

Happy New Year! Make workplace safety your 2013 resolution

As we head back to work or school after some time off for the winter holidays, many of us have made resolutions to help make 2013 our best year yet. While many of these resolutions tend to centre around well-being, such as getting fit or spending more time with friends and family, few of us take the time to think about how we could make more of an effort to ensure our own health and safety on the job. This year, why not make the resolution to make workplace safety more of a priority in your life? Whether you are working part-time after school or starting your career, health and safety should always come first. Not only will you be ensuring your own safety, but you will be paying it forward by helping to make the workplace safer for others as well!

Here are some tips for making workplace safety a priority:

1. **Take a moment to review your three basic rights as an employee:**

These rights are:

- The right to know about workplace hazards, and to receive training on how to do your job safely.
 - The right to participate in solving health and safety problems at your workplace.
 - The right to refuse dangerous work: "An employee may refuse to do any act at his place of employment where he has reasonable grounds for believing that the act is likely to endanger his health or safety or the health or safety of any other employee." (Section 19 of the *OHS Act*)
2. **Ask questions:** Have you been wondering about the safety of certain tasks at your job, or have you noticed something at work that you think might be a safety hazard? Speak up! Make a resolution to communicate more with your employer about your health and safety questions and concerns.
3. **Take some time to check your personal protective equipment (PPE) for wear and tear:** Are your safety boots worn? Can you still see clearly through the lenses of your safety glasses? Start the year off right by ensuring your PPE is effective and properly fitted.
4. **Resolve to do away with distractions:** Do you gossip with co-workers while performing your duties, or text your friends in between tasks? These types of activities take your concentration away from the task at hand, which can increase your chance of having a workplace accident. Save those chats for break time, and keep your cellphone in a locker or a drawer to ensure you aren't tempted to text or tweet.
5. **Add WorkSafeNB to your phone contacts:** It's important to know who to contact if you have any workplace health and safety questions or concerns. Don't hesitate to call WorkSafeNB's toll-free number (1 800 222-9775) if you would like to know more. You can also email our youth programs co-ordinator at youth.coordinator@ws-ts.nb.ca.

Best wishes for a healthy and SAFE new year!

