, chemicals, or hygiene standards that assist you in completing tasks. Outline the safety program and list ways in which it could be improved.
3. Create a list of safety procedures for the student who will follow you at your placement.

## Safety Survey

1. a) What type of business is it?  
Office  Manufacturing  Retail  Construction  Other
- b) If manufacturing, what do they manufacture?
- c) What area do you work in? Office  Other
2. a) How many full-time employees work in the business in total?
- b) Do they have a Joint Health and Safety Committee?
- c) Identify the members who represent the workers.
3. a) Do they have a written and signed copy of the workplace health and safety policy?
- b) Do they have an emergency procedure?
- c) Is the emergency procedure written down?
- d) Did anyone explain the emergency procedure to you before you asked about it?
- e) How often do they have emergency drills?
4. a) Are you required to wear any personal protective equipment?  
What type?
- b) Do you work in any confined spaces?
- c) Do you work at heights?
5. a) Did you receive any health and safety training the first day on the job?
- b) Who did the training and what is his or her title?
- c) Do you do any lifting as part of your job?
- d) Did anyone train you in how to lift something properly?
- e) Did you receive some health and safety training before doing every new job?
- f) If not, what jobs did you do for which you did not receive any health and safety training?
6. List all the equipment/machinery you will work with. (Indicate which ones have a written work procedure.)
7. What are the major hazards identified for you so far?
8. a) What chemicals do you work with?
- b) Were any health hazards identified for you?
- c) Briefly describe the health hazards.
9. What were you told to do if you see a hazard in the workplace?
10. What health and safety information is posted in the workplace?
11. Whom do you tell if you get hurt and what is his or her responsibility in the workplace?
12. Where are the first-aid supplies kept?
  - a) Do you have first-aid training?
  - b) If you have first-aid training, did you let your boss know that you do?



You may wish to file a copy of your presentation notes and any visuals in your portfolio.



# EXPANDING YOUR LEARNING

## Analyzing Key Concepts

1. Why are safe working habits so important?
2. Which factors contribute to a safe working environment?
3. What is WHMIS?
4. Outline how legislation in your province or territory addresses health and safety in the workplace.
5. Describe what an employer must do in the event of a work-related injury or illness.
6. Describe what an employee must do in the event of unsafe working conditions.
7. How does workers' compensation or the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board help injured workers?

## Developing Employability Skills

### ACADEMIC SKILLS

1. Create a list of the ways an office worker may be injured. For each point, describe in writing how the injury may have been prevented. For example, a worker may cut a finger on a sharp object inside a drawer. The solution would be to keep drawers organized and to remove sharp objects.

### PERSONAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS

2. Your brother is 16 and is starting his first part-time job. He has a tendency to be an amusing, carefree joker. Write a letter telling him why it is important to be a safe worker.

### TEAMWORK SKILLS

3. Select a team to make a video on safety in the workplace. Write the script, coach the actors, gather props, and then tape your creation.

## Career Connection

Earning certificates in first aid and CPR are assets for any employee.

- What courses are available to you in your community?
- What organizations provide them?
- How much do they cost?
- How long are they?
- What other courses would be a valuable asset?

Create a chart of your findings.

Handwritten notes: "1st Aid", "1st Aid Training", and "Darr".

### Researching the World of Work

Locate the safety equipment supply stores in your community. Choose three pieces of protective equipment, such as safety boots, safety glasses, and protective earphones. Go to one of the stores and, for each piece of equipment, select three brands and compare each one. List the features each one claims to have. Are there standards available for each piece of equipment? If so, what are they, who sets them, and how does the consumer know about them? Develop a comparison chart and then decide which of the three brands you would buy and why for each of the pieces of equipment you selected.

### Problem-Solving Situation

You have been hired as a cook in a small, family-owned restaurant. You enjoy working there. While cooking fries one day, you are burned by the hot oil. You require medical attention and miss several days of work. You apply for workers' compensation, only to discover that your employer does not have this coverage for you. What are your legal rights in this case? What must you do to rectify the situation?

### Reflective Journal



List the possible safety risks involved in the careers that most interest you. What precautions would you take to minimize these risks?

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