

Your Responsibilities For Safety and Health in the Workplace

The Workplace Safety and Health Act supports every worker's right to a safe and healthy workplace. It assigns responsibility to each person in the workplace for creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace, to the extent he or she has the authority and ability to do so. Everyone has a personal and shared responsibility to work together to prevent workplace injuries and illness. The main duties of the various types of people in the workplace are listed below.

Employers

Since they have the greatest degree of authority and control over the operations of the workplace, employers have the greatest degree of responsibility for workplace safety and health. Employers' legal safety and health responsibilities include:

- Taking necessary precautions to ensure the safety, health and welfare of workers
- Providing and maintaining a safe workplace, equipment, tools and systems
- Ensuring all workers and supervisors are aware of hazards in the workplace as well as the precautions necessary for their protection
- Providing workers with competent supervision
- Providing all new workers with a safety and health orientation
- Providing the training necessary to protect workers' safety and health before they begin a new job
- Taking necessary precautions to ensure that other people are not exposed to safety or health risks due to the activities of the workplace
- Consulting and co-operating with the workplace safety and health committee or representative
- Co-operating with other people on workplace safety and health matters.

Supervisors

Supervisors have the responsibility and authority to oversee a group of workers within a workplace. The legal safety and health duties of supervisors include:

- Taking necessary precautions to protect the safety and health of workers under their supervision
- Ensuring that workers comply with safety and health procedures and use safety equipment, clothing and devices
- Advising workers of safety and health hazards in the work area
- Co-operating with the workplace safety and health committee or representative
- Co-operating with other people on workplace safety and health matters.

Workers

Workers are responsible for their own actions or inaction. Workers' legal safety and health responsibilities include:

- Taking reasonable care to protect themselves and others who may be affected by their actions or omissions
- Proper use of safety equipment, clothing and devices
- Co-operating with the workplace safety and health committee or representative
- Co-operating with other people on workplace safety and health matters.

(see over)



Contractors

Contractors are described under the *WSH Act* as persons who hire an employer or self-employed person on contract and direct their activities. Contractors' legal safety and health duties include:

- taking necessary precautions to ensure that activities and hazards within their control do not create a safety and health risk
- co-operating with other people on workplace safety and health matters.

Prime Contractors

Prime contractors are required on construction projects where more than one employer or self-employed person is involved. The legal safety and health responsibilities of prime contractors include:

- co-ordinating, organizing and overseeing work on the project to ensure the safety and health of workers and others who may be affected by activities on the project (including co-ordinating the safety and health programs of employers working on the project)
- setting up an effective system to ensure everyone working on the project fulfils their legal safety and health responsibilities
- co-operating with other people on workplace safety and health matters.

Self-Employed Persons

Self-employed persons are responsible for their own actions or inaction. Their legal safety and health duties include:

- taking necessary precautions to ensure their activities do not create a safety and health risk to themselves or others who may be affected by their activities
- co-operating with other people on workplace safety and health matters.

Owners

The owners of buildings or land used as a workplace have legal safety and health responsibilities that include:

- taking necessary precautions to ensure that property under their control does not create a risk to safety and health
- co-operating with other people on workplace safety and health matters.

Suppliers

The legal safety and health duties of suppliers include:

- taking necessary precautions to ensure that tools, equipment and other materials supplied to a workplace are safe when used according to instructions provided
- co-operating with other people on workplace safety and health matters.

Workplace Safety & Health Committees and Representatives

Committees and representatives play an important role by providing input and advice to employers on safety and health matters. However, they are not responsible for managing safety and health in the workplace.

- Employers are required to establish a safety and health committee in workplaces with 20 or more workers.
- In workplaces with 5 to 19 workers, employers are required to designate a worker as the safety and health representative.

(see next page)

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Publications and resources available at: safemanitoba.com





- Prime contractors are required to establish a project safety and health committee on construction projects expected to last more than 90 days where 20 or more workers are expected to work.
- All seasonal workplaces where 20 or more workers are expected to work for at least 90 days must have a safety and health committee.

The legal responsibilities of committees and representatives include:

- making safety and health recommendations to the employer
- dealing with the safety and health concerns of workers
- participating in the development and promotion of safety and health precautions, as well as safety and health education and training programs
- conducting regular workplace inspections
- conduct safety and health investigations
- co-operating with other people on workplace safety and health matters.

Reference to legal requirements under workplace safety and health legislation:

- Duties of Workplace Parties: Workplace Safety and Health Act W210 Parts 4, 5, 6 and 7

Additional workplace safety and health information available at: safemanitoba.com

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