

NOISE CHEMICALS

HEAT



BACTERIA

COLD

young workers:

keeping them safe from exposure to

workplace hazards

an employer's guide

WORK SAFE BC

WORKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

help them recognize hazards in the workplace – and remember: unseen dangers hurt, too!

Young workers face many hazards in their jobs. Sometimes the hazards are obvious, but sometimes young workers may not even see the dangers that can make them sick. Chemical fumes and vapours, noise, and airborne particles can present serious exposure risks that could affect their health now and potentially years or even decades down the road.

This document offers strategies and resources to help you keep your young and most vulnerable workers safe from exposure-related illness.

WHY FOCUS ON YOUNG WORKERS?

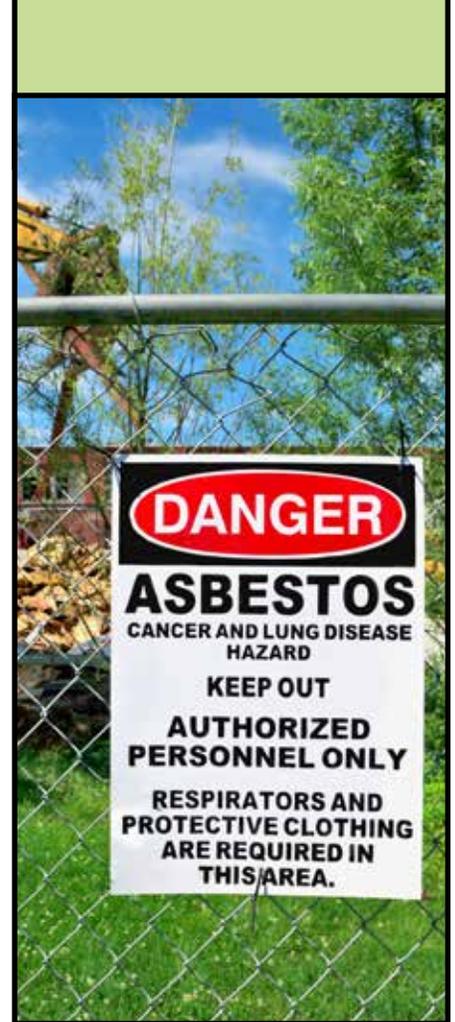
don't all workers need protection from exposure hazards?

As an employer, you're required to ensure a healthy and safe workplace for all of your workers. But young workers have specific needs. Being both young and new to the workplace, they may lack experience, knowledge of hazards, and a full understanding of the consequences of being exposed to hazards. Research shows that youth don't reach full cognitive development until about 22 years of age, which may help explain why they don't always make the link between occupational exposures and health consequences. This underlines the importance of the role you play in making sure your young workers are protected from exposure hazards.

Improve young worker awareness of health and safety hazards as well as workplace rights and responsibilities by:

- > Encouraging them to ask questions
- > Providing more training if necessary
- > Ensuring that they're properly protected from hazards

To learn more about personal protective equipment, visit www2.worksafefbc.com/Topics/PPE/Home.asp.



PROTECT

GIVE YOUNG WORKERS A SAFE \$TART

PROTECT YOUR YOUNG WORKERS

- > Evaluate your workplace to identify exposure hazards. Depending on the type of hazard, you may need to develop an exposure control plan.
- > Train and orient young workers so they're aware of the hazards and how to avoid exposure.
- > Ensure that young workers are aware of their rights and responsibilities.
- > Ensure that young workers know the consequences of occupational exposure – the immediate and long-term consequences, particularly for hazards that have a long latency period, such as asbestos.
- > Encourage young workers to ask questions.
- > Follow the hierarchy of exposure controls (substitution, engineering controls, administrative controls, personal protective equipment). Personal protective equipment should only be used as a last resort, or in conjunction with other controls.
- > Reinforce the importance of exposure hazard awareness through safety meetings.

TRAINING AND ORIENTATION ARE ESSENTIAL...THEY'RE ALSO REQUIRED BY LAW

Sections 3.22 to 3.25 of the Regulation specify what's required of employers who hire young workers (less than 25 years of age) or new workers (new to your jobsite or facing new hazards or procedures). If you hire young workers, ensure that training and orientation are carried out before they begin work. There are 13 topics you must include in training and orientation. You must also provide additional training and orientation if the worker needs or requests it. You must be able to present documentation of training and orientation to WorkSafeBC upon request. For full details, and to see a sample orientation checklist, visit www2.worksafebc.com/Topics/YoungWorker/Home.asp.

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T YOUR YOUNG WORKERS

WHY IT MATTERS

It matters because workers are getting sick and dying.

You need to protect young workers now to save them from diseases later. Many people who are ill or dying of occupational diseases today were exposed to hazards when they were young. Last year, 148,000 work days were lost as a result of occupational diseases, which accounted for 2,610 claims. The majority of these were from diseases related to asbestos and silica dust exposure. Over the past five years, on average, more than 50 people have died each year from work-related asbestos exposure, which makes it the **number one occupational killer**.



TRAINING
PROTECT

requirements that address EXPOSURE

The following parts of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation and accompanying guidelines list your responsibilities with regard to occupational exposures and provide guidance to eliminate, reduce, or manage workers' exposure risk. You'll find the complete Regulation online at www2.worksafebc.com/Publications/OHSRegulation/Home.asp.

- > **Part 5: Chemical Agents and Biological Agents** (flammable and combustible substances, controlling exposure, ventilation, internal combustion engines, emergency procedures)
- > **Part 5 Guidelines** (details on safe handling of chemicals, hierarchy of controls, ventilation, exposure control plans, plus a table of exposure limits for chemical and biological substances)
- > **Part 6: Substance Specific Requirements** (asbestos, biological agents, cytotoxic drugs, lead, pesticides, rock dust, toxic process gases)
- > **Part 7: Noise, Vibration, Radiation and Temperature** (hazards associated with these kinds of exposures)
- > **Part 8: Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment** (definitions; general requirements; high visibility and distinguishing apparel; respirators, eye and skin protection)
- > **Part 9: Confined Spaces** (confined spaces, definitions, lockout and control of harmful substances, ventilation)
- > **Part 9 Guidelines** (details on verification and testing, including definitions, hazard assessment, and work procedures)
- > **Part 12: Tools, Machinery and Equipment** (abrasive blasting and high pressure washing; welding, cutting, and allied processes; painting, coating, and work with plastics and resins; laundry and dry cleaning activities)
- > **Part 20: Construction, Excavation and Demolition** (concrete pumping, hazardous materials, notice of project)
- > **Part 20 Guidelines** (details on hazardous materials, including asbestos, and notice of project)
- > **Part 21: Blasting Operations** (storage, handling explosives)
- > **Part 22: Underground Workings** (working requirements, gassy underground workings)
- > **Part 23: Oil and Gas** (general requirements)
- > **Part 28: Agriculture** (general conditions, hazardous substances)
- > **Part 30: Laboratories** (general requirements, specific substances and procedures)



DON'T DOWNPLAY THE DANGER OF NOISE

Hearing loss is common in environments where there's excessive noise – typically at or above 85dBA. If there's a lot of noise in your workplace, provide workers with proper hearing protection. iPods and other portable devices can also be dangerous at work. As well as potentially causing hearing impairment, they can distract workers from the sounds of approaching machinery, alarms, sirens, or warnings from other workers.

a matter of perception – and how you can **change it**



Your young workers may be required to work around chemicals, in loud public or industrial settings, or in environments where they may be exposed to airborne particles, such as asbestos, silica dust, lead, mould, bacteria, or viruses. You probably know the elements that present exposure risks to your workers, but if your workers are young, they may not know or understand the risks. They may also have a different perspective about how exposures affect them. Some common misconceptions are that only older people need to worry about exposure-related diseases, some risks are just part of the job, and being exposed only once or twice isn't going to hurt them. You have a leadership role in your workplace and the power to improve young workers' knowledge and awareness of exposure hazards.



TOOLS FOR SAFETY TALKS

The following are some WorkSafeBC resources that may help you educate and train young workers.

APPRENTICESHIP PORTAL

This site provides trade- and topic-specific health and safety resources that you can use in safety meetings or to help improve the knowledge and awareness of young workers and apprentices. Visit the portal at www2.worksafebc.com/Topics/Apprenticeships/Home.asp.

6-MINUTE SAFETY TALKS

Designed to help you deliver a short safety meeting, these are available for a number of topics. Each topic includes an employer/instructor guide and young worker/student handout. Go to www2.worksafebc.com/Topics/YoungWorker/ApprenticeshipPrograms.asp.

Topics include:

- > Asbestos
- > Battery Safety (Automotive)
- > Biohazards
- > Bloodborne Pathogens
- > Exposure to Airborne Contaminants
- > Latex Allergies
- > Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
- > Noise Exposure
- > Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- > WHMIS

TOOLBOX MEETING GUIDES

Download the following ready-made meeting guides on exposure-related subjects and on rights and responsibilities at www2.worksafebc.com/Portals/Construction/ToolboxMeetingGuides-Index.asp.

- > Health hazards of asbestos
- > Asbestos removal
- > Confined spaces
- > WHMIS hazard symbols
- > WHMIS material safety data sheets
- > WHMIS - The workplace label
- > WHMIS - The supplier label
- > Propane safety
- > The dangers of breathing silica dust
- > Silica dust control (available for multiple occupational activities)
- > Hearing protection
- > Noise - How loud is it?
- > Proper use of foam earplugs
- > Basic personal protective equipment and clothing
- > Putting on your respirator
- > Preventing interference with the respirator seal
- > Eye and face protection
- > The right to refuse unsafe work
- > Health and safety responsibilities
- > Hypothermia
- > How to reduce the risks of hypothermia
- > Heat exhaustion
- > Heat stroke

video resources

WorkSafeBC has several videos you can use to augment training and orientation or to reinforce exposure awareness during safety meetings. Below is a sample of the video topics that are available for free download at www.worksafebc.com/publications:

- > Asbestos
- > Asbestos in demolition and renovation (slide show)
- > Mould
- > Hearing
- > WHMIS
- > Silica exposure

exposure control plans

Download information and sample exposure control plans at www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/by_topic/occupational_hygiene/default.asp including the following:

- > *Exposure control plan for cutting small amounts (< 3 square metres) of gypsum board containing asbestos*
- > Lead-Containing Paints and Coatings: Preventing Exposure in the Construction Industry
- > Exposure control plans for silica (various)
- > *Sample Respirator Program*

RESOURCES
REFUSE UNSAFE WORK

more **print resources** and other helpful tools

The Publications section of the WorkSafeBC website features many publications that can be downloaded for free. Here's a sample of exposure-themed publications available at www.worksafebc.com/publications. Resources are also available on the Apprenticeship Portal at www2.worksafebc.com/Topics/Apprenticeships/Home.asp.

GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

- > *A Hantavirus Exposure Control Program for Employers & Workers*
- > *Controlling Exposure: Protecting Workers from Infectious Disease*
- > *Dealing with Latex Allergies at Work*
- > *Confined Space Entry Program: A Reference Manual*
- > *Hazards of Confined Spaces* (industry-specific versions for construction, shipping and transportation, and food and beverage)
- > *Hypothermia: Surviving the Cold*
- > *Preventing Heat Stress at Work*
- > *Young Worker Orientation*

AGRICULTURE

- > *Health and Safety for Greenhouses and Nurseries*
- > *Standard Practices for Pesticide Applicators*
- > *Working Safely with OPS (Organo-Phosphate Insecticides)*

CONSTRUCTION

- > *Asbestos Hazards in Demolition, Renovations and Salvage*
- > *Safe Work Practices for Handling Asbestos*
- > *Lead-Containing Paint and Coatings: Preventing Exposure in the Construction Industry*

EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY

- > *Hard Metal Hazard*

FORESTRY

- > *Western Red Cedar Asthma*

HEARING LOSS PREVENTION

- > *Hear for Good: Preventing Noise Exposure at Work*
- > *Sound Advice: A Guide to Hearing Loss Prevention Programs*

OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE

- > *Safe Work Practices for Asbestos Laboratories*
- > *Ten steps to compliance with asbestos abatement requirements of section 20.112 for a pre-1990 house/building demolition*
- > *Ammonia in Refrigeration Systems*
- > *Carbon monoxide in industry*
- > *Chlorine Safe Work Practices*
- > *Hydrogen Sulfide in Industry*
- > *Ozone Safe Work Practices*
- > *Toxic fumigants in shipping containers*
- > *Lead: Preventing Exposure at Work*
- > *Developing a silica exposure control plan*

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- > *Breathe Safer: How to Use Respirators Safely and Start a Respirator Program*
- > *PPE information sheets*



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LEARN MORE Visit the WorkSafeBC Young Worker Portal at www2.worksafebc.com/Topics/YoungWorker/Home.asp.

QUESTIONS? E-mail yworker@worksafebc.com.

Scan the tag with your smartphone to go directly to the WorkSafeBC Young Worker Portal.

Get the free mobile app at gettag.mobi or search "tag reader" in the App Store.



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