

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

IDENTIFY

All levels of workers have a role and responsibility to keep themselves, their co-workers, and work environment safe.

This toolbox talk is dedicated to learning about the different types of roles and responsibilities in your workplace.

COMMUNICATE AND CONTROL

The Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Act and Regulation define the responsibilities of workplace safety for owners, employers, supervisors, and workers.

Owners

The owners of buildings or land (used as a workplace) have legal safety and health responsibilities that include the following:

- Taking necessary precautions to ensure that property under their control does not create a risk to safety and health.
- Co-operating with other people on workplace safety and health matters.

Employers

Employers are responsible for the safety, health, and welfare for their workers in the workplace. This includes the following:

- Providing and maintaining equipment, materials, personal protective equipment (PPE), and tools.
- Providing new workers with a safety orientation.
- Ensuring that everyone and all processes comply with the requirements of the law.
- Providing information and instruction to protect workers' safety and health.
- Providing competent supervision.
- Educating workers on the hazards associated with the workplace.
- Taking every precaution reasonable to protect workers.

Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible to protect their own safety and the safety of other persons in the workplace. This includes the following:

- Ensuring that workers use and wear any protective equipment or clothing, required by legislation and/or the employer.
- Advising workers of any possible hazards on the job.

Worker

Every worker must take reasonable care to protect their own safety and health, as well as the safety and health of other persons in the workplace. This includes the following:

- Wearing any protective equipment or clothing that your employer/legislation requires you to wear.
- Reporting to your employer or supervisor any protective device that is missing or not working properly.
- Reporting to your employer or supervisor any hazard in the workplace.
- Reporting any violations in legislation.

Worker safety representative

The safety rep on site is a position that is sometimes designated by the supervisor to another worker. In the WSH Act, it states that a person not representing management is the identified worker representative. Some of the responsibilities include the following:

- Participating in hazard identification.
- Participating in incident investigations.
- Participating in right-to-refuse situations.

The worker safety representative is the liaison between the workers and the site supervisor. They will help the workers address any safety concerns, be the leader in site safety, and participate in safety meetings.

A worker safety representative is not a supervisor. Unless given the authority by management, the representative cannot discipline other workers.

Safety committee member

The safety committee must be established when the company, or worksite, has 20 or more workers.

- **Company** – there should be between four and 12 members, equally representing the workers and management (quorum). The worker members will be elected by their peers. The management workers will be selected by the management co-chair. Each of the management and workers will designate a co-chairperson. These people will each take a turn chairing a meeting in rotation.
- **Worksite** – the prime contractor must establish a site safety committee if the project is expected to have 20 or more workers, and it is expected to last a minimum of 90 days. One worker from each sub-contractor company should be on this committee.
- **Meetings** – in each example, it is expected that the safety committee meets at minimum each quarter. For a worksite, if the project is very large, and has enough workers to warrant, the prime contractor may meet more frequently. All meetings must be documented with attendees and the minutes.

THE QUIZ

1. Owners are responsible for:
 - a) The land or premise used as a workplace
 - b) Advising workers of any possible hazards on the job
 - c) Reporting any violations in legislation
 - d) Providing new workers with a safety orientation
2. Employers are responsible for:
 - a) Ensuring that workers use and wear any protective equipment or clothing
 - b) Co-operating with other people on workplace safety and health matters
 - c) Providing information and instruction to protect workers' health and safety
 - d) Reporting any violations in legislation
3. Supervisors are responsible for:
 - a) Reporting any violations in legislation
 - b) Advising workers of any possible hazards on the job
 - c) Educating workers on the hazards associated with the workplace
 - d) Taking every precaution reasonable to protect workers
4. Workers are responsible for:
 - a) The protection of their own safety
 - b) Providing and maintaining equipment, materials, PPE, and tools
 - c) Providing new workers with a safety orientation
 - d) Reporting any violations in legislation
5. Safety representatives should participate in:
 - a) Workplace inspections
 - b) Disciplinary actions
 - c) Analyzing blueprints
 - d) Conference calls

ANSWERS:

1. a; 2. c; 3. b; 4. a, d; 5. a