



Tool Box Talk

Rights and Responsibilities

April 2019

Everyone in the workplace is legally responsible for workplace safety. The *Saskatchewan Employment Act* requires that they work together to carry out health and safety duties at a place of employment. Everyone must know what their duties are; have the authority, resources, and time to carry them out; and have required knowledge (education, training, and certification).

DUTIES OF EMPLOYERS

The following are some of the **responsibilities of an employer**:

- Provide a safe and healthy workplace;
- Make sure that managers and supervisors are trained, supported, and held accountable for fulfilling their workplace health and safety requirements;
- Oversee the health and safety performance of their managers and supervisors;
- Make sure workers have the information, training, certification, supervision, and experience to do their jobs safely;
- Ensure workers are not exposed to harassment in the workplace; and
- Ensure that legal health and safety requirements are met.

DUTIES OF SUPERVISORS

The following are some of the **responsibilities of supervisors**:

- Make sure hazards are identified and proper steps are taken to eliminate the hazards or control the risks;
- Inspect work areas and correct unsafe acts and conditions;
- Instruct and coach workers to follow safe work procedures;
- Ensure only authorized, competent workers operate equipment;
- Ensure equipment is properly maintained;
- Ensure the necessary personal protective equipment is provided to workers and used properly;
- Ensure that workers under their direct supervision are sufficiently supervised; and
- Ensure that workers under their direct supervision are not exposed to harassment at their workplace.

DUTIES OF WORKERS

The following are some of the **responsibilities of workers**:

- Understand and comply with legislation and workplace health and safety requirements;
- Follow safe work procedures;

- Use safety equipment, machine guards, safety devices, and personal protective equipment;
- Report unsafe acts and workplace hazards;
- Report incidents (meaning accidents and dangerous occurrences), injuries, or illnesses immediately;
- Work and act safely and help others to work and act safely

THREE BASIC RIGHTS OF WORKERS

Workers play an important role in keeping each other safe on the job. A major part of injury prevention is ensuring each worker is aware of their legislated rights and responsibilities. Under The *Saskatchewan Employment Act*, workers have three basic rights:

1. **The Right to Know** the hazards at work and how to control them;

If an employer does not disclose what hazards exist in the workplace, all workers have the right to ask for this information. Hazards are anything that has the potential to cause an injury or illness.

2. **The Right to Participate** in finding and controlling workplace hazards;

Become involved in the occupational health committee (OHC) at work. Every Saskatchewan workplace with 10 or more workers **must** have a worker/management OHC. High-hazard workplaces with five-to-nine workers must have an occupational health and safety (OHS) representative.

3. **The Right to Refuse** unsafe work that is believed to be unusually dangerous.

Workers cannot be disciplined or fired for exercising their right to refuse unsafe work that is believed to be unusually dangerous, which includes:

- A danger that is not normal for the job (e.g., repairing a roof in dangerous winds);
- A danger that would normally stop work (e.g., operating a forklift with a flat tire); or
- A situation for which a worker is not properly trained, equipped, or experienced to do the work assigned (e.g., cleaning windows on a tall building with no fall protection equipment or training).

For more information, please visit www.saskatchewan.ca/business/safety-in-the-workplace/rights-and-responsibilities-in-the-workplace

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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, membership-based, non-profit organization that provides cost-effective, accessible safety training and advice to employers and employees in the construction industry throughout the province to reduce the human and financial losses associated with injuries. Registered March 20, 1995, the SCSA is, and has been since inception, committed to injury prevention. Serving almost 10,000 member companies with business offices in both Regina and Saskatoon, the major business units of the association are Advisory Services, Business Development, Corporate Services, Program Services and Training. The mission of the SCSA is constructing safety leadership in Saskatchewan and the vision is to create the safest construction environment in Canada.