

# SAFETY TALK

[safety is everyone's business]

The *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act* and many health and safety regulations list responsibilities that belong to workers. For a workplace to have a strong and sustainable health and safety culture, everyone has a part to play.

In New Brunswick, workers have responsibilities through the *OHS Act*. By law, workers must do the following:

- **Comply with the *Act*, the regulations or any order made in accordance with this *Act*.**  
This means you must follow safe work procedures and respect rules in the law for such things as lock out, fall arrest and respiratory protection, to name just a few.
- **Conduct themselves to ensure their health and safety as well as that of other persons working in or near the place of employment.**  
A good example of this is work done by forklift and crane operators. It's easy to understand how the unsafe work practices of a crane operator can put many people at a worksite in harm's way.
- **Report to the employer the existence of any hazard of which they are aware.**  
You can do a lot to make your workplace safer. This includes things like basic housekeeping and removing tripping hazards. If the issue is greater than the your scope or area of responsibility, you still have a **legal obligation** to inform your supervisor of the issue. This includes the very important matter of reporting close calls and near misses.

Remember: the hazard that is reported, identified and corrected can prevent an accident and save lots of pain, trouble and cost. Correct what you can and report the rest.

- **Wear or use such protective equipment as is required.**  
This means that wearing your hardhat, safety boots, reflective vest, fall arrest harness, and other protective equipment is **not optional**. The boss should not have to be after you to respect this...it's the law, and you are held responsible to do this.

- **Consult and cooperate with the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) or the safety representative.**

To comply with this rule, you should bring unresolved safety issues forward to your JHSC representative. You should also participate in and assist with health and safety activities when they happen in your workplace.

Example: Your contribution during inspections or accident investigations. You have intimate and very precious hands-on knowledge of the work being done and the tools being used, and your contribution is essential.

- **Co-operate with any person responsible for the enforcement of the Act or regulations.**

When Health and Safety Officers visit workplaces, they can and do leave orders with workers. It is then your responsibility to respect these orders.

It is only by working together that we can make workplaces safer.  
Look out for your safety, and look out for your buddy.