New worker orientation  John Van Delden, Director

According to Safe Work Manitoba, new workers have 5 to 7 times the risk of injury in the first 4 weeks of a new job. In April, 2014 the Province of Manitoba formalized a requirement that workers new to workplace must receive a health and safety orientation. The Province considers anyone who is employed by the University as a worker. The new requirements appear in Part 2.2.1 of Manitoba’s Workplace Safety and Health Regulation.

The Regulation calls for new worker orientation on items that apply to all workers, like workers rights in Manitoba, but also requires orientation on safety and health items specific to the area where they will work or the specific task that a new worker will undertake, e.g. safe work procedures to perform a task, or rules around working alone. The Regulation goes further requiring that records be maintained of these orientations.

EHSO has posted an online New Worker General Orientation presentation that covers the required orientation items that apply to new workers regardless of their work area. The presentation can be found on the EHSO training page. New workers will complete a short online test to create a record of their completion of this general orientation.

The webpage also offers resources for new workers and employers/supervisors concerning new worker orientation. New workers are provided with training supports and references. Employers and supervisors are provided with background on the Provincial requirements, what elements must be included in workplace-specific safety and health orientations and a template to record the items covered in a workplace orientation.

EHSO will be monitoring completion of the general orientation centrally but would welcome assistance from faculties and units to ensure that new workers complete the orientation. Completion of the general orientation should require 45 minutes or less. EHSO will also follow up on new workers who started after April, 2014 to ensure that they have also completed the general orientation.

Faculties and units will need to complete workplace or task specific orientations for new workers and maintain records of those orientations. Resources are posted at the link above to assist with this.

Please contact EHSO at 474-6633 if you have any questions about the Province’s requirements for new worker orientation.

Poster and Bulletin Board Guideline  Posters, banners, and related material can easily create a fire hazard. Winnipeg Fire Prevention Branch inspects the University campus on a regular basis - a common problem is poster accumulations in tunnels, stairwells, and on bulletin boards. To assist us in providing a safer environment, the Winnipeg Fire Prevention Branch and the University’s Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHSO) have created a Poster and Bulletin Board Guideline that is available on the EHSO web page.
**Working Alone and Working in Isolation** *(New webpage)*

Every University staff member that works alone or in isolation is **required by regulation and University procedure** to plan ahead to get help in case of an injury or sudden ill health.

**Working Alone** means performing work by someone who is the only worker for that employer at that workplace at any time, and is not directly supervised by the employer (or anyone else designated as a supervisor) at any time.

*(A supervisor means a person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker. It doesn’t refer to people with that particular job title.)*

Consider if:

- Nobody can hear or see you (being completely by yourself).
- None of your coworkers can hear or see you (you might be surrounded by other people but you are still considered to be working alone when you are the only person from your employer performing work at that specific location).
- When your employer or your supervisor is not directly supervising you.

**Working alone** may include working in the lab or office after hours by yourself; working in the library by yourself but may be surrounded by students, contractors, etc.; or working in or on HSC property with another coworker but not supervised by a University of Manitoba supervisor.

**Working in Isolation** means working in situations or locations where assistance is not readily available in the event of injury, illness, or emergency.

**Working in isolation** may include working in a remote area doing research for the University, where Emergency Services will not be able to get to you right away or at all if needed; or working in a storage room where people outside of this room might not be able to assist you.

The following conditions should be considered:

- **Presence of others:** Are other people in the vicinity?
- **Awareness:** Will other persons capable of providing assistance be aware of the worker's need?
- **Willingness:** Is it reasonable to expect those other persons will provide assistance?
- **Timeliness:** Will assistance be provided within a reasonable period of time?

**STEP 1: Risk Assessment**
Supervisors and workers make a list of the possible hazards by considering the specific activities to be performed, the specifics of the workplace where the work is to be completed, and the variety of conditions or circumstances that may occur while working alone or in isolation.

**STEP 2: Safe Work Procedures**
Create a safe work procedure (SWP) by making a list of the specific steps required:
- To prevent, eliminate or reduce the identified hazards associated with the activity or performing the activity in the isolated location.
- For effective communication between the supervisor and the individual worker while working alone.

Include the steps required to activate emergency responses in the event there is any failure in communication.

**STEP 3: Implement**
Supervisors need to:
- Communicate the SWP and ensure workers have the training needed to perform all the steps.
- Check to make sure workers are following the SWP
- Make sure workers have what they need to follow the plan.

**STEP 4: Review and Update** SWP should be reviewed at least every three years (UM governance) and whenever there is a change such as new worker, new activity or change in the location.
More on Working Alone Risk Assessment

What are some factors to consider?
- Environmental hazards like temperature, weather, slippery conditions
- Length of time the person will be working alone
- Time of the day
- Working with the public (harassment or violence)
- Driving a vehicle
- Handling money

What forms of communication are available?
Is it necessary to "see" the worker or is voice enough
Will emergency communication systems work in all foreseeable situations

What are the specifics of the work or the location?
- Where are emergency supplies and first aid kit located
- Does the worker have first aid training or is a trained worker nearby
- Is there adequate personal protective equipment needed and available?
- What machinery, tools or equipment will be used?
- Is there a high risk activity involved?
- If the person is working inside a locked building, how will emergency services be able to get in? (For example: a night cleaner in a secure office building)

Characteristics specific to worker:
- Is the worker experienced, or new to the work or location?
- Are there any pre-existing medical conditions that may increase the risk?

Supervisors may prohibit certain tasks from being completed by a person working alone or working in isolation, such as
- Not allowing any work with certain hazards if alone on weekends or after hours/late at night.
- Limiting the high risk work to regular business hours so that there will be someone in the workplace that can check in on their progress.

Working Alone Strategies
- Buddy system
- Personal Check by another person
- Regular, scheduled telephone contact
NOTE: just having a cell phone is not a Working Alone Plan, there must be a procedure in place.

Steps for a check-in procedure:
- Prepare a daily work plan so it is known where the lone employee will be and when.
- Identify one main person to be the contact at the office, plus a backup.
- Define under what circumstances the lone employee will check in and how often.
- Stick to the visual check or call-in schedule. Consider keeping a written log of contact.
- Have the contact person call or visit the lone employee periodically to make sure he or she is okay.
- Pick out a code word to be used to identify or confirm that help is needed.
- Develop an emergency action plan to be followed if the lone employee does not check-in when he or she is supposed to.

When travelling out of the office, the main contact person should know the following details:
- Destination
- Estimated time of arrival
- Return time or date
- Contact information
- Mode of travel (public transit, car, plane, etc.)
- Alternate plans in the event of bad weather, traffic problems, etc.

The development of a specific Working Alone procedure is the result of collaboration between worker and supervisor. Consultation with the safety and health committee may also be helpful and ESHO may be consulted if additional expertise is needed.

Useful Links
University of Manitoba Governing Documents:
Working Alone Procedure
Appendix A: Working Alone or in Isolation - Risk Assessment
Appendix B: Working Alone or in Isolation - Safe Work Procedure

Environmental Health and Safety Office Documents:
Working Alone - Sample Contact Information
Working Alone - Sample Contact Log

Government of Manitoba Resources:
Code of Practice for Workers Working Alone or in Isolation
Workplace Safety and Health Regulation, M.R. 217/2006 [Section 9]
**2015 WHMIS Coordinators Meetings**  The Environmental Health and Safety Office hosted its annual meeting on two separate days, in hopes to better accommodate both Bannatyne and Fort Garry campus WHMIS coordinators. Having two smaller group meetings would also encourage WHMIS coordinators to participate in group discussions. The Fort Garry meeting was held on March 16th in the St. John’s College, with the second one occurring on March 23rd at the John Buhler Research Centre. The Meetings were deemed a success, with good attendance and participation at both sessions.

Some of the topics covered included:

**Roles and Responsibilities of WHMIS Coordinators** A review of the roles and responsibilities of a WHMIS coordinator and what the expectations are to ensure regulatory compliance. Items reviewed included:

- Training
- Material Safety Data Sheets
- Labelling
- Inventory records
- Biosafety

**Global Harmonized System** On February 11, 2015 the federal government published the Hazardous Products Regulation (HPR), which includes the Global Harmonized System (GHS). The new WHMIS 2015 which is based on the new requirements laid out in the new HPR, does not replace the original WHMIS 1988. WHMIS 2015 will actually update WHMIS 1988 to have it align with the United States version of GHS. The basic roles and responsibilities for suppliers, employers and workers stay the same. The only significant changes to WHMIS 2015 are; the new criteria for hazard classification and labels and safety data sheets (SDS), which will replace the material safety data sheets (MSDS).

- The objectives of the presentation were to identify:
  - The key changes to WHMIS 2015
  - Classification
    - New hazard class names
    - Classification rules
    - New hazard classes
  - Labels
    - New requirements for supplier labels, including pictograms, signal words, hazard and precautionary statements
    - The need for suppliers to have such labels in both English and French
  - New Safety Data Sheets (SDS) with the standard 16 sections format, which replaces the MSDS (nine section) format.

- During the presentation, it was made clear that until WHMIS 2015 is fully implemented in December 2018, revisions must be made to existing WHMIS 1988 training to include:
  - The new hazard pictograms
  - New hazard classes
  - New labels and the required wording (i.e. signal words)
  - The meaning of wording found on labels and SDSs
  - New SDS format

- Prior to rolling out new training package, Provincial and Territorial regulators must provide their requirements for WHMIS 2015 (expected by June 2015)

The [Laboratory Safety Links Webpage](#) lists numerous links to templates and resources applicable to a University laboratory.
Safety program transfer  A recent review identified three University of Manitoba safety programs where benefits could be realized by consolidating the service delivery role at Physical Plant. As of April 1, 2015, program delivery components will be transferred to Physical Plant for the following programs:

Asbestos Management  Confined Space inventory  Construction/Contractor Safety

Breanne Kamenz has transferred to Physical Plant to support these programs and has assumed the role of Manager of Physical Plant Safety Programs. Breanne will report to Rod Berscheid, Assistant Director of Physical Plant. For questions related to these three areas please contact Breanne (272-1634) or Rod (474-6307).

### EHSO Quick Contacts Revised April 2015

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Emergency Services</td>
<td>SSS on any University phone</td>
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<td>911 on any phone</td>
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