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Ergonomics in Canada

FEDERAL: Requires employers to ensure that machinery, equipment and tools used by workers in the course of their employment meet prescribed health, safety and ergonomic standards. Also requires employers to ensure that the workplace, workspaces and procedures meet prescribed ergonomic standards. (*Canada Labour Code, Sec. 125(1)(t) and (u)*)

ALBERTA: Regulations say that if a worker reports to the employer what the worker believes to be work related symptoms of a musculoskeletal injury, the employer must promptly a) review the activities of that worker, and other workers doing similar tasks, to identify work-related causes of the symptoms, if any, and b) take corrective measures to avoid further injuries if the causes of the symptoms are work related. (*OHS Code, Part 14, Sec. 211*)

BRITISH COLUMBIA: Regulations define MSI and require employers to: 1. Identify risk factors, including those spelled out in the regulations. 2. Assess identified risk factors. 3. Eliminate or minimize the risk of MSIs to workers. 4. Educate and train workers on identifying MSI risk factors, and the early signs and symptoms of MSIs. 5. Evaluate the effectiveness of the measures taken to comply with the ergonomics requirements. 6. Consult with the JHSC or the H & R representative on risk identifications, assessment and control; worker education and training; and evaluation of measures taken. 7. When performing risk assessment, must also consult with workers with signs or symptoms of MSIs and a random sample of the workers who are required to perform the work being assessed. (*OHS Regs., Secs. 4.46 to 4.53*)

MANITOBA:

Regulations define MSI and require employers to: 1. Conduct a risk assessment of all work activities that create a risk of MSIs. 2. Implement control measures taken to eliminate or reduce the risks of MSIs. 3. Monitor the effectiveness of any control measures taken to eliminate or reduce the risk of MSIs and implement further control measures if the risk hasn't been eliminated or reduced. 4. Inform workers exposed to the risk of MSIs of that risk and the signs and common symptoms of MSIs associated with the work performed. 5. Instruct and

train workers on the control measures implemented to reduce or eliminate the risk of MSIs.

(WHS Act, Part 8)

NEW BRUNSWICK:

No regulations. Guidelines: 1. Explain what MSIs are. 2. List some of the common risk factors that can cause MSIs. 3. List signs and symptoms of MSIs. 4. Suggest that employers contact ergonomics consultants to assist in identifying risk factors in the workplace. 5. Say that the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission will work with employers and workers to educate about MSIs, evaluate root causes of MSIs, and find solutions for a particular job or work area.

(NB WHSCC pamphlet, "Ergonomics and Musculoskeletal Injuries (MSI)".

http://www.whscc.n.ca/docs/ergomus_e.pdf)

NEWFOUNDLAND/ LABRADOR:

No regulations. Guidelines recommend that employers establish an ergonomics program that has three elements: 1. Recognition of risks in the workplace that are likely to cause soft tissue injury. 2. Detailed evaluation of the risks. 3. Establishment of control measures to eliminate or reduce the risks.

(NL DOL safety guidelines, "Guidelines for the Prevention of Soft Tissue Injuries")

<http://www.gs.gov.nl.ca/ohs/pdf/soft-tissue-injury-prevention.pdf>

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES/ NUNAVUT:

No regulations or guideline addressing MSIs in the workplace.

NOVA SCOTIA:

No regulations. Guidelines discuss: 1. Triggers that could indicate that a workplace needs ergonomics help. 2. How to find an ergonomics consultant who's qualified and experienced. 3. How working with an Ergonomist can help. 4. The costs of addressing ergonomics in the workplace. 5. The laws regulating ergonomics in the workplace.

(Nova Scotia Environment and Labour, OHS Division, Ergonomic FAQs)

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/enla/healthandsafety/ergonomics/>

ONTARIO:

No regulations. Guidelines recommend that employers prevent musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) by: 1. Advising and training workers about MSD risk factors in their job and in the workplace. 2. Encouraging workers to participate in the health and safety program through early reporting of MSD symptoms or concerns. 3. Identifying and assessing job-related MSD risk factors. 4. Putting in place controls to reduce workers' exposure to MSD risk factors. 5. Following up to make sure preventative measures are working.

(MOL Information Sheet, "Prevent Workplace Pains & Strains", WSIB Information book, "Prevent musculoskeletal disorders (MSD)")

http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/ergonomics/is_ergonomics.html

<http://www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/Public/PreventMSD>

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND:

No regulations or guidelines addressing MSIs in the workplace.

QUEBEC:

Regulations require employers to: 1. Instruct workers assigned the handling of loads or people in the proper manner of performing their work safely. When the manual moving of loads or people compromises the worker's safety, the employer must put mechanical devices at his/her disposal. 2. Provide workers working on piles with the necessary equipment allowing them to reach the top of piles of material safely, such as step ladders, ladders, pinch grips or any other equipment designed for such purpose. 3. Adapt the height of workbenches and the position of chairs to the work and the worker in such manner as to ensure workers a correct posture and to reduce fatigue. 4. Locate tools, handles and materials in positions that facilitate work and reduce strain. 5. Provide workers with chairs or benches when the nature of their work so permits. 6. Let workers have a meal break of at least 30 minutes when the duration of the work exceeds 5 hours. Unless there's an agreement to the contrary, the meal break must begin in a 2-hour period situated in the middle of the workers work period.

(OHS Regs., Div. XX, Secs. 166 to 171)

SASKATCHEWAN:

Regulations define MSIs and require employers to: 1. Regularly review, in consultation with the JHSC, the activities at the place of employment that may cause or aggravate MSIs. 2. Where a risk of MSI is identified, inform each worker who may be at risk of developing an MSI of that risk and of the signs and symptoms of any MSI associated with that worker's work; and provide effective protection for each worker who may be at risk, including any of the following: a) providing equipment designed, constructed, positioned and maintained to reduce the harmful effects of an activity; b) implementing appropriate work practices and procedures to reduce the harmful effects of an activity and c) implementing work schedules that incorporate rest and recovery periods, changes in the workload or other arrangements for alternating work to reduce the harmful effects of an activity. 3. Ensure that workers who may be at risk of developing MSIs are instructed in the safe performance of work, including the use of appropriate work practices and procedures, equipment and PPE. 4. Where a worker has symptoms of an MSI, advise the worker to consult a doctor, promptly review the activities of the at worker and any other workers doing similar tasks to identify any cause of symptoms and take corrective measures to avoid further injuries.

(OHS Regs., Part VI, Sec. 81)

YUKON:

No regulations or guidelines addressing MSIs in the workplace