

HOW TO IMPLEMENT A FORMAL OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAM



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WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD OF B.C.

About the WCB

The Workers' Compensation Board is an independent provincial statutory agency governed by a Board of Directors. It is funded by insurance premiums paid by registered employers and by investment returns. In administering the *Workers Compensation Act*, the WCB remains separate and distinct from government; however, it is accountable to the public through government in its role of protecting and maintaining the overall well-being of the workers' compensation system.

The WCB was born out of a compromise between B.C.'s workers and employers in 1917 where workers gave up the right to sue their employers or fellow workers for injuries on the job in return for a no-fault insurance program fully paid for by employers. The WCB is committed to a safe and healthy workplace, and to providing return-to-work rehabilitation and legislated compensation benefits to workers injured as a result of their employment.

WCB Prevention Information Line

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

Phone 604 276-3100 in the Lower Mainland, or call 1 888 621-7233 (621-SAFE) toll-free in British Columbia.

To report after-hours and weekend accidents and emergencies, call 604 273-7711 in the Lower Mainland, or call 1 866 922-4357 (WCB-HELP) toll-free in British Columbia.

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Many publications are available on the WCB web site. The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation and associated policies and guidelines, as well as excerpts and summaries of the *Workers Compensation Act*, are also available on the web site: <www.worksafebc.com>

Some publications are also available for purchase in print:

Phone: 604 232-9704
Toll-free phone: 1 866 319-9704
Fax: 604 232-9703
Toll-free fax: 1 888 232-9714
Online ordering: <www.worksafebc.com> and click on Publications;
follow the links for ordering

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Introduction

This booklet is for employers, workers, and joint health and safety committees. It will help you develop and maintain an effective occupational health and safety (OHS) program. The purpose of an OHS program is to prevent injuries and occupational diseases and to deal effectively with any accidents or incidents that occur.

This booklet describes the elements of a formal OHS program, which is required where there is:

- A workforce of 20 or more workers in a workplace that is moderate or high risk
- A workforce of 50 or more workers in a workplace that is low risk

A business with a smaller workforce requires a less formal OHS program. For more information see the publication *Informal Safety Program for Small Business*, available on the WCB web site <www.worksafebc.com>. Other resources for small businesses are available on the WCB small business web site.

An effective program will:

- Identify hazards in the workplace
- Eliminate or minimize the potential for injuries, disease, or loss of life
- Limit financial losses resulting from injuries and disease
- Be monitored to ensure that it meets its goals and WCB requirements

This booklet explains the responsibilities for health and safety, describes the elements of a formal program, and outlines the role of the joint committee. This booklet will help you comply with WCB requirements but it does not replace the *Workers Compensation Act* and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation. For specific requirements related to these topics, refer to sections 115 to 140 of the *Workers Compensation Act* and Part 3 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.

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Resources for small business

1. Click on Health & Safety Centre.
2. Click on Small Business.

The Regulation and the Act

1. Click on Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.
2. For the Act, click on *Workers Compensation Act* on the left side of the page.

Responsibilities for health and safety

The most effective OHS programs are developed jointly by management and staff. Read this section for information on the general responsibilities of employers, supervisors, workers, prime contractors, and owners. The purpose is to help everyone understand their own roles and the roles of others so they can work toward common health and safety goals.

Employer's responsibilities

Employers have both general and specific responsibilities related to hazard control and worker health and safety. In carrying out these duties, management—from the chief executive officer through to the first-level supervisor—can demonstrate their commitment to health and safety in the workplace.

General responsibilities

- Ensure the health and safety of the employer's workers and other workers present at the workplace.
- Establish occupational health and safety policies and an OHS program.
- Provide general direction to management, supervisors, and workers about their responsibilities and roles in providing a safe and healthy workplace.
- Provide specific direction and delegate authority to those responsible for health and safety.
- Consult and cooperate with individuals carrying out occupational health and safety duties (including joint committee members, worker health and safety representatives, and WCB prevention officers).
- Provide workers with the information, instruction, training, and supervision necessary to protect their health and safety.
- Provide supervisors with the support and training necessary to carry out their health and safety responsibilities.
- Provide and maintain protective equipment, devices, and clothing, and ensure that they are used.

First aid

The employer also has a responsibility to provide first aid to workers. First aid services include the equipment, supplies, facilities, first aid attendants, and services to provide adequate and appropriate first aid to workers if they are injured at work, and to transport injured workers to medical treatment.

For more information on first aid requirements, visit the WCB web site www.worksafefbc.com. Click on the Health & Safety Centre, and under Safety Topics, click on First Aid. Or contact the WCB certification services at 604 276-3090, or toll-free at 1 888 621-7233.

Hazard control responsibilities

- Identify potential hazards through regular inspections and either eliminate or control the hazards without delay.
- Remedy any workplace conditions that are hazardous to worker health or safety.
- Develop written safe work procedures.
- Encourage workers to express concerns and suggest improvements on health and safety issues, for example, through safety talks, meetings, or consultation with worker representatives.

Supervisor's responsibilities

Supervisors should give health and safety the same priority as productivity or quality control. They must know and comply with occupational health and safety requirements. A supervisor is defined in the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation as “a person who instructs, directs and controls workers in the performance of their duties.” Any worker (management or staff) who meets this definition of *supervisor* has the responsibilities of a supervisor for the workers under their control.

General responsibilities

- Ensure the health and safety of all workers under their direct supervision.
- Know the WCB requirements that apply to the work being supervised and ensure that they are followed.
- Ensure that workers under their supervision are made aware of all known or reasonably foreseeable health and safety hazards where they work.
- Consult and cooperate with joint committee members or worker health and safety representatives, and cooperate with others carrying out occupational health and safety duties (including WCB prevention officers).
- Ensure that the appropriate personal protective equipment and clothing are available, properly worn when required, and properly inspected and maintained.
- Investigate unsafe conditions reported to them and ensure that corrective action is taken without delay.



Forms, samples, and checklists

“Safety Orientation for Supervisors Checklist,”
page 37

In the Regulation

For refusal of unsafe work, see Part 3, sections 3.12 and 3.13, of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation on www.worksafebc.com.

Workers' responsibilities

Workers have general responsibilities for their own health and safety and that of other workers. In addition, they have the responsibility to refuse unsafe work; discriminatory action cannot be taken against them for refusing to do unsafe work.

General responsibilities

- Cooperate with the joint committee or worker health and safety representative, WCB prevention officers, and any other person carrying out occupational health and safety duties.
- Learn and follow safe work procedures.
- Be alert to hazards, and report hazards or problems to the supervisor or employer.
- Use the protective clothing, devices, and equipment provided.
- Perform work in a safe manner. Do not engage in horseplay or work while impaired by alcohol, drugs, or other causes.

Responsibility to refuse unsafe work

- Refuse to do work that they have reasonable cause to believe would create an undue hazard to the health and safety of any person.
- Immediately report an unsafe situation to their supervisor or employer.

Prime contractor's responsibilities

In a multiple-employer workplace (where there are two or more employers working at the same time), a prime contractor should be specifically designated as a prime contractor for the purposes of the *Workers Compensation Act* through written agreement. If there is no written agreement, the owner is deemed to be the prime contractor. Each employer at a multi-employer workplace must designate a supervisor and inform the prime contractor of the supervisor's name.

General responsibilities

- Ensure the coordination of occupational health and safety activities of employers, workers, and other persons at the workplace.
- Establish and maintain a system or process that will ensure compliance with occupational health and safety requirements at the workplace. (Individual employers are still responsible for the health and safety of their own workers.)

Owner's responsibilities

The owner of a worksite has responsibilities for a safe and healthy workplace. These are in addition to any other responsibilities the owner may have as the employer or prime contractor.

General responsibilities

- Maintain the land and premises used as a workplace in a manner that ensures the health and safety of persons at or near the workplace.
- Give the employer or prime contractor at the workplace any information known to the owner that is necessary to identify and eliminate or control hazards.
- Comply with occupational health and safety requirements and orders.

Responsibilities of others

Suppliers of tools and equipment and directors and officers of a corporation also have responsibilities for health and safety under the *Workers Compensation Act*. If a person has two or more functions (for example, as employer and owner), the person must meet the obligations of each function. For more information, see sections 120 to 124 of the *Workers Compensation Act*.

When a formal OHS program and a joint committee are required

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Assigned hazard rating

To use the “Assigned Hazard Rating List” in OHS Guideline G3.16-2:

1. Click on Health & Safety Centre.
2. Under Safety Topics, click on First Aid.
3. Click on Regulation and Guidelines, and go to G3.16-2.

All employers are required to have an OHS program. The type of program depends on the size of the workforce and the nature and extent of the risks and hazards in the workplace. This booklet describes a formal OHS program, which has several required elements. Small businesses may have a less formal, or basic, program.

If the workplace is large enough, a joint health and safety committee is required. In a smaller workplace, there may be a worker health and safety representative instead. The joint committee or worker representative assists the employer in implementing and maintaining the OHS program.

Is a formal OHS program required?

Follow these three steps to see if a formal or basic OHS program is required.

Step 1: Determine how many workers are regularly employed in your operation. Include all workers, supervisors, and managers who have been employed for at least one month.

Step 2: Determine the hazard classification. Workplaces are classified as either low (L) risk or not low risk—that is, moderate (M) or high (H) risk. For guidance in determining the hazard rating and using the “Assigned Hazard Rating List” see OHS Guideline G3.16-2, First Aid Assessment, or talk to a WCB prevention officer.

Step 3: Use the table below to determine the type of program required.

Number of workers	Program for workplace with low hazard rating (L)	Program for workplace with moderate hazard rating (M)	Program for workplace with high hazard rating (H)
Fewer than 20	Less formal*	Less formal*	Less formal*
20 or more but fewer than 50	Less formal*	Formal	Formal
50 or more	Formal	Formal	Formal

* A WCB prevention officer may require some smaller workplaces to update their program from a less formal (basic) program to a formal program in situations such as:

-
- High-risk work (such as logging or pile driving)
 - A high number of injury claims
 - Serious injuries or fatalities
 - Repeated non-compliance with the *Workers Compensation Act* or Occupational Health and Safety Regulation

Does my workplace need a joint committee?

Use the following table to see whether your workplace requires either a joint committee or a worker health and safety representative. If an employer has more than one workplace, use the number of workers at each individual workplace to see the type of representation required for each workplace. Note that you consider only the size of the workplace, not the hazard rating.

Number of workers	Representation for workplaces (with any hazard rating)
9 or fewer	None*
More than 9, fewer than 20	Worker health and safety representative
20 or more	Joint committee

* In certain circumstances, the WCB may order an employer to have a worker health and safety representative.

The duties and functions of the committee are described on pages 20–24, “Joint committees.” Where the term “joint committee” is used in this booklet, worker health and safety representatives may adapt the information for their use.

Elements of a formal OHS program

Every workplace is different. The OHS program should be designed to address the specific needs of the individual workplace. All formal OHS programs must have seven elements:

1. An OHS policy statement of the aims of the program and the responsibilities for health and safety
2. Regular inspection of premises, machinery, tools, equipment, and work practices
3. Appropriate written instructions for workers
4. Periodic management meetings to discuss health and safety
5. Investigation of accidents and other incidents in order to take action to prevent similar incidents
6. Records and statistics
7. Instruction and supervision of workers

1. OHS policy

An OHS program requires a statement of the employer's aims and the responsibilities of the employer, supervisors, and workers. This statement—called a policy—typically states:

- The employer's commitment to the OHS program
- The employer's commitment to protect the health and safety of workers
- The aims and priorities of the OHS program
- The responsibilities of the employer, supervisors, and workers

A good health and safety policy should be simply written and easy to understand. It does not need to be longer than a few paragraphs. The written policy should be signed by the CEO or senior manager on-site. It should be dated and reviewed annually. All workers should be made aware of the policy and its importance. For example, it could be given to all new workers and posted in the workplace.

In the Regulation

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, section 3.3(a) requires formal OHS programs to include “a statement of the employer's aims and the responsibilities of the employer, supervisors and workers.”



Forms, samples, and checklists

“Sample Policy Statement for OHS Program,” page 26

2. Regular inspection

Regular inspections of the workplace are intended to:

- Identify conditions and unsafe acts with the potential to cause injury or disease
- Determine necessary corrective measures
- Prevent unsafe work conditions from developing

Three different kinds of inspections are described below:

- **Regular, planned workplace inspections:** Inspect buildings, structures, grounds, excavations, tools, equipment, machinery, and work methods and practices for hazards that might cause injury or disease. Schedule these inspections at appropriate intervals to prevent unsafe conditions developing. Depending on the workplace and the type of hazards that might develop, inspections may be scheduled daily, weekly, or monthly.
- **Equipment inspections:** Workers should be trained to inspect their machinery, tools, and equipment regularly, following the manufacturer’s recommendations. The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation may also have specific requirements. For example, an elevating platform must be inspected by the operator before use on each shift (required by section 13.108 of the Regulation).
- **Special inspections:** The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation requires a special inspection after a malfunction or accident to ensure that work does not resume until it is safe to do so.

In the Regulation

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, section 3.3(b) requires formal OHS programs to include “provision for the regular inspection of premises, equipment, work methods and work practices, at appropriate intervals, to ensure that prompt action is undertaken to correct any hazardous conditions found.”

See sections 3.5 to 3.8 for additional information on workplace inspections. These sections include regular inspections of tools and equipment, special inspections, and the participation of the joint committee or worker health and safety representative.



Forms, samples, and checklists

“Workplace Inspection
Checklist,” pages
27–29

“Workplace Inspection
Report,” page 30

Workplace inspections

An inspection team includes both worker and management representatives. The team should be familiar with the work process and, whenever possible, include members of the joint committee or the worker health and safety representative.

A worksite inspection checklist can help ensure that inspections are thorough, results are recorded, and the inspection process is standardized. A checklist is particularly useful in guiding those unfamiliar with the inspection process. The checklist should be adapted to suit the needs of your workplace.

Any unsafe or harmful conditions found during a regular inspection should be reported immediately to the supervisor or employer and remedied without delay.

Record and communicate all significant findings. A form such as the sample on pages 27–29 can be used to record each hazard identified and the measures to be taken to eliminate or control each hazard. Provide a copy for the joint committee, and make a copy available to workers (for example, post a copy on the OHS bulletin board).

3. Written instructions

Health and safety, productivity, and quality control all benefit from written procedures. Written procedures can help train new workers and establish a consistent level of work performance.

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation requires written safe work procedures for a number of activities. A written safe work procedure lists the steps in doing a task safely—for example, it tells how to safely lock out a piece of equipment before doing maintenance.

Here are examples of some of the activities where the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation requires written work procedures:

- Lockout
- Confined space entry
- Fall protection
- Personal protective equipment
- Violence in the workplace
- Emergency evacuation
- Chemical spills clean-up
- Asbestos removal
- Working alone or in isolation

Not all tasks require detailed written procedures. Other types of written instructions may be appropriate. For some tasks, safety issues can be addressed verbally in crew talks or during training. In deciding whether or not written procedures are required, consider the following:

- The requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation
- The level of hazard
- The number of workers doing the work
- The experience of the workers
- How frequently the work is being done
- The severity of injuries that might result if correct procedures are not followed
- Recommendations for written procedures as a result of an inspection or investigation

In the Regulation

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, section 3.3(c) requires formal OHS programs to include “appropriate written instructions, available for reference by all workers to supplement this Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.”



Forms, samples, and checklists

“Sample Safe Work Procedure: Handling Garbage Safely,” page 31

Written safe work procedures should be developed in consultation with the joint committee and workers who do the job. Provide workers with copies or post the procedures in the area where the work activity occurs.

Review these procedures whenever a job changes, new equipment is introduced, or workers return after an extended absence. In addition, work procedures may need to be adjusted as the result of recommendations from an inspection or from an investigation into an incident.

In the Regulation

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, section 3.3(d) requires formal OHS programs to include “provision for holding periodic management meetings for the purpose of reviewing health and safety activities and incident trends, and for the determination of necessary courses of action.”

4. Management meetings

A formal OHS program requires management meetings to review health and safety activities and incident trends. Management meetings can be used to:

- Review existing policies and procedures
- Review feedback from workers
- Consider reports and other information provided by the joint committee
- Address questions or concerns brought directly to management
- Review reports and other information about health and safety in workplaces performing similar work, as well as general information about workplace injury and disease prevention, to improve the existing OHS program

Recommendations for action from the joint committee should be considered and acted upon by:

- Developing an action plan for implementing the recommendation, or
- Suggesting an acceptable alternative

Management decisions and activities on health and safety matters should be communicated to supervisors and workers.

5. Investigations

An effective OHS program has a process for investigating all accidents and incidents that had the potential to cause an injury or disease. The purpose of an investigation is to identify the cause or causes and to recommend steps to prevent similar unsafe conditions.

What is an incident?

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation defines an incident as “an accident or other occurrence which resulted in or had the potential for causing an injury or occupational disease.” Incidents include the following:

- Accidents in which a worker is injured or killed
- Accidents in which no one is hurt but equipment or property is damaged
- Near misses (no visible injury or damage but the incident could have resulted in a serious injury, death, or property damage)

Serious incidents you need to report to the WCB

Employers must immediately notify the WCB of any serious incidents that:

- Resulted in serious injury to a worker or the death of a worker
- Involved a major structural failure or collapse of a building, bridge, tower, crane, hoist, temporary construction support system, or excavation
- Involved the major release of a hazardous substance

To report a serious incident, call 604 276-3100 in the Lower Mainland or 1 888 621-SAFE (7233) toll-free in B.C. To report an incident after normal business hours, call 604 273-7711 or toll-free 1 866 922-4357 (WCB-HELP).

In the event of a serious incident, the scene must be secured and left undisturbed until a WCB officer releases it (except for attending to injured workers and preventing further injuries).

In the Regulation

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, section 3.3(e) requires formal OHS programs to include “provision for the prompt investigation of incidents to determine the action necessary to prevent their recurrence.”



Forms, samples, and checklists

“Incident Investigation Report” (form 52E40), pages 32–35

Incidents the employer must investigate

Employers must investigate the above serious incidents as well as any incidents that:

- Resulted in injury to a worker requiring medical treatment
- Did not involve injury to a worker, or involved only minor injury not requiring medical treatment, but had a potential for causing serious injury to a worker

Incident investigations should be carried out by persons knowledgeable about the type of work being done. Where possible, investigations should involve both worker and employer representatives and members of the joint committee.

An incident investigation report must include the following information:

- The place, date, and time of the incident
- The names and job titles of persons injured in the incident
- The names of witnesses
- A brief description of the incident
- A statement of the sequence of events that led up to the incident
- Identification of any unsafe conditions, acts, or procedures that contributed to the incident
- Recommended corrective actions to prevent similar incidents
- The names of persons who investigated the incident

Employer duties

1. If one or more workers were injured, fill out forms 7 and 7A and send copies to the WCB or submit online:
 - Form 7: Employer's Report of Injury or Occupational Disease
 - Form 7A: First Aid Report
2. Determine who will investigate the incident.
3. Investigate the incident:
 - Determine the cause or causes of the incident.
 - Identify any unsafe conditions, acts, or procedures that contributed to the incident.
 - Recommend corrective action to prevent similar incidents.
4. Prepare incident investigation report.
5. Provide copy of report to joint committee (and the WCB if required).
6. Take corrective action required to prevent reoccurrence of similar incidents.
7. Prepare follow-up report on corrective action taken.
8. Provide copy of follow-up report to joint committee or post at the workplace.

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Forms

Click on Forms to download forms, to submit forms online, or to order printed copies. Forms include:

- Form 7: Employer's Report of Injury or Occupational Disease
- Form 7A: First Aid Report
- Form 52E40: Incident Investigation Report

In the Regulation

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, section 3.3(f) requires formal OHS programs to include “the maintenance of records and statistics, including reports of inspections and incident investigations, with provision for making this information available to the joint committee or worker health and safety representative, as applicable and, upon request, to an officer, the union representing the workers at the workplace or, if there is no union, the workers at the workplace.”

6. Records and statistics

In a formal OHS program, records typically include:

- Inspection reports and records of corrective actions taken
- Incident investigation reports and records of corrective actions taken
- Worker orientation records
- Records of worker and supervisor training showing the date, names of attendees, and topics covered (for example, lockout and WHMIS training)
- Records of meetings and crew talks at which safety issues were discussed
- Supervisors’ notes and logs of safety contacts
- Records showing use of progressive discipline to enforce safety rules and written safe work procedures
- Joint committee meeting reports showing steps taken to address health and safety issues
- Subcontractor pre-qualification documents
- Equipment logbooks and maintenance records
- First aid records, medical certificates, and hearing tests
- Forms and checklists (for example, confined space entry permits) showing requirements for safe work procedures
- Sampling and monitoring records for work around harmful substances
- Emergency response plan, record of drills, and any resulting improvements

Statistics

Accident and injury statistics are useful for identifying trends and for measuring the effectiveness of health and safety activities and programs. The table below outlines some ways you might use data from incidents for statistical analysis:

Type of incidents	Types of data	Statistical analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Near misses• First aid only• Health care only• Time-loss injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of incidents• Frequency of incidents• Number of injuries• Types of injuries• Severity of injuries• Number of days lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compare monthly and annual results• Compare type of work or activity• Compare shifts• Compare worker experience and training

Injury rates

The WCB calculates average injury rates for various industry groups as well as a provincial average for all industries. Individual workplaces can also calculate their own injury rate as follows:

$$\text{Injury rate} = \frac{\text{STD claims}}{\text{FTEs}} \times 100$$

Where:

- STD is the number of short-term disability claims accepted by the WCB in a specified time period. These **do not** include health care only claims, long-term/permanent disability claims (LTDs), or fatalities.
- FTE is the number of full-time equivalent employees employed during the specified time period.

Low injury rates can be used as a general indicator on the success of a good health and safety program. However, they do not distinguish the type of injuries, the length of time lost, the total cost of the injuries, or the severity of injuries.

Comparing injury rates is only one of many indicators used to measure successful health and safety programs.

In the Regulation

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, section 3.3(g) requires formal OHS programs to include “provision by the employer for the instruction and supervision of workers in the safe performance of their work.”

7. Instruction and supervision of workers

It is the employer’s responsibility to ensure that every worker receives adequate instruction to do their work safely. This is usually done through education and training. **Education** generally refers to formal classroom instruction that may include lectures, discussions, and videos. **Training** generally refers to hands-on, job-specific instruction provided individually or in small groups to workers. Training often includes demonstrations and active participation by workers so that supervisors can confirm that workers understand safe work procedures.

An education and training record should be maintained for each worker, listing topics covered and date of education or training. Education and training records should be reviewed periodically to ensure that training requirements have been met.

Supervisors must supervise their workers to ensure that they follow safe work procedures. Adequate supervision includes:

- Ensuring proper training of workers
- Observing workers after training to ensure that they continue to follow safe work procedures
- Making informal inspections on a daily basis to ensure safe work procedures are being followed, including the proper use of protective equipment, devices, and clothing provided
- Enforcing safety rules and safe work procedures
- Conducting informal discussions (crew talks) with workers to discuss specific safety issues as they arise

The following are some examples of education and training topics, who may receive them, and what they should include.



Forms, samples, and checklists

“New Worker Orientation Checklist,” page 36

“Safety Orientation for Supervisors Checklist,” page 37

Education and training topics

Topic	Type of workers or industries	Key content (not inclusive)
New worker orientation	All workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of first aid equipment and services • Reporting accidents, injuries, and unsafe conditions • Safe work procedures • Right to refuse unsafe work • Location of fire exits, routes, and safe gathering areas • Emergency procedures
WHMIS	All workers who are or may be exposed to hazardous materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and understanding labels • Understanding information on MSDSs • Location of MSDSs • Hazards of products being used • Controls measures and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Various industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When, why, where, and how to use specific PPE • Limitations of protection • Regular inspection and maintenance
Preventing violence	Service industries such as retail; health care; workers who work alone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define violence and types of incidents • Identifying risk factors • Preventing and defusing incidents • Control measures
Lockout	Machinists, workers on production lines; various manufacturing industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define lockout • Types of lockout • When to lockout • Review specific procedures for specific equipment
Confined space	Various industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the hazards of each confined space • Procedures for working safely in a specific space as set out in the confined space entry program
Fall protection	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall protection system being used • Fall protection procedures • Proper use of fall protection equipment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemical hazards (such as lead, asbestos) • Biological hazards (such as HIV, hepatitis) • Physical hazards (such as noise, vibration, heat, cold, radiation) 	Various industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential health effects of exposure • Common routes of exposure • Ways to prevent exposure • Proper use of controls • How to recognize signs and symptoms of exposure

Joint committees

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Publications

You can print *Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee* from the WCB web site:

1. Click on Publications & Videos.
2. Under Online publications, click on By title and keyword, and go to letter "J."

A joint committee is made up of worker and employer representatives working together to identify any health and safety problems and make recommendations to the employer on health and safety issues. The joint committee advises the employer on the OHS program and any other required programs and monitors their effectiveness. To be successful, the committee must operate in an atmosphere of cooperation and commitment to health and safety in the workplace. Joint committees must meet at least once a month.

This booklet gives a brief overview of joint committees and their role in the formal OHS program. For further details and sample forms and checklists, see the WCB publication *Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee*, available on the WCB web site.

Duties of the joint committee

The *Workers Compensation Act* sets out the following duties and functions of the joint committee:

- To identify situations that may be unhealthy or unsafe for workers and advise on effective systems for responding to those situations
- To consider and expeditiously deal with complaints relating to the health and safety of workers
- To consult with workers and the employer on issues related to occupational health and safety and occupational environment
- To make recommendations to the employer and the workers for the improvement of the occupational health and safety and occupational environment of workers
- To make recommendations to the employer on educational programs promoting the health and safety of workers and compliance with the *Workers Compensation Act* and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation and to monitor their effectiveness
- To advise the employer on programs and policies required and to monitor their effectiveness
- To advise the employer on proposed changes to the workplace or the work processes that may affect the health or safety of workers
- To ensure that accident investigations and regular inspections are carried out as required
- To participate in inspections, investigations, and inquiries
- To carry out any other duties and functions prescribed by regulation

Joint committee membership

A joint committee includes:

- At least four members
- Both worker and employer representatives; at least half of the members must be worker representatives
- Two co-chairs, one selected by the worker representatives and the other by the employer representatives

The size and structure of the committee will vary depending on the:

- Degree of hazard in the workplace
- Number of workers
- Number of departments
- Number of labour groups or work groups
- Number of worksites and work shifts
- Diversity of work being done

Committee members should be chosen for their ability to get the job done, their knowledge of various work processes, and ability to work cooperatively with others. There is no specific requirement for how long members serve on a committee. The committee should consider a term that will keep up enthusiasm, encourage fresh ideas, and promote efficiency through continuity.

Employers must post the names and work locations of committee members at the workplace.

Employer representatives

The employer must select representatives from those who exercise managerial functions for the employer at the workplace. An individual employer can act as an employer representative.

It is important that employer representatives have the authority to make commitments and to speak on behalf of the employer at committee meetings. Since the committee itself does not have the power to act on its own recommendations, the committee depends on the authority of the employer representatives to finalize matters agreed upon at a meeting.

In the *Workers Compensation Act*

Sections 125 to 140 of the Act set out requirements for joint committees. The Act includes topics such as the selection of employer and worker representatives, duties and functions of the joint committee, the employer's obligation to respond to recommendations and to support the committee, and committee reports.

You can read these sections online. Go to the WCB web site www.worksafefbc.com and click on Occupational Health and Safety Regulation. Then click on the link to the *Workers Compensation Act* on the left side.

Seasonal operations

Many industries in British Columbia operate seasonally, presenting special problems for organizing the committee. There is usually a permanent core staff who could act as a nucleus of the committee. Also, quite often there are seasonal workers who have worked for the organization on previous occasions and will have the experience to act as useful members. Meetings during the off-season are not always practical, but administrative planning and maintenance should include considerations for health and safety. These factors can be planned for by the committee in regular meetings during the active season.

Worker representatives

Workers must select representatives from workers who do not exercise managerial functions at the workplace.

Select representatives to effectively represent:

- Unionize and non-unionized workers
- Workers from different labour groups
- Workers doing high hazard jobs
- Workers on different shifts
- Workers in different departments

Alternates

Alternates should be selected to attend meetings or conduct committee business when regular members are not available. Alternates should be selected at the same time as regular members.

Education and training for committee members

It is recommended that part of every meeting be set aside for education. Members with certain expertise can prepare and deliver a talk, suppliers can be invited to discuss equipment and materials, and professionals from outside organizations can also be included. Members can be sent to seminars and report to the committee.

Each member of a joint committee is entitled to an annual educational leave totalling eight hours to attend OHS training courses conducted by the WCB or with the approval of the WCB. These courses might be WorkSafe courses developed by the WCB or other OHS courses that meet the training needs of the committee members.

Joint committee support for the OHS program

The regular meeting should not be the only time when members concern themselves with the OHS program. Not all safety-related problems can wait until the next meeting for resolution.

Outside the regular meeting, members should monitor ongoing health and safety procedures. Hazards can be identified and recommendations made to workers and employers that will improve conditions. Members are in a good position to promote cooperation throughout the operation.

In addition to the regular meeting, members may be required to:

- Deal with complaints relating to health and safety
- Advise the employer on programs and monitor their effectiveness
- Participate in workplace inspections (see page 10)
- Participate in investigations of accidents or incidents (see page 13)

Worker complaints

Workers should be instructed that complaints concerning health and safety should be directed to their supervisor. However, if the situation is not handled to the worker's satisfaction, a committee member should be contacted. The member can work with the supervisor and the committee, if needed, to resolve the complaint. It is important to keep the worker informed of the disposition of the matter. The joint committee must not be used as a grievance committee.

Monitoring the effectiveness of health and safety programs

Depending on the workplace, there may be a number of health and safety programs in addition to the formal OHS program. These might include a WHMIS program, an emergency plan, a noise control and hearing conservation, a confined space entry program, and a respirator program. Joint committee members may be involved in developing and implementing these programs, in educating and training workers, and in reviewing the programs.

Most programs should be reviewed at least annually to ensure that they are effective and to consider changes in the workplace and work activities.

Effective committees

The effectiveness and credibility of both the committee and the employer depend on results. The committee itself is only an advisory body, making recommendations to the employer. The employer may accept the committee's recommendation or may give reasons for not accepting them. The committee should communicate the results of recommendations to workers along with any explanations.

Committee members should not attempt to bypass normal employer channels of supervision or control. Health and safety are part of the job and should be dealt with on the job. Reporting hazardous conditions and procedures and taking corrective action is a matter for immediate attention through normal channels. Do not wait until the next meeting.

Finally, the committee should establish procedures for self-monitoring in an effort to ensure that its objectives are being reached.

Forms, samples, and checklists

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Sample Policy Statement for OHS Program

Include a policy statement in your OHS program that reflects your company's commitment to health and safety in the workplace.

Health and Safety Policy

_____ wants its workplace
(name of business)

to be a healthy and safe environment. To achieve this, our company will establish and maintain an occupational health and safety program designed to prevent injuries and disease. Our employer is responsible for providing workers with adequate instruction in health and safety and for addressing unsafe situations in a timely, effective manner. All workers and service contractors are required to work safely and to know and follow our company guidelines for safe work procedures.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Employer's responsibilities include:

- Establishing the health and safety program
- Conducting an annual review in _____ of each year
(month)
- Training supervisors
- Providing a safe and healthy work environment

Supervisors' responsibilities include:

- Providing a health and safety orientation to new workers
- Providing ongoing training to workers
- Taking part in inspections and investigations
- Reporting any safety or health hazards
- Correcting unsafe acts and conditions

Workers' responsibilities include:

- Learning and following safe work procedures
- Correcting hazards or reporting them to supervisors
- Participating in inspections and investigations where appropriate
- Using personal protective equipment where required
- Helping to create a safe workplace by recommending ways to improve the health and safety program

Workplace Inspection Checklist

- Adapt this checklist for regular safety inspections at your workplace.
- Go over every aspect of your workplace to identify possible hazards.
- Add or delete items as necessary for your particular workplace.

Floors and walkways	Yes	No
Are aisles clear of materials or equipment?		
Are main aisles at least 1 m (36 in) wide?		
Are doorways clear of materials or equipment?		
Are carpets or tiles in good condition, free of loose or lifting carpeting or tile?		
Are floors clean and free of oil or grease?		
Are floors kept dry?		
If supplies or materials are stored on the floor, are they away from doors and aisles and stacked no more than three boxes high?		
Fire safety and security	Yes	No
Are fire extinguishers clearly marked?		
Are fire extinguishers properly installed?		
Have fire extinguishers been inspected within the last year?		
Are workers trained to use fire extinguishers?		
Are flammable liquids properly stored?		
Will space heaters shut off automatically when tipped over?		
Are emergency phone numbers close to phones?		
Are smoke, fire, and burglar alarms in place?		

Stairs, ladders, and platforms	Yes	No
Are ladders safe and in good condition?		
Are stair handrails fastened to the wall securely?		
Are stairwells clear of materials and equipment?		
Are stairs and handrails in good condition?		
Are ladders and stairs provided with anti-slip treads?		
Walls	Yes	No
Are signs and fixtures securely fastened to the wall?		
Lighting	Yes	No
Are lighting levels in work areas adequate?		
Are work areas free of glare or excessive lighting contrast?		
Is task lighting provided in areas of low light or high glare?		
Are windows covered with blinds, drapes, or other means of controlling light?		
Does emergency lighting work?		

Storage	Yes	No
Are supplies and materials stored properly on shelves?		
Does your storage layout minimize lifting problems?		
Are trolleys or dollies available to move heavy items?		
Are floors around shelves clear of rubbish?		
Are racks and shelves in good condition?		
Electrical	Yes	No
Are electrical cords in good repair?		
Is there clear access to electrical panels and switch gear?		
Are electrical cords secured?		
Are proper plugs used?		
Are plugs, sockets, and switches in good condition?		
Are ground fault circuit interrupters available, if required?		
Are portable power tools in good condition?		
Computers	Yes	No
Are display screens free of dust?		
Are display screens bright enough with sufficient contrast?		
Are display screens positioned at a comfortable viewing level?		

Equipment and machinery	Yes	No
Is equipment and machinery kept clean?		
Is the equipment regularly maintained?		
Are operators properly trained?		
Are start/stop switches clearly marked and in easy reach?		
Is machinery adequately guarded?		
Is there enough work space?		
Are noise levels controlled?		
Are fumes and exhaust controlled?		
Do you have a lockout procedure in place?		
Entrances and exits	Yes	No
Is there safe access for workers and customers?		
Are emergency exits clear of materials or equipment?		
Are emergency exit signs working?		
Are emergency lighting units provided? Are they working?		
First aid	Yes	No
Is the first aid kit accessible and clearly labelled?		
Is the first aid kit adequate and complete?		
Is the first aid kit clean and dry?		
Are emergency numbers displayed?		

Chairs	Yes	No
Are chairs in good condition?		
Are chairs properly adjusted?		
Garbage	Yes	No
Are bins located at suitable points?		
Are bins emptied regularly?		
Hazardous materials	Yes	No
Are Material Safety Data Sheets provided for all hazardous materials?		
Are containers clearly labelled?		
Are hazardous materials properly stored?		
Are hazardous materials disposed of properly?		
Environment	Yes	No
Is air quality good?		
Are workers protected from cool drafts or excessive heat?		
Are workers protected from excessive or irritating noise?		

Parking	Yes	No
Are parking spots and walkways appropriately lighted?		
Are parking spots safe? (Names should not be painted on spots.)		
Are workers encouraged to use a buddy or escort?		
Is a speed limit posted on the parking lot?		
General worker questions	Yes	No
Do workers know where to go and who to call for first aid assistance?		
Do workers know where to find MSDSs for chemical products?		
Do workers know where to find personal protective equipment (for example, disposable gloves, eye protection)?		
Do workers know how to use personal protective equipment?		
Do workers know the procedures for working alone?		

Sample Safe Work Procedure: Handling Garbage Safely

The following example is intended to help you develop safe work procedures that apply to the specific situations and situations in your workplace. Information to include in safe work procedures:

- The normal sequence of events and actions required to perform the work safely
- Any hazards involved in performing the work, such as hazardous chemicals or equipment and tools with potential hazards, and ways to eliminate or minimize the risks
- Personal protective equipment required

Handling garbage safely

Follow these steps to prevent contact with sharp objects (such as needles and broken glass) and other items improperly discarded in garbage:

1. Handle garbage as little as possible.
2. Use waterproof garbage bags.
3. Be alert. If possible, look for sharp objects sticking out of the bags. Listen for broken glass when you move the bag.
4. Don't compress garbage or reach into garbage containers with your bare hands.
5. Don't use your bare hands to pick up garbage that has spilled out of an overflowing container. Wear puncture-resistant and liquid-resistant gloves (the type worn by firefighters) or use other tools designed for picking up garbage.
6. Don't let garbage bags get too full, if possible. Leave enough free space at the top of the bag so that when you grab it, you grab the top of the bag only—not any of the contents. You may have to change bags more often to prevent them from getting too full. This will also make them lighter, and easier to hold away from your body.
7. Hold garbage bags by the top of the bag, away from your body. Don't hold garbage bags against your body.
8. Don't place one hand under the bag to support it.

INCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORT

Worker and Employer Services Division

This form is provided to employers for the purpose of documenting the employers investigation into a workplace incident. Please attach a separate sheet if necessary.

Employer name	Employer number
Address where incident occurred (including nearest city)	

Incident Occurred ref: s. 3.4(a) Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR)

Place	Date <small>YY / MM / DD</small>	Time <input type="checkbox"/> a.m. <input type="checkbox"/> p.m.
-------	-------------------------------------	--

Injured Person(s) ref: s. 3.4(b) OHSR

Last name	First name	Job title
1)		
2)		

Nature of Injury/Injuries

1)
2)

Witnesses ref: s. 174(4) WCA and s. 3.4(c) OHSR

Last name	First name	Address	Telephone
1)			()
2)			()
3)			()

Incident Description ref: s. 3.4(d)-(e) OHSR

Briefly describe what happened, including the sequence of events preceding the incident.

Statement of Causes *ref: s. 174(2)(a)-(b) WCA and s. 3.4(f) OHSR*

List any unsafe conditions, acts, or procedures that in any manner contributed to the incident.

Recommendations *ref: s. 174(2)(c) WCA and s. 3.4(g) OHSR*

Identify any corrective actions that have been taken and any recommended actions to prevent similar incidents.

Recommended corrective action	Action by whom	Action by date
1)		
2)		
3)		
4)		

Persons Conducting Investigation *ref: s. 3.4(h) OHSR*

Name	Signature	Type of representative			Date
		<input type="checkbox"/> Employer	<input type="checkbox"/> Worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Employer	<input type="checkbox"/> Worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Employer	<input type="checkbox"/> Worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Employer	<input type="checkbox"/> Worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

For additional information on the Workers' Compensation Board and on the requirements for incident investigations, please refer to the WCB web site: www.WorkSafebc.com

Mailing Address Workers' Compensation Board of B.C.
PO Box 5350 Stn Terminal
Vancouver BC V6B 5L5

Fax number: 604 276-3247

Telephone Information

Call centre: 604 276-3100 or toll free within B.C. 1 888 621-SAFE (7233)

After hours health and safety emergency: 604 273-7711 or toll free 1 866 922-4357 (WCB-HELP)

A GUIDE TO INCIDENT INVESTIGATION

Use this guide in conjunction with the requirements of the *Workers Compensation Act (WCA)*, Part 3 Division 10, and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR), section 3.4.

When is an investigation required?

Employers are required to immediately undertake an investigation into any accident or other incident that:

- Is required to be reported under section 172 of the *Workers Compensation Act*, or
- Resulted in injury requiring medical treatment, or
- Did not involve injury to a worker or involve a minor injury that did not require medical treatment but had the potential for causing serious injury, or
- Was an incident required by regulation to be investigated.

Who should conduct the investigation?

- Incidents must be investigated by people knowledgeable about the type of work involved at the time of the incident.
- If reasonably available, investigations must be carried out with the participation of one employer representative and one worker representative.

What is the purpose of an investigation?

The purpose of an investigation is to determine the cause or causes of the incident, to identify any unsafe conditions, acts, or procedures that contributed to the incident, and to recommend corrective action to prevent similar incidents.

Who receives copies of the report?

Incident investigation reports required by the *WCA* must be provided to the joint health and safety committee or worker representative as applicable, and to the WCB.

What follow-up action is required after an incident investigation?

After an investigation, the employer must without undue delay undertake any corrective action required to prevent recurrence of similar incidents and must prepare a report of the action taken. The report must be provided to the joint health and safety committee or worker representative as applicable. The follow-up report does not have to be provided to the WCB unless requested by a Board officer.

What information should be included in the investigation report?

An incident investigation report should answer the **WHO, WHERE, WHEN, WHAT, WHY, and HOW** questions with regard to the incident.

WHO Employer, injured person(s), other person(s) involved in the incident, witnesses, and persons carrying out the investigation

WHERE Place, location where incident occurred

WHEN Date and time of the incident

WHAT A brief description of the incident, including the sequence of events that preceded the incident

Before the incident occurred:

- What were the events that led up to the incident?
- What process(es) was/were occurring immediately prior to the incident?
- What was/were the worker(s) doing immediately prior to the incident?
- What was the last event before the incident occurred?

At the time of the incident:

- What happened at the time of the incident?
- What process(es) was/were occurring at the time of the incident?
- What was/were the worker(s) doing at the time of the incident?

- What hazard(s) was/were the worker(s) exposed to?
- What hazards may have contributed to the incident occurring?
- What hazards did the worker(s) encounter?
- What personal factors may have contributed to the incident occurring?

Other information:

- Other observations
- Other related information

WHY From the answers to “what,” identify any unsafe conditions, acts, or procedures that in any manner contributed to the incident. Why did the unsafe conditions, acts, or procedures occur? Why were the personal factors not identified and/or addressed before the incident occurred?

HOW An investigation report should recommend corrective actions to prevent similar incidents from occurring. Once it is known why an incident occurred, determine how to prevent recurrence. For example:

- Improve workplace inspection and maintenance programs
- Repair or replace equipment/building
- Install safeguards
- Establish or revise safe work procedures
- Train/retrain person(s)
- Improve supervision

Additional Information for Determining Why an Incident Happened

To determine the most probable cause(s) of an incident, consider all details of the investigation, including witness statements and, where possible, the injured worker’s statement.

Determine if the incident was due to an unsafe act, an unsafe condition, unsafe or inadequate procedures, or a combination of these. Consider whether the accepted/current procedures adequately address safety concerns associated with the activity that was taking place when the incident happened. Consider training, supervision, equipment controls, safeguards, and lock-out.

Unsafe Acts – An unsafe act is a specific action or lack of action by an individual that is under the individual’s control. Examples of unsafe acts include: knowingly not following established rules, knowingly not following established procedures, knowingly disregarding a hazard, willful misconduct, abusing equipment, knowingly using equipment incorrectly, choosing not to use personal protective equipment, and not locking out when required. Generally, violating a safety rule, not following a safe work procedure, or disregarding a hazard are considered unsafe acts.

Unsafe Conditions – Examples include poor housekeeping, congested areas, deficient equipment, equipment lacking safeguarding or having ineffective safeguarding, lack of personal protective equipment, poor visibility, poor weather conditions, and lack of or inadequate training. Inadequate training should be considered an unsafe condition as opposed to a deficiency in skill or ability (personal factors).

Inadequate Procedures – Indications that procedures are inadequate include:

- Procedures are not available in written form
- Procedures do not identify inherent hazards
- Procedures do not identify hazard control methods
- Procedures do not identify safeguards that must be in place
- Procedures do not address pre-operation inspection requirements
- Procedures do not address lock-out requirements
- Procedures direct improper use of equipment or tools

Personal Factors – A personal factor is a deficiency in skill or ability, a physical condition, or a mental attitude. It is a factor inherent in an individual at the time of the incident. Examples include work fatigue due to manual exertion, distress due to emotional problems, the influence of alcohol or drugs, or illness. A condition causing an allergic reaction in some but not most workers should be considered a personal factor, not an unsafe condition.



New Worker Orientation Checklist

Use this checklist when training new workers on health and safety in your workplace (see pages 18–19).

Worker's name: _____

Date worker was hired: _____

Supervisor's name: _____

Date of orientation: _____

Orientation topics covered?	Yes	No
Health and safety responsibilities		
Health and safety rules		
How to get first aid		
Location of first aid kit or services		
Location of fire exits and fire extinguishers		
How to report unsafe conditions		
Right to refuse unsafe work		
WHMIS		
Location of MSDS		
Use of personal protective equipment		
Working alone procedures		
Emergency procedures (list them here):		

Written work procedures (list them here):

Other topics covered (list them here):

Comments:

Safety Orientation for Supervisors Checklist

Use this checklist when training supervisors in their health and safety responsibilities. Adapt the checklist for your workplace.

Supervisor's name: _____

Date of orientation: _____

Orientation given by: _____

Annual review date: _____

Orientation topics covered?	Yes	No	Date
Supervisor's health and safety responsibilities			
Company's health and safety rules			
How to report unsafe conditions			
Right of workers to refuse unsafe work			
Use of personal protective equipment			
How to take corrective action when workers do not follow safe work procedures			
How and when to conduct workplace inspections			
What incidents are investigated and procedures to follow			
How and when to develop safe work procedures			
When and how to conduct worker instruction and training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation • Instruction and training • Crew talks 			

Emergency procedures reviewed (list them here):

Review of written safe work procedures used by workers being supervised (list them here):

Other topics covered (list them here):

WCB Offices

Visit our web site at <www.worksafebc.com>.

Abbotsford

2774 Trethewey Street V2T 3R1
Phone 604 276-3100
1 800 292-2219
Fax 604 556-2077

Burnaby

450 – 6450 Roberts Street V5G 4E1
Phone 604 276-3100
1 888 621-7233
Fax 604 232-5950

Coquitlam

104 – 3020 Lincoln Avenue V3B 6B4
Phone 604 276-3100
1 888 967-5377
Fax 604 232-1946

Courtenay

801 30th Street V9N 8G6
Phone 250 334-8765
1 800 663-7921
Fax 250 334-8757

Kamloops

321 Battle Street V2C 6P1
Phone 250 371-6003
1 800 663-3935
Fax 250 371-6031

Kelowna

110 – 2045 Enterprise Way V1Y 9T5
Phone 250 717-4313
1 888 922-4466
Fax 250 717-4380

Nanaimo

4980 Wills Road V9T 6C6
Phone 250 751-8040
1 800 663-7382
Fax 250 751-8046

Nelson

524 Kootenay Street V1L 6B4
Phone 250 352-2824
1 800 663-4962
Fax 250 352-1816

North Vancouver

400 – 224 Esplanade Ave. W. V7M 1A4
Phone 604 276-3100
1 888 875-6999
Fax 604 232-1558

Prince George

1066 Vancouver Street V2L 5M4
Phone 250 561-3700
1 800 663-6623
Fax 250 561-3710

Surrey

100 – 5500 152 Street V3S 5J9
Phone 604 276-3100
1 888 621-7233
Fax 604 232-7077

Terrace

4450 Lakelse Avenue V8G 1P2
Phone 250 615-6605
1 800 663-3871
Fax 250 615-6633

Victoria

4514 Chatterton Way V8X 5H2
Phone 250 881-3418
1 800 663-7593
Fax 250 881-3482

Head Office / Richmond

Prevention Information Line:

Phone 604 276-3100
1 888 621-7233 (621-SAFE)

Administration:

6951 Westminster Highway
Phone 604 273-2266

Mailing Address:

PO Box 5350 Stn Terminal
Vancouver BC V6B 5L5

After Hours

Health & Safety Emergency

604 273-7711
1 866 922-4357 (WCB-HELP)

