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# health & safety 101 Resource Book



# Resource Book

This resource book is provided for use with the H&S 101 e-course available on the Internet at [www.hs101.ca](http://www.hs101.ca)

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5051A (07/05)

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## Part 1



## Safety Matters

# Part 1

# Safety Matters

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## Safety Matters

It's great to have a job and exciting to start a new one, but workplaces can be dangerous places. Injuries happen in all kinds of workplaces, but they don't have to.

### Be Aware

Every day in Ontario, workers like you are injured, made ill or killed on the job.

You may think it'll never happen to you but neither did Sarah. Sarah is just one of many workers between the ages of 15 to 24 that get injured on the job every day.

How common are these workplace accidents?

In 2004,

- About 850,000 young people were working
- Almost 50,000 were injured
- Over 13,000 were injured seriously enough to miss work

Between 2001 and 2004, 44 young workers were killed on the job.

Over 40 % of injuries to young workers occur in the service industry – restaurants, stores, hotels.

There's no single reason why so many young workers are getting hurt.

Here are a few possibilities:

1. **NOT ENOUGH TRAINING:** Since they might be employed on a temporary basis, filling in for summer vacations, or working in a very busy workplace, young workers may not receive proper training.
2. **NOT ENOUGH EXPERIENCE:** Workers new to a job, regardless of age, are not familiar with the new workplace's hazards and tend to have more injuries than experienced workers.
3. **DON'T KNOW THEIR LEGAL RIGHTS:** Young workers may not realize they have legal rights that protect their health and safety - the rights to know, participate and refuse unsafe work. They may also hesitate trying to exercise these rights.
4. **AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS:** Young workers may be embarrassed to ask questions or rock the boat. They do not want to appear incompetent by asking questions.
5. **TIRED FROM TRYING TO BALANCE WORK WITH SCHOOL AND OTHER ACTIVITIES:** Young workers may have to juggle their job with classes, homework and other activities.



Sarah Heyink was 19 and working for a heavy construction company. She received a serious electric shock when the boom of a truck struck the power lines above her. Even after a year of rehabilitation, she didn't fully recover and she expects things will get worse as she gets older.

Sarah's advice for other workers? –

"Too many times, people go for jobs just for the money. They go into the job without knowing a thing and they get hurt or even worse, killed. It doesn't matter if you're 16 or 45, you're still an employee and you have that right to ask your employer about safety. In fact, it's your responsibility to ask them. Ask them what the safety guidelines are and if there is safety training you can take."

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There's no single reason why so many young workers are getting hurt. Here are a few possibilities:

1. Not enough training: Since they might be employed on a temporary basis, filling in for summer vacations, or working in a very busy workplace, young workers may not receive proper training.
2. Not enough experience: Workers new to a job, regardless of age, are not familiar with the new workplace's hazards and tend to have more injuries than experienced workers.
3. Don't know their legal rights: Young workers may not realize they have legal rights that protect their health and safety - the rights to know, participate and refuse unsafe work. They may also hesitate trying to exercise these rights.
4. Afraid to ask questions: Young workers may be embarrassed to ask questions or rock the boat. They do not want to appear incompetent by asking questions.

#### **5. Tired from trying to balance work with school and other activities: Young**

workers may have to juggle their job with classes, homework and other activities.

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The costs of injury or illness can be high. If you are injured, you may miss special activities, sports and school. And there is a risk of permanent injury or death. Plus, getting hurt also affects your family, friends, employer, co-workers and community.

- Family and friends – it's very hard to see someone you love in pain or permanently disabled
- Employer - loss of a valuable employee will hurt production, productivity and reputation
- Co-workers - staff morale may drop and people may have to work harder if you're not there
- Community - you may not be able to take part in community events like sports or volunteer work

## Health and Safety Laws

Preventing workplace injuries is important to everyone. That's why the Ontario government has laws to protect the health and safety of workers.

The purpose of these laws is to prevent injury and illness and to create better places to work.

(The Government of Canada has similar laws for federal workplaces, but this resource book will only cover the details of Ontario's law).

Along with specific duties and responsibilities, the law also sets out general health and safety requirements for everyone in the workplace.

### THE LAW SETS OUT

- Your rights and responsibilities as a worker
- The responsibilities of your supervisors and employer
- The role of the government in enforcing the law
- Specific regulations for certain jobs or workplaces.

Under the law, everyone in the workplace has a role to play in preventing workplace injury and illness. This means workers, supervisors, employers, and worker representatives all have legal duties to keep their workplace safe and healthy. We call this system of health and safety duties the Internal Responsibility System (IRS).

#### Who's Covered

**OHSA:** Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act covers most workers in Ontario.

**Canada Labour Code:** Workers with the federal government or organizations such as airlines, banks, television stations, cable companies and railways are covered by the Canada Labour Code.

**Not covered:** OHSA does not cover farming operations or work performed by the owner, occupant or servant of the owner or occupant in a private residence and its property.

#### Who's who under the Law

- **Employer:** a person who employs one or more workers. In other words, he or she runs the business and pays your salary.
- **Supervisor:** a person who has authority over any worker or charge over a workplace. In other words, any person who can direct you on how or when to do your job.
- **Worker:** a person who is paid to perform work or supply services.
- **Worker Representative:** a co-worker who can speak to management about worker health and safety issues and help to resolve problems

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Here's an example of how the IRS might work:

A worker spots a health and safety problem and reports it to the boss. The boss lets all workers know of the hazard and then eliminates it. A worker representative looks at the area during a regular inspection to make sure the hazard is still eliminated.

Part of the Internal Responsibility System is the Joint Health and Safety Committee or Health and Safety Representative.

- Workplaces with 6-19 workers must have a Health and Safety Representative
- Workplaces with 20 or more workers must have a Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC).
- Any workplace where a Designated Substance Regulation applies must have a JHSC, regardless of the number of workers in the workplace.
- Generally, construction sites with 20 or more workers are required to have a JHSC only if the project is expected to last more than 3 months.

At least one-half of the members of the committee must be worker members, chosen by their co-workers or union. In workplaces where 20 or more workers are employed, at least one worker and one management member must receive training to become Certified Members of the committee.

Health and Safety Representatives and Joint Health and Safety Committee Members can speak to management about your health and safety concerns. They will also

- Identify hazards in the workplace
- Try to help solve health and safety issues
- Do regular inspections of the workplace
- Obtain information from the employer
- Recommend changes to make the workplace safer and healthier
- Investigate serious accidents and fatalities

You should find out what regulations apply to your work.

#### Safety Regulations

- Construction Projects
- Industrial Establishments
- Mines and Mining Plants
- Health Care and Residential Facilities
- Window Cleaning
- Diving Operations
- Firefighters-Protective Equipment
- Oil and Gas-Offshore
- Roll-Over Protective Structures
- Teachers
- University Academics and Teaching Assistants

#### Training Regulations

- Training Requirements for Certain Skill Sets and Trades
- Training Programs

#### Designated Substances Regulations

- Acrylonitrile
- Arsenic
- Asbestos
- Asbestos on Construction Projects and in Buildings and Repair Operations
- Benzene
- Coke Oven Emissions
- Ethylene Oxide
- Isocyanates
- Lead
- Mercury
- Silica
- Vinyl Chloride

#### General Regulations

- Biological or Chemical Agents, Control of Exposure
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System

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## Ministry of Labour

The Ontario Ministry of Labour (MOL) enforces the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its regulations.

MOL Inspectors can enter any workplace covered by the OHSA at any time.

The MOL can also

- Lay charges against companies or people breaking the law
- Inspect workplaces
- Issue orders and stop unsafe work
- Investigate serious accidents, fatalities or work refusals
- Look for violations of health and safety laws and regulations

When health and safety laws are broken, there are penalties to pay. A person can be fined up to \$25,000 for every charge laid under OHSA and/or serve 12 months in jail.

A corporation can be fined up to \$500,000 for each violation if convicted.

### David's Story



David Ellis, 18, of Burlington, Ontario was removing cookie dough from an industrial mixer when the mixer started running. David was pulled into the mixer by the blades and struck his head. He was taken to hospital where he died six days later. It was David's second day on the job.

The company David was working for pleaded guilty to failing to ensure that the exposed moving parts of the mixer were guarded, contrary to Section 24 of the Regulation For Industrial Establishments and Section 25(1)(a) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. The company was fined \$82,500.

Two of the company's supervisors also pleaded guilty to failing to ensure that the exposed moving parts of the mixer were guarded, contrary to Section 24 of the Regulation For Industrial Establishments and Section 27(1)(a) of the Act. The two men were co-owners and directors of the company.

One was jailed for 20 days and the other fined \$7,500.

Source: Ministry of Labour

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### Minimum Ages

The Occupational Health and Safety Act and its Regulations set the minimum ages for different kinds of work:

- 18 years of age for Underground Mines
- 16 years of age at a Mining Plant or Surface Mine
- 18 years of age for Window Cleaning
- 16 years of age for Construction and Logging Operations
- 15 years of age for Factory Operations and Repair Shops
- 14 years of age for all other industrial establishments.

14 and 15-year olds may not be employed during school hours unless they are excused from school attendance under the Education Act, Ontario Regulation 308, "Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Students".

There are currently no minimum age requirements for health care establishments, libraries, museums, golf courses or schools.

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**Part 2**



**Safety  
Roles**



# **Part 2**

# **Safety Roles**