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ERGONOMICS CONSULTING INC.

Extra Extra, Read All About it!!!

The Province of Alberta is driving Safety to a higher level!

Part 2 focuses on Hazard Assessment and control.

Employers are required to assess their work sites for hazards, identify them, and eliminate or control them with Engineering or Administrative controls.



Alberta recently passed amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act. They standardized the technical requirements for safety into an Occupational Health and Safety Code, which came out last November and will be in full effect by April 30, 2004.

This Code includes two areas related to Ergonomics which employers should be aware of:

- 1. Part 2 - Hazard Assessment, Elimination and Control**
- 2. Part 14 - Lifting and Handling Loads**

Part 2 requires employers to assess their work sites for hazards, identify them, and eliminate or control them with Engineering or Administrative controls. From an Ergonomics perspective, Hazards include, but are not limited to, things such as:

- √ Lifting and handling loads (i.e. manual materials handling)
- √ Highly Repetitive Motions
- √ Awkward Postures that are held in position or repeated frequently
- √ Inadequate lighting
- √ Vibration

Part 14 requires employers to “provide, where reasonably practicable, appropriate equipment for lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying, handling or transporting heavy or awkward loads.”

Part 14 focuses on ensuring the safe handling of materials when lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying, handling or transporting heavy or awkward loads.”



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The Code discusses the importance of:

- ✓ Performing a hazard assessment before work begins at the work site;
- ✓ Repeating the hazard assessment at reasonably practicable intervals;
- ✓ Involving affected workers in the process;
- ✓ Using engineering and administrative controls to eliminate or control the hazard;
- ✓ Assessing manual handling hazards before a worker manually moves a load;
- ✓ Addressing Musculoskeletal injuries promptly

The Explanation Guide for the Occupational Health and Safety Code provides many ideas for adapting heavy or awkward loads and lifting safely. See http://www3.gov.ab.ca/hre/whs/law/ohs_regcode_down.asp#eg for more information.



The Code specifically addresses Musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs) because they are the leading cause of lost-time injury claims in Alberta. According to the Explanation Guide, "in each of the years from 1997 to 2002, according to data provided by the Workers' Compensation Board - Alberta, the percentage of all lost-time claims due to MSIs ranged from 27.1 percent to 29.8 percent. In the November 2003 issue of Alberta Venture magazine, it is stated that, "last year, the WCB paid out \$12.8 million in RSI claims". This article also stated that, "together, the top three most common repetitive strain injuries (i.e. tendonitis, Carpal tunnel syndrome, and epicondylitis) accounted for more than three-quarters of all claims received by the WCB last year".

Anderson Ergonomics Consulting is a full-service consulting firm, specializing in Ergonomic hazard assessments, training for employees and managers and top-notch cost-effective solutions to reduce employee injury and company costs. Our mission is to provide customers with expert, value-added ergonomic services to improve or continue the health and effectiveness of their most valuable assets - their employees.

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