

CAUT Health and Safety Fact Sheet



Reporting Workplace Hazards Fact Sheet

ISSUE 30

Workers are legally required to report hazards in their workplace, under provincial and federal occupational health and safety legislation. This is one of the four pillars on which safe work places are assured – the other three are the Right to Know about workplace hazards, the Right to Participate in workplace health and safety through their Joint Health & Safety Committee (JHSC), and the Right to Refuse Unsafe Work when there is reasonable cause to believe that working with or around something in the workplace may be unsafe to a worker or others. Reporting known or suspected hazards to the employer and the JHSC enables all three Rights to function effectively for the benefit of workers and others at the worksite.

The employer, in consultation with the JHSC and workers, is responsible for ensuring that there are proactive, preventative, and effective health and safety systems and programs,. The JHSC is responsible for identifying workplace hazards, training needs for committee members and workers, and making recommendations to the employer on how to most effectively approach and resolve hazardous conditions at work. Workers need to be the “eyes and ears” on the frontline for both the employer and the JHSC to assist with the identification of known or potential hazards.

It is essential for academic staff to work with their academic staff association and its members on the JHSC to develop practical and timely reporting mechanisms.

Why Report

Occupational health and safety legislation requires workers to report known or suspected workplace hazards to their supervisors and JHSC's. Workers know their work and its hazards best because they perform the work on a day-to-day basis. JHSC's depend on the knowledge of workers to inform and educate them on work processes and stressors, potential safety concerns and suggestions for improvements.

Who to Report to – Step 1

Workers must report health and safety concerns to their supervisors and JHSC members as soon as they are known so that they can be investigated and resolved promptly. Ensure you know who your supervisor is for health and safety and who your JHSC members are. Most jurisdictions require JHSC member name and contact information to be posted on health and safety bulletin boards. Contact your academic staff association for the names and contact information for your JHSC member(s) if it is not available in the workplace.

Workers
know their
work and
its hazards
best

For more information:

Laura Lozanski
Health and Safety Officer
CAUT
Tel.: (613) 820-2270
Fax: (613) 820-7244
Email: lozanski@caut.ca

Published by the

**Canadian Association
of University Teachers**
2705 Queensview Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K2B 8K2
www.caut.ca

OCTOBER 2012

CAUT

You can contact any worker JHSC member if your association's JHSC member is not available.

The Academic Staff Association Connection – Step 2

After you have reported health and safety concerns to your supervisor and JHSC members as per the occupational health and safety act (OSHA) in your jurisdiction, you should forward these concerns directly to your academic staff association.

Academic staff associations/unions need to know health and safety issues and trends in the workplace if they are to assist their members with effective safety prevention.

Reporting health and safety issues directly to the association is essential to building a broader awareness of hazards, accidents, injuries and occupational diseases in the workplace. Your academic staff association worker JHSC members, its executives and

its general memberships can develop stronger strategies when information is compiled in a comprehensive and systematic way. Contact your association/union and JHSC members to ensure it has a well-developed reporting plan.

Principles of Control

Using the principles of control while performing your work will be helpful in identifying known or potential hazards that should be reported.

The three major principles for controlling workplace hazards are at the source, along the path and at the worker¹. Controlling at the source of the hazard is the most effective method, as it can eliminate or reduce hazard exposure, or allow for a safer substitution. Controlling hazards along the path between the hazard and the worker, and then at the worker is less ideal but may sometimes be necessary. In this case, extra precautions and training must be instituted.

How to Report

Occupational health and safety acts identify the need to report promptly, but sometimes do not provide a practical tool to do so. The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety (CCOHS) has a sample hazard report form² that workers could use to report a hazard, including suggested corrective action.

Ask your JHSC member what reporting mechanisms are available at your institution. Reporting by a hardcopy or e-mail form is preferable to verbal reporting as there is a record for the worker, the supervisor and the JHSC, and the issue will be less likely to be missed or overlooked. Detailed and accurate reports also help the employer and the JHSC to look for trends and patterns in health and safety issues and address them in a more efficient manner.

Resources

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety www.ccohs.ca

Provincial and Federal Occupational Health & Safety Acts and Regulations

Workers Health & Safety Centre
www.whsc.on.ca

Notes

1 Workers Health & Safety Centre
www.whsc.on.ca

2 CCOHS
www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms/report.htm?print



REQUIREMENT FOR WORKER REPORTING OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY ACT OR REGULATION SECTIONS

Alberta *OHSA Regulation	14(2) A worker must immediately report to the employer, equipment that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) is in a condition that will compromise the health or safety of workers using or transporting it, (b) will not perform the function for which it is intended or was designed, (c) is not strong enough for its purpose, or (d) has an obvious defect.
British Columbia *OHSA	116(1) Every worker must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (e) report to the supervisor or employer (i) any contravention of this Part, the regulations or an applicable order of which the worker is aware, and (ii) the absence of or defect in any protective equipment, device or clothing, or the existence of any other hazard, that the worker considers is likely to endanger the worker or any other person
Federal *Canada Labour Code Part II	126(1) While at work, every employee shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (g) report to the employer any thing or circumstance in a work place that is likely to be hazardous to the health or safety of the employee, or that of the other employees or other persons granted access to the work place by the employer; (h) report in the prescribed manner every accident or other occurrence arising in the course of or in connection with the employee's work that has caused injury to the employee or to any other person; (i) report to the employer any situation that the employee believes to be a contravention of this Part by the employer, another employee or any other person.
Manitoba *OHSA	Implied through: <p>5. Every worker while at work shall, in accordance with the objects and purposes of this Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) take reasonable care to protect his safety and health and the safety and health of other persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work;
New Brunswick *OHSA	12. Every employee shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (c) report to the employer the existence of any hazard of which he is aware;
Newfoundland	17 (3) A worker shall immediately report a hazardous work condition that may come to his or her attention to the employer or supervisor.
Nova Scotia *OHSA	17 (2) Where an employee believes that any condition, device, equipment, machine, material or thing or any aspect of the workplace is or may be dangerous to the employee's health or safety or that of any other person at the workplace, the employee shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) immediately report it to a supervisor; (b) where the matter is not remedied to the employee's satisfaction, report it to the committee or the representative, if any; and (c) where the matter is not remedied to the employee's satisfaction after the employee reports in accordance with clauses (a) and (b), report it to the Division.

Ontario *OHSA	<p>28 (1) A worker shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (c) report to his or her employer or supervisor the absence of or defect in any equipment or protective device of which the worker is aware and which may endanger himself, herself or another worker; and (d) report to his or her employer or supervisor any contravention of this Act or the regulations or the existence of any hazard of which he or she knows.
PEI *OHSA	<p>16 (2) Where a worker believes that any item, device, material, equipment or machinery, condition or aspect of the workplace is or may be dangerous to the worker's occupational health or safety or that of other persons at or near the workplace, the worker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) shall immediately report it to a supervisor; (b) shall, where the matter is not remedied to the worker's satisfaction, report it to the committee or the representative, if any; and (c) may, where the matter is not remedied to the worker's satisfaction after the worker reports it in accordance with clauses (a)and (b), report it to an officer.
Québec *OHSA Regulation	<p>49. A worker must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (5) participate in the identification and elimination of risks of work accidents or occupational diseases at his workplace;
Saskatchewan *OHSA Regulation	<p>Maintenance and repair of equipment</p> <p>25(3) A worker who knows or has reason to believe that equipment under the worker's control is not in a safe condition shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) immediately report the condition of the equipment to the employer; and (b) repair the equipment if the worker is authorized and competent to do so.