



Canadian Association of University Teachers
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Occupational Health and Safety Report

Date: November 2018
To: CAUT Council
From: Laura Lozanski, OHS Officer

Support for Association Representatives

CAUT's health and safety, collective bargaining and legal department are finalizing the draft content outline of a guide and workshop to assist academic staff association representatives with the challenging work of representing workers involved in harassment cases. A resource section is currently being compiled to augment the guide and workshop. They will also form part of the resources for the Grievance Handling and Equity workshops.

Asbestos

On October 18, 2018 the federal government passed regulations which prohibit the import, use, sale, manufacture and export of asbestos and products with asbestos, and outline permitting and reporting regimes for a narrow range of allowable uses. This will take effect December 30, 2018. Canada is now one of over 55 countries that have banned the use of asbestos. This regulation is needed to stop asbestos exposure and protect workers and the public. It will result in substantial changes in asbestos use in key industry sectors such as construction and automobile manufacturing. There will be narrowly defined exemptions allowing for asbestos use in certain circumstances, including for a chlor-alkali plant until 2029. Additional exemptions for military equipment and nuclear facilities will be phased out by 2022. Exceptions also exist for the reuse of mining residues and road materials, with no anticipated end date.

Noise Survey for Musician Academics

A draft noise survey has been completed for academic staff association members who teach music and practice their instruments in academic institutions. The survey has been given a trial and the results are being reviewed for potential revisions.

Cannabis

The recreational use of cannabis has now been legalized in Canada, and employers are beginning to grapple with the potential impact in the workplace. The Canadian labour movement is taking an impairment approach – how a worker's performance or actions diverge from their normal day-to-day performance or skill - to medical, recreational and substance abuse issues. A worker having drugs in their system does not necessarily mean that the worker is impaired. A targeted approach to alcohol or drugs as the only causes of workplace impairment does not take into account the myriad reasons why a worker may be impaired at work.

CUPE's new fact sheet on impairment is an excellent template for both a workplace approach to the issue and collective agreement language:

<https://cupe.ca/management-impairment-workplace>

Nanotechnology

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety and the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers have released a new nanotechnology awareness video. This module focuses on defining nanotechnology, hazards during manufacturing, use and disposal of nano products, how to work safely, and the role of the joint health and safety committee. The module is free and should be circulated to JHSC's and academic staff association members to increase their safety awareness in the workplace:

English: <https://www.ccohs.ca/products/courses/nanotechnology/>

French:

<https://www.cchst.ca/products/courses/nanotechnology/?url=/products/courses/nanotechnology/>

Joint Health and Safety Committee Training

Academic staff associations should ensure they have representatives elected or appointed to their workplace joint health and safety committees (JHSC). JHSC training needs should be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with provincial, federal and other training requirements. JHSC representatives need a sound knowledge base to effectively carry out their legislated duties. Contact CAUT's Occupational Health and Safety Officer at lozanski@caut.ca for course information and to schedule training dates.

General Health and Safety Training

CAUT offers training on many hazard-specific health and safety issues, including, but not limited to:

- Asbestos
- Mental Health and Workplace Stress
- Lockdown: a crisis prevention plan
- Workplace Inspections
- Indoor Air Quality
- Ergonomics
- Violence

Most topics are 3-hour modules and can be delivered as stand-alone sessions or as an addition to the Joint Health and Safety Committee Training module.

New Health and Safety Training Modules

The Fine Arts departments training module is nearing completion and is being developed as both 3-hour and 5-hour modules. Hazards and barriers to a safe and healthy workplace have been identified and will incorporate suggestions for meeting regulatory requirements, current best practices and example case studies.

Fact Sheets Completed

Personal Protective Equipment

Fact Sheets in Process

Privacy and Health & Safety