

Live Safe! Work Smart!

Health and safety e-news for Ontario teachers

? YOU ASKED US

Q: What is the Internal Responsibility System (IRS)? Do students in experiential learning programs such as Co-op have a part in contributing to this?

A: The legal duties and responsibilities of employers, supervisors and workers overlap and complement each other. Together, they create what's known as the internal responsibility system or IRS.

Simply put, the IRS means everyone in the workplace has a role to play and a duty to actively ensure workers are safe. Every worker who sees a health and safety problem such as a hazard in the workplace has a duty to report the situation to management. Once a hazard has been identified, the employer and supervisor have a duty to look at the problem and eliminate any hazard that could injure workers.

TISH'S TIPS

DO STUDENTS KNOW IF THE PLACEMENT WORKSTATIONS ARE SET UP PROPERLY TO AVOID MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURIES AND EYE STRAIN? HERE'S A TIP FOR AN ASSIGNMENT FOR CO-OP STUDENTS PLACED IN OFFICES. ASK THEM TO CHECK OUT THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR'S RESOURCES, INCLUDING THE: PAINS & STRAINS IN THE WORKPLACE TOOL, MSD PREVENTION SERIES, AND OTHER RESOURCES FOR COMPUTER USERS AT WWW.LABOUR.GOV.ON.CA/ENGLISH/HS/PUBS/PAINS/INDEX.PHP TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS AND WHAT THEY CAN DO TO PREVENT THEM. (PSST! THERE ARE STANDARDS FOR DISTANCE BETWEEN THE OPERATOR AND THE SCREEN, POSITION OF THE KEY BOARD AND PROPER SEATING, WHERE YOUR FEET SHOULD BE, ETC.).

Results of the Ministry of Labour's 2010 New and Young Worker Inspection Blitz (Industrial)

BY TISH AMICO, Education Consultant for the Ministry of Labour

In this newsletter, we will share the results of the Ministry of Labour's 2010 Young Worker Blitz in the **Industrial** sector.

During the 2010 blitz, MOL inspectors focused on new (on the job less than 6 months or recently reassigned) and young workers (under 25).

Ministry of Labour inspectors (inspectors) conducted 4,006 workplace visits to 3,097 premises and issued 3,555 orders, including 255 stop-work orders for key hazards faced by new and young workers.

Inspectors visited a wide range of workplaces, including:

- service – retail, restaurant, tourism and hospitality, wholesale, vehicle sales and service, office related service
- manufacturing
- municipal
- farming (field crops)
- golf courses, amusement devices, landscaping, tree planters, camps, sales

The Industrial workplaces most commonly inspected during the blitz were:

- Retail (1,003)
- Restaurants (718)
- Hospitality and Tourism (391)
- Factories (279)
- Vehicle Sales and Service (279)

Inspectors noted:

- lack of training, orientation and supervision
- lack of personal protective equipment, and
- shortcomings related to the Internal Responsibility System (IRS)- (see Q and A section of this newsletter)

From 2004 to 2009 there were 11 fatalities in the industrial sector involving young workers aged 15 to 24. During this same time period, 466 young workers in this age group were critically injured.

Among industrial workplaces with the highest number of lost-time injury claims* were:

- services (46%)
- manufacturing (14%)
- transportation (7%)

*A "lost time" claim is created with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) when a worker suffers a work-related injury/disease which results in:

- being off work past the day of accident
- loss of wages/earnings, or
- a permanent disability/impairment.

Employers must ensure that young workers are adequately trained in all facets of their job including fall protection, personal protective equipment and emergency procedures!



BRIGHT IDEA

ON YOUR GUIDANCE AND CO-OP COMPUTERS, WHY NOT BOOKMARK THE MOL'S WEBSITE FOR NEW AND YOUNG WORKERS: WWW.WORKSMARTONTARIO.GOV.ON.CA? THAT WAY, WHEN STUDENTS HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT MINIMUM WAGE, OVERTIME, OR OTHER WORKPLACE ISSUES, THEY CAN RESEARCH THE ANSWERS THEMSELVES!

We welcome your questions, comments and suggestions for future newsletters at info@livesafeworksmart.net

Links

- www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/sawo/blitzes/blitz_report20.php
- www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90o01_e.htm
- www.worksmartontario.gov.on.ca
- www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/pains/index.php

Disclaimer: This newsletter has been prepared to help the workplace parties understand some of their obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and regulations. It is not legal advice. It is not intended to replace the OHSA or the regulations. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE SEE THE [FULL DISCLAIMER](#)