

INFORMATION GUIDE

PW&S WORKPLACE

HEALTH and SAFETY PROGRAM

Table of Contents

- ▶ Orientation to workplace h&s
- ▶ PWS Accident Prevention Manual
- ▶ Safety rules
- ▶ Office safety
- ▶ Health and safety committees
- ▶ Workplace inspections
- ▶ Emergency plans and evacuations
- ▶ First aid kits and training
- ▶ Fire extinguishers
- ▶ Fire prevention
- ▶ Asbestos
- ▶ Personal protective equipment
- ▶ Accident reporting
- ▶ Accident investigation
- ▶ Safe driving and driver training
- ▶ Confined space hazards
- ▶ Contractor safety
- ▶ Suspicious packages
- ▶ PWS as landlord
- ▶ Safety activities
- ▶ For more information
- ▶ PWS workplace h&s coordinator

Public Works and Services is fully committed to having safe and healthy workplaces. This is a summary of our program. If you want to know more, use the links to Internet resources.

▶ Orientation to Workplace Health and Safety

Supervisors are responsible for telling new staff about health and safety.

The GNWT's orientation web site (<http://www.horizons.gov.nt.ca>) includes Health, Safety and Security. It has links to the GNWT's policies and procedures on:

- occupational health and safety
- smoke-free workplace (shops and vehicles are also workplaces)
- alcohol or drug problems
- HIV/AIDS in the workplace
- power outages
- violence in the workplace

▶ Our PWS Accident Prevention Manual (APM)

Our *Accident Prevention Manual* is on our web site under Publications (www.pws.gov.nt.ca/pdf/Accident_Prevention.pdf).

▶ Safety rules (see page 4, [APM](#))

Page 4 of the *Accident Prevention Manual* has the short list. The rules should be posted on each floor of all our workplaces. All employees should know and follow the rules.

▶ Office safety (see p. 13-18, [APM](#))

If you do a lot of computer keyboarding, you need to have the right equipment and setup. Treat it like a sport or other physical activity – do strengthening exercises and stretches, and take short breaks.

The WCB offers office ergonomics courses. Contact their Safety Trainers at 669-4404 or 669-3867.



Safety
is a
Value!

"SAFETY FIRST...

...or there won't be a LATER"

► Health and safety committees

(see Article 40, [Collective Agreement](#))

PWS health and safety committees are set up in each major location (Inuvik, Fort Simpson, Yellowknife HQ/SMH, Yellowknife NSRO, Yellowknife Warehouse, Hay River, Fort Smith).

Committees identify and correct unhealthy or unsafe situations at workplaces. Committees meet every 3 months. They have employer reps, employee reps, and members to represent trade shops or smaller workplaces.

► Workplace inspections (see p. 23-25, [APM](#))

Health and safety committees should do safety inspections of our workplaces every 3 months. As well, supervisors should inspect their workplaces every 3 months. Use the *Safety Inspection Form* on page 25 of the *Accident Prevention Manual*.



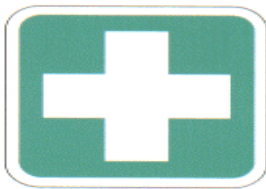
► Emergency plans and evacuations

(see p. 17-18, [APM](#))

Each workplace with more than 10 staff must have a written emergency action plan including evacuation procedures. Ask your health and safety committee for a copy.

Be sure you know your first and second evacuation routes. The first route is not always the closest.

► First aid kits and training (see p. 19, [APM](#))



The health and safety committee makes sure that enough staff have first aid training and that we have enough first aid kits in our buildings. If you'd like to take first aid training, ask your supervisor.

► Fire extinguishers



PWS Building Operators across the NWT check the extinguishers monthly to ensure they work properly. A qualified contractor does a more detailed annual inspection of the extinguishers.

Building and Floor Wardens should be trained in how to use an extinguisher. Other staff can take this training too. Contact your local fire department about the training.

► Fire prevention

PWS has an 8-page brochure and a 4-page checklist, *Fire Prevention for Public Buildings*. See www.pws.gov.nt.ca/publications/Fire/Checklist.pdf.

PWS Maintenance Coordinators and Building Maintainers do thorough inspections of all GNWT buildings once a year, using the checklist.

► Asbestos (see p. 32, [APM](#))

Asbestos management is part of our workplace health and safety program. PWS is the GNWT's major landlord, so we're responsible for many GNWT buildings across the NWT. In 2000 PWS developed the *Asbestos Management Plan for GNWT Buildings Operated and Maintained by PWS*.

If you have questions or concerns about asbestos or fire prevention in a workplace, contact the Asset Management Division at 920-6142.

► Personal protective equipment

(see p. 22, [APM](#))



There are allowances for personal protective equipment for trades and other employees. Follow CSA footwear, headgear and eyewear standards.

► Accident reporting (see p. 26-27, [APM](#))

The *Safety Act* requires that all accidents be reported to the WCB. Serious accidents and dangerous occurrences must be reported to the WCB's 24-hour Accident Reporting Line, 1-800-661-0792.

For details on what to report and what not to report, refer to the *Accident Prevention Manual*. The employer and employee accident reporting forms are on the WCB web site: www.wcb.nt.ca/Forms/index.htm

► Accident investigation (see p. 28-30, [APM](#))

Accident investigations help us prevent similar accidents. An investigation must be fair, prompt and accurate. Be sure to follow the procedures in our *APM*.

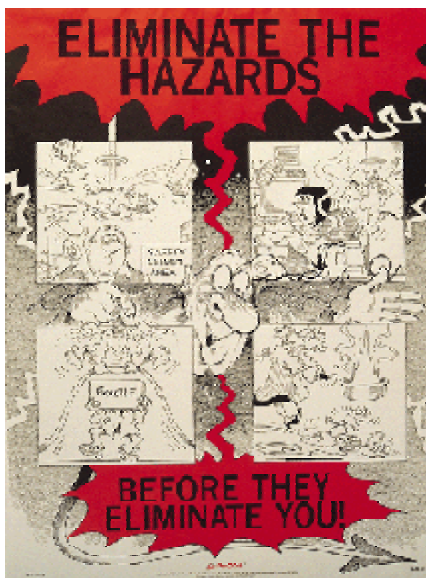
► Safe driving and driver training

(see p. 6-12, [APM](#))

Driving on NWT roads can be challenging. Driver safety training is part of the workplace health and safety program. PWS staff who drive vehicles on GNWT business are required to take driver training.

DOT coordinates the courses, which are done by the Alberta Motor Association. Courses are usually held in Yellowknife and Hay River. Courses have also been held in Fort Simpson, Norman Wells and Inuvik.

See page 9 of the *Accident Prevention Manual* for details on the courses. The PWS workplace health and safety coordinator keeps a database of employees who took the program. If you want to arrange driver training, talk to your supervisor and then the coordinator.



► Confined space hazards

(see p. 33-36, [APM](#))

If you're working in a confined space, you need to follow the safety precautions very closely. You need to be able to:

- identify a confined space
- test and monitor the air inside
- think about other dangers and related precautions
- call for help

NEVER try a rescue on your own.

► Contractor safety (see p. 31, [APM](#))

PWS shares with our contractors the responsibility for ensuring that the contractors work safely. Section 4.5 (Site Safety) of the *Project Management Manual* has more details.



► Suspicious packages

Although less of a concern than in the south or USA, this is still part of our workplace health and safety program. Staff who handle the mail have received information and have been trained.

The information includes *Communications Procedures – Suspicious Packages, Guidelines for Identifying and Handling Suspicious Packages*, and a *Mail Alert* summary. If you handle mail and don't have this information, ask your supervisor.

► PWS as landlord

PWS acts as a landlord for the GNWT. We lease or own office buildings all over the NWT. In that role, we share some responsibility for the health and safety of building occupants.

The Senior Property Manager of the Asset Management Division works with other GNWT departments to ensure their workers have health and safety committees and emergency plans.



► Safety activities

May North American Occupational Safety and Health Week is held every year. We often do related safety contests. For details about NAOSH, check out their web site at www.naosh.ca.



October Fire Prevention Week. A good time for promotional activities.

► For more information

- [NWT Safety Act](#)
- [NWT Safety Regulations](#)
- [Collective Agreement](#), Article 40, Safety and Health
- Workers' Compensation Board www.wcb.nt.ca/home.htm
- WCB resources www.ohsforeveryone.org/ntnu/
- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety www.canoshweb.org/oshmainpage.html
- Canadian Health Network http://www.canadianhealthnetwork.ca/1workplace_health.html

► PWS workplace health and safety coordinator

The PWS coordinator for workplace health and safety is Rob Given, Policy Advisor, Asset Management Division. If you have comments or suggestions for our program, contact Rob at rob_given@gov.nt.ca, 920-8035.

The coordinator:

- coordinates and monitors PWS workplace health and safety activities
- promotes workplace health and safety, particularly during fire prevention week and NAOSH week
- monitors workplace health and safety committees
- arranges safe driving courses for staff



Make "Safety First" a rule for life

Workplace Health and Safety Program

*D. Bruce Rattray
Deputy Minister
Public Works and Services
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