



## Toolbox Talk

# Hazards and Hazard Reporting

Hazards are always present - at work, in your car and at home. We may recognize hazards differently because of our experiences, training and knowledge.

### What is a Hazard?

A hazard is any source (object, material, substance, condition, practice, behaviour etc.) that has the potential to cause injury, illness or damage.

### Health Hazard vs. Safety Hazard

Generally, hazards are grouped into two types - health hazards and safety hazards.

Health hazards can result in illness or disease, and include: noise, vapors, bacteria and repetitive movement. Safety hazards can result in physical injury or damage, and include: missing guards, working in a confined space and moving parts on equipment.

### Hazardous Effects

Some hazards can create acute (immediate) effects or consequences, while others are more likely to create chronic (long-term) effects.

For example, if you were working on a scaffold at 80 feet and you fell, the effect would be acute (immediate). By contrast, exposure to asbestos is a chronic hazard, because diseases such as lung cancer, mesothelioma and asbestosis may not show up until 20 or more years after a worker's last exposure.

### Hazard Reporting

It is everyone's job, regardless of role or seniority, to identify and control hazards to help protect yourself and others from getting hurt and to prevent property and environmental damage.

Section 12(g) of the NL OHS Regulations identifies the requirement for each employer to have a system for the recognition, evaluation and control of hazards. In addition, section 17(3) of the NL OHS Regulations states that a worker shall immediately report a hazardous work condition that may come to his or her attention to the employer or supervisor. If you see an unsafe act or condition you must report it to your supervisor.

### Common Construction Hazards

Some common hazards found on construction sites include:

- falls from height,
- breathing in harmful contaminants,
- working near power lines,
- trench cave-ins,
- heavy lifting,
- open holes,
- being struck by mobile equipment,
- defective tools
- dropped objects etc.

### Discussion points

- Review your organization's Hazard Reporting Procedure
- Review the Hazard Assessment for the current job with workers. Are there any hazards that have been overlooked?