



Planning a residential construction or renovation project?

DON'T FORGET TO BUILD IN SAFETY!

ARE YOU DRAWING UP PLANS TO BUILD YOUR DREAM HOME, FINISH YOUR BASEMENT, OR ADD A NEW DECK?

The Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission wants you to be aware of some simple steps you should take to ensure that your project runs smoothly and safely.

As a homeowner, you have an important role to play in reducing injuries on the job. Appropriate safety measures must be followed on the work site. Safety is a team effort, so make sure that all members of the project team work safely from the outset.

FOCUSING ON SAFETY CAN HELP KEEP YOUR PROJECT ON TRACK

While the cost of materials and labour is an important consideration, you should also strive to hire a contractor or workers who are experienced, reputable and safety-conscious.

If you hire a contractor, ask about their experience and training; ask them to provide proof of workers' compensation coverage if they have three or more total employees. Most importantly, ask them about their health and safety record.

Remember, when the project is underway, your home may be considered a workplace under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. This means that as the owner, if you have hired a contractor who employs one or more employees and if an injury occurs due to unsafe practices, it is possible that you could be charged and fined under this legislation.

Hiring safety-conscious contractors and workers will not only help protect you from liability, it will also lessen the chance of incurring costly delays associated with any injuries.

PLAN FOR SAFETY

Planning will help get any building project, big or small, off to a good start. Set aside some time with the contractor that you select to make sure that:

- The proper building permits have been obtained.
- The project complies with all zoning bylaws.
- The contractor has specific safety measures in place and maintains them as the project develops.

BE INFORMED

The WHSCC recommends that you gather detailed information on the contractors and workers you're considering hiring. Questions you should ask them include:

- How long have they been in business?
- What licenses or qualifications do they have for their particular trade?
- What education and training, including safety training, do they have?
- What is their health and safety record like?

Note:

If you are acting as your own contractor or hiring a contractor, you should ensure that proper workers' compensation is in place. This may offer you better protection against a lawsuit if an accident occurs.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Ensure that your contractor or subcontractor is registered with the WHSCC if they have three or more employees.
- Ask your contractor or subcontractor to provide you with proof that they have workers' compensation coverage.
- Ask your contractor about their health and safety program.
- Ensure that any injuries that occur during the project are reported to the Commission.

DID YOU KNOW?

The regulations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* have specific requirements that may impact on your project. For example, the regulations have definite rules for working above three metres, for working on electrical equipment or systems, and for working with power tools. The regulations also require that workers have proper protective equipment and that first aid be available should an injury occur. Ask your contractor if they are in compliance with the regulations.

For more information, and to read more about regulations associated with home building and renovations, please visit our website at www.whscc.nb.ca.

Endorsed by the Atlantic Building Supply Dealers Association.

