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Care

PUBLISHED BY KIT CARE CORPORATION

SPECIALISTS IN FIRST AID, SAFETY, SPILL & FIRE EQUIPMENT FOR OVER 50 YEARS.

Cancer at the **Workplace**

Cancer Related to Workplace Exposures

What's at stake?

As many as 20,000 deaths attributed to cancer and 40,000 new cases of cancer each year may be due to occupational exposures to cancer-causing agents. A number of factors influence whether or not you get cancer, such as age, sex and family history. Also in the mix are the materials you are exposed to at work, how much you are exposed to and how it enters your body.

What's the danger?

Although we tend to think of cancer as one disease, the truth is that cancers are a group of different diseases that have the same characteristics, including uncontrolled cell growth, spread of these cells in the body, and severe health effects that can span from illness or loss of body parts to an inability to work or even death.

Example

There are many examples of cancers commonly associated with different jobs. Known workplace cancers are those of the lung, bladder, skin, larynx, nose, throat, and liver, as well as leukemia, lymphoma, and cancers of the muscles (sarcomas). The causes of many cancers, but not all, are known, and include smoking, inhalation of second-hand smoke and exposure to asbestos & dyes. Some cancers may come from working with formaldehyde, benzene or aromatic hydrocarbons, herbicides or pesticides. Even working outdoors in the sun can cause cancer.

How to protect yourself

There are some things you cannot change, such as your age, sex or family history, but you can take steps to help reduce your risk of getting cancer on the job. These include not smoking and trying to get your workplace to become a smoke-free environment. Use respirators if they are needed, for example, if you work with asbestos or hazardous chemicals.

Eat a healthy diet and drink plenty of fluids. Drinking lots of fluids can help prevent the buildup of chemicals in the bladder that may lead to bladder cancer. Wash your hands routinely and use protective clothing,

If you work outdoors, use sunscreen. Education is also an important way to protect yourself. Learn about cancer-causing materials in your workplace, especially those that you use. Follow directions on how to protect yourself. Attend safety meetings and get trained so you know what to do to reduce your exposure.

Final Word

Cancer due to occupational exposures has serious consequences. Learn about what types of cancers are found in your industry and know how to protect yourself to reduce your risk of getting cancer.

All our best... The Kit Care Team

What's **INSIDE**

How is your Safety Attitude?
Cancer in the Workplace Quiz
WHMIS 101
Industry Events & Care Tips

How is your **Safety Attitude?**

Test Your Knowledge

- 1) There are a number of factors that determine whether or not you might get cancer at work.
 True False
- 2) There are many known occupational cancers.
 True False
- 3) All causes of occupational cancers are known.
 True False
- 4) Eating a healthy diet is an important way to reduce your risk of occupational cancer.
 True False
- 5) Cancer is not one disease, but a group or diseases that have many features in common.
 True False

What Would You Do?

There appear to be a large number of your co-workers who have become sick with cancer over the past two years. You are concerned about this. What would you do to find out if the cancer is related to your occupation?



Are you protecting yourself against hazards?

WHAT'S AT STAKE

You have been receiving advice about safety for years. You have listened to it, read it and watched television spots on it, but probably never thought about it much. You might even think, "Accidents can't happen to me."

WHAT'S THE DANGER

When an incident does happen, you realize the victim could have been you.

EXAMPLE

Your co-worker, who is in a hurry to get off work, loses her leg in an injury incident. It impacts everyone, especially you. You can see what it means to your friend — physical pain, emotional shock and lost time. She will probably have to train for a new job, if she ever returns to work. Things will be very tough for quite a while. Physical therapy and rehabilitation are long and usually painful procedures with this type of injury.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Stay alert to possible hazards. Take the extra time to use special personal protective equipment and safety procedures. Listen to suggestions that might protect you. The elements of a good safety attitude include the following:

- 1. Focus.** You focus on the task and concentrate on the job. If you have other things on your mind, you may be distracted. If you are bored, an accidental slip is easy.
- 2. Strength.** This means the strength of character to do the right thing, even when under pressure to take shortcuts — the strength to stick with the procedures.
- 3. Time.** Take the time to do the job correctly and use the correct personal protective equipment. Saving a few minutes isn't worth a lifelong injury.
- 4. Responsibility.** Care enough about yourself and your co-workers to take responsibility even when a task "isn't my job." Think of yourself as part of the team.
- 5. Weighing risks.** Weigh the risks of performing a job a certain way. A one-in-a-thousand risk is not worth the possible cost. A good safety attitude means being smart and avoiding taking unnecessary risks.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Making a good safety attitude a habit affects everyone around you. Your home life and working relations are positively influenced. We can always think of excuses why we do not act with safety in mind. In order to conserve our lives and our resources, it makes a lot more sense to maintain a good safety attitude.

WHMIS 101

Understanding the WHMIS Training Requirements



Most employers know that they must provide WHMIS training to an employee, but many do not know the specifics. Which workers must get WHMIS training? The most obvious answer is to provide WHMIS training to workers who actually work with so-called 'controlled products,' but what about the other employees in the workplace?

There has been a lot of debate on this topic and the differences in opinion with regard to training requirements is understandable, given the vague and often confusing language in the WHMIS and OHS regulations. Of course, there's too much at stake for safety coordinators to have to guess what their training obligations are under the law.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS

Just about every workplace has at least some dangerous chemicals and substances. WHMIS, which is a staple of every jurisdiction's OHS laws, requires employers to protect their workers against the dangers posed by said substances. The WHMIS system is based on education and awareness. WHMIS requirements are designed to ensure that workers are aware of dangerous chemicals in their workplace, the hazards associated with them, and how to protect against them. One key step employers must take to implement these principles is to provide WHMIS training for workers that are exposed to such risks.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES VS. CONTROLLED PRODUCTS

The difference between these two substances are important because some jurisdictions require separate training for both.

A **hazardous substance** is a broad term that typically includes any substance or agent (biological, chemical or physical) that could adversely impact workers' health, such as heat, noise, ammonia, lead or asbestos.

A **controlled product** is a narrower term that is usually defined by the regulations as a hazardous or dangerous substance that is classified as a controlled product under the federal *Hazardous Products Act* and its *Controlled Products Regulation*. Most controlled products are also hazardous substances.

WHMIS TRAINING

Every jurisdiction except Federal requires employers to provide WHMIS training for workers who "work with or in proximity to" a controlled product. Alberta and Manitoba go one step further to require training for workers who perform any work involving the manufacture of a controlled product. Federally regulated employers must provide training to workers who "are likely to handle or be exposed to" hazardous substances, including controlled products. In British Columbia, its OHS Regulation also requires that "an employer must ensure that general WHMIS education, as it pertains to the workplace, is provided to workers" [Sec. 5.6 (I)]. This seems to suggest that all workers, whether they work with or near controlled products, must get general WHMIS training.

It is also important to note that some jurisdictions have not only WHMIS training requirements, but also separate training requirements for hazardous substances in general. These jurisdictions include Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Yukon Territory, Ontario, Saskatchewan, and federally regulated employers.



Care Tips

Know the Laws of Your Province

FEDERAL: *Hazardous substance:* Are likely to handle or be exposed to a hazardous substance, including controlled products [*Canada OHS Regs.*, Sec. 10.14(2)(a)]. If the hazardous substance is a controlled product, such training must include the information required to be disclosed on an MSDS and on a label and the purpose and significance of that information [Sec. 10.14(2)(a)(vi)]. *WHMIS:* No separate WHMIS training requirement except as noted above.

ALBERTA: *Hazardous substance:* May be exposed to a "harmful substance" [*OHS Reg.*, Sec. 15(3)(b)(i); *OHS Code 2006*, Sec. 21(2)(c)]. *WHMIS:* Work with or in proximity to a controlled product [*OHS Act*, Sec. 30(c)]. Work with or near a controlled product or perform work involved the manufacture of a controlled product [*OHS Code 2006*, Sec. 397(1)].

BRITISH COLUMBIA: *Hazardous substance:* Are or may be exposed to a chemical or biological substance that could cause an adverse health effect [*OHS Reg.*, Sec. 5.2(d)]. *WHMIS:* Work with or in proximity to a controlled product, workers must get specific WHMIS training [*OHS Reg.*, Sec. 5.7(1)]. Otherwise, all workers must get a "general WHMIS education" [Sec. 5.6(1)].

MANITOBA: *Hazardous substance:* Work in a workplace in which a chemical or biological substance creates or may create a risk to workers' health and safety [*Workplace Health & Safety Reg.*, Sec. 36.3(b)]. *WHMIS:* Work with or near a controlled product or perform work involving the manufacture of a controlled product [*Workplace Health & Safety Reg.*, Sec. 35.3(1)].

NEW BRUNSWICK: *Hazardous substance:* Are involved in the handling, use, storage or disposal of a hazardous substance [*OHS Reg.*, Sec. 59]. *WHMIS:* Work with or in proximity to a controlled products (*WHMIS Reg.*, Sec. 6(1)).

NEWFOUNDLAND/LABRADOR: *Hazardous substance:* No separate training requirement. *WHMIS:* Work with or in proximity to a controlled product [*WHMIS Reg.*, Sec. 6(1)].

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES/NUNAVUT: *Hazardous substance:* No separate training requirement. *WHMIS:* Work with or in proximity to a controlled product [*WHMIS Reg.*, Sec. 5(1)].

NOVA SCOTIA: *Hazardous substance:* No separate training requirement. *WHMIS:* Work with or in proximity to a controlled product [*WHMIS Reg.*, Sec. 4].

ONTARIO: *Hazardous substance:* Are or may be exposed to a "hazardous material" or "hazardous physical agent" [*OHS Act*, Sec. 42(1)]. *WHMIS:* Work with or in proximity to a controlled product [*WHMIS Reg.*, Sec. 7(1)].

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND: *Hazardous substance:* No separate training requirement. *WHMIS:* Work with or in proximity to a controlled product [*WHMIS Reg.*, Sec. 5(1)].

QUEBEC: *Hazardous substance:* No separate training requirement. *WHMIS:* Work or are liable to come into contact with a controlled product [*Reg. Respecting Information on Controlled Products*, Sec. 54].

SASKATCHEWAN: *Hazardous substance:* Are exposed to any chemical or biological substance in the course of their work [*OHS Reg.*, Sec. 302(3)]. *WHMIS:* Work with or in proximity to a controlled substance [*OHS Reg.*, Sec. 318].

YUKON: *Hazardous substance:* Are involved in the handling, storage, use or disposal of hazardous substances [*OHS Reg.*, Sec. 8.16(2)]. *WHMIS:* Work with or in proximity to a controlled product (*WHMIS Reg.*, Sec. 5(1)).



Upcoming Industry

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For more information, please visit the website below.
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www.congress.nsc.org

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Western Ontario Workplace Safety Symposium

For Managers, Supervisors, Health & Safety Professionals and JHSC members
London, Ontario

www.pshsa.ca

November 6-8, 2011

BC Municipal Occupational Health & Safety Conference

The Health, Safety, and Environment Conference for Canada.
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<http://bit.ly/vAXz7h>

Events

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