

2008-03

March 31, 2008

By E-mail: 5 pages plus attachment

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OH&S Survey 2008 Highlights

Thank you for taking the time to complete the OH&S Survey. Of the 80 responses received:

- 47.9% of respondents categorized BCPSEA Health, Safety and Wellness Services as practical. This was followed closely by timely (43.8%) and accessible (41.1%).
- 11.0% categorized the services as slow and impractical.
- 73% of respondents are responsible for health and safety. However, only 40% of respondents devoted more than 25% of their time to health and safety.
- Respondents overwhelmingly prefer to access resources online, with online resources and online training topping the list.
- The topic considered most important is a health and safety program (66.7%). Violence in the workplace ranked a close second for 62.2% of respondents.
- In terms of BCPSEA training/resources/assistance, 62.2% of respondents believe health and safety best practices would be the most valuable.

Full details of the survey results will be made available once all of the data have been analyzed. Thanks again to all those who completed the survey. The results will be invaluable in shaping our direction going forward.

Changes to the WorkSafeBC OH&S Guidelines

WorkSafeBC has recently released a number of OH&S Guideline changes. The following guidelines were updated or amended:

- G7.18(1) Exposure limits – Using the ACGIH standard
- G7.28(2) Clothing correction values
- G7.29-4 Heat Stress Assessment using a dry bulb thermometer or Humidex Index
- G-D10-172-1 Board notification of serious injuries

Full text of the Guideline changes is included in the attachments to this bulletin.

Once the *Humidex* value has been determined, the appropriate response can be implemented using the Heat Response Plan table shown below (Table 2).

The response varies depending on the category of work being carried out (light, moderate or heavy) and whether the work is acclimatized to working in a hot environment. The WorkSafeBC guideline defines an unacclimatized worker as a worker who is not accustomed to working in a hot environment or who has been out of a hot environment for seven consecutive days. It may take several days for workers to become acclimatized. In most areas in British Columbia, workers will not become acclimatized to working in a hot environment.

Table 2: Humidex Based Heat Response Plan

Humidex 1 Moderate unacclimatized & Heavy acclimatized	Response	Humidex 2 Moderate acclimatized & Light unacclimatized
25 - 29	Supply water to workers on an "as needed" basis.	32 - 35
30 - 33	Post Heat Stress Alert notice; encourage workers to drink extra water; start recording hourly temperature and relative humidity.	36 - 39
34 - 37	Post Heat Stress Warning notice; notify workers that they need to drink extra water; ensure workers are trained to recognize symptoms.	40 - 42
38 - 39	Work with 15 minutes relief per hour can continue; provide adequate cool (10-15°C) water; at least one cup (240 mL) of water every 20 minutes. Worker with symptoms should seek medical attention.	43 - 44
40 - 41	Work with 30 minutes relief per hour can continue in addition to the provisions listed previously.	45 - 46
42 - 44	If feasible, work with 45 minutes relief per hour can continue in addition to the provisions listed above.	47 - 49
45 or over	Only medically supervised work can continue.	50 or over

Keep in mind that these are only guidelines and anyone exhibiting signs of heat stress should be treated without delay, notwithstanding the Humidex value you have measured.

Guideline G-D10-172-1 *Board notification of serious injuries*

Employers are required to report serious injuries and fatalities to WorkSafeBC immediately. This reporting should occur as part of the employers' response at the time of the incident.

The categorization of what is or is not a serious injury has always been very subjective. Further, WorkSafeBC provided little guidance in terms of defining what constitutes a serious injury.

In light of this, WorkSafeBC has amended the guideline to provide more specific examples of serious and traumatic injuries that must be reported to WorkSafeBC immediately.

WorkSafeBC considers the following traumatic injuries to be “serious injuries”:

- Major fractures or crush injuries, such as
 - A fracture of the skull, spine, or pelvis
 - Multiple, open or compound fractures, or fractures to major bones such as the humerus, fibula or tibia, or radius or ulna
 - Crushing injuries to the trunk, head or neck, or multiple crush injuries
- An amputation, at the time of the accident, of an arm or leg or amputation of a major part of a hand or foot
- Penetrating injuries to eye, head, neck, chest, abdomen, or groin
- An accident that caused significant respiratory compromise, or punctured lung
- Circulatory shock (i.e., internal hemorrhage) or injury to any internal organ
- Lacerations that cause severe hemorrhages
- All burns that meet the rapid transport criteria of the Occupational First Aid Training Manual, including
 - Third degree burns to more than 30% of the body surface
 - Third degree burns to the face, head, or neck
 - Burns of any degree with complications
- An asphyxiation or poisoning resulting in a partial or total loss of physical control (i.e., loss of consciousness of a worker in a confined space) or a respiratory rate of fewer than 10 breaths per minute or severe dyspnea (difficult or laboured breathing)
- Decompression illness, or lung over-pressurization during or after a dive or any incident of near drowning
- Traumatic injury which is likely to result in a loss of
 - Sight
 - Hearing
 - Touch
- **“Immediately”**

WorkSafeBC has not provided a specific time frame or clear definition of what is meant by reporting “immediately.” Instead, they have provided a series of steps that should be performed prior to reporting a serious injury or fatality to WorkSafeBC. The steps are as follows:

1. Employers should ensure any workplace conditions that present an immediate hazard to other workers are addressed
2. Employers should ensure first aid and medical treatment for the injured worker
3. Then the Employer should notify WorkSafeBC of the incident.

Filing a Form 7 will not satisfy an Employer’s obligation to immediately report a serious injury or fatality.

To report a serious injury or fatality, phone 1.888.621.SAFE (7233) during business hours or call toll-free 1.866.WCB.HELP (922-4357) after hours.

Coming Attractions

Start today – Live it Every Day is the theme for this year's North American Occupational Health and Safety week to be held May 4th to 10th, 2008. The goal: to focus employers, employees, partners and the public on the importance of preventing injury and illness in the workplace, at home and in the community.

For more information, resources and events, please visit www.naosh.ca.

Questions

If you:

- wish to suggest any topics you would like discussed in an *OH&S Issues* bulletin, or
- have any questions on the information provided in this bulletin or on any other occupational health, safety and wellness issue

please contact Mark Grabas at 604.730.4509 or markg@bcpsea.bc.ca.

Attachment