

# Community-Based Learning: Workplace Health & Safety

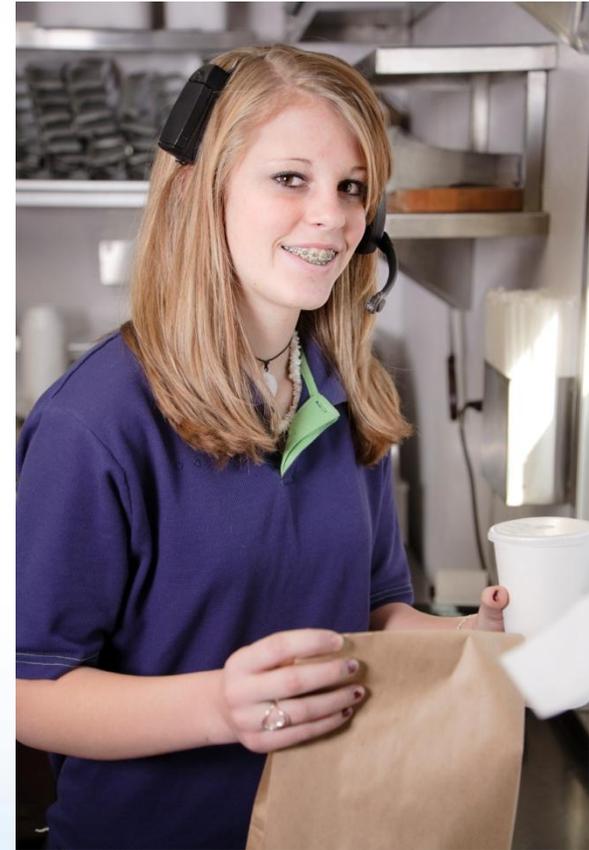


**Introduction to Nova Scotia's  
OHS Division and the OHS Act & Regulations**

# **1. Overview of Nova Scotia's OHS Division and Safety Act & Regulations**

## **2. Employer and Worker Rights and Responsibilities**

## **3. The Internal Responsibility System**



# Group brain teaser!

Does Nova Scotia have workplace health and safety law?

T\_\_\_ F\_\_\_

Do you have a legal responsibility to help keep co-workers safe?

T\_\_\_ F\_\_\_

Do you have the right to know about the hazards that could affect you at work?

T\_\_\_ F\_\_\_

Do you have the legal right to refuse to do work that you feel will endanger you  
or someone else?

T\_\_\_ F\_\_\_

Could you be fired for not following your workplace's safety rules?

T\_\_\_ F\_\_\_

Is your boss legally responsible to make sure you are trained in how to do your  
job safely?

T\_\_\_ F\_\_\_

# Nova Scotia OHS Law: Act and Regulations

## **Our Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) Division**



**Working for your safety!**

# Nova Scotia's Workplace Safety Law

- Nova Scotia's safety law is called the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*; it includes several Regulations.
- Safety law is enforced by officers of the OHS Division of Nova Scotia's Dept. of Labour & Advanced Education. OHS officers and staff also teach employers and worker groups to better understand how safety law affects them.
- **EVERY workplace must follow OHS law.**
- **EVERY employer has responsibilities under OHS law.**
- **EVERY worker has rights & responsibilities under OHS law.**



# Safety Law: Rights & Responsibilities

## How am I protected at work?



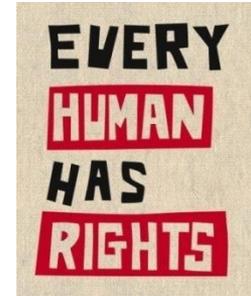
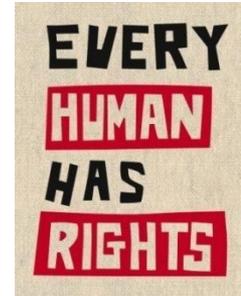
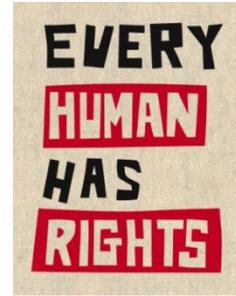


# **Worker Rights and Responsibilities**

# Workers: The 3 Main Safety Rights!

Your key rights under NS Occupational Health and Safety law are:

1. The **Right to Know**
2. The **Right to Participate**
3. The **Right to Refuse**



**This means:**

1. You have the **right to know about the hazards** in your workplace, and how to protect yourself. Every job has some sort of hazard. What are the hazards of your work?
2. You have the **right to participate in your own safety**. This could be joining the safety committee or attending training. What are some other ways workers can get involved?
3. You have the **right to refuse work that** you believe could hurt you or someone else. Safety law protects you from being discriminated against for exercising your rights!

# Workers: Key Safety Responsibilities!

Responsible to **report unsafe** acts and conditions

Responsible to **follow** workplace **safe-work rules**

Responsible to **use equipment properly**

Responsible to **work safely and not endanger** others



# Hmmmm...

- How are 'Rights' and 'Responsibilities' different?
- What's the difference between understanding and exercising our safety rights and responsibilities? Do you think one is harder to do than the other?
- What sorts of things stop us from exercising our safety rights?
- What sorts of things stop us from meeting our safety responsibilities?
- What could be done to improve these things?



# **Employer Responsibilities**

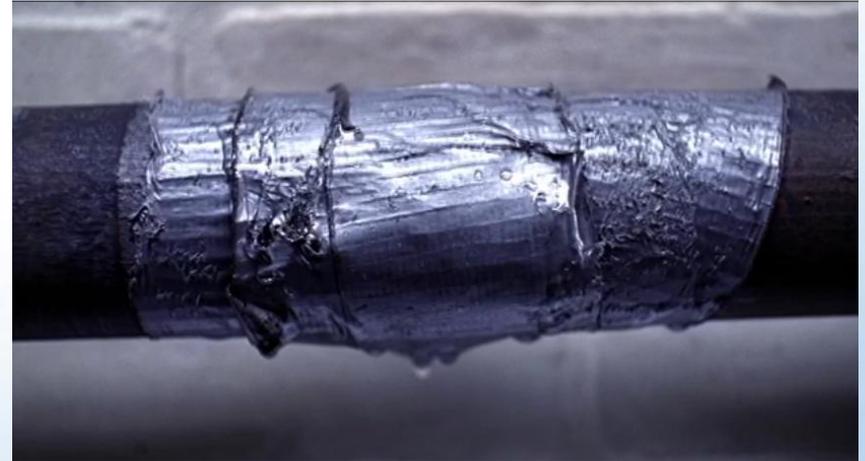
# Employers: Key Responsibilities

- Ensure the **health and safety of persons at or near the workplace**
- **Inform workers** of hazards in the workplace
- **Follow safety law**, and make sure that workers do so as well!
- Make sure workers have **proper equipment and correct safety gear** to work safely; and maintain equipment safely and appropriately
- Put a **safety policy and program** in place. Make sure it includes safe work procedures, worker orientation and training programs, and hazard reporting and investigation process.
- Have a **health and safety committee** or safety representative. Make sure they have training to fulfill this role.

# Hmmmm...

- It's ten years from now and you're running your own business! What could it be? Discuss:
  - What are some of the hazards your workers will need to know about?
  - What types of training will they need to do their jobs safely?
  - What type of training will you and your supervisors need to run the business safely?
  - In what ways can workers and employers come together for workplace safety?
  - If something bad happens at one of your job sites, how could it impact your business?

# The Internal Responsibility System (IRS)



# The IRS: What's it mean for me?

The IRS means:

- That employers and workers **share responsibility** for workplace safety.
- Levels of safety responsibility are based on the level of authority and ability that different workplace groups have.
- Workers and managers talking and working with each other for the safety of the workplace.



**The IRS means you can't say *"I'm not responsible for safety."***

# How do I share in the IRS?

Exercise your rights and responsibilities!

***The OHS Act protects you from being discriminated against for exercising your safety rights!***

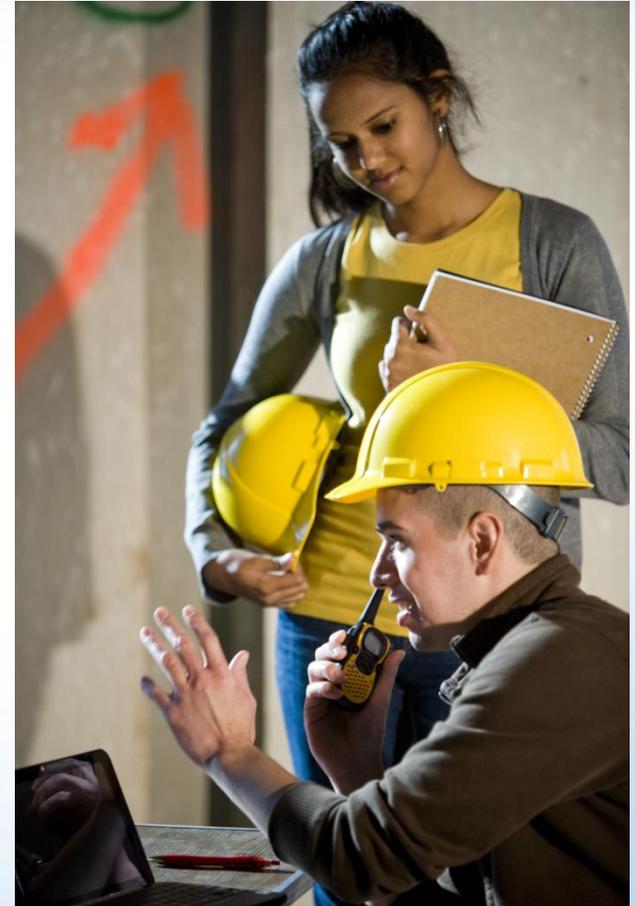
Report hazards so they can be controlled.

Talk to your supervisor about safety in the workplace.

Take part in your own safety.

Know when to say “No, I can’t do that work until I have my safety training.”

Involve an adult you trust (ie. parent, teacher) when you need support with a safety concern!



# Responsible to Report Workplace Hazards!

- (1) Always report workplace hazards to your supervisor! If your supervisor doesn't do anything, tell your safety rep or JOHSC member.
- (2) If you're hurt at work, tell your supervisor! Employers are responsible for providing you with first aid and filling out a report.
- (3) If you need to see a doctor for your workplace injury or illness, make sure you tell her or him how it happened at work!
- (4) **If the workplace doesn't do anything about unsafe situations, call OHS Officers of Labour & Advanced Education at 1-800-952-2687. Tell them what's going on!**



# The IRS needs you to act on your safety rights!

**Exercising your safety rights means you are working to protect yourself and your co-workers from workplace injury and illness.**

Safety training should be a part of your first shift – if you don't see it, ask!

Take training seriously and ask questions. It shows maturity & professionalism.

Even if you think something is hazardous, report it to a supervisor & talk about it.

Follow the workplace's safety rules and safe work procedures.

Use all equipment and materials properly, including safety gear. Don't mess around.

If you haven't been trained to handle certain products or processes, don't.

**If your workplace just isn't safe, don't stay quiet. Talk to an adult you trust, or call the OHS Division for help.**

# How are we doing? 😊

Does Nova Scotia have workplace health and safety law?

**Yes.** The OHS Act and OHS officers work to help keep us safe at work!

Do you have a legal responsibility to help keep co-workers safe?

**Yes.** Workplace safety is also about your behaviour toward others!

Do you have the right to know about the hazards that could affect you at work?

**Yes.** All jobs have risks! Your employer has to tell you how to protect yourself.

Do you have the legal right to refuse to do work that you feel will endanger you?

**Yes.** If you're not given training to do a hazardous task safely, don't do it.

Could you be fired for not following your workplace's safety rules?

**Yes.** Take your employer's safety rules seriously and follow them!

Is your boss responsible to make sure you have safe-work training?

**Yes! By law!** Training can give you the power to safely meet workplace risks!

# OHS Law: Where to go for more info?

Nova Scotia Provincial Law - OHS Division: Labour & Advanced Education  
[www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/healthandsafety](http://www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/healthandsafety)

**1-800-952-2687**

Federal Law - Human Resources & Skills Development Canada  
[www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

