



Workplace Violence

(We're Not in Mayberry Anymore, Barney)

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION

**SAFETY SERVICES NEW BRUNSWICK
2010 SYMPOSIUM ON SAFETY
May 7, 2010**

What Is Workplace Violence?

Workplace violence is any physical assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting.

Other Provinces

- Alberta
- British Columbia
- Manitoba
- Prince Edward Island
- Saskatchewan
- Nova Scotia
- Quebec (Psychological Harassment)

Acts/Regulations Specific to Violence Prevention in NB

Canada Labour Code

Part XX

(Federal)

NB Occupational Health and Safety Act

Section 9

(Provincial)

What Is Required By the “Law” in NB?

9(1) Every employer shall

- (a) take every reasonable precaution to ensure the health and safety of his employees;
- (b) comply with this Act, the regulations and any order made in accordance with this Act or the regulations; and
- (c) ensure that his employees comply with this Act, the regulations and any order made in accordance with this Act or the regulations.

What Is the “Law” in NB?

- **9(2)** Without limiting the generality of the duties under subsection (1), every employer shall
 - (c) provide such information, instruction, training and supervision as are necessary to ensure an employee’s health and safety;

What Is Required By the “Law”?

Every employer should perform a risk assessment and evaluate their workplace to determine the presence of risk factors or situations that might place employees at risk of occupational assaults and homicides.

Definition

A workplace may be any location either permanent or temporary where an employee performs any work-related duty

Definition

This includes, but is not limited to, the buildings and the surrounding perimeters, including the parking lots, field locations, clients' homes and traveling to and from work assignments, vehicles used to perform work...

Workplace Violence Includes:

- Beatings
- Stabbings
- Suicides
- Shootings
- Rapes
- Near-suicides
- Psychological traumas
- Threats or obscene phone calls
- Intimidation
- Harassment of any nature
- Being followed, sworn or shouted at

Examples

Verbal threats to inflict bodily harm; including vague or covert threats

Attempting to cause physical harm; striking, pushing and other aggressive physical acts against another person

Types of Workplace Violence

- Violence by strangers
- Violence by customers or clients
- Violence by co-workers
- Violence by personal relations

Extent of Problem

We live in an increasingly violent culture

- **Job-related homicides were the third leading cause of death for all workers (North American).**
- **The #1 cause of occupational death for all female workers (USA).**
- **The #2 cause of occupational death for male workers (USA).**

Generally Speaking

- Establish a Violence Prevention Policy
- Conduct Risk Assessments
- If at risk...
 - Establish a violence prevention policy
 - Conduct risk assessments
 - Establish procedures for; reporting, investigating and recording incidents of violence
 - Provide information and training to employees

What is a Risk Assessment?

A Risk Assessment is an inspection or examination of the workplace to find existing or potential hazards (Risk Factors) for workplace violence; this can include:

- Look at the history of past incidents; try to identify patterns or trends which occurred in your workplace.
- Review your occupational injury and illness logs) and incident reports to identify injuries resulting from violence.
- Survey your workers at all levels regarding violent incidents reported or unreported

Risk Factors

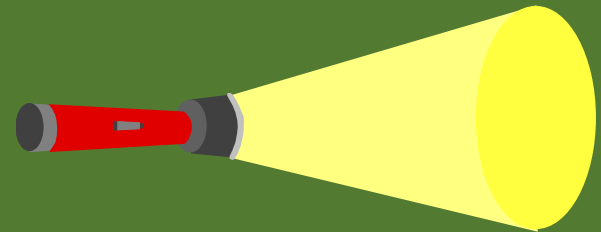
- Contact with the public
- Working late night or early morning
- Exchanging money with the public
- Working alone or in small numbers
- Uncontrolled access to the workplace
- Having a mobile workplace such as a police cruiser, fire fighter or ambulance service

Risk Factors

- Prevalence of handguns and other weapons among the public, employees, or clients
- Solo work, often in remote locations, high crime settings with no back-up or means of obtaining assistance such as communication devices or alarm systems

Risk Factors (cont'd)

- Lack of training in recognizing and managing escalating hostile and aggressive behavior
- Poorly-lighted parking areas



Workplace Violence Prevention Program

- List of Risk Factors found during analysis
- Methods used for Hazard Prevention and Control
- Written plan and/or codes of practice
- Management Commitment and Employee Involvement

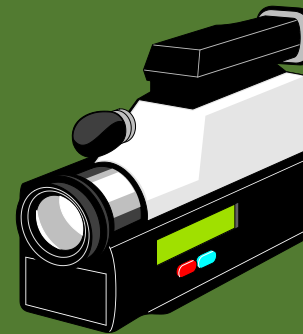
Methods Used For Hazard Prevention and Control

Could Include:

- Make high risk areas more visible
- Install more lighting
- Use drop safes, decrease cash on hand
- Post signs – stating limited cash
- Train employees on conflict resolution
- Need a system to respond

Engineering Controls

- Visibility and lighting
- Drop safes
- Video surveillance
- Height markers
- Door detectors, buzzers
- Alarms
- Bullet resistant barriers



Administrative and Work Practice Controls

- Locked delivery doors
- Establish rules for workers leaving facility
- Lock doors when not open, procedures for opening and closing
- Limit access
- Adopt safety procedures for off-site work

Administrative and Work Practice Controls

- State clearly to patients, clients, and employees that violence will not be tolerated or permitted
- Establish liaison with local police and state prosecutors
- Require employees to report all assaults and threats
- Set up trained response teams to respond to emergencies

Administrative and Work Practice Controls

- Integrate violence prevention into daily procedures
- Minimal cash in register
- Emergency procedures, systems of communication
- Procedures to use barriers & enclosures
- Evaluate staffing needs for high risk locations/times

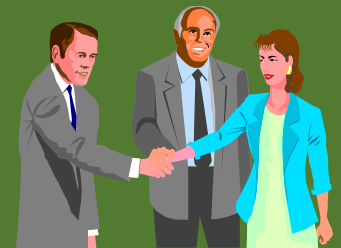
Management Commitment and Employee Involvement

- Complementary and essential
- Management commitment provides the motivating force to deal effectively with workplace violence
- Employee involvement and feedback-enable workers to develop and express their commitment to safety and health



Employee Involvement

- **Understand and comply with the workplace violence prevention program and other safety and security measures**
- **Participate in employee complaints or suggestion procedures covering safety and security concerns**
- **Prompt and accurate reporting of violent incidents**

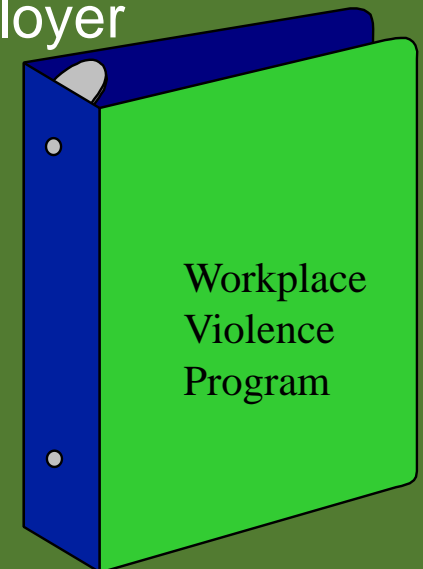


Post-Incident Response

- Trauma-crisis counseling
- Critical incident stress debriefing
- Employee assistance programs to assist victims

Training and Education

- Initially or upon assignment and annually thereafter
- Review of the Workplace Violence Prevention Program
- Risk Factors
- Methods for employees to protect themselves
- Controls/procedures put in place by the employer



Training and Education

- **Employees should understand concept of “Universal Precautions for Violence” - i.e., that violence should be expected but can be avoided or mitigated through preparation**
- **Employees should be instructed to limit physical interventions in workplace altercations unless designated emergency response team or security personnel are available**

Training and Education

Training program should involve all employees, including supervisors and managers



Training and Education

- **Workplace violence prevention policy**
- **Risk factors that cause or contribute to assaults**
- **Early recognition of escalating behavior or warning signs**
- **Ways to prevent volatile situations**
- **Standard response action plan for violent situations**
- **Location and operation of safety devices**

Recordkeeping and Evaluation

- Recordkeeping and evaluation of the violence prevention program are necessary to determine overall effectiveness and identify deficiencies or changes that should be made

Recordkeeping

- First Aid Log of Injury and Illness
- Reports of work injuries from assaults
- Incidents of abuse, verbal attacks or aggressive behavior
- Information on patients with history of violence
- Minutes of safety meetings, records of hazard analyses and corrective actions
- Records of all training programs



Evaluation

- Establish uniform violence reporting system and regular review of reports
- Review reports of minutes from staff meetings on safety issues
- Analyze trends and rates in illness/injury or fatalities caused by violence
- Measure improvement based on lowering frequency and severity of workplace violence

Are You Prepared?

1. Do you have a violence prevention policy which identifies the problem and outlines your general approach to dealing with it?
2. Have you conducted a comprehensive hazard assessment of your workplace?

Are You Prepared?

3. Have you developed a violence prevention program which incorporates a secure workplace design, prudent administrative practices and safe work procedures?
4. Have you set up a trustworthy, confidential reporting system and investigation procedures for all violent or potentially violent incidents?

Are You Prepared?

5. Has your organization clearly outlined and assigned responsibilities to management, supervisors and employees?
6. Do you have a comprehensive and easy to remember critical incident management plan?

Are You Prepared?

7. Have you established victim support services (EAP) or something similar?
 - Have managers and employees been trained to recognize, prevent and respond to violent or potentially violent situations?

Are You Prepared?

9. Do you regularly review all of the above to ensure they reflect and respond to the current status of your workplace?

Resources

- Safety Services New Brunswick
- WorkSafe NB
- Various Provincial WCB's
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada – Labour Programs
- CCOHS
- OHSA
- Others...

Questions?