



YUKON WORKERS' COMPENSATION
HEALTH AND SAFETY BOARD
COMMISSION DE LA SANTÉ ET DE LA SÉCURITÉ
AU TRAVAIL
DU YUKON

News Release

For Immediate Release
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This Week is North American Occupational Safety and Health Week

The Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board (YWCHSB) is reminding employers and workers that "prevention is the cure" during North American Occupational Safety and Health (NAOSH) Week.

NAOSH week is an annual initiative led by the Canadian Society of Safety Engineers in partnership with the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety and Human Resources Development Canada. This year, NAOSH week runs from May 5-11.

According to YWCHSB claim statistics, in the last decade there have been 19 workplace fatalities and over 11,000 workplace injuries in the Yukon. Rob McClure, manager of education and development at the YWCHSB, maintains that if every Yukon workplace put in place a prevention plan the territory's injury rate would drop significantly.

"One of the best practices that employers can put in place is a system for reporting close calls," says McClure. Close calls are injuries that *almost* happened. "When a close call happens, it's a clue that may point to a safety problem in the workplace. If it happens once, it could happen again with more serious consequences."

Another key concern of the YWCHSB is raising employers' awareness of the hazards faced by young workers. In the Yukon, 113 workers between the ages of 15 and 24 were injured last year. Yukon young workers are at least twice as likely to be injured on the job as other workers.

“Many young and new workers will be entering the workforce this summer. We are asking employers to take special care to train these workers,” says McClure.

The YWCHSB has two guides available—one for employers and one for parents—outlining why young workers are at higher risk for workplace injury and what employers and parents can do to lower this risk. Copies can be obtained by contacting the YWCHSB or visiting their website at www.wcb.yk.ca.

For Broadcast Use:

This week is North American Occupational Safety and Health Week and the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board is urging workers and employers that prevention is the only cure for workplace injuries. According to Board's claim statistics, in the last decade there have been 19 workplace fatalities and over 11,000 workplace injuries in the Yukon. The board maintains that if every Yukon workplace put in place a prevention plan the territory's injury rate would drop significantly. One of the Board's key concerns is raising awareness of the hazards faced by young workers. In the Yukon, 113 workers between the ages of 15 and 24 were injured last year. Yukon young workers are at least twice as likely to be injured on the job as other workers. Employers and workers should contact the board if they need help setting up their workplace safety net.

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Looking for Story Ideas for North American Occupational Safety and Health Week?

“Wow, that was a close call!”

When accidents almost happen most of us tend to wipe our brow, thank our luck stars and leave it at that. But close calls are a clue that may point to a safety problem. Reporting close calls at work one of the "best practices" for keeping workplaces free of accidents and injuries. The YWCHSB can help employers set up a system for reporting close calls. We also surveyed Yukoners during the trade show and gathered approximately 80 stories of close calls, at home and at work.

Rob McClure is the manager of the YWCHSB's education and development unit and the acting Director of Occupational Health and Safety. You can arrange an interview with Rob by calling (867) 667-3726

“Keep your first aid kit in good health”

According to the Minimum First Aid Regulations, Yukon employers must have a first aid kit at the worksite. The size and contents of the kit vary according to the risk at your workplace, the distance from a hospital and the number of workers at the site. Employers and supervisors who are unsure of what the regulations say should contact the YWCHSB. Ignoring the regulations can lead to a fine, or your workplace can be shut down until the requirements are met.

Bob Scott is the YWCHSB's manager of inspections and compliance. You can arrange an interview with Bob by calling (867) 667-3788