

HEADS UP

work smart. work safe.

**WORKSITE SURVIVAL
FOR YOUNG WORKERS**



Workers'
Compensation
Board

Alberta

Over 50 per cent of the accidents involving young workers occur during the first six months on the job

No matter what job you do, there is an element of risk and you should know how to protect yourself. It could be something as simple as knowing the emergency evacuation procedures for your office or as complicated as learning how to operate heavy duty machinery on a construction site.

In Alberta, as elsewhere, many young workers aged 15-24 are unaware of the potential hazards in their workplace. In fact, over 50 per cent of the accidents involving young workers occur during the first six months on the job. That's a statistic the Workers' Compensation Board - Alberta wants to change.

Imagine you're looking for a job and you're fortunate enough to get an interview. Chances are, you're so intent

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on impressing your potential employer you neglect to ask about workplace safety or job training. Once you've got the job, your enthusiasm and desire to do well can lead you to take on tasks you're not prepared for. This is not unusual, but the consequences can be devastating. If you're not operating in a safe environment, you're endangering yourself and your co-workers.

Your employer is responsible for providing you with a safe workplace. This means adhering to health and safety regulations, providing appropriate worksite supervision and ensuring you have the necessary equipment and training to do the job right and to do it safely.

To help make your first six months on the job, and the rest of the career safer, please read this booklet and put the suggestions into practice. You'll be glad you did.

JUST THE FACTS:

- Young workers are 1/3 more likely to be injured on the job than those over 25.
- In 1998, more than 7200 young workers in Alberta were hurt badly enough to miss work beyond the day of the accident.
- Young workers comprise 16 per cent of people who work, but young worker claims represent nearly 22 per cent of all workers' compensation claims in Alberta.
- In 1998, more than \$14 million was spent in Alberta on medical treatment, hospital stays, rehabilitation and wage replacement for young workers.
- In the first 10 months of 1999, 11 young workers were killed on the job in Alberta. That's nearly double the six young worker fatalities that occurred in all of 1998.

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RISKY BUSINESS

Some jobs are traditionally more hazardous than others to young workers, either in the number of injuries that occur or the severity of those injuries. If you work in one of the following industries, be aware of the most common causes of injuries and read further for details about how to ensure your safety.

INDUSTRY	# 1 cause of injury amongst young workers aged 15-24	#2 cause of injury amongst young workers aged 15-24
FOOD/CONVENIENCE STORES	Overexertion (i.e. lifting, pushing or pulling too much, repetitive strains)	Being struck by an object (i.e. falling, hanging or airborne tools, equipment or other materials)
MEAT PROCESSING	Being struck by an object (i.e. falling, hanging or airborne tools, equipment or other materials)	Overexertion (i.e. lifting, pushing or pulling too much, repetitive strains)
RESTAURANT/TAKE-OUT FOOD SERVICES	Coming in contact with a hot object or substance - Be aware of hot equipment and food, wear proper safety equipment and be extra cautious in crowded areas.	Being struck by an object (i.e. falling, hanging or airborne tools, equipment or other materials)
STEEL/METAL FABRICATING	Overexertion (i.e. lifting, pushing or pulling too much, repetitive strains)	Being struck by an object (i.e. falling, hanging or airborne tools, equipment or other materials)
HOTELS/MOTELS/ CONVENTION CENTRES	Falls (i.e. from stairs, ladders, structures, vehicles)	Overexertion (i.e. lifting, pushing or pulling too much, repetitive strains)
GENERAL TRUCKING	Overexertion (i.e. lifting, pushing or pulling too much, repetitive strains)	Being struck by an object (i.e. falling, hanging or airborne tools, equipment or other materials)
WOOD PRODUCTS/ MANUFACTURING	Overexertion (i.e. lifting, pushing or pulling too much, repetitive strains)	Being struck by an object (i.e. falling, hanging or airborne tools, equipment or other materials)
RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION	Being struck by an object (i.e. falling, hanging or airborne tools, equipment or other materials)	Overexertion (i.e. lifting, pushing or pulling too much, repetitive strains)
MOBILE EQUIPMENT OPERATION/ROAD CONSTRUCTION	Being struck by an object (i.e. falling, hanging or airborne tools, equipment or other materials)	Overexertion (i.e. lifting, pushing or pulling too much, repetitive strains)

As shown, some types of injuries occur more frequently than others. No matter what type of job you do, be aware of your surroundings and realize you are most at risk for the following:

- Overexertion**
 Learn how to bend and lift properly and know your limits. Use a step or a ladder if appropriate and don't attempt to move or lift something heavy alone. Back injuries are one of the most common results of overexertion. If you need help - ask for it!
- Being struck by an object**
 Falling tools, equipment that isn't steady, and other everyday work materials can be deadly. Use extra caution in crowded areas, ensure your tools and equipment are put away properly and always wear your safety gear.
- Slips, trips and falls**
 Wear comfortable, safety-approved footwear and be sure to keep walkways and floor areas clear. Watch out for uneven terrain, power cords or equipment, carpet tears and spills.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUNG WORKER SAFETY?

WCB-Alberta

P.O. Box 2415, Edmonton, AB T5J 2S5
 Phone: (780) 498-4000
 Email: youngworker@wcb.ab.ca
 Website: www.wcb.ab.ca

The WCB-Alberta has provided a substantial grant to the Job Safety Skills Society (JSSS) to help them prepare young workers to be safe workers. The JSSS offers young workers comprehensive training in personal safety, workplace safety and safety management. For more information on the Job Safety Skills Program, please contact:

Job Safety Skills Society

Phone: (780) 413-6876
 Fax: (780) 413-6877
www.jobsafetyskills.com

There are several other organizations in Alberta and elsewhere who can provide information and/or materials on workplace health, safety and prevention programs. Here's a list of the ones we think you might find most helpful:

Alberta Construction Safety Association
www.acsa-safety.org

Petroleum Industry Training Service
www.pits.ca

Alberta Hotel Safety Association
www.albertahotels.ab.ca

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
 Phone: (905) 572-2981
 Fax: (905) 572-2206
www.ccohs.ca/naosh

Alberta Municipal Health and Safety Association
www.amhsa.net

Human Resources Development Canada, Labour Program
 Phone: (780) 495-2992
 Fax: (780) 495-2998
www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca

Alberta Safety Council
www.connect.ab.ca/~asc/

Alberta Trucking Industry Safety Association
www.albertatrucking.com/atisa

Metal Fabricating Health & Safety Association
www.mfhsa.org/

Alberta Human Resources and Employment
 Phone: (780) 427-5585
 Fax: (780) 427-5988
www.gov.ab.ca/hre

One of the ways you can keep yourself and your co-workers safe, is to be aware of your health and safety responsibilities. Here are some questions to ask about workplace safety.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR EMPLOYER

- What are the potential dangers of my job?
- Are there any hazards (noise, chemicals, heavy lifting) that I should know about?
- Will I receive job training? When will it happen and what will I learn?
- Is there any safety gear I'll be expected to wear? Will I be trained in how to use it?
- Will I be trained in emergency procedures?
- Where are fire extinguishers, the first aid kit and other emergency equipment located?
- Does the company hold safety meetings?
- Am I covered by workers' compensation?
- What do I do if I get hurt on the job? Is there a first aid person on site?
- Will I receive a copy of the company safety rules?
- Will there be more experienced workers I can go to for help or guidance?
- How often is equipment inspected?
- Who is my representative on the company's safety committee?
- Who do I ask if I have other worksite safety questions?

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- Do I have a safety-conscious attitude?
- Do I follow my employer's safety rules and regulations?
- Do I know what my rights are?
- Have I asked for the training I need to do my job safely?
- Do I wear the proper protective equipment?
- Have I identified unsafe working conditions?
- What else can I do to prevent work-related injuries?
- Have I reported all injuries?

Even if your employer has a good injury prevention program, you, or one of your co-workers could be hurt on the job. Here's what to do:

IF YOU ARE HURT AT WORK

1.

Tell your employer

2.

**Seek medical treatment,
if required**

3.

**Fill out a WCB Report of
Injury form**

Even if you think your injury is minor, follow these steps. The information you share with your doctor (or other health care professional) will help determine how best to treat your injury. This information can also help your employer find ways to improve worksite health and safety practices.

WHAT WILL WORKERS' COMPENSATION DO FOR ME?

If WCB insurance is required in your industry, you are entitled to file a claim for any work-related injuries or illnesses. The WCB will review your claim and use WCB policies to determine which benefits and services you are entitled to. These could include:

- wage replacement for lost income
- hospital/clinic costs
- other health care and rehabilitation costs i.e. physical therapy, counseling
- medication costs
- dental treatment

OTHER WORKSITE INJURY AND ILLNESS PREVENTION BOOKLETS AVAILABLE FROM WCB-ALBERTA:

Back to Basics

This booklet provides information on back injury prevention and sound recovery practices.

It's Not Safe Being Green

Information for employers who hire young workers

Office Ergonomics - Remembering the Basics

This booklet identifies symptoms and causes of discomfort, guides individuals through an ergonomic self-evaluation and outlines exercises designed to reduce the risk of injury.

WCB Worker Handbook

This handbook helps workers better understand the workers' compensation process.

Working Safely Behind the Wheel

This booklet is designed to get you thinking about your own driving behaviours and what you can do to make the roads safer for all Albertans.

WorkSafe™ Best Practices: Prevention and Disability Management Programs

This booklet outlines the strategies Alberta organizations have used to reduce lost-time injuries and develop comprehensive return-to-work programs.

WorkSafe™ is a registered trademark, used under license from WCB-B.C.

To view, visit the WCB's website.
To order please call (780) 498-8680.
Website: www.wcb.ab.ca



The Workers' Compensation Board - Alberta is a not-for-profit mutual insurance corporation funded entirely by employers. The WCB provides cost-effective workplace liability and disability insurance to more than one million workers and 90,000 employers.