



Health and Safety Santé et sécurité



APRIL 2009

APRIL 28 NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

The observance of this year's annual Day of Mourning on April 28 will mark 25 years since this date was etched into the calendar to focus our attention on the urgency of our ongoing struggle against workplace fatalities. In those 25 years, some 25,000 workers have died from injuries and work-related diseases in Canada alone. To mark this special event during the PSAC Triennial Convention in Vancouver, PSAC will join the BC Federation of Labour in a ceremony at the Vancouver Art Gallery where there will be a procession with 160 coffins to illustrate the scope of workplace fatalities in Vancouver in 2008.

North American Occupational Safety and Health Week May 3 - 9, 2009

NAOSH Week – was first launched in June 1997, marked by an agreement between Canada, the United States and Mexico. The goal is to focus the attention of employers, employees, the general public and all partners in occupational safety and health on the importance of preventing injury and illness in the workplace, at home and in the community. It is an annual occupational safety and health celebration led by the Canadian Society of Safety Engineering and its partners – the Canadian Centre of Occupational Health & Safety, Human Resources & Skills Development Canada's Labour Program and the American Society of Safety Engineers.

DEFINITION OF A WORKPLACE

Canada labour Code Part II... Any place where an employee is engaged in work for the employee's employer.

Here are some scenarios for clarification:

- You are working from home, who is responsible for your Health and Safety?

Employees who are injured in the course of their duties are to be compensated for their work-related illnesses or injuries. This applies whether the illness or injury takes place at the employer's designated workplace or at any other agreed location, including the employee's home. This is consistent with the Canada Labour Code Part II, which defines the "work place" as any place where an employee is engaged in work for the employer, and this can include an employee's home. The employee must bring any accident or injury to the immediate attention of their supervisor.

- You are an Employee of CFIA who works in a provincially regulated plant, who is responsible for your Health and Safety?

Ultimately your employer (CFIA) is responsible for your Health & Safety, the work follows the worker therefore you health and safety should be protected wherever you go. Once again the employee must bring any accident or injury to the immediate attention of their supervisor.

THE RELATIONSHIP AND FLOW OF INFORMATION BETWEEN VARIOUS LEVELS OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEES

The *Canada Labour Code Part II* requires that workplace Health and Safety Committees be established for each work place controlled by the employer at which twenty or more employees are normally employed. And that every employer who normally employs directly three hundred or more employees shall establish a Policy Health and Safety Committee.

Policy Committees participate in the **development, implementation and monitoring** of all health and safety policies and programs.

Workplace Committees participate in the implementation and monitoring of health and safety policies and programs applicable to their workplace. Workplace Committees also participate in policy and program development, but only when the issues are unique to their workplace.

The Canada labour Code Part II also provides for additional Policy Committees [*CLC* sec. 134.1(3)] where there is mutual agreement between unions and employers. In certain cases where, because of the number of workplaces or the complexity of the organization, the work would be better handled by more than one Policy Committee, the union agrees to additional Policy Committees based on regional or branch lines. This allows for a hierarchal structure of Policy Committees to more effectively monitor the workplace program as well as provides for more resources when many regionally specific policies and programs are required.

The National Joint Council Directive on Committees supports this by stating that Regional Committees are Policy Committees as defined in the Code, and that they:

1. must inform the National Policy Committee of any issue they are dealing with and;
2. must have their terms of reference approved by the National Policy Committee

This structure allows the National Policy Committee, where the workload requires it, to reasonably coordinate all the Policy Committee work. If the workload doesn't require such a structure, extra Policy Committees could needlessly complicate the health and safety program.

Information related to health and safety in the workplace should flow freely between each level of committee. Policy committees develop policies and programs related to the hazards in the worksites for the employer as a whole. Workplace committees implement and monitor the policies and programs as they relate to the hazards at their worksites. Information on hazardous occurrences, accidents and OHS training must be communicated and monitored by each level of committee as it related to their duties. Issues that are unresolved, are of a national nature or are outside of the level of authority should be referred by the workplace committee to the next appropriate level of Policy Committee.

Making it Home Safe Every Day is what Safety and Health is all about. Make sure that injuries and tragedies don't happen.