The regulations regarding prime contractors came into effect January 1, 2015.

A prime contractor is responsible for coordinating the health and safety activities at multi-employer worksites. Their duties include:

- ensuring policies, procedures, and safe work practices are used on the worksite; and
- preparing a written plan that coordinates activities and identifies the prime contractor’s backup and the supervisors on the worksite.

A prime contractor is designated by the project owner or is the owner of the project.

On the Worksite

The addition of a prime contractor provision to Part III of The Saskatchewan Employment Act is to ensure that one person is responsible for the coordination of safety for workers on a multi-employer worksite.

The term "worksite" is used to describe specific locations within a place of employment where the majority of the daily work happens. In Part III of the Act, worksite means the area at a place of employment where a worker works or is required or permitted to be present.

Certain multi-employer worksites will be required to have a prime contractor, while others will not. A prime contractor is required if:

- There are 10 or more workers or self-employed persons under the direction of two or more employers; and
- Are operating in the following industries:
  - Construction (excluding construction of, or renovation to, residential dwellings consisting of less than four units);
  - Forestry (Mill Operations); and
  - Oil and gas

Under The Saskatchewan Employment Act, prime contractors’ duties include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying and informing employers and self-employed persons about hazards for which the prime contractor is responsible;
- Ensuring, insofar as reasonably practicable, that the employers or self-employed persons at a worksite eliminate hazards identified by the prime contractor before activities or operations begin on the worksite and after they have commenced;
- Ensuring that the employers and self-employed persons reduce or control hazards that cannot be eliminated;

Ensuring that the contact information of the prime contractor is posted in a conspicuous location at the worksite;

- Ensuring that all activities at the worksite that may affect health and safety are coordinated;
- Ensuring, as far as reasonably practicable, that all employers and self-employed persons have adequate and appropriate occupational health and safety policies and procedures, safe work practices and equipment, and competent and informed workers;

Identifying a competent person to oversee and direct, on behalf of the prime contractor, the activities of employers and self-employed persons at the worksite; and

Preparing a written plan that explains how the requirements are to be met and delivering a copy of the written plan to all employers and self-employed persons before any work commences.

It is the responsibility of the employer and self-employed persons, to cooperate with the prime contractor to ensure information regarding health and safety programs and coordination of worksite activities are properly communicated between all parties.

For more information on prime contractor responsibilities, or to book a presentation for your organization, call the SCSA at one of the numbers listed below.
How To Use This Resource

When accidents and incidents happen on the jobsite we are always quick to point the finger at lack of training, not following practices or procedures, or even improper supervision. The idea that the hazards and dangers associated with the job were not properly communicated to all of the workers, is often missed.

Tool Box Talks can go by many names and although formats may vary, these meetings all serve one purpose to inform employees and contract workers. Tool Box Talks are short, Informal, meetings between management and the workers on a jobsite. The goal of these meetings is to reinforce current safe job procedures, inform workers of new and/or relevant procedures, review recent safety violations/incidents, and ensure workers are up to date on the Information required to complete their work safely.

Always use a Tool Box Talk form to record the meeting topic, date, who was in attendance and any follow up actions to be taken. Not only do these forms help with consistency of record keeping but they also ensure that nothing is missed. At the end of the meeting have management sign off on the form.

One of the most important aspects of a Tool Box Talk is giving workers an opportunity to voice their concerns and ask questions. All employees have a right to participate in health and safety as it relates to their work and it is the supervisor or manager’s responsibility to create an environment for them to do so. Once the meeting is over, and the form is filled out, it should be filed with other documented Tool Box Talks. Remember that Tool Box Talks are short and informal, they are not meant to be intimidating. Use the opportunity to have fun, and stay on top of what is necessary to keep safety culture a strong part of the business.

For a full listing of Tool Box Talk topics, visit: www.scsaonline.ca/resources/tool-box-talks

For a copy of the Tool Box Talk form, visit: www.scsaonline.ca/pdf/Tool_Box_Meeting.pdf

ABOUT THE SASKATCHEWAN CONSTRUCTION SAFETY ASSOCIATION

The Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association (SCSA) is an industry-funded non-profit organization that provides cost-effective, accessible safety training and advice to employers and employees throughout the province. Companies that are registered with Saskatchewan Workers’ Compensation Board (WCB) and fall under the CLASS B – BUILDING CONSTRUCTION rate class are members of the SCSA. SCSA members and supporter members receive preferred pricing on classroom training year-round. The SCSA equips more than 10,000 workers each year with the education and training they need to achieve their organization’s safety goals.