

Live Safe! Work Smart!

Health and safety e-news for Ontario teachers

? YOU ASKED US

Q: Are the Live Safe! Work Smart! (LSWS) teacher resources still accurate and relevant given that there have been revisions to Ontario secondary school curriculum and changes to Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHS) and regulations?

A: Yes, the resources continue to be relevant to you. Likely 90%, if not more, of the Grade 9 - 12 safety material is not based on legislative requirements. Instead it deals with safety knowledge and principles, prevention techniques, etc., so there are many ideas and strategies that can be used to reinforce student learning.

For instance, the WHMIS lessons in the LSWS Chemical Hazards section that build knowledge from Grade 9 through to Grade 12 are based on education principles that are still valid. They are likely one of the few WHMIS resources that take into account progressive learning for all destination students.

Two resources that are NOT curriculum based – the coil-bound Special Needs and the Co-op resource – are very current, as they align with the Ministry of Education's current co-op policy.

Expert Advisory Panel: Report and Recommendations re: Young Worker Health and Safety

BY TISH AMICO, Education Consultant for the Ministry of Labour

On January 27, 2010, the Minister of Labour appointed Tony Dean as Chair of an Expert Advisory Panel on Occupational Health and Safety to review Ontario's occupational health and safety (OHS) system. With the support of a panel of health and safety experts from labour groups and academic institutes, as well as employers, the Chair was asked to recommend structural, operational and policy improvements to the system.

Tony Dean reported back to the Minister in December 2010 with recommendations that touch on the continuum of prevention and enforcement activities, from education in schools and proactive prevention initiatives, right through to the need for effective enforcement by the Ministry of Labour in situations where workplace safety standards are breached.

Among the key recommendations around young worker health and safety, the following opportunities in education were identified:

- **Recommendation 29:** "The Minister of Labour should appoint a committee under section 21 of the OHS Act to provide advice on matters related to the occupational health and safety of vulnerable workers". Young workers as a segment of the vulnerable worker population would have the opportunity to advise the Minister in this regard.
- **Recommendation 39:** "The Ministry of Education should work with school boards, private schools and teacher organizations to expand the health and safety content of primary and secondary school curricula and update

teacher resource material to allow them to effectively teach these curricula."

- **Recommendation 40** states: "The Ministry of Education should make high school graduation dependent upon demonstration of knowledge of occupational health and safety."

Young workers would also benefit from the report's other recommendations as well. As Tony Dean reported, the recommendations, if fully implemented, would mean that:

- Every Ontario worker and supervisor would receive mandatory information about workplace rights and responsibilities before they start their job;
- Every construction worker would receive entry-level training on construction site safety;
- There would be rigorous training standards for workers who work at heights or other high risk activities;
- There would be tougher penalties for those who place workers at risk of death or serious injury; and
- There would be more information in multiple languages and in many different formats that could be distributed via various media, and also more proactive Ministry of Labour inspections and enforcement campaigns in workplaces where vulnerable workers are concentrated to better protect them.

One of the Ministry of Labour's major initiatives currently is to work to implement the recommendations of the Panel to improve Ontario's workplace health and safety prevention and enforcement system. Visit the Ministry's web site at www.labour.gov.on.ca to stay on top of the latest developments.



BRIGHT IDEA

HAVE STUDENTS LIST THE HAZARDS (E.G., CHEMICAL HAZARDS; PHYSICAL HAZARDS; BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS) ASSOCIATED WITH A CLASSROOM OR WORK ACTIVITY AND LIST AT LEAST TWO WAYS THEY CAN PERFORM THE ACTIVITY SAFELY AND PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM THESE HAZARDS (E.G., WHAT SAFETY CONDITIONS SHOULD BE IN PLACE? OR WHAT SAFETY GEAR MIGHT THEY USE?).

TISH'S TIPS

WHEN CO-OP STUDENTS HAND IN THEIR WEEKLY LOGS THAT LIST WHAT THEY ARE DOING IN THEIR PLACEMENT, HAVE THEM USE A HIGHLIGHTER TO CALL ATTENTION TO ANY NEW ACTIVITIES. IN THIS WAY, DURING YOUR NEXT MONITORING VISIT, YOU CAN TALK TO BOTH THE STUDENT AND EMPLOYER ABOUT ANY HAZARDS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS NEW RESPONSIBILITY, THE REQUIRED TRAINING AND SUPERVISION TO DO THE JOB SAFELY, AND ANY SAFETY GEAR THAT IS NECESSARY.

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

Links

<http://news.ontario.ca/mol/en/2011/02/interim-health-and-safety-prevention-council-appointed.html>

http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pdf/eap_report.pdf

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