

On Occupational Health and Safety

Big Changes for Workers After Job Hazard Analysis

For over a decade, childcare workers at Day Nursery Centre in Winnipeg would stoop over to change children's diapers on a short wooden bench, at least 20 times a day. But now, thanks to an assessment done by their health and safety committee, they have a change table designed for childcare centres. Toddlers now walk up steps to a change table that is at waist height for adults.

Workers at Day Nursery Centre had been complaining of aches and pains and some had filed workers compensation claims. The Day Nursery Centre's workplace health and safety committee is responsible to assess the hazards in their workplace. But Cassandra Fines, one of the members of the committee, says they weren't sure how to do this assessment.

With help from the Occupational Health Centre, Fines says they decided to use a job hazard analysis. In a job hazard analysis each basic step of a job is examined to identify potential hazards and determine the safest way

to do the job (see flowchart, pg 3). Any workplace can use a job hazard analysis to examine hazards particular to their workplace.

The workplace health and safety committee at Day Nursery Centre completed a job hazard analysis of 21 different jobs. They looked for all types of hazards including ergonomic hazards, infectious diseases, and the risk of violence.

"It's empowering to know that you can be part of making changes for your coworkers," Fines says. Day Nursery Centre management has followed through on the health and safety committee's recommendations. While a lack of resources limits the amount of new equipment they can purchase, they now provide workers

with personal alarms when working alone, adult-sized chairs, and extenders to help clean child-sized tables without bending over.

Fines says it was hard to find the time for committee members to sit and observe workers perform each job so they could identify each step and its hazards. But she credits the management

of the Day Nursery Centre for providing substitute childcare workers while committee members completed this work.

Fines believes they were successful completing the job hazard analysis because the committee received a great deal of training in the process and had a say in deciding to use a job hazard analysis in the first place. Fines thinks it would not have worked out so well if they were given tight deadlines or orders.



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New Workplace Health & Safety Laws Now In Effect

Health & safety committees in Manitoba need to be familiar with a new set of workplace health and safety laws. The Manitoba government's new workplace safety and health regulation took effect on February 1, 2007.

The regulation is an important part of Manitoba's laws on workplace health and safety. The regulation clearly outlines specific duties and responsibilities in a number of areas.

Highlights of the regulation include:

Pregnant or Nursing workers

Pregnant or Nursing workers must be informed of any risk in the workplace to them or their unborn or nursing child. An employer must take steps to reduce the risk or assign the worker to alternative work.

Musculoskeletal injuries (MSI) - also called Repetitive Strain Injuries

Employers must conduct a risk assessment in consultation with the health and safety committee or representative if the risk of a musculoskeletal injury is

- known to be present
- is reasonably obvious
- has been identified

If the assessment identifies that workers are at risk of a musculoskeletal injury, the employer must implement measures to reduce this risk.

Violence and Harassment in the Workplace

All employers must develop a harassment policy. Employers are also required to identify and assess the risk of violence and inform workers about the risk. When a risk for violence is identified, a policy must be developed and followed.

Hearing Conservation and Noise Control

- Employers must conduct a noise exposure assessment where a worker is likely to be exposed to noise levels over 80 decibels of sound.
- Hearing protectors must be provided to workers if requested when they are exposed to between 80 and 85 decibels of sound.
- Employers must reduce noise or ensure that hearing protectors and warning signs are mandatory if workers are exposed to noise levels over 85 decibels of sound.
- The employer must provide annual hearing tests to workers who are exposed to noise levels over 85 decibels of sound.

Asbestos

A plan to deal with asbestos must be developed and followed. An inventory of all material containing asbestos in a workplace must be completed. All material containing asbestos must be identified by signs or labels. Workers who may be exposed to material that contains asbestos must receive information and training.

Health Care Facilities

Safe work procedures must be developed for

- infectious materials
- waste and laundry
- patient handling
- lasers

Other areas of the new regulation include Radiation, Confined Space, Fall Protection, Excavations, Machine, Equipment and Tool Safety, Firefighters, Oil and Gas, and Diving Operations.

For a copy of the new regulation call Workplace Safety and Health Division at 945-0767 or go to www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/actreg.html

Upcoming Events

Saskatchewan Labour presents Work-Family Balance and Labour Force Shortages

March 14 & 15, 2007, Saskatoon
Cost: \$354 (corporate/government) \$150 (community organizations, small business, individuals) \$42 (non-wage/student) For more information go to www.workandfamilybalance.com

Day of Mourning for workers killed and injured on the job - Candelight Memorial Service & Vigil
10:30 am, Saturday, April 28, 2007
Union Centre, 275 Broadway

Manitoba Federation of Labour - Health and Safety Conference - "Strategies for Safety"

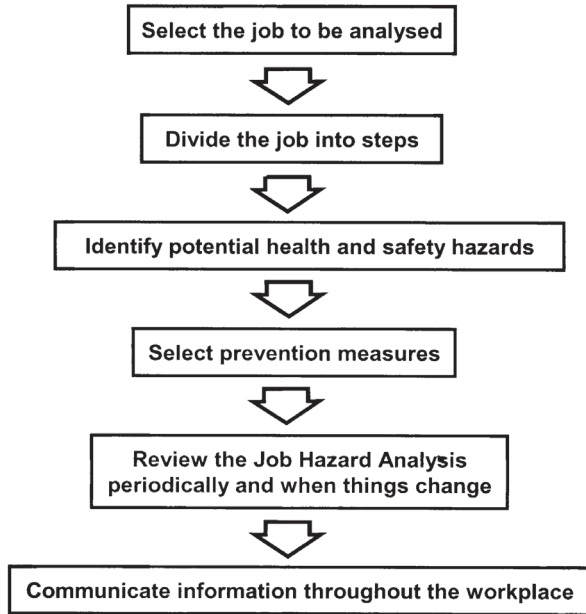
May 10 & 11, 2007
Winnipeg Convention Centre
For more information call 947-1400

Workplace Safety & Health Division presents the following courses from February to June 2007

SAFE Committee Basics
Keep Your Workplace Safe
Investigating Workplace Accidents
Chemical & Biological Hazard Control
Control of Risks for Musculoskeletal Injury
Supervisor & SAFE Work

Free registration for all of the above courses.
For more information call 945-3610 or go to www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety - select "Committee Training"

**Job Hazard Analysis
Flowchart**



Workers have also had a chance to see the many changes and improvements made because of the job hazard analysis work.

Fines adds “It’s very satisfying when I look across the room and see my coworkers using the new equipment we recommended.”

Day Nursery Centre has also compiled a 15 minute video on their health and safety work that can be used by others in the child care field.

If your workplace health and safety committee would like help with a job hazard analysis, contact Diane Gagnon at the Occupational Health Centre, 926-7904.

Dick Martin Award recipients



Les Ellsworth, Harry Mesman, and Ellen Olfert were each presented the Dick Martin Award in November 2006 at the Occupational Health Centre’s Annual General Meeting.

This award, presented every three years, honours the memory of Dick Martin and recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to protect the health and well being of Manitoba workers. All three recipients of the award demonstrate an outstanding commitment to workplace health and safety, as exemplified by Dick Martin.

Dick Martin, president of the Manitoba Federation of Labour at the time, was instrumental in establishing the MFL Occupational Health Centre which opened in Spring 1983. Dick Martin made occupational health and safety a priority for workers until his death in 2001.

did you know...?

Five Canadian workers die every day from workplace accidents and diseases.

Deaths from illnesses such as cancer, asbestos-related diseases and others count for half of all work-related fatalities in Canada.

Source: Centre for the Study of Living Standards, December 2006

**I want
to help!**

I will support the Occupational Health Centre to help Manitobans protect their health and safety at work.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Prov _____

Postal Code _____

Please make your cheque payable to the
MFL Occupational Health Centre
102-275 Broadway
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 4M6



Check out this website!

Ergonomics
U.S. Department of Labor
Occupational Health & Safety
Administration (OSHA)

<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/ergonomics/>

This website offers examples of ergonomic solutions to reduce repetitive strain injuries at work. It includes e-tools and success stories submitted by actual workplaces. OSHA also has posted their industry-specific guidelines for poultry processing, retail grocery stores and nursing homes that may be instructive for these types of workplaces in Manitoba.

Let us know about your favourite health and safety related website! Email your suggestions to khamilton@mflohc.mb.ca



Do you have an article, information or story about workplace health and safety that you want to share?

We reserve the right to edit. Send your newsletter contributions for "Focus on Occupational Health and Safety" to Karen Hamilton at khamilton@mflohc.mb.ca or fax: 956-0848

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OHC's public presentation series

OHC's popular Tuesday morning public presentations on workplace health and safety issues will be starting up again soon!

Public presentations will be held the first Tuesday of the month in March, April, May and June. Presentations run from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. For more information on presentation topics call Pat Hebert at 926-7907, email phebert@mflohc.mb.ca or go to www.mflohc.mb.ca

The MFL Occupational Health Centre (OHC) is a community health centre focussed on promoting the health of Manitoba workers. We are a non-profit, charitable organization funded by the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and by donations from individuals and unions. We are committed to working with all Manitobans who are interested in creating safer and healthier workplaces.

The OHC provides the following services to Manitobans:

- **medical services to help you find out if your job is making you sick**
- **education and assistance to workplace health and safety committees to identify and resolve health and safety problems.**
- **special initiatives with immigrant and Aboriginal communities**
- **information and library services, Monday to Friday from 9 am to 5 pm**

Healthy Workplaces Healthy Workers Healthy Communities

