



Forestry Safety Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Newsletter

FALL 2017

Heads Up!

It's that time of year again when hunters, berry pickers, hikers, photographers, and many other outdoor enthusiasts head out into the wilderness in pursuit of the many benefits provided by our beautiful surroundings. It is also the time of year when Bay of Islands Search and Rescue (BOISAR) is often called upon to locate individuals who have become lost, or treat and evacuate people who were injured, while taking part in these popular fall season activities. As we move into this busy time of year, BOISAR would like to offer some reminders to help keep you safe when travelling in remote or backcountry areas.

One important tip, especially for berry pickers and hunters, comes from the old adage to "keep your head up". Through we are often not conscious of it; as we encounter areas that we are not familiar with, our brains continuously gather information from our surroundings to assemble a map. When searching for berries or animal sign, however, one's attention is focused downward for long periods of time and your brain's map of the area will lack information on prominent landmarks or other important landscape features. When exploring a new area, be sure to take the time to take a good look around and note prominent landmarks – having a good knowledge of the area can help prevent you from becoming lost. Keep Your Head Up!

In addition to making yourself aware of your surroundings, BOISAR recommends the following three important steps that everyone at work or at play in wilderness areas should follow:

1. Always write a trip plan and leave it with a responsible adult. You can access trip plans here: <https://adventuresmart.ca/tripplan/tripplan.php>
2. Get appropriate training (for example wilderness survival, GPS/map/compass use, first aid). (BOISAR offers education sessions for all age groups focused on various outdoor activities)
3. Always carry the 10 essentials (below) and learn how to use them.
 - Flashlight, spare batteries
 - Fire starting kit (waterproof matches, fire starter)
 - Signaling device (whistle, mirror)
 - Extra food and water – 1 litre/person
 - Extra clothing (for rain, wind, cold)
 - Navigational/Communication Aids (maps, compass, GPS)
 - First Aid Kit
 - Emergency shelter (Tarp, parachute cord)
 - Knife/Axe
 - Sun protection (glasses, sunscreen, hat)



Message from the Executive Director

Marijuana is in the process of being legalized in Canada. This legalization will have ramifications for both employers and employees right across the country. Some are very concerned and others think there will be no real change. One thing is for certain, workplaces are going to have to deal with this head on.

A major concern is the expectation that the recreational use of marijuana will increase, as a result of its legalization, and it might lead to impairment in the workplace. Medical marijuana has been legal in Canada since 2001. However, legalization means no longer is marijuana only for pain relief, but will soon be available for use at your discretion. However, employers and workers have to recognize that marijuana is an impairing drug and has no place in the workplace.

No matter what the reason is for taking marijuana, the risk in the workplace remains the same, is that person able to do their job safely. Being under the influence of marijuana, prescription drugs, alcohol or any illegal mind-altering substances means, quite frankly, you are not fit for work. Being impaired at work puts at risk the health and safety of the worker and other workers.

On July 1, 2018 the recreational use of marijuana becomes legal. It makes sense that employers get ahead of this and look to establish appropriate drug policies for their workplace. If you need help with this please contact FSANL to see how we can be of assistance.

Ten Steps to Improve Your Workplace Health and Safety

1. Hazard Recognition, Evaluation, and Control

Legislatively, as an employer, you must identify hazards in your workplace and take steps to eliminate or minimize them. But if you cannot recognize what hazards the workers are being exposed to then you cannot eliminate or minimize them.

2. Inspect Your Workplace

Workplace inspections help prevent injuries and illnesses. Through an examination of the workplace, inspections identify whether current identified hazards are being controlled effectively and give an opportunity to recognize additional hazards that may have been introduced.

3. Preventative Maintenance of Equipment

Ensuring that your equipment is in good working order will reduce the risk of injury, damage, and loss of production. You need to regularly check all equipment and tools to ensure that they are well maintained and safe to use.

4. Safe Work Procedures

A job safety analysis (JSA), also known as job hazard analysis (JHA), is the first step in developing a work procedure. The JSA/JHA is an examination of each task of a specific job to help identify hazards and to determine the safest way to do the job by putting in place preventative measures. Employees who carry out the tasks should be consulted in developing the procedure.

Continued on next page

Ten Steps to Improve Your Workplace Health and Safety (continued)

5. Train Your Employees

Proper orientation and training is necessary for all employees. The orientation not only introduces the employees to your SMS, it is also their first impression of the company's "safety culture". Statistically, inexperienced workers are more likely to be involved in workplace incidents, and although experience can only be gained through time, health and safety education and job skills training will help them through this period.

6. Talk Regularly with Your Employees

Meet regularly with your staff and discuss health and safety issues. These "toolbox talks" are essential to workplace safety and should be used to encourage employees to share their ideas and thoughts on how to improve safety in the workplace.

7. Report and Investigate Incidents

After basic and root causes have been determined, control measures are then developed to use as future preventative measures. Even if an incident does not result in a serious injury, you need to conduct an incident investigation to help determine why an incident happened so you can take steps to ensure that it will not recur.

8. Emergency Procedures

Emergency procedures are plans for dealing with emergencies such as medical situations, fires, explosions, major releases of hazardous materials, violent occurrences, or natural hazards. An effective plan will prevent or minimize fatalities, injuries, and property/equipment damage. This can be done by clearly defining the procedures for handling these unexpected situations.

9. Maintain Records

Keep records of all first aid treatment, hazards assessments, inspections, incident investigations, training activities, etc. This information can help you identify trends in unsafe conditions or work procedures, assists in demonstrating due diligence, and enables you to take steps to correct these potential hazards.

10. Make Safety a Habit, Not a Struggle

Having a 'Safety Culture' means that safety becomes a habit to ALL employees and is not just an after-thought. Safety should be as important as customer service, financial planning, and seeing your family at the end of the day. A commitment to health and safety makes good business sense because it's the one way to protect your greatest resource — your people.

By Glenn Richardson, LCGI, MInstLM, NCSO™

Glenn is the Supervisor of the Member Outreach Program at NLCSA.

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