Safe Work Practices

Overview.................................................................................................................. 13.1

Legislative Requirements ................................................................................... 13.1

Safe Work Practices Compliance........................................................................... 13.1

Guidelines for Meeting Legislative Requirements ............................................. 13.2

Training Requirements ....................................................................................... 13.3

Implementation..................................................................................................... 13.4

Getting Started...................................................................................................... 13.4

Ongoing.................................................................................................................... 13.4
Safe Work Practices

Overview

Wherever possible, safe work practices must be put into place to minimize accidents and prevent injuries. The three categories of Safe Work Practices that the District has implemented to identify and control work hazards include:

- Task Hazard Analysis
- Safe Work Procedures
- Codes of Practice

The District has an ongoing process for analyzing tasks, identifying hazards and controls (Task Hazard Analysis), and developing Safe Work Procedures to promote workplace safety. In addition, Codes of Practice have been developed to address specific legislation requirements for some hazards with a higher probability of injury, illness or environmental impact. Some hazards may require the development of more than one category of safe work practice.

Legislative Requirements

Under provincial legislation, employers must, where practicable, ensure the health and safety of their employees and ensure that employees are aware of their responsibilities and duties related to health and safety issues. Employees must take reasonable care to protect themselves and others in the workplace and are expected to cooperate with the employer to create a safe work environment.

The Hazard Assessment, Elimination and Control Section of the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Code provides requirements to reduce or eliminate hazards in the workplace. These requirements include hazard assessment, worker participation, hazard elimination and control, emergency control of hazards and health and safety plans.

The development of Safe Work Practices must involve input from employees. An employer must ensure that employees affected by the hazards identified are informed of the hazards and the methods used to control or eliminate the hazards. Safe Work Practices are required to be reviewed on an ongoing basis and amended as conditions change.

Safe Work Practices Compliance

Standard safe work practices are judged for compliance from a prevention of serious accident and costly errors standard. If an incident should occur at the workplace the questions a government inspector would ask are:

- Are safe work practices in place for hazardous tasks, so that the job is completed safely, productively and efficiently?
- Are employees fully aware of the practices and the consequences of not following them?
• Does the employee have the competence (knowledge, skill and ability) to do the work properly?

Principals and non-school based department heads have the responsibility to ensure that employees:

• Understand the hazards involved in the work that they are performing and the necessity of the controls required to ensure safety.
• Have input into the development of any safe work practices that are intended to maximize safety of the tasks they perform or supervise.

Employees shall know:

• How to effectively participate in the development of safe work practices.
• Their responsibility to be active participants not only in the development, but in the implementation, use and review of these safe work practices.
• The consequences of not following safe work practices in relation to employee performance evaluations.

**Guidelines for Meeting Legislative Requirements**

The three categories of safe work practices that the District has implemented to identify and control work hazards are detailed below.

Hazardous tasks require the completion of a **Task Hazard Analysis**. This primary process identifies all the hazards involved in the task, details the controls that must be put in place and articulates the specific practices to be followed to minimize the possibility of accidents and injury.

There are some high hazard tasks that require a detailed step-by-step procedure that the employee should follow in completing the task. **Safe Work Procedures** address the required systematic approach for these high hazard tasks.

Finally, there are some hazards that by legislation require the development of a **Code of Practice** (e.g., confined space entry). These are detailed documents which outline the District’s approach to meeting all regulated requirements related to the hazard.

![Safe Work Practices Diagram](image)

The District has conducted an initial systematic review of tasks performed by employees and has identified those tasks that have a higher degree of risk. The following Risk Level Determination Matrix is a guideline used by the District to assist in determining appropriate risk levels.
To assess the level of risk associated with a hazard, the severity (S) of the consequences associated with the hazard, probability (P) of incident or injury occurring, and frequency (F) of the exposure to the identified hazard are determined. The associated values for each component are added to determine whether risk is Low, Medium, or High.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Consequence of the Hazard</th>
<th>Probability (P)</th>
<th>Frequency (F)</th>
<th>Total Risk (S+P+F)</th>
<th>Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Minor injury (first aid)</td>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Low (L) - Unlikely chance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Serious (lost time)</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>Medium (M) - Reasonable chance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Catastrophic injury</td>
<td>Highly likely</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>High (H) - Very likely chance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Great care must be taken when mitigating a High risk. This may include consulting your Occupational Health & Safety team prior to work to remove or minimize the hazard.

A safe work practice has been developed for all of those tasks that were identified as high or medium risk level (black or grey area on the Risk Level Determination Matrix). This process involved employee participation. All of the safe work practices developed have been categorized and published in a District Safe Work Practices Manual. This manual has been distributed to all principals and non-school based department heads.

The District Safe Work Practices Manual is a dynamic document which will be modified and revised as feedback is received from employees or as legislation or work site conditions change.

**Training Requirements**

All District principals and non-school based department heads are aware of the Safe Work Practices Manual and the process followed in identifying and developing safe work practices. Each principal and non-school based department head is expected to review the Safe Work Practices Manual and identify those tasks which are performed by members of their staff. They must then review the relevant safe work practices with appropriate employees and provide them with a copy of the document. A record should be maintained regarding the distribution of safe work practices. The principal or non-school based department head must also ensure that any employees who will perform a task which requires prior District training or certification, has received such training or certification.
This process should occur annually and in conjunction with Position Hazard Assessment reviews (see Section 3 Hazard Assessment and Control). Many of the tasks for which a safe work practice has been developed are associated with positions where a Position Hazard Assessment has been completed.

**Implementation**

**Getting Started**

The principal or non-school based department head shall:

1. Review the contents of the Safe Work Practices Manual and identify those tasks which are performed by members of their staff.

2. Review and provide copies of safe work practices to relevant employees. This should be done in conjunction with the review and distribution of Position Hazard Assessments. Any recommended changes to those documents should be brought to the attention of the District Health and Safety Officers.

3. Maintain a record of which safe work practices employees receive. This information should be kept in the Document Binder.

4. Ensure that any employees who will perform a task which requires prior District training or certification, has received such training or certification.

**Ongoing**

The principal or non-school based department head shall:

1. Annually review and distribute Safe Work Practices to relevant employees.

2. With input from employees, identify any tasks which are of a high or medium risk level that are not addressed, or need revision, in the Safe Work Practices Manual. These tasks should be brought to the attention of the District Health and Safety Officers, who will facilitate the development of a new or modified safe work practice.


4. Conduct periodic inspections to ensure that safe work practices are being followed. Documentation of these inspections should be maintained.

5. Encourage participation of employees in District based training or in-service programs related to occupational health and safety.