



THE safety mosaic

connecting people with health and safety news

Seasonal Safety: Protecting young workers during the holidays.

As the service industry gears up for the Christmas season, businesses begin the annual process of hiring part time or seasonal staff. Many of those workers will be young and inexperienced, between the ages of 15 and 24, with little or no health and safety knowledge or experience. That lack of knowledge could be deadly. In 1994, seven young people were killed on the job in Ontario. Over 18,000 were injured in work related accidents, with many of those injuries occurring in the service industry to students and other young people working as waiters, cooks and store clerks.

Understanding the Legislation

Protecting the safety of young, seasonal workers involves ensuring that each new employee understands their health and safety duties and rights. Let your new employee know that the Act outlines the minimum requirements for health and safety in most workplaces in Ontario, and that its purpose is to protect workers from health and safety hazards on the job.

This is also a good time to talk about the Internal Responsibility System. Let your new staff know that your company shares the responsibility for knowing the health and safety problems that exist in the work-

place, and then doing something about them. Let all employees know that it is their direct responsibility to report any health and safety hazards they notice while on the job.

Recognizing Designated Substances

From cleaning solvents to oils and gasses, many workers in the service industry are exposed to potentially dangerous substances every day. Make sure that all new employees are informed about any potential exposure to designated substances in your workplace. Take the time to outline the hazardous materials that might impact on a new employee's job, including a review of WHMIS, and discuss ways in which each employee can control their exposure to potentially dangerous substances.

Knowing About Rights and Responsibilities

All new workers should understand their three basic rights — the right to know about any hazards in the workplace; the right to participate in inspections, recommendations and health and safety training through a worker health and safety committee or representative; and the right to refuse work that they feel is unsafe. All new employees should also recognize that they have the responsibility to work safely by reporting unsafe conditions, wearing any personal protective equipment that is required and knowing what to do in the event of an emergency.

Cont'd on page 2 →

INSIDE

Message from the G.M.	2
Forklift Safety Basics	3
Shiftwork	4
Transitions: WSIB	6
Meet the OSSA Staff	7
What's Going On	8

Seasonal Safety (Cont'd from page 1)

Develop an Orientation Checklist

Every new employee — whether full, part time or seasonal — deserves the same health and safety orientation training. When developing your new employee introduction, consider the following:

Have you:

- ✓ Explained the company health and safety rules or policies that relate to the new employee's job?
- ✓ Identified who the new employee should contact if they have a health and safety question?
- ✓ Identified the hazards of the job (i.e. noise, chemicals, shiftwork)?
- ✓ Outlined the procedures for controlling hazards?
- ✓ Informed the new employee about any regular health and safety meetings?
- ✓ Identified any designated substances in the workplace?
- ✓ Provided any safety training for the job? WHMIS training?
- ✓ Informed the new employee about any safety gear they are expected to wear? Provided training on how to use it?
- ✓ Provided any needed training in emergency procedures?
- ✓ Identified the location of fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and other emergency equipment?



Top 5 Causes of Injury to Young Workers

1. Slips and falls
2. Over-exertion
3. Struck by or against an object
4. Bodily reaction (toxic effects from chemicals)
5. Burns

Top 5 Critical Injuries to Young Workers

1. Broken bones
2. Severe loss of blood
3. Head injuries
4. Amputation
5. Severe burns or scalds

The 5 Most Common Injuries to Young Workers

1. Sprains and strains (including back injuries)
2. Soft tissue injuries
3. Bone fractures
4. Inflammation of joints
5. Burns or scalds

Adapted from the Young Workers Awareness Program, The Workers' Health and Safety Centre and The Industrial Accident Prevention Association.

Message from the G.M. and C.E.O.



It is extremely rewarding to reflect on the past year, and the significant strides made by the Ontario Service Safety Alliance. In just twelve months, our staff complement has grown from three people to over fifty. Today, we have a dynamic team of professionals who share a common vision — to help create injury and illness-free workplaces, and connect people and companies with the means to make health and safety an integral part of their business.

On October 21st we officially unveiled our vision at our Open House. The Ossa vision statement, along with our mission statement, has been the culmination of several strategic planning sessions involving all of our staff and Board of Directors.

On the same evening, we celebrated the graduation of our first group of consultants who were wrapping up an comprehensive five week orientation program, developed and administered predominantly by other staff members. The second group, who are still training, will enter the field in mid-November. This unique program has been very beneficial for everyone involved. In addition to provid-

ing the perfect opportunity for head office staff and consultants to get to know one another, the orientation program has also been an exceptional information sharing exercise.

As our staff prepare to go into the field, we have been surveying our members and stakeholders. The INCA Group, a consulting firm that has been managing our strategic planning process, provided some top-line observations from a formal survey of employers and employees.

Initial results of the INCA survey revealed that, while there is minimal awareness of Ossa within the service sector, those who have received "service" from us have been very impressed. It was especially encouraging that words like "dynamic" and "entrepreneurial" were used frequently. It confirmed what all of us at Ossa feel and are keen to share with our members — that this is truly a unique organization, dedicated to being the leading provider of health and safety awareness, education, assistance and training within the Ontario service industry.

1999 will be our first true year of service delivery. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the long-term supporters and friends of Ossa. Your belief in our unique concept has helped us to realize tremendous success so far and, I believe, will be key to our continued development as an exceptional safe workplace association.

I wish each of you a safe and happy holiday season and a truly inspiring and exciting 1999 filled with joy and success.

Elizabeth Mills
General Manager and C.E.O.
The Ontario Service Safety Alliance

On April 7th, 1995 Kevin Brenner died while working as a part time employee of a major Canadian retail franchise. He was driving a forklift near or at full speed (19 km per hour) when he attempted to turn the truck to the right. It tipped over to the left. He was not wearing a seatbelt and attempted to jump clear. Kevin landed on his feet facing the truck but was crushed by the lift truck as it tipped over. He was transported to the hospital but despite resuscitation attempts, he was declared dead in the emergency room. Mr. Brenner and most of his co-workers had only 15 minutes of instruction on the operation of a lift truck. No one used the seatbelt which was buckled under the seat. The well known tendency of lift trucks to tip over if turned at high speeds was not known to the co-workers and presumably not known to Kevin.

FORKLIFT SAFETY BASICS

Each year, workers lose their lives and suffer injuries because of the improper operation of forklifts. Here is a quick review of some forklift safety basics:

1. Never operate a forklift unless you have been properly trained.
2. Never allow riders on the forks of a forklift.
3. Always use your seatbelt.
4. Never raise or lower a load while in motion.
5. Follow the set speed limit.
6. Avoid sharp turns.
7. Be sure your load is stable and secure.
8. Never operate an unsafe forklift.
9. Stop and sound your horn at intersections.
10. Drive with your load about six to eight inches off the ground and tilted slightly backwards.
11. Never drive over loose objects.
12. Keep your arms and legs inside the forklift at all times.
13. Make sure that no one walks beneath the elevated forks.
14. Never leave the key in the ignition while you are away from the forklift.
15. Keep a safe following distance from other forklifts.

SHIFTWORK

The 24 Hour Lifestyle: Managing Sleep and Shiftwork

In the past three years, the service industry has seen significant growth. This brighter economic outlook has led to increased job prospects and hours for service industry workers, including evening and Sunday hours. However, the impact of increased shift work on the health of these workers has not always been as positive.



The human body is designed to sleep at night and be active during the day. For service industry employees whose jobs require them to work long, demanding or irregular hours, shiftwork can disrupt those natural patterns of sleeping and waking.

The results — exhaustion, physical health risks like stomach and heart problems, and mental health problems such as depression — can all take their toll on a worker's safety and health.

What are some of the effects that shiftwork can have?

The most direct and immediate effect that shiftwork can have is on sleep patterns. Natural body rhythms boost alertness in the morning, making it difficult to sleep for long during the day. Noise or sunlight can interrupt or cut short sleep. As a result, shift workers commonly get only five or six hours of sleep after night shifts, compared to the seven or more hours experienced by people who work regular day shifts. At the same time, daytime sleepers spend less time in the deeper stages of sleep, and may receive less Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep, considered important for mental health.



Who suffers from sleep related problems?

Almost everyone who works through the night has at one time or the other experienced sleep-related problems. Some are more able to adjust to the differences while others find it very difficult to cope with the extra stress and lack of quality sleep.

What causes these problems?

- Disruptions to awake/sleep cycles — Between 11:00 pm and 6:00 am, our bodies are at their lowest ebb. Disruptions to awake/sleep cycles can occur when a shiftworker is fully functioning by working instead of fully asleep between these hours.
- Out-of-sync shift work schedule — a shiftworker who alternates between day, evening and night shifts may experience more symptoms than a worker who works constant shift hours.
- Lack of quality sleep — Many shift workers report the inability to get a “full” or quality sleep.



How can a shift worker get quality sleep?

Here are some simple things shift workers can do to encourage quality sleep:

- Find some quiet — reduce or control any outside noises that might disrupt your sleep such as noisy children, lawn mowers or air conditioners. A blindfold or set of ear plugs can also help to eliminate outside noises.
- Control the light — light proof curtains or roller blinds on the windows can help to control any light into the sleeping area.
- Control the temperature and humidity — adjust your thermostat so that it is comfortable for sleeping.
- Exercise — extra exercise can help to reduce the effects of shiftwork.
- Drink lots of fluids — Mild dehydration is common among those who work shifts. An adequate intake of fluids during a night shift can stop dehydration.
- Find a shift schedule that works — sometimes a simple change in a shift work schedule can dramatically affect your well being.
- Let the sun in — spending as much time outside in bright sunshine during waking hours can be good therapy for those who work shifts.



The Symptoms of Shiftwork Burnout

Here are some of the most common symptoms of shiftwork “burnout” that employees should be aware of, and ready to react to:

Mental Symptoms

- Irritability
- Stress
- Forgetfulness

Physical Symptoms

- Fatigue
- Loss of energy
- Broken sleep after shifts
- Stomach problems

TRANSITIONS: Introducing the WSIB's New Services Sector Delivery Model.

On November 3, 1997, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (formerly WCB) re-organized into 17 industry sectors, with the objective of fostering a better working relationship with the employer community and developing a better understanding of the needs of specific industries. Under the guidance of Sector Director, Mary Luck, a Services Sector was launched to service the needs of the province's largest sector.

The Goal

Through its new service model, the Board hopes to promote better understanding of the particular processes of an employer, their disability management program and stronger interpersonal relationships between Board staff and the employer. "Our goal is one of quality and timely health care services that will result in early and safe return to work for the worker and a valuable and productive employee for the employer," says Sector Director, Mary Luck.

What's New

- **One Firm. One Adjudicator.** In the past, claims were allocated by postal code. As a result, several adjudicators worked with employers handling multiple

active claims. Under the new service delivery model, a single adjudicator will handle all claims for an employer.

- **Introduction of Nurse Case Managers.** The team will incorporate a new position of Nurse Case Manager. Each nurse has the responsibility of medical management, and work in close contact with the treating physician, the worker and the employer. Case conferences will be arranged as needed, as well as employer site and home visits. Proactive measures will be taken to ensure that delays in treatment are kept to a minimum. Nurse Case Managers and Adjudicators are located throughout the province.
- **Phase-out of Caseworker Positions.** The position of caseworkers will be phased out over the next year. The

WSIB is currently sourcing a single service provider to handle Labour Re-entry Services as of October 1998.

- **Increased Workplace Responsibility for Return-to-Work Process.** Under the new legislation, effective January 1, 1998, the workplace parties are responsible for managing the return to work process. Where return-to-work is not likely to occur, the Adjudicator may arrange for a labour market assessment and a referral to a service provider with advice from a return-to-work advisor.
- **Introduction of Return-to-Work Mediators.** Where there is a conflict between the workplace parties regarding the suitability of a particular job offered, a Return-

to-Work Mediator will mediate and render a decision on a priority basis.

- **Introduction of Account Managers.** This new field position will manage employer issues involving all revenue, assessment, accident cost and experience rating. This person will act as a liaison in difficult claims issues and assist in solving WSIB problems.

What's Happening Now

The WSIB hopes to have most of the new service delivery model in place by the end of 1998. Currently, managers and adjudicators are proactively contacting their dedicated employers to arrange tours of facilities and plants in an effort to understand the business, provide education as requested,

resolve specific claims issues and most importantly establish a good working relationship.

Working Together

The OSSA and the WSIB share the goal of accident prevention and, should an accident occur, a safe and timely return-to-work. Initiatives to maximize the impact of this new services sector model are already underway with the OSSA and WSIB working closely with the Ministry of Labour so that field staff contacting employers do not duplicate activities. Efforts are underway to educate staff about the other two agencies. The OSSA and WSIB are also currently working together on the Service Advisory Committee to identify customers' needs.

Meet the Team:



The OSSA Staff

The OSSA Staff gathered together for a group photo at our Open House on October 21st.

Back row, left to right: Mel Simon, Bill Boyle, Janis Seaman, Michael Bechard, John Baker, David Sly, John Shermack, Scott Smith, Gerald Robinson, Mike Sheluk.

Second row from the back, left to right: Hillary Klaas, Sheila Goodwin, Denis Bagot, Kim Litchfield, Heather West, Jeff Pedlow, Rhonda Bridger, Jack Minacs, Trudi Farquhar, Adrian David.

Third row from the back, left to right: Jan Hill, Donna Russett, Trina Gorr-Allison, Mary Wilson, Chrystal Leeder, Karen Stewart, Mary Tombalakian, Jocelyn Barkwell, Janet Avery, Susan Kamin, Mary Lynne Colasanti, Maria Pontes.

Second row from the front, left to right: Norm Kramer, Bill McMurray, John Bryden, John Aird, Elizabeth Mills, Toni Volpato, Bonnie-Jean Wilson.

Front row, left to right: Bev Hewston, Dominique Schneider, Steve Metelsky, Sandro Peruzzo.

All of OSSA's consultants will be in the field by mid-November. For more information, or to arrange a meeting with the consultant nearest you, please call OSSA head office at 1-888-478-OSSA or (416) 250-9111.



Upcoming Events Calendar 1999

VENUE	DATE	LOCATION
Canadian Food and Beverage Show	February 14 - 16	International Centre, Mississauga
IAPA Opportunity Winter '99 Day of Workshops	February 23	Four Points Sheraton, Kitchener
Human Resources Professionals Association of Ontario Annual Conference & Tradeshow	February 18 - 20	Sheraton Centre Hotel, Toronto
IAPA New Horizons Health & Safety Conference	March 2	Wheels Inn, Chatham
IAPA Health and Safety Day	March 24	Glen Abbey Golf Club, Oakville
Forklift Truck Training	April 14 - 16	Simcoe, Ont
IAPA Health and Safety '99	April 26 - 28	Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto
Retail Council of Canada's Annual Resources Protection Conference & Trade Show	April 19 - 20	Marriott Hotel, Toronto (Eaton Centre)

Let us know about your upcoming show or event.
Forward your event information to:



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