

Tips for Young Workers

Protecting Yourself at Work

Don't Say, "It Can't Happen to Me"

In Saskatchewan one out of every six people is less than 25 years old. About 8,000 young workers (roughly one in 10) are injured and three die every year on the job. Serious injuries can happen in any workplace – just read Curtis Weber's story.

Curtis Weber was 17 when he got a job helping move heavy steel grain bins. There was a lot of pressure to get things done quickly and the company used equipment Curtis was not familiar with.

He received no safety training before starting work. On his fourth day on the job, the crane used to lift bins contacted an overhead power line. Curtis was electrocuted and became a multiple amputee.

He spent six weeks in intensive care and months in rehabilitation learning to use an artificial leg and a battery-powered hand. His education was put on hold for several years because of the operations Curtis needed. A promising Junior "A" hockey career was cut short.

Some Signs that a Workplace May be Unsafe

- Other employees are getting injured on the job
- You work without direct supervision
- You have not been trained properly
- Equipment is unguarded or broken
- Chemical containers aren't labelled
- Shortcuts are used to save time
- There is poor housekeeping and maintenance (e.g. floors are slippery and electrical cords are frayed)

Questions We Often Ask Ourselves About Our Jobs

- How long is my shift?

- What will my co-workers think about me?
- Will I be able to keep the job?
- How much money will I make?

Questions We Sometimes Forget to Ask

- Will I be trained enough in order to do my job safely?
- Can I recognize possible hazards?
- Do I know my rights and responsibilities?
- Could a workplace incident disfigure me or cost me my life?

How to Protect Yourself

- Learn to do the job safely. Ask yourself, "Am I in any danger?"
- Think the job through. Know what to do when there is an injury or emergency situation.
- Ask, Ask, Ask – there are no stupid questions.
- Get help, especially if you have to lift something heavy.
- Wear the gear. Find out what to wear to protect yourself, how to wear it and how to maintain it.
- Inform your supervisor if you see anything unsafe that may hurt you or someone else.
- Discuss concerns you cannot resolve with your supervisor, with the workplace's occupational health committee (OHC) or worker health and safety representative.
- Report injuries – if you get hurt, tell your supervisor. See a doctor and report your injury to the Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) at 1-800-787-9288.
- Talk to your family about your job. Sometimes they know something you do not know!

Minimum Age Requirements for Working in Saskatchewan

<i>The Education Act</i>	16 years old	Students under the age of 16 must get written permission from the principal to work during school hours. While the law does not require it, students should inform their parents.
<i>The Labour Standards Act</i>	16 years old	Saskatchewan's minimum age of employment is now 16.
	14-15 years old	14 and 15 year olds can work under certain conditions. They need permission from a parent or guardian and they must complete an online course in workplace health and safety and labour standards*. They can't work more than 16 hours during a school week, after 10 p.m. on a day before a school day, and before the start of any school day.
<i>The Occupational Health and Safety Act</i>	16 years old	Construction; Pulp mills, sawmills or woodworking; Smelters, foundries, refineries, metal processing or fabricating; In a confined space; Meat, fish or poultry processing; Forestry or logging; Oil drilling or servicing rigs; As an operator of powered mobile equipment, crane or hoist; Where exposure to a chemical or biological substance is likely to endanger health or safety; Power line construction or maintenance.
	18 years old	Mining; Radiation worker; Asbestos process; Silica process; Any working requiring an atmosphere-supplying respirator.

For More Information

About the law and safety for young workers, go to the Ministry website.

If you need help with a safety concern, call Occupational Health and Safety at the phone number below. Visit www.worksafesask.ca for information about health and safety issues in your industry.

Ready for Work

Do you know about *Ready for Work*? It is a program about health, safety and employment standards developed for middle and high school students by the Ministries of AEEL and Education.

For more information, go to www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/youth-at-work.

Note: This is not a legal document. Consult the legislation to interpret and apply the law.

By Law You Have Basic Rights

1. The Right to Know what hazards are in your workplace and what to do to prevent injuries from those hazards.
2. The Right to Participate in health and safety activities in your workplace.
3. The Right to Refuse work you believe to be unusually dangerous to yourself or others.

You Also Have Responsibilities

1. The Responsibility to Work Safely, using all machinery and equipment in the way you were trained.
2. The Responsibility to Report Health and Safety Concerns, including unsafe activities and conditions, to your supervisor and to ask questions if you are unsure how to do something safely.
3. The Responsibility to Properly Use or Wear Protective Devices, and to not remove a guard or device designed to protect you.

Remember to wear safety gear. It's the law!