



Yukon Workers'
Compensation
Health and
Safety Board

May 28, 2009

Enough is Enough: YWCHSB Begins Zero Tolerance Practice

WHITEHORSE: The Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board announced today that, beginning July 1st, it will have a zero tolerance for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) not being used as required in workplaces.

This initiative is a direct result of numerous stakeholder consultations, in particular from employer meetings during the last year. Employers made it clear they wanted YWCHSB to enforce Occupational Health and Safety Regulations for businesses and their workers, especially those who show poor safety performance.

Some Yukon employers, supervisors and workers believe safety precautions, including the use of proper PPEs, is a matter of personal choice. In fact, these and all OH&S Regulations are the law. Those who choose to ignore the regulations continue to have workplace injuries, the costs of which are borne by other employers in that industry who are in compliance with regulations.

Until July 1st, OH&S Safety Officers will be issuing orders to workers and their supervisors to correct Basic PPE infractions. The order will also make it mandatory for them to take an online course about PPE, which takes less than an hour to complete. The course was developed by the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety.

Those who will be taking the online course must contact OH&S to arrange access to the website. Call 667-5450 or 1-800-661-0443.

After July 1st, Safety Officers will issue a fine of \$50 to each worker who fails to wear proper Basic PPE when it is required for the task they are doing, or for the conditions at the site where they are working.

Supervisors will receive a fine of \$250. for not ensuring that workers, under their control, are wearing the correct Basic PPE.

Both the worker and supervisor must also take the online PPE course.

Employers will be fined a minimum of \$500 if they did not provide proper PPE; did not provide appropriate training in its use; or failed to instruct workers to wear PPE as required by OH&S Regulations.

The Basic PPEs are:

- Safety Footwear
- Eye Protection
- Head Protection
- Hearing Protection
- Hand Protection
- High Visibility Clothing
- Respiratory Protection

“Hundreds of workers have already been injured in Yukon workplaces in the first few months of 2009, and every one of those injuries could have been prevented,” said Kurt Dieckmann, Director of Occupational Health and Safety. “Despite all the publicity, we still see far too many workplaces where preventing injuries is not being taken seriously, and where some of the most basic precautions are not being followed. So we’re saying, “enough is enough”,

“Yukon workplace injuries in 2009 have added another several hundred thousand dollars in avoidable costs to the burden on the Workers’ Compensation system,” said Valerie Royle, President / CEO of the Yukon Workers’ Compensation Health and Safety Board. “We need to make it clear that these injuries and the resulting human and financial costs are not acceptable. Everyone in every workplace has a responsibility to ensure that injuries do not occur in that workplace.”

With only a month before the zero tolerance practice takes effect, Yukon employers, supervisors and workers are strongly advised to ensure they are well informed of the Personal Protective Equipment required to protect them in the work they do.

Information may be found at www.wcb.yk.ca, or by calling 867-667-5450 or 1-800-661-0443.

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