

**Trent University**

**Environmental Health and  
Safety**

**Handbook**

**Prepared by the Risk Management Department,**

**Last revised  
November, 2007**

Every employee of Trent University is encouraged to read this handbook and to incorporate safe practices in their work.

Every employee of Trent University responsible for directing the work of others should consider this Handbook to be mandatory reading.

**Emergency Telephone Numbers**

**Police, Fire, Ambulance call 911  
(Dial 9-911 from a University phone)**

**University Security Emergency line:  
extension 1333  
(Dial (705) 748-1011 extension 1333 if calling  
from a non-University phone)**

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## **I. Introduction**

Every person who works at Trent University has an important role to play in maintaining the University's high standards of safety. The information in this Handbook is provided to assist Trent University's employees in maintaining those high standards. While the information is intended for employees, students are encouraged to become familiar with the concepts and procedures outlined here.

For the most part, this Handbook is intended to outline the basic requirements of an effective environmental health and safety program. It covers a wide variety of topics, but it is not and cannot be entirely comprehensive. In many cases it will be necessary to augment the information presented here with procedures and training specific to the needs of your Program or Department. It is hoped that you will find this Handbook to be a useful starting- or reference-point.

Every employee is encouraged to read this handbook and to incorporate safe practices in their work. Every employee responsible for directing the work of others should consider this Handbook to be mandatory reading.

We welcome your recommendations to improve both this Handbook and Trent University's safety programs. Please forward your comments and suggestions to the Risk Management Department, Blackburn Hall, to a member of the University's Joint Occupational Health

and Safety Committee, or to your supervisor.

## **II. Trent University's Health and Safety Policy:**

**June 16, 2005**

**TRENT UNIVERSITY**

**Health and Safety Policy**

### **1. Background:**

Health and safety is an integral part of management. Any person who manages an activity must also manage the risks of that activity. Health and safety cannot be managed adequately by responding reactively. It must be deliberately managed.

Specifically, Trent University is required to “take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of the worker”<sup>1</sup>. Further, “Every one who undertakes, or has the authority, to direct how another person does work or performs a task is under a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent bodily harm to that person, or any other person, arising from that work or task”<sup>2</sup>. Implicit in the legislation, and supported by the Supreme Court of Canada<sup>3</sup>, is the organization’s positive duty to establish a system to prevent the occurrence of

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<sup>1</sup> Occupational Health and Safety Act, RSO 1990 c0.1 , s25(2)(h)

<sup>2</sup> Criminal Code of Canada, R.S. c.C-46, s217.1

<sup>3</sup> Supreme Court of Canada, R.v. Sault Ste. Marie (1978)

offenses under the Act and to take reasonable care to ensure the system is effective.

### **2. Purpose:**

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Provide a framework for identifying and controlling hazards in University operations;
- Clarify the health and safety responsibilities of each member of the University community;
- Satisfy the requirement to “prepare and review at least annually a written occupational health and safety policy and develop and maintain a program to implement that policy”<sup>4</sup>.

### **3. Scope:**

This Policy applies to all members of the Trent University community: employees, students, visitors, and independent contractors.

### **4. Policy:**

**The University will take all appropriate measures to protect the health and safety of employees, students, visitors, and contractors, to promote health and safety awareness, and to meet or exceed the standards and legislative requirements of the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act, regulations made under the Act, and related statutes and regulations.**

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<sup>4</sup> Occupational Health and Safety Act, RSO 1990 c0.1, s25(2)(j)

## **5. Responsibility Framework:**

It is the Board of Governors' expectation that Trent University will comply with all applicable legislation and regulations concerning the health and safety of employees, students, visitors and contractors. Through an annual report on health and safety from management the Board will assure itself that the University is in compliance and that a comprehensive and effective health and safety system and supporting programs are established, maintained and updated as necessary. The Board may periodically conduct or call for more detailed in-house or external reviews.

The President of Trent University is responsible to the Board for directing the health and safety activities of the University and for ensuring that:

- A written health and safety risk management strategy is developed and implemented;
- Health and safety risk management is integral to strategic planning;
- A joint health and safety committee, advisory to the President, is established and maintained;
- the annual performance review of those persons reporting to the President takes into account the manner in which they have carried out their responsibilities for managing health and safety.

The Vice-Presidents of Trent University, in accordance with the responsibilities delegated by the President, are responsible to the President for:

- Ensuring that, within their areas of responsibility, appropriate plans are developed, resourced, kept current, and implemented, pursuant to the University's health and safety risk management strategy;
- Ensuring that annual performance review of those persons reporting to them takes into account the manner in which they have carried out their responsibilities for managing health and safety.

The Associate Vice-Presidents, Deans, Associate Deans, Senior Directors, Directors, Registrar and University Librarian, in accordance with the responsibilities delegated by their respective Vice-Presidents are responsible for:

- Ensuring health and safety risk management is integrated into all planning and decision-making within their portfolios, including the design of teaching curricula;
- Ensuring programs are developed, resourced, implemented, evaluated, and maintained to implement effectively the health and safety risk management strategy;
- Ensuring that annual performance review of those persons reporting to them takes into account the manner in which they have carried out their responsibilities for managing health and safety.

Managers, Academic Department Chairs, Academic Program Chairs, Academic Program Directors, and Research Directors (Principal Investigators) are responsible to their respective Associate Vice-President,

Dean, Associate Dean, Senior Director, Director, Registrar or University Librarian for ensuring that:

- Health and safety programs are implemented in the Program or Department as applicable;
- Health and safety risk management is integrated into all aspects of planning and decision-making within the Program or Department;
- Risk assessments are performed for all potentially hazardous activities;
- All accidents or incidents are investigated and addressed as necessary to prevent a recurrence;
- The required supervision, training and instruction are provided to all members of the Program or Department to ensure work is done safely, and that documentation is retained to demonstrate due diligence;
- Annual reviews take place of accident profiles, workplace inspection findings, health and safety concerns, training activities and other, related factors in order to monitor health and safety performance and to determine planning priorities.

Any employee (faculty or staff) having charge of an area or activity, or any degree of authority over any student or any individual who receives remuneration from the University, is responsible to his/her respective Manager, Academic Department Chair, Academic Program Chair or Academic Program Director for ensuring that:

- All hazards have been identified and assessed and requirements for risk control measures and/or

emergency response procedures have been addressed and documented;

- All individuals under his/her supervision have been informed of the hazards and instructed on the necessary risk control and emergency response procedures. This includes students participating in course activities;
- Workplace inspections, monitoring and accident reporting and investigations are routinely conducted to ensure the integrity of risk control and emergency response measures, and;
- Any concerns are responded to promptly.

Any employee responsible for a contract between the University and an independent contractor is responsible for ensuring that:

- The contract documents incorporate all applicable requirements of Trent University's health and safety risk management systems;
- All relevant information relating to workplace hazards and occupational health and safety is communicated to the contractor
- Contract requirements for complying with the University's health and safety requirements are monitored and enforced.

Every University employee and every independent operator working on University property is responsible for:

- Complying with this Policy, the Occupational Health and Safety Act and regulations and the rules and

procedures developed under the University's health and safety risk management strategy;

- Promptly reporting to his or her supervisor any observed contravention of the Act or regulations, any contravention of University health and safety policy or program or any workplace hazard of which he or she is aware;
- Refraining from any activity which may endanger the health or safety of themselves or any other person.

University students and visitors to the University are similarly expected to refrain from any activity which may endanger the health or safety of themselves or any other person. Students and guests are to be encouraged to promptly report any hazards which may arise.

### **5. Requirement to Post**

The President of Trent University (or designate) will ensure that a copy of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and a copy of this Policy are posted in a conspicuous location in every Trent University building<sup>5</sup>. This Policy will also be posted on Trent University's Health and Safety website:

[www.trentu.ca/healthandsafety](http://www.trentu.ca/healthandsafety)

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<sup>5</sup> Occupational Health and Safety Act, RSO 1990c0.1, s25(2)(i) and (k)

### **6. Review**

To comply with the legislative requirement for an annual review of this policy, the President (or designate) will initiate a review in January of each year. In performing this review, the President (or designate) will consult with the joint health and safety committee. The outcome of the annual policy review will be reported to Trent University's Board of Governors as part of an annual report on health and safety activities.

**Approved:** Board of Governors: June 16, 2005  
(Date)

**Replaces:** Trent University Health and Safety Policy.  
February 23, 2000.

**Revisions:**

**Policy Maintenance:** VP (Administration)

### **III. Emergency Procedures**

#### **1. Medical Emergency:**

- **Life-threatening injury:**
  - Call (9-)911 (Police, Fire Department, Ambulance). Provide location and details.
  - Call Campus Security's Emergency number at (748-)1333. Provide location and details.
  - Administer first aid to the injured person to the best of your abilities. Call for help. Keep them warm. Do not move them unless they are in danger. Stay with them until help arrives.
  
- **Serious Injury, but not life-threatening:**
  - Call Campus Security's Emergency number at (748-)1333. Provide location and details.
  - Administer first aid to the injured person to the best of your abilities. Call for help. Keep them warm. Do not move them unless they are in danger. Stay with them until help arrives.
  
- **Minor Injuries:**
  - Apply first aid. Seek follow-up medical attention if required.

Supervisors are strongly encouraged to periodically review first aid procedures with their staff. See Section IV of this Handbook for reporting procedures

(Reporting Accidents, Incidents and Safety Concerns, page 23), and Section VI of this handbook for First Aid Program Requirements (Safe Work Practices: 11. First Aid, page 67).

#### **2. Fire:**

- When you hear the fire alarm:
  - Immediately vacate the building via the nearest Exit Route;
  - Do not use elevators;
  - Designated fire refuge areas are maintained in the stairwells of multi-story buildings. If you cannot use the stairs, remain in the stairwell until Emergency Services personnel arrive to assist you.
  
- In case of a fire in your office or immediate work area:
  - Shout "Fire!" and pull the nearest fire alarm (located at the nearest Exit);
  - Close doors behind you as you evacuate;
  - Attempt to rescue persons in immediate danger, but do not endanger yourself;
  - Do not attempt to use a fire extinguisher unless you have been properly trained;
  - Do not attempt to fight a major fire on your own;

- From a safe location call (9-)911 (Police, Fire Department, Ambulance). Give location and details;
- Call Campus Security's Emergency number (748-)1333. Give location and details.

Supervisors are strongly encouraged to periodically review fire response procedures with their staff. See Section VI of this Handbook (Safe Work Procedures: 10. Fire Safety, page 67).

### 3. **Bomb Threats:**

If a bomb threat is received immediately call Campus Security at (748-)1333.

No bomb threat should be ignored.

### 4. **Chemical Spills:**

The University would normally expect that anyone working with a chemical (i.e. a hazardous material) would be trained and equipped to handle a spill of that material.

#### (a) **If you can safely handle the spill and there is no release to the environment:**

- Contain the spill rapidly by diking with suitable material (spill stockings, sand, vermiculite, etc.);
- Take steps to prevent the chemical from contaminating ground water and sewer

systems (eg. use an absorbent, block any drains);

- Do not leave the spill unattended.
- Carefully plan cleanup steps.
- Dispose of cleanup materials as hazardous waste.

#### (b) **If you cannot safely handle the spill or there is a release to the environment:**

- Evacuate to a safe location;
- Call the Campus Security Emergency number (748-)1333. Request assistance, giving the details of the spill.
- Use the fire alarm to evacuate the area if the situation is out of control (the fire alarm is located at the nearest Exit);
- Attempt to rescue persons in immediate danger, but do not endanger yourself;
- Ensure others do not enter the area;
- Close doors behind you as you evacuate.

See Section IV of this manual for reporting procedures (1(d). Unintentional Release – Spills, page 26) and Section VI for requirements when working with biological or chemical agents (1. Biological and Chemical Agents, page 40).

## **5. Gas Leak:**

Natural gas is used in the University's heating, cooking and hot water systems.

In its pure state natural gas is colourless and odourless, however suppliers add mercaptan to give the gas a strong, "rotten-egg-like" smell. Natural gas is not toxic, however, if it escapes into a confined space it may displace the air and could asphyxiate anyone remaining in the area. It is also extremely flammable if mixed with air at certain concentrations.

No gas leak should be ignored. Evacuate the area immediately if the smell becomes very strong. Call Campus Security at (748-) 1333 from a safe location.

## **6. Physical Attack or Threatening Behaviour:**

### **(a) Physical Attack:**

Get help:

- Scream or yell for assistance.
- Use a phone to call Campus Security (748-)1333 or Police (9-)911
- Punch the red emergency button on a University Emergency Phone
- Pull a fire alarm

Find safety:

- Get to a group of people (Never move to a more isolated area);
- Get to the security of a building, car, room or office.

Report the incident as soon as possible to your Supervisor and to Campus Security.

### **(b) Violent Behaviour:**

Violent behaviour can include oral or written statements, gestures or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm, as well as aggressive or physically violent acts such as finger pointing, spitting, shoving, slapping, assault with or without a weapon, suicide and homicide. Bullying is a form of violence and may include excessive unfounded criticism, malicious rumours, stalking or sabotage of someone's work.

Do not ignore threatening or violent behaviour. If you witness or experience violence or threats of violence, or if you feel that a colleague, student or visitor is likely to become violent, report the situation to your supervisor, your department head or Campus Security. *If you or anyone else are in immediate danger, call 911 then contact Campus Security at 748-1333 at once.*

See Section VI. (26. Violence in the Workplace, page 88) for additional information on recognizing, assessing and controlling violence in the workplace.

#### **IV. Reporting Accidents, Incidents and Safety Concerns**

Trent University encourages all members of the University community – visitors, students, contractors and employees – to promptly report any safety concerns that may arise. Prompt reporting will assist the University in identifying, assessing and controlling hazards to prevent injury.

Employees experiencing or witnessing any accident or incident which causes or has the potential to cause an injury and/or loss or damage to University property should report the event immediately to their immediate supervisor, manager, or Campus Security . Every accident or incident should be investigated. Steps should be taken, as appropriate, to prevent recurrences.

##### **1. Reporting Events:**

###### **a) First Aid:**

Regulations require that records be maintained of all first aid treatment administered in the workplace. For this reason, every first aid kit should include a log book. A record should be entered into the logbook each time a first aid kit is used.

###### **b) Workplace Safety and Insurance:**

The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WS&IB) requires the submission of an “Employer’s Report of Injury/Disease” report where a work-related injury or occupational disease causes an employee to:

- Be absent from regular work and/or

- Require modified duties at regular pay or less than regular pay
- Earn less than regular pay at regular work and/or
- obtain health care.

The Report must be completed within three calendar days of a work-related injury or first awareness of an occupational illness. The report must be received in the WS&IB office within seven calendar days.

Work-related injuries or illness should be reported immediately to your supervisor and to the Risk Management Department. Risk Management will submit the *Employer’s Reports* to the WSIB. Information can be forwarded to Risk Management by phone (extension 7373) during office hours or Campus Security (extension 1328 after hours), or by faxing a completed copy of Appendix A (page 114) to Risk Management at extension 1009.

The WSIB levies \$250 fines for late reporting. This charge may be forwarded to the employing department where appropriate. More substantial fines may apply where an injury is not reported to the WSIB.

###### **c) Critical Injuries and Fatalities:**

Regulation defines a critical injury as an injury of a serious nature that:

- Places life in jeopardy;
- Produces unconsciousness;

- Results in substantial loss of blood;
- Involves the fracture of a leg or arm but not a finger or toe;
- Involves the amputation of a leg, arm, hand, or foot but not a finger or toe;
- Consists of burns to a major portion of the body; or
- Causes the loss of sight in an eye.

In the event of a critical injury or a fatality it is assumed that the University's Emergency Procedures will be followed, i.e. that both Security and Emergency Response personnel will be contacted immediately. You should advise your supervisor or manager as soon as possible. The accident site must not be disturbed without the permission of a Ministry of Labour Inspector, with the following exceptions:

- where necessary to provide assistance to the victim;
- to maintain an essential service; or,
- to prevent unnecessary damage to equipment or property.

Security will ensure that Senior Management is immediately advised of the incident and will work with Senior Management to insure the Ministry of Labour, the Co-Chairs of the Joint Health and Safety Committee and the President of the Union (where applicable) are notified as quickly as possible.

#### **d) Unintentional Releases (Spills):**

Immediately notify your supervisor and University Security (extension 1333) of any spill that meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Impairment to the quality of the natural environment – air, water, or land;
- Injury or damage to property or animal life;
- Adverse health effects;
- Safety risk;
- Making property, plant or animal life unfit for use;
- Loss of enjoyment of normal use of property; or,
- Interference with the normal conduct of business.

Regulation requires that the Ministry of the Environment be informed immediately of such a spill. The Ministry's **Spills Action Centre** is staffed on a 24-hour basis and can be reached at:

**1-800-268-6060**

For more information visit the Ministry of the Environment's website at: [www.ene.gov.on.ca/spills.htm](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/spills.htm)

#### **2. Reporting Safety Concerns:**

Some members of the University community may not know exactly who to contact with a safety concern. If

you are not sure, contact Campus Security at (705) 748-1328 (or internally at extension 1328)

In general terms, safety concerns should be reported as follows:

**(a) Visitors:**

- General concerns should be brought to the attention of Campus Security, extension 1328;
- Participants of Conferences or Special Events should bring their concerns to the attention of Conference and Hospitality Services, extension 1260.

**(b) Students:**

- Concerns related to courses or coursework should be brought to the attention of the course instructor. If unresolved, the concern should be discussed with the Department Chair, Program Director, or, if necessary, the Dean;
- Residence-related concerns should be brought to the attention of the College Don, or, if necessary, to Housing Services at extension 5127. Building deficiencies (eg. A broken lock) should be reported to the College Porter or, after hours, to Campus Security at extension 1328;
- General campus safety concerns should be reported to Campus Security, extension 1328;
- The Trent Central Students Association (TCSA, extension 1000) or College Cabinet representatives are also available to provide assistance, as required.

**(c) Contractors:**

- Project-related concerns should be brought to the attention of the University employee assigned to manage the project (i.e. the Project Manager). Where necessary, the Project Manager will raise the concern to a more senior level of management until the matter is resolved.
- Campus Security should be contacted after hours, weekends and holidays for any situation requiring immediate assistance during these periods.
- Campus Security must be advised of any situation on University property requiring emergency assistance (eg. police, fire, emergency medical services).

**(d) University Employees:**

- University employees are required to report health and safety concerns to their immediate supervisor. Where a supervisor lacks the resources or authority to address a concern, the supervisor is required to forward the concern to a more senior level of management, as required, until the matter is addressed.
- In addition:
  - Building deficiencies should be reported to the Physical Resources Department using the “fixit” e-mail address (fixit@trentu.ca)
  - Related emergencies (eg. A broken water pipe) should be reported immediately to Campus Security, extension 1328.
  - Security should be contacted if immediate assistance is required. Security must be

- advised of any emergency situation involving police, fire, or emergency medical services.
- Should an employee disagree with their supervisor's response to a safety concern, the employee has the right to bring the issue to the attention of the University's Joint Health and Safety Committee.

### **V. Rights and Responsibilities**

The underlying principle of Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act is that every employee in a workplace has a role to play in ensuring a safe and healthy work environment. In general:

#### **1. The "Worker": (from the Ontario Ministry of Labour)**

If you are an employee of Trent University, no matter what position you hold, you are a "worker" as defined by the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

As a worker you must:

- Work in compliance with the Act and Regulations;
- Use or wear protective clothing or devices as required by the University;
- Report to your supervisor or manager the absence or defect in equipment or protective devices that come to your attention;
- Report to your supervisor or manager any contravention of the Occupational Health and

Safety act or any hazard which comes to your attention.

- Not remove or make ineffective any protective device (unless an adequate, temporary device is in place);
- Not use any equipment, machine or device that may endanger you or another worker;
- Not engage in any prank or 'boisterous conduct.'

Every Worker enjoys four rights under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. They are:

- **The Right to Know**

Workers have the right to know about any potential hazards to which they may be exposed. This means the right to be trained and to have information on machinery, equipment, working conditions, processes and hazardous substances. The parts of the Act that implement the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) play an important role in giving workers the right to know.

- **The Right to Refuse Work**

Workers have the right to refuse work that they believe is dangerous to either their own health and safety or that of another worker. The Act describes the exact process for refusing dangerous work and the responsibilities of the employer in responding to such a refusal.

- **The Right to Participate**

Workers have the right to be part of the process of identifying and resolving workplace health and safety concerns. This right is expressed through worker membership on the joint health and safety committee. Health and safety concerns should be brought to the attention of your immediate Supervisor. Unresolved concerns should be brought to the attention of the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

- **The Right to Stop Work**

In certain circumstances, members of a joint health and safety committee who are "certified" have the right to stop work that is dangerous to any worker. The Act sets out these circumstances and how the right to stop work can be exercised.

## **2. The “Supervisor”:**

Every person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker is a Supervisor as defined by the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA).

In addition to your rights and responsibilities as a worker, a supervisor is required to:

- Recognize the hazards in the workplace;
- Advise workers of potential and actual dangers;
- Be familiar with the OHSA and Regulations;
- Ensure your workers are meeting their health and safety duties;

- Provide your workers with written measures and procedures where required by regulation;
- Take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of workers.

It is important to note that the functional definition of supervisor contained in the OHSA is independent of job title and will apply notwithstanding Collective Agreements or policy. In academic areas, for example, individual faculty members or principal investigators who have charge of a workplace (eg. a laboratory) or some degree of authority over a worker (eg. graduate student, teaching assistant, administrative staff, or other University employee) are supervisors as defined by the Act.

## **3. The “Employer”:**

OHSA defines the employer as a person who employs one or more people. At Trent University the duties and responsibilities of the employer are normally carried out at a variety of organizational levels. This would normally include supervisors, managers, directors and more senior administrative levels, including Associate Deans, Deans, Vice-Presidents and the President.

The Employer’s responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that equipment, materials and protective devices required by Regulation are provided, are used, and are maintained in good condition;
- Ensuring that buildings are not exposed to loads beyond those set out by the Building Code;

- Providing the information, instruction and supervision necessary to protect the health or safety of workers;
- Establishing, maintaining, assisting and co-operating with a workplace Joint Health and Safety Committee;
- Preparing a written occupational health and safety policy and developing and maintaining a program to implement that policy;
- Take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of workers.

#### **4. Contracted work**

##### **(a) Contract employees:**

The Occupational Health and Safety Act does not differentiate between regular employees and employees on contract. Supervisors and managers are responsible for ensuring that contract employees receive adequate training and supervision to safely perform the work assigned to them.

##### **(b) Contract for Service:**

The University is responsible for ensuring that work done for the University is done safely, whether by a University employee or through a contract for service. Any employee arranging a contract for service should ensure that the contractor, as a minimum, provides proof of each of the following:

- Demonstrated experience and success in the nature of work to be performed (usually through references);

- Confirmation of appropriate staff training and qualifications;
- Certification of up-to-date compensation insurance (Usually provided through the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board);
- Acknowledgement that it is an independent contractor in a contract for goods and /or services and no employer-employee, no partnership or agency agreement is created by its agreement with the University;
- Confirmation that the Contractor will abide by the Ontario Human Rights Code, Occupational Health and Safety Act, Environmental Protection Act, applicable Regulations and University policies;
- Where a project may disturb building fabric the Contractor should be advised that some University Buildings may contain asbestos. The Contractor should provide a written commitment that any work done on site will comply with the University's Asbestos Management Plan.

For additional information contact the Purchasing Office, Financial Services (extension 1217) or the Risk Management Department (extension 7373).

#### **5. Due Diligence:**

The Occupational Health and Safety Act includes enforcement provisions and establishes penalties where

the requirements of the Act are not met (see also Section V. 8, Ministry of Labour, page 37).

The Act and Regulations made under the Act establish minimum standards that must be met in the workplace. One of the most challenging of these standards is the requirement of supervisors and employers to “...take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker.”

It should be understood that where a workplace accident results in serious injury the courts will assume that the workplace parties have not met the legal standard of ‘taking every precaution reasonable’. The courts will look to supervisors and employer representatives, in particular, to defend themselves by demonstrating that they have met this standard. This defense is known as Due Diligence.

In order to present a Due Diligence defense it is important that every person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker establish and maintain an accident prevention/emergency response program for their areas of responsibility. The program should include each of the following five steps:

**(a) Recognize the Hazards:**

Generate a list of the hazards in your workplace. Consider the information available in this handbook. Are there other hazards? What factors might mitigate or exacerbate the hazard? Consider the following:

- The knowledge and skills of those doing the work
- The environment
- The level of supervision
- Accident or injury records
- ‘Near misses’
- Consider any energy sources present: Chemical, mechanical (kinetic or potential), electrical, hydraulic, pneumatic, gravity, etc.
- Special circumstances (eg. new equipment, new staff, unusual situations)

Seek input and assistance from your staff.

**(b) Assess the Hazard:**

How significant is the hazard? What are your statutory obligations? Is there a high probability that an injury or disease will occur? If so, what type of injury is likely? What types or precautions are normally taken in other, similar industries? Is testing required to determine whether a hazard is present?

**(c) Control the Hazards:**

Hazard controls generally fall into one of three categories: At the source (preferred), along the path between the source and the worker (second), and at the worker (generally acknowledged as the least preferred).

(i) At the Source:

Are alternate, less hazardous materials, equipment, procedures or devices available?

Is the activity truly necessary? Can the hazard source be relocated to reduce the risk? Would improved maintenance reduce the risk?

(ii) Along the Path:

It is possible to increase the distance between the hazard and the worker? Would enclosure be feasible? Would guards or barriers be appropriate? Can the hazard be contained?

(iii) At the Worker:

Can the hazard be addressed with personal protective equipment? Are signs required? Training? Supervision? Written procedures? Are additional precautions required to address the eventuality of human error?

**(d) Document:**

It is important to keep written training records, maintenance records, test results, etc.

**(e) Repeat:**

It is important to review safety practices to ensure that hazards are being adequately controlled. Consider whether hazards have changed or whether new hazards have perhaps been unintentionally created.

**6. The Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC):**

The JHSC is an advisory group of worker and management representatives who meet regularly to

identify hazards and make recommendations for the improvement of health and safety. Worker-appointed Committee members perform monthly inspections of the physical condition of the University, ensuring that every building is inspected at least once each year. The Committee responds to concerns raised by workers and plays an important role in the investigation and resolution of these concerns.

The University is required to provide a written response to a Joint Health and Safety Committee recommendation within 21 days.

Committee member's names, contact information, and Committee minutes are posted on the University's intranet portal:

[myTrent /myWorkplace /myTrentsites/ health&safety](#)

**7. Posting of Health and Safety Information**

Regulations require that the following information be posted in a conspicuous location in the workplace:

- Certificates of persons trained in first aid
- Names of the members of the Joint Health and Safety Committee
- A copy of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*
- Minutes of the Joint Health and Safety Committee
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Board's Form 82

Managers are encouraged to post this information in their workplace. For more information contact the Risk

Management Department, extension 7373.

### **8. The Ministry of Labour:**

The Ministry of Labour carries out workplace inspections to ensure compliance with the Act and regulations. Inspections are also conducted in response to a specific complaint(s). Such complaints are kept confidential.

Everyone in the workplace is expected to co-operate with and assist the Inspector.

At the conclusion of an inspection the Inspector will provide a written report making recommendations for the improvement of health and safety. Where an Inspector finds violations of the Act or regulations, the inspector will issue written orders to comply with the law within a certain time period. Where a hazard is imminent immediate compliance may be required. The Inspector can also order that work be stopped, equipment not be used, the workplace be cleared of workers, or that chemicals, or physical or biological agents not be used until the order has been complied with and the Ministry is duly notified.

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act the Ministry of Labour can issue fines for safety infractions. On conviction, personal fines can be up to \$25,000 and a year in jail per infraction. Corporate fines can be up to \$500,000.

These penalties are intended to serve as an important deterrent and are published by the Ministry of Labour. The Ministry's news releases can be found on their website:

[www.gov.on.ca/LAB/english/news](http://www.gov.on.ca/LAB/english/news).

## **VI. Safe Work Practices: Requirements and Guidelines for Recognition, Assessment and Control of Specific Hazards**

### **1. Biological or Chemical Agents**

#### **(a) Biological and Chemical Agent Regulation**

Regulations establish occupational exposure limits for over 600 hazardous substances. The limits are listed in Regulation 833, found at the following link:

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws\\_regs\\_900833\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_900833_e.htm)

Supervisors should establish and maintain procedures to ensure exposures do not exceed these limits.

#### **(b) Biohazardous materials**

A biohazard is any organism or toxin that is known or suspected to cause disease in animals or humans. Biohazards may include viruses, bacteria, fungi, parasites, and their toxins, blood and bodily fluids, human or animal tissue, and cells, cell-lines and certain nucleic acids.

Any department or program working with biohazardous materials is expected to develop and implement an effective hazard control program.

Any work involving biohazards recognized by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency or the Public Health Agency of Canada as requiring Containment Level 2 or Containment Level 3 requires approval of the Trent University Biosafety Committee. The University's Biosafety Officer will issue permits for all approved work.

Trent University does not allow work at Containment Level 4.

Contact the Risk Management Department at extension 7373 if you have questions or require assistance.

### **(c) Designated Substances**

Certain toxic materials have been deemed "Designated Substances" by regulation. A control program and a written assessment of exposure is required where designated substances are used.

There are currently eleven designated substances. They are:

- **Acrylonitrile**
- **Arsenic** (Defined as Arsenic in its elemental form and arsenic in inorganic compounds, except arsine, and includes arsenic in organic form only where both

inorganic and organic compounds of arsenic are present)

- **Asbestos** (Defined as any of the following fibrous silicates: actinolite, amosite, anthophyllite, chrysotile, crocidolite or tremolite)
- **Asbestos on Construction Projects and in Buildings and Repair Operations** (Defined as any of the following fibrous silicates: actinolite, amosite, anthophyllite, chrysotile, crocidolite or tremolite)<sup>6</sup>
- **Benzene**
- **Coke Oven Emissions** (Defined as the benzene soluble fraction of total particulate matter (BSF TPM) of the substances emitted into the atmosphere from metallurgical coke ovens including condensed vapours and solid particulates)
- **Ethylene oxide**
- **Isocyanates (Defined as organic isocyanates)**
- **Lead** (Defined as elemental lead, inorganic compounds of lead and organic compounds of lead)
- **Mercury** (Defined as elemental mercury, inorganic compounds of mercury and organic compounds of mercury)
- **Silica** (Defined as crystalline silica in a respirable form)
- **Vinyl chloride**

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<sup>6</sup> see the *Trent University Asbestos Management Program Manual – Operations and Maintenance, August, 1994*, available through the Department of Physical Resources or the Department of Human Resources.

Any Department or Program that is using a designated substance(s) is responsible for preparing an assessment of exposure and filing their written assessment with the Dean, Associate Dean, or Director, as appropriate. A copy of the assessment must also be provided to the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

These requirements are detailed in the University's Designated Substances Standard, which can be found on the health and safety website:

<http://www.trentu.ca/healthandsafety/policies.html>

Contact the Risk Management Department at extension 7373 if you have questions or require assistance.

**(d) Eyewash Stations and Deluge Showers:** *(from the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety)*

The first 10 to 15 seconds after exposure to a hazardous substance, especially a corrosive substance, are critical. Delaying treatment, even for a few seconds, may cause serious injury. Eyewash stations and deluge showers are required whenever there is risk of injury to an eye or to skin due to contact with a biological or chemical substance. Eyewash stations and deluge showers are used to provide on-the-spot decontamination.

Some general guidelines:

- Eyewash stations and deluge showers should be located within 10 seconds (15 to 30 m) of a work area.
- Portable eyewash stations are available, but they must be large enough to deliver water at the recommended flow rates and for a sufficient duration for the chemical or biological agent being used. (Normally 15 minutes, but some chemicals require up to 60 minutes. See the Material Safety Data Sheet for specific information).
- Plumbed models are recommended to ensure that there is sufficient volume to deliver water at the recommended flow rates and flushing times.
- Several "flushing fluids" are available for eyewash stations: Potable water, preserved water, preserved buffered saline solution (or other medically acceptable solutions) are okay.
- One worker in the area should be designated responsible for inspecting and operating (activating) the eyewash station and deluge shower weekly. Signed, dated records should be kept. All workers should be encouraged to check the operation of the eyewash station daily for their own protection.
- Preventative maintenance inspections should be conducted every six months to check for valve leakage, clogged openings, clogged lines and adequacy of fluid volumes. Written records of these inspections should be maintained.
- Consider audible or visual alarms to alert other workers, especially where a worker may be isolated.

- Clothes contaminated with corrosive or contaminated materials may need to be removed. Consider installing a privacy curtain and keeping extra overalls handy.
- Workers should be trained in the proper use of an eyewash station before any emergencies occur.
- Arrangements should be made to provide warnings and protection in the event that an eyewash station fails.

**(e) Hazardous Waste Management**

The University’s hazardous waste program is managed by the Risk Management Department. The Department arranges regular collection and removal of hazardous waste materials through contracts with qualified, certified hazardous waste disposal contractors. The Department is also responsible for registering and filing the University’s Generator Registration Reports with the Ministry of the Environment.

For more information, or to arrange disposal of hazardous wastes generated on campus, contact the Risk Management Department at extension 7373.

**(f) Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG)**

Dangerous Goods are defined as any product, substance or organism falling within one or more of the following Classes:

- Class 1: Explosives

- Class 2: Gases (compressed, deeply refrigerated, liquefied, or dissolved under pressure)
- Class 3: Flammable and combustible materials.
- Class 4: Flammable solids (substances liable to spontaneous combustion or which emit flammable gases on contact with water)
- Class 5: Oxidizing substances
- Class 6: Poisonous and infectious substances
- Class 7: Radioactive substances
- Class 8: Corrosives
- Class 9: Substances recognized by the “Governor in Council” to be dangerous to life, health, property or the environment.

Regulations require that any person who “handles, offers for transport or transports dangerous goods,” must be trained and hold a valid TDG training certificate *or* work under the *direct supervision* of someone who holds a valid certificate. Managers are responsible for ensuring that training is adequate for the work being performed.

For more information contact the Risk Management Department at extension 7373.

**(g) Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)**

The WHMIS regulation requires:

- Anyone who works “with or near hazardous materials” receive WHMIS training; (hazardous materials include any of the following: compressed

gases, flammable and combustible materials, oxidizing materials, poisonous and infectious materials, corrosive materials and dangerously reactive materials);

- An annual assessment to ensure employees have the ability to use this information to ensure their health and safety;
- All hazardous materials be labelled; and,
- An up-to-date (i.e. not more than three years old) Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) be available.

Every Department or Program that uses hazardous materials is required to meet University's WHMIS standard. The standard can be found at the following link:

<http://www.trentu.ca/healthandsafety/policies.html>

The Risk Management Department offers core WHMIS training sessions at the start of each semester. Risk Management can also provide departments with WHMIS quizzes that can be used for an annual assessment. Core training is also available through self-instruction manuals and computer-based training. Supervisors should provide additional training, as required, to ensure their employees are familiar with specific workplace hazards and emergency procedures. Contact the Risk Management Department extension 7373 for more information.

## **2. Boating**

Provincial health and safety regulations require an alarm system, life jacket, rescue equipment and written procedures where there is, "risk of a worker falling into a liquid of sufficient depth to result in drowning". Federal boating regulations expect boaters to be responsible for being properly equipped, for safe boat operation, and for ensuring the safety of those on board.

The following guidelines may be useful to you: (For more detailed information visit the Canadian Coast Guard website: <http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca>).

- Operators of Pleasure Craft Regulations: Requirements for a proof of competency are being phased in for all operators of pleasure craft fitted with a motor and used for recreational purposes (N.B. It would be prudent to assume that the same requirements should be considered a minimum for those using pleasure craft in their work):

|  | Date at which proof of competency is required on board. |
|--|---|
| All operators born after April 1, 1983                                   | September 15, 1999                                      |
| All operators of craft under 4m in length, including personal watercraft | September 15, 2002                                      |
| All operators  | September 15, 2009                                      |

Proof of competency must be on board at all times. It can be obtained by providing proof of having successfully completed a boating safety course in Canada prior to April 1, 1999, with a pleasure craft operator card after successful completion of a Canadian Coast Guard accredited test, or by completing a rental-boat safety checklist.

- Required Equipment:

The size and type of boat will determine the minimum equipment required on the vessel. The categories are:

- Rowing Boats (any kind) up to 6 m in length
- Unpowered craft up to 6 m
- Powered craft up to 6 m
- Craft 8 – 12 m in length
- Craft 12 – 20 m in length
- Craft 20 m+ in length
- Personal Water Craft

Requirements are provided for the first three categories:

Rowing Boats (any kind) up to 6 meters in length (19'8"):

- One Canadian-approved personal flotation device or lifejacket or appropriate size for each person on board
- One buoyant heaving line 15 m (50')
- One manual propelling device OR an anchor with 15 m (50') of cable, rope or chain
- 1 hand-bailer OR manual pump with enough hose to pump water overboard
- Sound signalling device

- Navigation lights must comply with Collision Regulations [Not required unless operated at night or in restricted visibility]

Unpowered Craft up to 6 metres in length (19'8"):

- One approved and properly sized lifejacket (yellow, red or orange) or PFD (personal flotation device) for each person on board
- 1 buoyant heaving 15 metres
- One manual propelling device OR an anchor with 15 m (50') of cable, rope or chain
- 1 hand-bailer OR manual pump with enough hose to pump water overboard
- Sound signalling device
- Navigation lights must comply with Collision Regulations [Not required unless operated at night or in restricted visibility]

Powered Craft up to 6 metres in length (19'8"):

- One approved and properly sized lifejacket (yellow, red or orange) or PFD (personal flotation device) for each person on board
- 15 m (50') buoyant heaving line
- 1 manual propelling device [oar] OR anchor with 15 m (50') of cable, rope or chain
- 1 bailer OR manual pump with enough hose to pump water overboard [Not required for multi-hull vessel that has subdivided multiple-sealed hull construction]

- 1 Class 5BC fire extinguisher if vessel has inboard engine OR a fixed fuel tank OR fuel burning heater, stove or refrigerator
- 1 watertight flashlight OR 3 flares of Type A, B or C
- Sound signalling device (horn)
- Navigation lights must comply with Collision Regulations [Not required unless operated at night or in restricted visibility.]

Notes:

- Flares must be Canadian approved and not beyond the expiry date. Flares are valid for 3 ½ years from date of manufacture.
- Canadian approved lifejacket or PFD (personal floatation device) must fit each person on board properly. The ‘horseshoe’-type life buoy does not fulfil safety requirements.
- Also consider taking a compass, charts, a spotlight, a first aid kit and a tool kit.
- Boats with a motor of 7.5 kW (10 horsepower) must be licensed with the provincial government. A copy of the license should be on board.

**3. Confined Space** (from the *Education Safety Association of Ontario*)

A confined space is defined as, “...a space in which, because of its construction, location, contents or work activity therein, the accumulation of a hazardous gas,

vapour, dust or fume or the creation of an oxygen-deficient atmosphere may occur.”

A ‘typical’ confined space is one that is normally entered only periodically. Access and egress to the space is usually difficult. Often air quality is fine, but there is a *potential* for a build-up of hazardous gases, vapour, dust or fumes, or for an oxygen-deficient or enriched environment to exist in the confined space. Accidents in confined spaces are usually serious and often fatal. Tragically, many would-be rescuers have also been injured or killed by trying to provide assistance without the appropriate protective equipment.

Every Supervisor should be aware of all confined spaces under his/her control. Confined spaces should be secured to prevent unauthorized entry. A confined space must not be entered unless all of the following conditions have been met:

- Mechanical equipment in the confined space is disconnected from its power source and locked out;
- All pipes and other supply lines in the confined space (which could pose a hazard) are blanked off;
- The confined space is tested and evaluated by a competent person who records the results of each test in a permanent record and certifies in writing (in the permanent record) that the confined space is free from hazard and will remain free from hazard while the work is performed.

- A minimum of two (2) persons, one of whom is certified in first aid and CPR will stand guard outside the space (standby);
- Communications have been established between the worker and the standby.

The above is intended to serve as a guideline only. Any person intending work in a confined space must be aware of the Confined Space requirements in the *Regulations for Industrial Establishments*. Any work in a confined space must meet or exceed the requirements of Trent University's Confined Space Standard. The Standard is available at the following link:

<http://www.trentu.ca/healthandsafety/policies.html>

#### **4. Crisis and Emergency Planning**

The University has established an Emergency Management Plan that provides a framework for an appropriate response to any emergency that may arise on campus. The umbrella plan includes requirements for University Departments and Programs to establish and maintain departmental emergency plans and contact lists.

The Plan and supporting documents are available to University employees on the University's intranet portal:

myTrent / myWorkplace / myTrentSites / health&safety

For more information contact the Risk Management Department at extension 7373.

#### **5. Diving (Working Underwater)**

No person should perform any work under water unless they are familiar with the *Diving Operations* regulations made under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (O. Reg. 629/94). Any work to be performed under water must meet or exceed the requirements of the Diving Operations regulation:

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws\\_regs\\_940629\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_940629_e.htm)

#### **6. Electrical Safety:**

Electrical equipment should only be repaired by persons who are qualified by their training or experience.

Some general precautions:

- Check that all electrical appliances are “approved” with recognized approval markings to ensure they meet the electrical safety requirements for Ontario;
- Check to make sure that Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI's) have been installed in bathrooms, laundry rooms, outdoors or any location where water is used near an electrical outlet. GFCI's minimize the risk of electrical shock in these environments;
- Never overload electrical outlets by plugging in too many plugs or by connecting extension cords end-to-end;
- Regularly check your office or work area for:
  - Loose or damaged plugs;

- Damaged or frayed electrical cords;
- Fuses that blow or circuit breakers that trip frequently, or for circuits that won't work when fuses are replaced or breakers reset;
- Dim or flickering lights;
- Recognize that extension cords are handy for temporary use, but:
  - Never remove the third prong – the prong exists to prevent shocks;
  - Don't use extension cords in place of permanent wiring. They are for temporary use, only;
  - Don't use extension cords (or any electrical equipment) that show signs of damage such as loose prongs, splits in the plastic casing (cord jacket), or heat excessively when in use;
  - Keep electrical cords away from heat and water;
  - Never place electrical cords under carpets or heavy furniture.

Electrical system problems or concerns should be reported to the Department of Physical Resources (e-mail: "fixit@trentu.ca")

## 7. **Elevated Work** *(from the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety)*

Elevated work is any work that requires an employee to be raised above ground level and presents a risk of a fall and carries a potential for serious injury. There are many devices available to assist with elevated work. The

simplest, ladders, are described in this section. More complex systems (eg. buckets, elevating platforms, scaffolding and suspended work) are in many cases the safest and most appropriate systems for certain types of elevated work, but the qualifications and training requirements required for their use are beyond the scope of this general handbook.

Please note that fall arrest systems (described below) are required for any work where there is a risk of falling 3m (10 feet) or more.

Contact the Risk Management Department, extension 7373, should you require assistance in developing or implementing an elevated work program.

### **(a) Fall Arrest Systems:**

Fall arrest (or fall protection) equipment is required for any work where you may be at risk of falling three meters or more.

A complete fall protection program is required if fall protection equipment is to be used. The program should include training in the selection, fit testing, maintenance and inspection of the equipment.

Contact the Risk Management Department at extension 7373 if you require assistance in developing a fall protection program for your area.

### **(b) Ladders (Fixed)**

Inspect the ladder before each use. A detailed inspection should take place every three months. Check for:

- Loose, worn or damaged rungs or side rails;
- Damaged or corroded cage;
- Corroded guard, bolts and rivet heads;
- Damaged or corroded handrails and brackets on platforms;
- Broken or loose anchorages;
- Weakened or damaged rungs on brick or concrete slabs;
- Defects in climbing devices, including loose or damaged carrier rails or ropes;
- Slippery surfaces from oil and ice;
- Clutter obstructing the base of ladder or platform.

Maintain a written record of the inspection. Promptly report any defect to the Department of Physical Resources (e-mail “fixit@trentu.ca”)

When climbing:

- Wait until the other person has exited before ascending or descending;
- Use the appropriate safety devices (eg. restraint belt or travelling fixture);
- Maintain three-point contact by keeping two hands and one foot, or two feet and one hand on the ladder;
- Face the ladder and use both hands to grip the rungs firmly;
- Place feet firmly on each rung;

- Wear footwear with heels. Ensure that footwear is in good condition;
- Clean muddy or slippery boot soles before mounting a ladder;
- Raise or lower tools and materials using a hand-line;
- Take your time.

### **(c) Ladders (Portable)**

Falls from ladders are a major source of serious injury. Be aware of the hazards and take proper precautions to prevent falling.

*Never* use a chairs, tables, boxes (etc.) as makeshift ladders.

Check the following before using a ladder:

- Inspect the ladder. Are there:
  - missing or worn or loose rungs;
  - damaged or worn non-slip feet;
  - loose or worn parts;
  - is the ladder material sound (eg. wood is free from rot or decay, fibreglass is not exposed or cracked, metal is not cracked, split or worn). Do not use painted wooden ladders. The paint may hide serious defects;
  - are there sharp, rough or splintered edges or surfaces;
  - are the rails twisted;

- are identification labels in place?

Reject and tag any ladders that have defects.

Setting up the ladder:

- Check for and avoid overhead electrical wires. Do not use any type of ladder near electrical wires.
- Get help when handling a heavy or long ladder;
- Use a ladder designed for the task. Consider the strength, type, and length;
- Place the ladder  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the ladder's working length (eg. foot to top support point) away from the base of the structure (eg. for every 4 feet high, the base of the ladder should be out 1 ft.; that means one horizontal foot from the support point);
- The ladder should be extended at least one metre above the landing platform;
- Place the ladder on a firm, level footing. Use a ladder with slip-resistant feet or secure blocking, or have someone hold the ladder (if the ladder is less than 5 m);
- Rest both side rails on the top support. Tie off ladders at the top and secure the bottom to prevent the ladder from slipping;
- Don't use a step ladder if it wobbles;
- Extension ladders should be set up so that the upper section (the 'fly') is resting in front of the bottom section. The lower section should face the supporting surface. Make sure the locking ladder hooks are secure before climbing. Maintain the minimum overlap of sections as shown on the ladder label;

- Don't set up a ladder in a passageway, doorway, driveway or other location where a person or vehicle can hit it unless suitable barricades are in place (eg. pylons, caution tape, construction barriers);
- Don't place a ladder against or on a flexible or moveable surface;
- Don't use ladders on ice.

When using a ladder:

- Clear the area around the base and top of the ladder of any debris (including tools and other objects);
- Ensure that only one person is on a single-width ladder;
- Maintain a three-point contact by keeping two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand on the ladder at all times;
- Grasp the rungs when climbing a ladder, not the side rails. (The rungs are easier to hold onto if your foot slips);
- Wear protective footwear with slip-resistant soles and heels. Clean and dry the boots if the soles are muddy, wet or slippery;
- Rest frequently to reduce arm fatigue and possible disorientation when the work requires you to look up and reach above your head;
- Drape your arms over a rung and rest your head against another rung or side rail if you become dizzy or panicky. Climb down slowly;
- Don't carry objects in your hands while on the ladder. Hoist materials or attach tools to a toolbelt;

- Don't work from the top three rungs (Four rungs on an extension ladder) to reduce the possibility that the ladder will slip out at the base;
- Don't straddle the space between a ladder and another object. Keep your body between the side rails;
- Face the ladder when going up or down and when working from it.

### 8. **Ergonomics** (from the Education Safety Association of Ontario)

Ergonomics is the process of "fitting" the workplace to the worker in an effort to minimize workplace conditions that might otherwise pose a hazard to the worker. Ergonomic hazards include such things as repetitive movements, forceful movements, prolonged sitting or standing, environmental extremes, poor or awkward postures, etc. Ergonomic concerns can be addressed through such things as the choice of equipment, the selection and/or arrangement of furniture or the organization of the work.

#### (a) **General Ergonomic Considerations:**

An ergonomic assessment should examine the following factors:

- Force:
  - Dynamic force (effort involving motion) Dynamic forces are not usually a concern in ergonomics, unless extreme forces are involved;
  - Static (a sustained effort with no motion):

Muscles tend to fatigue quickly and easily when applying a static force. (For example, holding a heavy book away from your body at shoulder height.) Activities requiring an employee to apply a static force should be kept to a minimum. As an example, the following levels of static force would be seen as 'considerable':

- A high level of effort for 10 seconds or more;
  - A moderate effort for 1 minute or more;
  - A slight effort (1/3 of maximum) for 4 minutes or more.
- Repetition: Tasks should be examined in terms of frequency (number of times an activity is completed in a given period of time, keystrokes per minute, for example), duration (how long the task is to be performed), and recovery time (time required to rest and recover between tasks). It is important to ensure recovery time is consistent with the frequency and duration of the task.
  - Awkward Posture and Position: In general, the more a body or part of a body deviates from a natural tendency, the greater the likelihood of an injury. Workstations should be designed to foster a comfortable, neutral posture and allow tools to be kept within an easy, comfortable reach.
  - Vibration: Many tools generate a great deal of vibration. Hand-arm vibration has been shown to affect blood flow and reduce the sense of touch. Whole-body vibrations can

cause fatigue, insomnia, headache and “shakiness”. Health effects tend to increase in severity over time.

#### Ergonomic Controls:

Ergonomic controls tend to fall into one of three categories:

- Engineered Controls (These tend to be the most expensive initially, but the most cost effective over time):
  - Changing equipment so that it is adjustable;
  - Changing the workstation so it is adjustable and frequently used items are closer;
  - Changing the way items are moved or lifted (maybe mechanical intervention);
  - Changing the tools to ergonomically designed tools (staplers, scissors, etc.);
  - Changing the work environment to eliminate or lessen environmental concerns (eg. noise, temperature, humidity).
- Administrative Controls (usually requires little or no capital commitment):
  - Multi-tasking so there are different physical demands on the worker;
  - Rotating workers in one job so exposure duration is less;
  - Increasing the break times or frequency for recovery from task;
  - Providing training on proper work practices.
- Personal Protective Equipment

There continues to be a great deal of debate whether

personal protective equipment such as back belts, wrist supports and vibration attenuation gloves reduce injuries. There is little concrete evidence that they reduce injury and some argument that they actually reduce the body’s natural defense mechanisms.

Caution should be taken when selecting or recommending personal protective equipment to address ergonomic concerns.

#### **(b) Ergonomics in Office Workstations:**

The Ministry of Labour has prepared the following checklist as an ergonomic guideline for Computer Workstations:

##### Keyboard Position:

- Upper arms hang relaxed at side during computer use;
- Elbow joints are at 90 degrees;
- Hands are in line with forearms when using keyboard and/or mouse;
- Forearm is supported when using a mouse or other hand-held device;
- Both keyboard and mouse height allow appropriate arm postures.

##### Monitor Position:

- The top of the screen is at eye height (bifocal and trifocal wearers excepted);
- Viewing distance (eyes to screen) is 45 to 60 cm;
- Monitor is centred in front of user during continuous computer use.

#### Seating:

- The seat pan height is adjustable 42 to 54 cm;
- The seat pan tilt is adjustable +3 to -4 degrees;
- The backrest height (lower edge to seat) is adjustable 8 to 15 cm;
- The angle of the backrest to seat is adjustable 90 to 110 degrees;
- The backrest has a well-formed lumbar support;
- The worker knows how to adjust chair for maximum comfort;
- The thighs are parallel to the floor;
- Feet are flat on the floor or a footrest is provided where necessary.

#### Desks:

- Horizontal knee space is greater than 46 cm;
- Horizontal toe space is greater than 61 cm.

#### Document Holders:

- An adjustable document holder is present;
- The holder is large enough for documents being used.

#### Lighting:

- Lighting levels appear to fall between 300 and 500 lux;
- The monitor is free of glare spots;
- The worker is shielded from sources of direct glare;
- The worker's line of sight is parallel to the plane of windows;

- The office area is illuminated with indirect light fixtures;
- Overhead light fixtures are fitted with parabolic filters;
- The workstation is located between rows of overhead lights;
- The worker is provided with an adjustable task light (if required).

#### Task Design:

- The worker is encouraged to take frequent breaks (eg. 5 minutes every hour) away from keyboarding during prolonged computer use.

Contact the Risk Management Department at extension 7373 for more information on ergonomics.

#### **9. Field Trips:**

All Trent sanctioned activities must be evaluated from a risk management perspective to maximize the safety of all participants, minimize the risk of losses to the University and protect the University and its members from legal liability. Anyone planning University-sanctioned off-campus activities must follow the procedures outlined by the University's Activity Risk Management Policy. Copies of the Policy can be obtained for the Risk Management Department, Blackburn Hall.

## **10. Fire Safety**

Responsibilities for fire safety at Trent University are outlined by the University's Fire Safety Policy. Under this Policy every University Department and Program is responsible for appointing a Fire Warden. Fire Wardens have supervisory responsibilities for fire safety within their Department or Program.

Copies of the Policy can be obtained by contacting the Risk Management Department at extension 7373.

## **11. First Aid**

Regulation requires that:

- First aid stations be easily accessible and supervised by workers who:
  - Have valid first aid certificates from a WSIB-recognized training organization, and;
  - Work in the immediate vicinity of the stations.
- First aid equipment be inspected regularly and accurate records of these inspections must be kept;
- All required first aid information is posted where it can be seen clearly;
- Detailed records are kept of all accidents and first aid treatment given.

On request, the Risk Management Department will provide your Department or Program with the following:

- A WSIB-compliant first aid kit(s) appropriate to the size of your work area, i.e. 1-5 people, 6-15 people, 16-199 people, and vehicle kits;
- Incident log books;
- Checklists of required supplies;
- First aid supplies;
- The WS&IB's "In Case of Injury at Work" posters (required by regulation);

The Risk Management Department sponsors standard level first aid training sessions for University employees. Training session times and dates are posted on the Health and Safety website:

[www.trentu.ca/healthandsafety](http://www.trentu.ca/healthandsafety)

### **Every Department or Program should:**

- Determine the number, size and location of first aid kits required by the Department or Program;
- Identify employees to be trained in first aid;
- Ensure that first aid kits are inspected and re-stocked at least quarterly;
- Ensure that any injury requiring first aid is recorded in the log book;
- Ensure all employees are aware of first aid procedures;
- Post and maintain an "In Case of Injury at Work" poster.

## **12. Housekeeping**

In order to reduce the risk of injury the following good housekeeping practices should be followed at all times:

- Floors should be kept clear of any item that increases the chances of slipping or tripping;
- Materials should be stored so they will not tip, collapse or fall;
- Heaters and electrical panels should not be obstructed;
- Do not store combustible materials next to sources of heat;
- Extension cords are intended for temporary use only. (If additional electrical outlets are required contact the Department of Physical Resources);
- Never store materials in a manner that will obstruct access to a fire extinguisher, a fire hose cabinet, an alarm bell or a fire escape route.

### **13. Indoor Air Quality**

Sealed buildings are now commonly associated with a number of symptoms, collectively referenced by terms such as Sick Building Syndrome, Tight Building Syndrome or Building Related Illness (CCOHS, 1999).

IAQ is affected by a number of things, including:

- Quality of the outdoor air supply;
- Number and activity of building occupants;
- Type and quantity of contaminants being generated;
- Type and efficiency of ventilation;
- Building materials and state of repair.

The following steps should be taken to help ensure acceptable indoor air quality:

- Windows should be in good working condition in buildings that are not mechanically ventilated;
- Mechanical ventilation systems should remain in operation when buildings are occupied. They should be maintained in good repair with regular maintenance and cleaning, as required;
- Smoking, garbage storage and idling vehicles should not be allowed near loading docks, air intakes, building entrances, or windows;
- Air supply and/or return grates should not be blocked;
- Spills and leaks should be cleaned up promptly;
- Any activity that generates gases, vapours, dusts or odours, including: painting, renovations (demolition or sanding), new furniture, new carpets, printing and/or photocopying should be minimized unless steps are taken to protect air quality;
- The use of scents, including perfumes, colognes and air fresheners should be minimized;
- Good personal hygiene should be encouraged;
- Personal property containing dirt, dust, pet hair, dander, mould, etc. should be left at home;
- Remove untended plants. Well tended plants may improve air quality, but neglected plants will support fungal and mould growth.

These requirements are detailed in the University's Indoor Air Quality Standard, which can be found on the health and safety website:

<http://www.trentu.ca/healthandsafety/policies.html>

## **14. Insurance**

### **(a) Liability and Property insurance** *(from University of Guelph)*

The University carries liability insurance to indemnify its officers, directors, supervisors and employees acting in good faith in the course of their duties. The University also insures against catastrophic loss to physical, financial and other assets. (N.B. Fines levied upon employees convicted of offences under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* or the *Environmental Protection Act* are personal. They cannot be paid by the employer.)

All Programs and Departments are responsible for taking appropriate initiatives for due diligence and reasonable care for risk management and loss control. Property insurance deductibles are normally the responsibility of the Department or Program experiencing loss. Personal possessions of faculty, staff and students on University property are not covered by University insurance policies.

Activities and situations that present unique or potential liabilities to the University should be reported to the Risk Management Department (extension 7372).

### **(b) Compensation Insurance:**

All University employees are insured against a loss of compensation resulting from a work-related injury or industrial disease through the University's account with

the Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).

Any work-related injury must be reported as outlined in Section IV. (2. Reporting Accidents and Incidents: Workplace Safety and Insurance), found on page 23 of this handbook.

The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board works with injured employees, their employer (the manager or supervisor, usually with the assistance of the University's Environmental Health and Safety Officer) and the employee's physician to facilitate an early and safe return to work. For more information contact the Risk Management Department (extension 7373).

## **15. Lockout /Tagout** *(from the Education Safety Association of Ontario)*

Some energy sources are readily apparent. Others are hidden. Stored energy should not be neglected. Preventing accidental exposure to all the various forms of energy, whether direct or stored, can often involve some careful planning. It is important to identify all energy sources and their potential to cause harm.

Regulations require electrical equipment to be disconnected, locked out of service and tagged before any work is done on or near that equipment. Similar precautions should be taken when working on or near any potentially dangerous source of energy. These

precautions, collectively, are known as a lockout /tagout procedure.

Supervisors and Managers should be aware of the energy sources present in their workplaces. Precautions should be developed to prevent unplanned exposure to these sources. A written lockout procedure is required when working on or near these sources of energy. As a minimum the lockout procedure should include the following seven steps:

- Plan the lockout: This involves reviewing procedures that should have been established, identifying all energy sources and their locations and obtaining any required personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE such as rubber gloves and mats are required (for example) whenever you cannot lockout and must work on live electrical equipment.
- The “person in charge” of the work reports to their supervisor, obtains the lockout equipment needed and completes a log book. “Person in charge” is the term used in the regulations. It means the main person who is actually going to perform the work. The person must obviously be qualified.
- The Supervisor communicates with all persons who may be affected by the lockout. This is an important step that is often missed. If people know that there is a lockout in place and that they may (for example) be without electricity for a period of time, they are less likely to go see why they have no power and to attempt to restore it themselves.

- The person in charge stops/turns off the equipment in the normal manner (using switches, control valves, etc.)
- The person in charge establishes a zero energy state and applies their lock(s) and tag(s)<sup>7</sup>. Establishing a zero energy state can mean many things depending on the number and type of energy sources. It could include opening circuit breakers, pulling fuses, grounding power lines, blanking and bleeding pipes and hoses, locking out control valves, lowering or blocking raised machine parts, and so on. Only a qualified person should do these things.
- The person in charge tests the equipment to ensure that it is in a zero energy state. This could involve attempting to operate the equipment using the normal controls or switches or using a voltage meter to verify that the inlet side is live and all outlet conductors are dead. Failure to test has resulted in many serious injuries and fatalities.
- Other persons who are involved in the work apply their own lock(s) and tag(s) and verify that there is a zero energy state. The law requires that each and every person involved in the work must have their own personal lock applied at each and every isolating point AND that they verify that there is no energy. If

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<sup>7</sup> Tags should be fixed securely and attached at all isolating points, not just the primary energy source. They should include the date and time the work commenced, the name of the people doing the work, the location of the work, the nature of the work.

there are, for example, three energy sources and four persons working on the job, then there must be twelve locks involved. Locks must not be able to be opened by more than one key, and the key for each lock must be in its owner's possession at all times that their lock is in place. You have no guarantee of being safe unless you have your key(s) in your pocket.

Contact the Risk Management Department (extension 7373) if you require assistance developing a lockout/tagout procedure.

### **16. Machine Guarding**

Any machine or device with parts that may pose a hazard (eg. moving parts, electrical equipment, u-v light, heat) should have a guard or guards in place to prevent access to the hazard. As long as the hazard exists the guard must not be removed or made ineffective.

### **17. Material Handling**

Consider the size, weight and shape of the item to be moved. Heavy items are clearly more difficult to move than lighter items, but even a light item can be cumbersome if it is large or bulky. The location of the item should also be a consideration: Loads lifted away from the body exert a much greater force on the back than items that can be held close to the body. Bending or twisting while lifting adds to the risk of injury.

Ask for assistance if the load is large, bulky or difficult to reach. Recognize your limits. Where possible, use a cart.

Consider the path to be taken when moving an object. Make sure that you are able to see where you are going.

Place the item in a way that it will not tip, collapse or fall.

### **18. Mould** *(from the Ministry of Labour and the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety)*

Moulds (mold, mildew, yeasts and fungi) are present everywhere – indoors and outdoors. These micro-organisms can enter a building directly or by their spores being carried in by the air. In a home or building, moulds are usually found growing on wood, drywall, upholstery, fabric, wallpaper, drapery, ceiling tiles and carpeting. Moulds can grow almost everywhere and on any substance providing moisture is present, however, buildings with a history of water leaks, floods, fires and problems with indoor air quality (eg. poor humidity control, lack of fresh air) should be considered at greater risk of mould growth.

The presence of mould does not always mean that health problems will occur. However, for some people the inhalation of the mould, fragments of the moulds, or spores can lead to health problems or make certain health conditions worse. In addition, many of these moulds make “mycotoxins”. Mycotoxins are metabolites or by-products from the moulds that have been identified as

being toxic to humans. These toxins can slowly wear down the immune system and can lead to allergic or respiratory problems. In general, the most commonly reported symptoms include:

- Runny nose or nasal congestion;
- Eye irritation;
- Cough or congestion;
- Aggravation of asthma;
- Fatigue;
- Headaches, and
- Difficulty concentrating.

The Ministry of Labour advises that the sustained and/or extensive growth of visible mould on the interior surface of a building is unacceptable.

A visual inspection is the most reliable method of identifying mould problems. The most common sign of water damage will be discolouration and staining. Mould will most often appear as dark spots, stains or patches.

Please contact the Department of Physical Resources to report the presence or suspected presence of mould in University buildings (email [fixit@trentu.ca](mailto:fixit@trentu.ca)).

**19. Personal Protective Equipment** (*from the Education Safety Association of Ontario and the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety*)  
Personal protective equipment, or P.P.E. is clothing or

equipment worn to minimize a hazard. P.P.E. does not remove a hazard. It does not guarantee protection. It is required where a hazard cannot be removed or adequately controlled through other means.

Where P.P.E. is necessary it is important that appropriate equipment is selected and that it is used properly and maintained in good condition. The following information is provided to assist with the selection of P.P.E.:

**(a) Eye Protection:**

Regulations require the use of eye protection where there is a risk of eye injury. It is important to match the type of eye or face protection to the type of hazard. To determine the most suitable type of protection consult the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) *Industrial Eye and Face Protectors Standard CAN/CSA-Z94.3-92*. This document is available from the Risk Management Department (extension 7373).

**(b) Head Protection:**

Regulations require the use of head protection where there is a risk of head injury. The choice of protection depends on the type of hazard. To determine the most appropriate level of protection for your work area Consult the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard CAN/CSA Z94.1-92 (R1998), “Industrial Protective Headwear,” available from the Risk Management Department (extension 7373).

**(c) Hearing Protection:**

Regulation requires hearing protection where an employee is exposed to sound levels at or above 85 decibels (A-weighted, or dB(A)). Hearing protection may consist of ear plugs, canal caps, or ear muffs. Consult the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard “Hearing Protectors” Z94.2-94 when choosing the most appropriate form of hearing protection for your work area. This document is available from the Risk Management Department (extension 7373).

**(d) Foot Protection:**

Regulation requires the use of foot protection where there is a risk of foot injury. The level of protection depends on the type of hazard. Consult the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard CSA Z195.1-02, “Guideline on Selection, Care and Use of Protective Footwear” when selecting safety footwear. A copy of this document is available from the Risk Management Department (extension 7373).

**(e) Long Hair, loose clothing or jewelry:**

Regulations require that long hair, loose clothing or jewelry be confined or removed where it could become entangled in moving equipment or devices.

**(f) Skin Protection:**

Regulation requires that skin be protected where there is a possibility of exposure to a noxious gas, liquid, fume or dust; a sharp or jagged object; or a heat source.

The material used for personal protection will depend on the nature of the hazard. Using gloves as an example:

- Cotton:  
Cotton or cotton/leather combinations offer limited protection against abrasion, sharp objects or dry heat, but do not protect from chemicals. In fact, cotton and leather may absorb chemicals and increase exposures.
- Latex (Rubber) – Surgical type<sup>8</sup>  
These gloves offer excellent dexterity, but limited chemical protection. They offer some protection from aqueous solutions for short periods of time. They do not protect from organic solutions. They do not offer protection from abrasion or sharp objects.
- Latex (Rubber) – Rubber/Heavy Latex<sup>8</sup>  
These gloves offer moderate dexterity and good protection from most aqueous solutions. They do not afford protection from a number of concentrated acids, organic solvents or chlorinated solvents.
- Neoprene Nitrile Rubber or Viton (Synthetic Rubbers)  
Moderate dexterity with good resistance to a broad selection of chemicals.

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<sup>8</sup> Allergies to latex rubber are a serious concern for workers who become sensitized to latex gloves and other natural rubber products. The use of latex should be discouraged where other materials are available. Latex should not be used in environments where people have identified latex allergies.

- **Plastics (PP, PE, Copolymers)**  
Recommended for general use, these thin gloves offer moderate dexterity with high resistance to chemical penetration.

Most suppliers are capable of recommending the material most suitable to your needs. Contact the Risk Management Department (extension 7373) if you require assistance.

**(h) Respirators:**

Respirators or supplied air systems should not be used without appropriate training in the selection, use and care of the equipment. (In many cases suppliers are able to arrange training by qualified consultants.) For more information on the use of respirators consult the Canadian Standards Association document CSA Z94.4-02, “Selection, Use, and Care of Respirators”, available from the Risk Management Department (extension 7373).

**20. Scents and Perfumes** *(from the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety)*

Studies of the health effects of exposures to scents and perfumes have generally been inconclusive, but many people cite exposure to scents and perfumes as a cause of a wide variety of symptoms, including headaches, dizziness, nausea, fatigue, an inability to concentrate, depression, anxiety, shortness of breath, and skin

irritation. Even very small amounts of scents and perfumes have been cited as a trigger to attacks in those with allergies, asthma or “multiple chemical sensitivity”.

All employees are encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of their colleagues and students. When at work, employees are encouraged to use only unscented personal hygiene products (eg. shampoo and conditioners, hairsprays, deodorants, soaps, lotions and creams) and to refrain from wearing fragrances, perfumes, aftershaves or colognes. The use of air fresheners and deodorizers, potpourri, scented oils and candles in an enclosed workplace is discouraged. As a general guideline, any scent should not be detectable at more than an arm’s length from the source.

Employees concerned about the scents or perfumes used by a colleague are encouraged to discuss their concerns directly with that colleague in a sensitive and discreet manner. If unresolved, the issue should be brought to the attention of your immediate supervisor.

**21. Slips, Trips and Falls**

Slips, trips, and falls are, historically, the most frequent cause of accidents and injuries at Trent University. Most falls can easily be prevented by adhering to the following guidelines:

- Floors should be kept clear of tripping or slipping hazards. If you spill something, clean it up immediately.

- Keep papers, boxes and other articles on shelves or in cabinets, not on the floor.
- Hold the handrail when using stairs;
- In winter, be cautious of snow and patches of ice. Slipping hazards exist even in the most carefully plowed and sanded walkways and parking lots. Wear footwear appropriate to the conditions.
- Use paths and walkways that are maintained in the winter.

## **22. Smoking**

Trent University maintains a “Smoke-Free” policy. The policy is available through the Trent University web site or by contacting the Office of the Vice-President Administration.

In general, the policy prohibits smoking indoors and within 9m (30 feet) of any University building. Smoking is prohibited in University-owned vehicles.

## **24. Tools and Equipment**

It is important to ensure that anyone using tools or equipment has received appropriate training and understands and adheres to the necessary safety precautions. Read the manufacturer’s manual before using any equipment. Ensure the manual is maintained in a safe place and that others who may use the tool or

equipment receive appropriate training and understand the safety precautions. Keep training records for each employee.

Some general precautions:

- Wear the required protective equipment;
- Follow manufacturer’s instructions;
- Use the right tool for the job;
- Remove and tag defective tools;
- Ensure regular maintenance by a competent person. Keep written records of all maintenance;
- Ensure bystanders are kept away from work areas. If the work is a hazard to the general public, mark the work area with signs or pylons. Major hazards should be barricaded.

## **25. Vehicle Safety:** *(from the Education Safety Association of Ontario)*

For many of us the activity offering the single greatest risk of serious injury – both on and off the job - is likely to be the use of a motor vehicle and the possibility of a motor vehicle accident. Consider the following measures to help reduce the risk:

- Ensure the vehicle is safe to operate:
  - Follow manufacturer’s recommendations for regular maintenance;
  - Consider annual safety inspections by a competent person;
  - Items to be checked daily include:

- Tires: proper inflation, even wear, no cuts, bulges or punctures;
  - Brakes: proper adjustment, no signs of leakage at the wheels, no unusual noises;
  - Oil at proper level;
  - Cooling system: filled and no sign or leaks;
  - Lights: all operational;
  - Mirrors: present and in usable condition;
  - Steering: no free play, no leaks or mechanical damage;
  - Clutch/transmission: operates smoothly;
  - Suspension: check for an even ride;
  - Hitches: firmly attached and undamaged;
  - Sounds/smells: no unusual sounds or smells when the vehicle is started;
  - Exhaust system: no leaks or broken parts;
  - Seat belts: in good condition.
- Increase Driver Safety:
    - Consider taking a course in defensive driver training;
    - Pay attention: Keep distractions to a minimum (i.e. eating, drinking, smoking, adjustment of radio, cellphones, etc.);
    - Be aware of changing driving conditions such as volume of traffic, weather, etc.;
    - Be well rested;
    - Do not consume alcohol, medications or other substances that may affect driving;

- Adjust seat, mirrors, steering wheel climate controls, radio station, etc. before leaving;
  - Plan your route before you leave;
  - Stow belongings properly;
  - Do not reach for items that have fallen or shifted unless absolutely necessary and can be done safely;
- Reduce the Amount of Driving Required:
    - Consider tele- or video-conferencing as an alternative to meetings;
    - Consider using alternate forms of transportation (eg. public transit, trains or planes);
  - When towing ensure:
    - The expected load doesn't exceed the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating established by the manufacturer;
    - The hitch ball:
      - meets or exceeds the vehicle weight rating;
      - is mounted securely, lubricated and in good condition;
      - is the appropriate size for the trailer hitch;
    - Mirrors extend wider than the object being towed;
    - The safety chain is in good condition;
    - Trailers have:
      - A load range suitable for the job and load planned;
      - Wheel bearings that have been re-greased if the trailer has been sitting for a period of time;

- Secure lug nuts on the wheels;
- Tires of a proper load rating, the specified air pressure, and no signs of damage (eg. excessive wear, cuts, bulges);
- Working lights;
- Weight spread so that 10% of the weight is on the hitch;
- A hitch with a secure and properly functioning locking device;
- Safety chains adequate to keep from breaking if the hitch fails.

Note: The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has issued a cautionary warning to users of 15-passenger vans because of an increased rollover risk under certain conditions: 15-passenger vans have a rollover risk similar to other light trucks and vans when carrying few passengers, but the rollover risk increases from fewer than five occupants to over ten passengers.

Loading a 15-passenger van causes the centre of gravity to shift rearward and upward, increasing the likelihood of rollover and the potential for loss of control in panic maneuvers.

It is important that these vans be operated only by experienced drivers who understand and are familiar with the handling characteristics of their vehicle, especially when the van is fully loaded.

## **26. Violence in the Workplace:**

Violent behaviour can include oral or written statements, gestures or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm, as well as aggressive or physically violent acts such as finger pointing, spitting, shoving, slapping, assault with or without a weapon, suicide and homicide. Bullying is a form of violence and may include excessive unfounded criticism, malicious rumours, stalking or sabotage of someone's work

Violence, threats and intimidation will not be tolerated at Trent University. Do not ignore threatening or violent behaviour. If you witness or experience violence or threats of violence, or if you feel that a colleague, student or visitor is likely to become violent, report the situation to your supervisor, your department head or Campus Security. *If you or anyone else is in immediate danger, call 911 then contact Campus Security at 748-1333 at once.* Supervisors or department heads that observe campus violence or receive a report of campus violence are responsible to respond in a prompt and effective manner and to contact Campus Security. Campus Security will create an incident report, provide guidance on personal security measures and advise the Director of Risk Management.

For more information see the Campus Violence Policy available on the Security website:

## **27. Weather Extremes**

### **(a) Cold Weather**

Anyone working in cold weather should be aware of cold-related hazards and the steps necessary to protect against those hazards.

Environment Canada recommends that precautions be based on measurements of wind chill, not temperature. The wind chill index (now included in most weather forecasts) combines temperature and wind speed data to produce ‘temperature-like’ units used to forecast what you will actually feel. Environment Canada offers the following guidelines:

| <b><u>Wind Chill</u></b> | <b><u>Description</u></b> | <b><u>Health Concern</u></b>  | <b><u>What to do</u></b>   |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---|--|
| 0 to -10                 | Low                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slight increase in discomfort</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dress warmly, with the outside temperature in mind.</li> </ul>  |
| -10 to -25               | Moderate                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncomfortable</li> <li>Exposed skin feels cold</li> <li>Risk of hypothermia if outside for long periods without adequate protection</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dress in layers or warm clothing, with an outer layer that is wind resistant</li> <li>Wear a hat, mittens and scarf</li> <li>Keep active</li> </ul> |
| -25 to -45               | Cold                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk of skin</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dress in layers</li> </ul>  |

|                             |         |   |   |
|-----------------------------|---------|---|---|
|                             |         | freezing (frostbite) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check face and extremities (fingers, toes, ears and nose) for numbness or whiteness</li> <li>Risk of hypothermia if outside for long periods without adequate protection</li> </ul> | of warm clothing, with an outer layer that is wind-resistant. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cover all exposed skin, particularly your face and hands. Wear a hat, mittens and a scarf, neck tube or face mask.</li> <li>Avoid exposing the skin directly to the wind.</li> <li>Keep active.</li> </ul>   |
| WARNING LEVEL<br>-45 to -59 | Extreme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exposed skin may freeze in minutes</li> <li>Check face and extremities frequently for numbness or whiteness (frostbite)</li> <li>Serious risk of hypothermia if outside for long periods</li> </ul>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be careful. Dress very warmly in layers of clothing, with an outer layer that is wind-resistant.</li> <li>Cover all exposed skin, particularly your face and hands. Wear a hat, mittens and a scarf, neck tube or face mask.</li> <li>Limit outdoor activities to short periods.</li> <li>Be ready to cut short or cancel activities.</li> </ul> |

|                |         |   |   |
|----------------|---------|---|---|
|                |         |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep active.</li> </ul>  |
| -60 and colder | Extreme | <b>DANGER!</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor conditions are hazardous</li> <li>• Exposed skin may freeze in less than two minutes</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay indoors.</li> </ul> |

#### Frostnip and Frostbite:

Look for a loss of feeling and a white or pale appearance in the extremities (eg. fingers, toes, nose, or ear lobes).

Frostnip is a freezing of the outer skin layers. Frostbite occurs when ice crystals form between cells and can result in deep injuries.

#### Hypothermia:

Hypothermia occurs when the body is unable to replace heat lost to the environment. Initial symptoms are shivering and foot stomping to help generate heat. More advanced stages include uncontrolled shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness and apparent exhaustion. Hypothermia can be fatal.

#### Additional factors to consider:

- Wet clothing increases the effect of cold on the body;
- Drugs, medications, and certain diseases can inhibit the bodies response to cold and/or impair judgement;
- Exhaustion may increase the effects of cold weather.

#### Additional precautions to consider:

- Warming shelters or effective spot heating should be available where work involves prolonged exposure at low temperatures;
- Wind shields may reduce effective wind chill;
- Thirst can be suppressed in a cold environment. Drink large amounts of fluids (ideally warm, sweet beverages). Alcohol and caffeine should be avoided;
- Use a buddy system where frostbite or hypothermia is possible;
- If possible, schedule work during the warmest hours of the day (or postpone work until warmer weather);
- Inner layers of clothing should consist of materials that draw moisture away from the body (eg. polypropylene)
- Avoid workloads that result in heavy sweating;
- Ensure a change of clothing is available;
- Wear eye protection if there is risk of eye injury due to freezing or blowing snow or ice crystals;
- Ensure employees are aware of warming procedures, first aid treatment (recognition and treatment of cold-related injuries), appropriate clothing selection, and eating and drinking requirements and other precautions as outlined above.

#### (b) Warm Weather

It is important to take suitable precautions to protect your health when working in warm weather. The hot summer weather, especially when combined with other stresses such

as hard physical work, loss of fluids, fatigue or medical conditions can result in heat-related illnesses.

The following tips are provided by the Ministry of Labour to assist you in dealing with the heat:

- Wear light summer clothing that allows free air movement and sweat evaporation;
- Wear light-coloured clothing when outside;
- Increase air movement (i.e. fans), where feasible;
- Increase the frequency and length of rest breaks. Move to an air-conditioned rest area where possible;
- Schedule hot jobs to cooler times of the day;
- Drink a cup of cool water every 20 minutes or so;
- Salt your food well (Discuss this with your doctor if you are on a low salt diet);
- Slow down the work pace;
- If you are pregnant or have a medical condition discuss working in the heat with your doctor;
- Use a ‘buddy system’ – you are unlikely to notice your own symptoms.
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of heat stress:

|                |                               |   |  |  |
|----------------|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
|                | ; plugged sweat glands.       | rash with severe itching.                     | and avoid hot environments. Rinse skin with cool water.  |  |
| <b>Sunburn</b> | Too much exposure to the sun. | Red, painful, or blistering and peeling skin. | If the skin blisters, seek medical aid. Use skin lotions (avoid topical anaesthetics) and work in the shade. | Work in the shade: cover skin with clothing; wear suntan lotions with a sun protection factor of at least 15. People with fair skin should be especially cautious. |

|                  | <u>Cause</u>          | <u>Symptoms</u> | <u>Treatment</u>        | <u>Prevention</u>                          |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Heat Rash</b> | Hot humid Environment | Red bumpy       | Change into dry clothes | Wash regularly to keep skin clean and dry. |

|                           |  |  |   |   |
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| <p><b>Heat Cramps</b></p> | <p>Heavy sweating drains a person's body of salt, which cannot be replaced just by drinking water.</p> | <p>Painful cramps in arms, legs or stomach which occur suddenly at work or later at home. Cramps are serious because they can be a warning of other more dangerous heat-induced illnesses.</p> | <p>Move to a cool area; loosen clothing and drink cool salted water ( 1 tsp. salt per gallon of water) or commercial fluid replacement beverage. If the cramps are severe or don't go away, seek medical aid.</p> | <p>When working in the heat, workers should put salt on their food (if on a low-salt diet, this should be discussed with a doctor). This will give the body all the salt it needs; don't take salt tablets.</p> |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|---|

|                        |   |   |  |   |
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| <p><b>Fainting</b></p> | <p>Not enough blood flowing to the head, causing loss of consciousness.</p> | <p>Sudden fainting after at least two hours of work; cool moist skin; weak pulse.</p> | <p>Fainting may be due to a heart attack or other illness. GET MEDICAL ATTENTION. Assess need for CPR. Move to a cool area; loosen clothing; make person lie down; and if the person is conscious, offer sips of cool water.</p> | <p>Reduce activity levels and/or heat exposure. Drink fluids regularly. Workers should check on each other to help spot the symptoms which often precede heat stroke.</p> |
|------------------------|---|---|--|---|

|                        |  |   |   |  |
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| <b>Heat Exhaustion</b> | Inadequate salt and water intake causes a person's body's cooling system to start to break down. | Heavy sweating; cool moist skin; body temperature over 38C; weak pulse; normal or low blood pressure; person is tired, weak, clumsy, upset or confused; is very thirsty; or is panting or breathing rapidly, vision may be blurred. | GET MEDICAL AID. This condition can lead to heat stroke, which can kill. Move the person to a cool shaded areas; loosen or remove excess clothing; provide cool water to drink (salted if possible); fan and spray with cool water. | Reduce activity levels and/or heat exposure. Drink fluids regularly. Workers should check on each other to help spot the symptoms which often precede heat stroke. |
|------------------------|--|---|---|--|

|                    |  |   |   |   |
|--------------------|--|---|---|---|
| <b>Heat Stroke</b> | If a person's body has used up all its water and salt, it will stop sweating. This can cause body temperature to rise. | High body temperature (over 41C) and any one of the following: the person is weak, confused, upset or acting strangely; has hot, dry, red skin; a fast pulse; a headache or dizziness. In later stages, a person may pass out and have convulsions. | CALL AMBULANCE . This condition can kill a person quickly. Remove excess clothing; fan and spray the person with cool water; offer sips of cool water if the person is conscious. | Reduce activity levels and/or heat exposure. Drink fluids regularly. Workers should check on each other to help spot the symptoms which often precede heat stroke |
|--------------------|--|---|---|---|

Discuss any concerns you may have with your supervisor. Contact your supervisor immediately if you experience signs of heat-related illness.

Supervisors should consider sending staff home where reasonable accommodations are not adequate to control heat stress. Supervisors should ensure that any employee exhibiting advanced signs of heat stress (i.e. fainting, heat exhaustion, heat stroke) receives prompt medical attention.

**28. West Nile Virus** *(from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care)*

Certain mosquitoes in Ontario can carry the West Nile virus. Bites can lead to infection and mild or serious illness. Most people who become infected will experience no symptoms or will have mild illness. In some cases, symptoms will be pronounced. In rare cases the virus can cause serious neurological illness.

The West Nile virus is spread to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they bite an infected bird. The virus is not spread by person-to-person contact through touching, coughing, or sneezing.

The best protection is to prevent mosquito bites. Consider the following:

- Mosquitoes are attracted to darker, more intense colours. Try to wear light colours;
- Cover up: Wear long-sleeved shirts or jackets and long pants. Tuck pants into socks for extra protection;
- Where possible, avoid work outside in early morning and late evening when mosquitoes are most active;
- Use insect repellent keeping the following recommendations in mind:
  - Do not use repellent on open wounds or if skin is irritated or sunburned;
  - Do not get it in your eyes – if this happens, rinse with water right away;

- Wash skin with soap and water when you return indoors or when protection is no longer needed;
- Avoid breathing mist from spray-type repellents;
- Do not use near food;
- Check for sensitivity – apply repellent to a small area of skin on the arm and wait for 24 hours before use;
- Read the manufacturer’s instructions carefully;
- Use only federally registered insect repellents (eg. DEET or N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide). Never use a product labeled as an “insecticide” on your body.
- Choose a product that meets your needs:
  - 30% DEET provides protection for approximately 6 hours.
  - 15% DEET provides protection for approximately 5 hours.
  - 10% DEET provides protection for approximately 3 hours.
  - 5% DEET provides protection for approximately 2 hours.

For more information visit the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care’s website:

[www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca)

**29. Working Alone** *(from the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety)*

Working alone is not necessarily a hazard, but working alone may greatly increase the risks associated with other

hazards. High risk activities should never be undertaken by a lone worker. In many cases, such as when working at heights, working in confined spaces, working on live electrical equipment or working in diving operations there are statutory requirements that prohibit working alone.

A variety of factors should be taken into consideration to assess the risk of working alone. These include:

- The nature of the task(s);
- The nature of any physical hazards;
- The location;
- Potential environmental hazards (eg. generation of fumes or dusts, changes in weather);
- Distance from help in an emergency;
- Frequency of contact;
- Pre-existing medical conditions;
- Nature of communication available.

Supervisors should assess the circumstances under which their employee(s) are required to work alone. Supervisors, in consultation with their employee(s), should develop and implement a control strategy to address those risks. Control strategies should be amended as necessary to reflect changes in the workplace.

An effective control strategy might include:

- A prohibition of high risk activities when working alone;
- Limiting higher-risk tasks to times when other employees are able to assist;

- Using a buddy system;
- The establishment of check-in procedures such as:
  - A daily work plan;
  - Identifying a main contact and a back up;
  - Establishing and maintaining check in schedules;
  - Keeping a written log of contact;
  - Periodically visiting the lone employee;
  - Establishing a code word to confirm that help is needed;
  - Development of a plan to be followed if the employee does not check in;
- Providing an appropriate form of communication (telephone, cellular phone, radio, emergency phone, emergency pager, etc.) that works properly in all situations;
- Providing appropriate training (eg. first aid, knowledge of emergency telephone numbers and procedures);
- Maintaining office security. (eg. Keeping doors locked after hours or when working alone);
- Using of the Walk-home program;
- Advising Security when working alone;
- Ensuring walkways and main entrances/exits well-lit;
- Immediately reporting unusual events and/or incidents.

## **VII. Additional Resources**

### **1. Websites:**

A great deal of health and safety information is now readily available through a number of excellent health and safety websites. Some of these include:

- The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety: [www.ccohs.ca](http://www.ccohs.ca)
- The Canadian Coast Guard: [www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca](http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca)
- The Canadian Food Inspection Agency:  
<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/toce.shtml>
- Environment Canada: [www.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca](http://www.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca)
- Ontario's Health and Safety Associations:  
<http://www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsbsite.nsf/public/PartnersHealthandSafety>
- Ontario's Ministry of the Environment  
[www.ene.gov.on.ca](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca)
- Ontario's Ministry of Labour:  
[www.gov.on.ca/LAB](http://www.gov.on.ca/LAB)
- Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board:  
[www.wsib.ca](http://www.wsib.ca)

- The Public Health Agency of Canada:  
[http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new\\_e.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html)

### **2. Health and Safety Library, Risk Management Department :**

The Department of Human Resources maintains a small library of health and safety reference books, training videos and compact discs. These items are available for short-term loan to members of the University community. Titles include:

#### **(a) Books:**

- CSA Standards:
  - Guideline on Selection, Care and Use of Protective Footwear;
  - Hearing Protectors;
  - Industrial Eye and Face Protectors Standard;
  - Industrial Protective Headwear;
  - Office Ergonomics, A National Standard of Canada;
  - Selection, Use and Care of Respirators;
- CRC Handbook of Laboratory Safety, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition;
- Cold Weather Workers Safety Guide;
- Due Diligence Strategies for Senior Management. (70 minute video and manual);
- H&S Guide for Custodial Workers;
- Indoor Air Quality Health and Safety Guide;
- Mould in the Workplace, A Basic Guide;
- Occupational Safety Management and Engineering, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition ;

- Office Ergonomics;
- Prudent Practices in the Laboratory ;
- School Workers Health and Safety Guide;
- Workplace Violence Prevention – A Practical Guide to Security on the Job;

**(b) Compact Discs**

- Contracted Services: Employer Liability for Health and Safety and the Temporary Worker;
- Occupational Health and Safety Orientation;
- WHMIS For Everyone. The Essentials.

**(c) Videos:**

- Confined Space Safety (10 minutes)
- Chemical Fire and Explosion (20 minutes)
- Chemical Handling (22 minutes)
- Due Diligence Strategies for Senior Management (70 minute video and manual)
- Hazardous Materials and Health and Safety at Work
  - Part One: Beware...Danger! (10 minutes)
  - Part Two: W.H.M.I.S. (13 minutes)
  - Part Three: Labels and Material Safety Data Sheets (15 minutes)
  - Part Four: Prevention and First Aid (10 minutes)
- Health Hazards (20 minutes)
- Lockout Procedure (10 minutes)
- Office Safety (13 minutes)
- Safety and the Young Worker (10 minutes)
- Safety Awareness (20 minutes)

- Slips, Trips and Falls (12 minutes)
- Things You'd Better Know to Work Smart, Work Safe (13 minutes)
- Working with Display Screen Equipment (17 minutes)

**(d) Workbooks:**

- Dangerous Goods. A Self-Teach Training Program.

## **VIII. Acknowledgements**

The development of this handbook was greatly facilitated by information, resources and expertise available through the following agencies:

- The Canadian Coast Guard;
- The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety;
- The Education Safety Association of Ontario;
- Environment Canada;
- The Ministry of Labour;
- The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board;

This assistance is greatly appreciated.

## **IX. Appendices**

### **Appendix A: Report of Work-Related Injury or Illness**

#### **Trent University**

#### **Report of Work-Related Injury or Illness**

Work-related injuries can be reported by telephone during regular office hours by calling the Risk Management Department at extension 7373 or after hours by calling Campus Security at extension 1328.

Work-related injuries can also be reported by completing this form and faxing it to the Risk Management Department (extension 1009). Attach additional pages if required. Include any related reports that may be available.

Any work-related injury that results in one or more of the following must be reported:

- Absence from regular work after the date of injury;
- A need for modified duties at regular pay or less than regular pay;
- Reduced earnings, and/or;
- Health care (i.e. treatment by a medical doctor, surgeon, optometrist, chiropractor, dentist, hospital emergency, skilled nursing care, drugless practitioner or chiropodist).

Any suspected occupational disease should be reported immediately to the Risk Management Department.

Name of Employee: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Hour of Injury/Awareness of Disease: \_\_\_\_\_

Will the employee be off work following the day or injury / awareness of disease because of the injury/disease? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Unknown \_\_\_

Did the employee receive health care: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Unknown \_\_\_

If yes, name of practitioner/facility:

\_\_\_\_\_

What happened to cause the injury/disease? If known, describe injury, part of body involved and specify left or right side:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who was the injury/disease reported to? If injury/disease was not reported immediately, provide reason for delay.

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the employee's activities at the time of the injury/disease. Include details of equipment or materials used and the size and weights of objects being handled.

\_\_\_\_\_

Where was the worker when the injury/awareness of disease occurred? If the injury/disease occurred outside of Ontario, specify province, state or country.

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there anyone else who may have witnessed or who may know about the injury/onset of disease? If so, provide their name, address and phone numbers if available:

\_\_\_\_\_

To your knowledge, has the employee had a previous similar injury/disease?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, provide details:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Was any individual who does not work for Trent University totally or partially responsible for the injury/disease? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Was machinery, equipment or a motor vehicle totally or partially responsible for the injury/disease? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Do you have any reason to doubt that the injury/disease is work-related?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, please explain.

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The above information will be used by the Risk Management Department to complete the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board's Employer's Report of Injury/Disease. It is an offence to deliberately make false statements to the WSIB.

I declare that all of the information provided in this report is true to the best of my knowledge:

Name and title of person completing this report:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Person completing this report:

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