



## safety & health guide for new retail workers





## Contributing Organizations

This Guide was developed by Retail Council of Canada, the Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba and the Workplace Safety and Health Division.

Special thanks to the Workers' Compensation Board of BC for providing information from which this Guide is based.

# At your new job, think about safety & health ... because work shouldn't hurt.

Every workplace has its hazards, but no one ever expects an injury to happen to them at work. In fact, new and young workers are injured on the job every day.

In the retail industry, the leading causes of injury are:

- Handling bags, boxes and other objects
- Using tools and equipment  
(e.g., from box cutters to pallet jacks)
- Slips and falls

Many other causes of injury are less frequent but still common. That's why the Retail Council of Canada has partnered with the Workplace Safety & Health Division and The Workers Compensation Board – SAFE Work to produce this *Safety & Health Guide for New Retail Workers*.

Representatives from the contributing organizations have shared resources and experiences to jointly explore potential solutions to safety and health concerns in the retail sector. Our goal in producing this Guide is to share some of the results of these joint efforts and to demonstrate our collective commitment to worker safety and health.

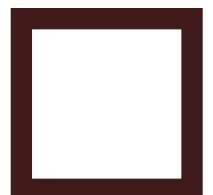
The Guide has information for people who are thinking about a new job in the retail industry or are just getting into the workforce. It is intended to increase awareness while providing some specific safety and health tips for workers in retail. Specific information for employers is provided in the form of additional references.

You can find the Guide online by going to [www.retailcouncil.org](http://www.retailcouncil.org) or [www.safemantoba.com](http://www.safemantoba.com).

Should your organization wish to order more of these Guides, you can place an order online at the SAFE Store at [www.safemantoba.com](http://www.safemantoba.com).

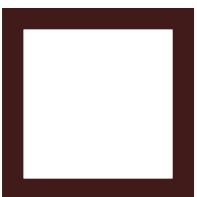
Contact information for the above organizations is listed on the last page of this booklet.

Best wishes for a safe and healthy experience when you start your new job!



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# Healthy expectations

Are you thinking about a new job or a new position, or are you just getting into the workforce? Congratulations on choosing retail as a potential career! Finding and starting a new job can be intimidating, especially if it's your very first job. But keep in mind – it's about more than just working and getting paid. It's also about safety and health.

When you start your new job you will have a responsibility to protect yourself and the people around you from injury – that's the law. However, it's important to know what to expect from your potential employer before you start. Not only do you have the duty to work safely, you also have rights.

As a worker you have three basic rights related to safety and health:

- **The right to know** and to be trained in safe work practices in all aspects of your job.
- **The right to participate** in safety and health matters either directly or through a work site safety and health committee or representative.
- **The right to refuse work** if you have reasonable cause to believe that the work process, equipment or environment poses an undue risk of injury to you or another person.

So when you are considering a new job, remember that it's a two-way responsibility. You will be expected to take your job seriously just as your employer will be expected to take your safety and health seriously.

# About this Guide

## Purpose of this Guide

The purpose of this Guide is to help you gain valuable lifetime knowledge about safety and health in the workplace, particularly the retail industry. The Guide has 5 sections:

**Section 1** – Questions and concerns you might have about safety and health

**Section 2** – Safety tips

**Section 3** – Dealing with emergencies

**Section 4** – Finding more information

**Section 5** – Helping us improve this Guide/contacts

This Guide is to be used as a general resource only. Not all workplace hazards are covered. **For further information see Section 4 of this Guide. For specific legal or regulatory requirements, consult the Manitoba Workplace Safety & Health Act & Regulations.** These can be found online at [www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety) or link through [www.retailcouncil.org](http://www.retailcouncil.org) or [www.safemanitoba.com](http://www.safemanitoba.com).

## Who should use this Guide

The Guide has important information for people who are thinking about a new job in the retail industry or who are just getting into the workforce. It focuses on what you need to know to have a safe and healthy work experience, and discusses your rights and responsibilities around safety and health on the job.

## How to use this information

We encourage you to review the Guide before you meet with a potential employer and to keep it as a handy reference after you start your new job.

## If you are an employer

In the Guide you will find helpful references to other publications that have been written with your needs in mind.

SAFE Work bulletins are referenced through out this Guide. These bulletins can be located at the above websites.



## Section 1

Questions and concerns you  
may have about safety and health

# Section 1

## Questions and concerns you may have about safety and health

Good employers are serious about workplace safety and health. They provide safety and health training so that their new workers can identify hazards, and they have a safety and health program to deal with safety and health issues as they arise.

When you are considering or starting a new job, here are some questions you may have:

### Q: What dangers or hazards will I have to watch for on this job?

Your employer or supervisor must tell you about any dangers or potential hazards they know about at your work site – that's the law. However, it's good to start with a general sense of safety and health issues that can arise.

#### **Common safety and health concerns in the retail industry include:**

- Handling and lifting materials
- Slipping, tripping and falling
- Using ladders
- Cuts and bruises
- Violence in the workplace
- Shoplifting
- Harassment
- Exposure to chemicals, biological hazards and diseases
- Biological hazards (like infectious diseases)
- Traveling safely to and from work

**Section 2** of this booklet includes specific advice on each of these topics to help you work safely right from the start.

**Q: What safety and health training or education will I need?  
Will you provide this training?**

Your employer is responsible for providing the training you need to do your work safely. Until you have the right knowledge and skills, you have to be under the direct supervision of someone who has them.

Your orientation should include basic information about safety and health at the workplace. For example:

- How to get first aid
- How to report injuries and incidents
- How to report potential hazards and unsafe work conditions
- Where emergency exits are located
- Who is responsible for safety and health (you should meet them)
- What the potential hazards are on the job site

**Q: What sort of emergency procedures will I be trained in?**

Emergencies can arise at any workplace, so emergency procedures must be in place for activities such as evacuation, chemical spill clean-up or fire fighting. These procedures will include knowing the location of exits, fire extinguishers, the first aid kit and any other specialized equipment needed to handle emergency situations. Your employer or supervisor should explain these procedures during your first few days on the job.

Being prepared for emergencies is further discussed in **Section 3** of this Guide.

**Q: Will I be required to use any safety and health gear or protective clothing?**

If there are hazards in the workplace, your employer has to protect you from them. Your employer is required by law to provide you with safety and health gear specific to your job tasks. You may be required to provide some items yourself such as safety shoes. Check with your employer.

Examples of safety and health gear common in the retail industry include:

- Safety vests (when working around moving equipment such as forklifts and vehicles)

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- Work gloves and safety shoes (when handling garbage or working in storage areas)
- Disposable waterproof gloves (when cleaning bathrooms)
- Cut-resistant gloves (for some cutting and equipment cleaning operations)
- Eye protection and gloves (to protect you from chemicals)

### Q: If I have safety and health concerns, who should I speak with?

Your supervisor or manager should always be kept informed of all safety and health concerns. In addition, some workplaces will also have either a “worker safety and health representative” or a “safety and health committee” depending on the number of workers employed by the company.

### Q: If I am injured on the job, what should I do?

By law, you are required to report any work related injury to your supervisor and first aid attendant as soon as possible. An employer will be sure to go through this with you.

As well, every workplace has to provide some level of first aid. For a very small, low-hazard workplace close to a medical facility, a first aid kit may be all that is required. Larger worksites may require a first aid attendant and possibly a first aid room. In your orientation, you should expect to find out some specific information about first aid procedures in the workplace, such as:

- How and when to report an injury
- To whom to report the incident
- Where a first aid attendant or first aid room or first aid kit is located.

As well, if an injury or incident happens your employer should have a system for investigating the incident and reporting it to the Workplace Safety & Health Division (WSHD). Your responsibility in the process is to **be as helpful as you can be** to your employer (or WSHD official) to get at the root cause of the incident (why it happened, without looking for fault).

See **SAFE Work Bulletin #119** – Reporting Serious Incidents at [www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/bltn119.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/bltn119.pdf).

### Q: How will safety and health information be communicated to me?

Your employer should have written policies and provide additional guidance for working safely. An employer committed to safety and health will communicate safety and health information to employees in a variety of ways, such as: through your supervisor, e-mail, a safety and health notice board, staff meetings, posters and notices, the safety and health committee, or a workers safety and health representative. Safety will be considered part of the job.

### Q: What if I think a certain task is likely to endanger my co-workers or me?

You have the right to refuse work if you have reasonable cause to believe it is dangerous to you or someone else. The first thing you should do is tell your supervisor or manager that you think the task is dangerous. Together, you should be able to discuss the issue and find a safe solution. If the two of you cannot find a solution, involve the worker co-chair of the safety and health committee, or the worker representative if no committee is required. If there is not a representative, have another worker that you select brought into the discussion to help resolve the situation. If a solution can't be found, you, your employer, or the worker co-chair of the safety and health committee, may contact the Workplace Safety & Health Division for assistance.

See **SAFE Work Bulletin #193** – *Your Right to Refuse Dangerous Work* at [www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/bltn193.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/bltn193.pdf).

### Q: Will I be required to work alone or late at night?

If you are required to work alone, you can expect your employer will have specific procedures and safeguards for working alone and must review them with you as part of your training. There should also be specific procedures for working late at night, even if you are not alone.

### Q: Are there any other hazards that I may be exposed to?

Some examples of hazards for which you should expect more information and training include:

- Working with electrical equipment
- Going into walk-in refrigeration units
- Working with chemicals

**Ask your employer about locking out any electrical equipment** that you may be exposed to.

See **SAFE Work Bulletin #118** – *Locking Out of Electrical Equipment* at [www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/bltn118.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/bltn118.pdf).



## Section 2

Tips for working safely

# Section 2

## Tips for working safely

### HANDLING & LIFTING

Improper handling and lifting of heavy or bulky objects is a major source of strains, sprains, neck and back injuries, cuts, bruises, broken bones and hernias. Any one of these injuries can affect you **for the rest of your life.**

#### Signs and symptoms of sprains and strains

It is important to recognize the early signs and symptoms of sprains and strains. The sooner treatment starts, the better. Signs and symptoms include:

- Swelling
- Redness
- Difficulty moving a particular body part
- Numbness
- Tingling, and
- Pain

If you notice any early signs or symptoms of sprains and strains, report them to your supervisor, manager or employer (or first aid attendant, safety and health committee, safety and health representative).

Sprains and strains (known as musculoskeletal injuries, or “MSIs”) are the most common type of work-related injury. These can arise from overexertion or from repetitive movement, which is often associated with lifting.

Most MSIs result from overexertion, and many of these are associated with lifting. When lifting, you need to think about the force required to lift the load and about your posture. Muscles and tendons can be overloaded, especially when your body is in an awkward posture. However, a bit of prevention can go a long way toward ensuring injury-free muscles and joints.

## ... for the employer

Employers are required to conduct risk assessments to identify potential MSI hazards. For more information about preventing musculoskeletal injuries, see these WSHD publications [www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety):

- A Guide to Program Development & Implementation
- SAFE Work Bulletin # 191 – Elements of an Ergonomic Program at [www.safemanitoba.com/pdf/safework\\_summit/Bulletin191\\_elements\\_of\\_ergonomics\\_plan.pdf](http://www.safemanitoba.com/pdf/safework_summit/Bulletin191_elements_of_ergonomics_plan.pdf).
- SAFE Work Bulletin # 192 – Lifting at [www.safemanitoba.com/pdf/safework\\_summit/lifting.pdf](http://www.safemanitoba.com/pdf/safework_summit/lifting.pdf).

BACK to Basics – This publication on back care and prevention can be found at [www.safemanitoba.com](http://www.safemanitoba.com).

## SAFETY TIPS

### Preventing injuries from lifting

- Where possible, avoid lifting and carrying heavy or awkward objects. Instead, use mechanical devices such as forklifts, hoists, carts and dollies
- Get help from others
- Lift smaller loads by planning and adjusting weight distribution ahead of time
- Hold the object you are lifting as close to your body as possible
- Avoid awkward work postures such as bending, reaching and twisting
- Try to keep the load between your knees and shoulders, without twisting your body; pivot with your feet instead of twisting your back
- Bend at your knees, not at your waist – this will help you keep your centre of balance and let the strong muscles in your legs do the lifting
- Lift smoothly and slowly
- Get a good grip – use your hands, not just your fingers, to grip the load
- Avoid performing the same lifting task repeatedly over a long period – if possible, vary the task with another activity that uses different muscles

# SAFETY TIPS

## Working in storage areas:

- When stacking boxes and items, stack the heaviest items at knee to chest level to minimize lifting
- Make sure stacked boxes or other items are stable enough not to tip
- Use a ladder or step stool to reach high items
- Watch for ice in cold-storage areas
- Take micro-breaks, stretch and vary the load (alternate heavy and light items)

## PREVENTING SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Many injuries occur in the retail industry due to slips, trips and falls on slippery floor surfaces or in cluttered walkways. To avoid these injuries, a bit of caution can go a long way.

### Preventing falls from height

Falls from height can occur as a result of obscured visibility. In retail, however, the most common type of fall is from a ladder.

# SAFETY TIPS

## Preventing slips and trips:

- Wear well-fitting, non-slip footwear
- Keep walkways and aisles clear of boxes and other clutter
- Don't carry more than you can safely handle
- Ensure you can see where you are going when carrying large items
- Clean up spills right away or mark the area to warn others and report the spill to your supervisor

## USING LADDERS

### ...for the employer

Many injuries in the retail industry result from falls and being struck by objects. Certification is required to operate forklifts and similar equipment. A training plan for the use of ladders and other similar devices is critical.

See A Code of Practice for the Safe Operation of Powered Lift Trucks. It can be found on line at:

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/codesafepowlifttruck.pdf>

An on-line training course for ladders can be found at:

[http://www.ccohs.ca/products/courses/ladder\\_safety/](http://www.ccohs.ca/products/courses/ladder_safety/)

Many workers are injured each year by falls from ladders. Always inspect a ladder before use. If a ladder has a loose, broken or missing rung, a split side rail, or other hazardous defects, report to the supervisor. Don't use it.

If you do use a ladder, here are some tips to help protect you and your co-workers.

## SAFETY TIPS

### Working with ladders:

- Take a close look at the ladder before you use it to ensure no parts are broken, cracked or missing
- Make sure you place the ladder on a firm, level surface
- Make sure the areas around the base and the top of the ladder are clear of obstructions
- Don't place ladders against flexible or movable objects
- When you are on the ladder, keep your centre of gravity between the side rails, especially if you are carrying materials
- Don't stand on the top two steps of a ladder
- Make sure the base of the ladder is one foot out for every four feet high

See **Bulletin #177** – Portable Ladder Safety at [www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/bltn177.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/bltn177.pdf).

## **AVOIDING CUTS AND BRUISES**

Knives and power tools and equipment are two common sources of cuts, lacerations and bruises in the retail industry. Here are some tips for using knives or tools.

## **SAFETY TIPS**

### **When you use a knife:**

- Use the right knife or other cutting tool for the job and make sure it's sharp
- Always cut away from yourself and always store knives separately
- Use a flat surface or cutting board
- Never use a knife for anything other than cutting
- Hold the knife in your stronger hand
- To clean the knife, direct the edge away from you and wipe with the cloth on the dull edge of the blade
- Wear leather or metal mesh gloves if your employer requires them

## **SAFETY TIPS**

### **When you use a power tool or other equipment:**

Machinery with moving parts can catch or cut the body, clothing or jewellery. The misuse of portable power tools can lead to permanent disabilities. Toes and fingers have been cut off by mishandled power tools.

- When you use a tool, be sure it is the right one for the job
- Never use a tool to do something for which it was not intended
- If you need to use power tools or equipment, your employer must provide training in their safe use

## PREVENTING VIOLENCE

Given the daily risks that many businesses face, retailers need specific plans for their stores to help protect employees and minimize the potential for violence. Retailers can reduce the potential for workplace violence through a combination of physical and procedural control measures.

### Physical controls

Store design and security devices are sometimes referred to as physical controls. Physical controls may include the following:

- clear sightlines both inside and outside the store
- barriers such as wider counters or Plexiglas partitions
- good lighting
- security cameras

### Procedural controls

Procedural controls include training, safe work procedures, and scheduling. These all have a significant impact on how vulnerable employees are to potential violence. Retail businesses should do the following:

- provide employees with specific training on workplace violence
- provide specific written procedures for working alone
- provide specific written procedures for higher-risk situations such as opening, closing and cashing out.
- evaluate employee scheduling. Consider how many employees are on shift and who they are

## ...for the employer

The best way to deal with workplace violence is to prevent it from happening at all. As a retail employer, you can do this by developing a violence prevention plan. Your plan should identify potential risks in your business and describe the controls you will use to deal with those risks.

To assist in developing a violence prevention plan, valuable information can be found at <http://www.coohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/violence.html>.

# SAFETY TIPS

## Handling potentially dangerous situations

### Working alone:

If you are required to work alone...

- Someone should contact you regularly to make sure you're okay
- You should have an emergency phone number handy
- If possible, do not open back doors and leave them open and unattended
- If possible, do not empty the garbage at night, especially if the dumpster is in a secluded spot or back alley
- Give a friendly greeting to anyone who enters the store

### Irate customers:

If you work in the retail industry, it is almost inevitable that you will have to deal with an irate customer at some point.

- Focus on the emotions first, try to remain calm, and try to calm the other person
- Try to avoid escalating the situation. Find ways to help the irate customer save face
- Listen carefully and try to put yourself in the customer's shoes, so you can better understand how to solve the problem
- If you can't address their concern, take the customer's name and number and promise to forward the information to your manager or supervisor
- If you cannot calm the person, ask for help

### Making deposits:

- Avoid making night deposits
- If possible, vary the time of deposit
- If possible, avoid making deposits alone
- When making deposits with another person, have them face the other way to keep an eye on everything while you make the deposit
- Discuss these tips with your employer

## SHOPLIFTING AND ROBBERY

The main concern in the event of theft or robbery is safety – yours, your co-workers' and your customers'. Money and merchandise taken during a robbery can be replaced, people can't be.

### ...for the employer

#### Hardening the Target

- Train employees about what to do if a robbery occurs
- The store should be kept clean and well-stocked
- Posters and signs should not block the area around the register from view
- If possible, workers should be able to see out and customers and police should be able to see in
- Make a cash drop or safety deposit box available
- Post signs advising that "Minimum cash is kept on premises"
- Operate only one register from late at night through early morning

#### Shoplifting

The chances of shoplifting increase when you work alone. If you think someone is shoplifting contact security or someone professionally trained to deal with the situation. Never approach or try to apprehend shoplifters, especially if you are working alone. After the shoplifter leaves, write down as much information about them as possible. This should include the shoplifter's height, weight, hair and skin colour, race and clothing as well as possibly vehicle make, colour, approximate year and license plate number.

#### Preventing robbery

The best way to prevent injury resulting from robbery is to prevent the robbery from happening in the first place. Some businesses have internal security staff and specific instructions for dealing with robbery. Employers must have a plan and training for employees about what to do in the event of a robbery. Here are some tips to help protect you.

# SAFETY TIPS

## **Make the store attractive to customers, unattractive to robbers:**

- Keep the store clean, tidy and well-lit
- When there are no customers at your sales counter or check out, keep busy by cleaning, dusting, sweeping, etc.
- Get away from the sales counter when there are no customers in the store

## **Stay alert:**

- Be aware of cars parked across the street or off to one side of the lot
- Look for anyone who may be watching the store or loitering in or around it
- If you are concerned about a person or vehicle, do not hesitate to contact your supervisor or the appropriate authorities
- Know the location of phones or available help outside the premises
- Connect with potential customers
- Give a friendly greeting to everyone who enters the store
- When a shopper is nearby, act friendly and briefly look directly into their eyes
- Ask people alone in the aisle if they would like any help

## **Keep the cash register fund to a minimum:**

- Ask customers for exact change or the smallest bills possible

## If a robbery occurs

Your employer will provide specific instructions for dealing with robberies. However, the following tips may be helpful:

# SAFETY TIPS

### ■ **Keep it short**

The longer a robbery takes the more nervous the robber becomes

### ■ **Stay calm**

Handle the entire situation as if you were making a sale to a customer. Keep it short and smooth so that the robber doesn't get nervous

### ■ **If you are not sure what the robber is telling you, ask**

### ■ **Tell the robber about any possible surprises**

Tell the robber beforehand if you must reach for something or move in any way; tell them if another employee is in the back room so they are not startled

### ■ **Don't try to stop the robber**

Trying to fight with a robber is foolhardy, not heroic – if you don't see a weapon, always assume they have one

### ■ **Don't chase or follow the robber**

It will only invite violence and it may confuse the police as to who is involved in the robbery

### ■ **Write down some notes**

Right after the robber has left, make notes about their appearance, mannerisms and any features, the time and the direction they took when they left

### ■ **Call the police or appropriate authorities**

Dial 911 or your local emergency number

## HARASSMENT

An unwelcome behaviour or comment that is harmful to the work environment is considered to be harassment. Harassment takes many forms but can generally be defined as an insulting, intimidating, humiliating, malicious, degrading or offensive comment or act directed toward another person or group. This would also include bullying, sexual harassment or offensive displays.

Although harassment typically doesn't include physical violence, it can be very harmful and it does affect the overall health of the work environment. Employers are required to post their harassment policy/procedures in a conspicuous place for workers to view.

## SAFETY TIPS

### Dealing with harassment:

- **Tell the harasser to stop**

Do this right away by saying it or writing it in a letter or e-mail. If that doesn't work...

- **Tell your employer** or the person your employer has appointed to receive and handle harassment complaints

- **Talk about it** to someone you trust (a co-worker, friend or relative)

- **Write it down**

To help you make your case in an investigation, write down each remark or incident (the exact words if possible), including dates, times, places and the names of any witnesses

## EXPOSURE TO CHEMICALS

If you are expected to work with chemical or biological materials, your employer will provide training in how to handle hazardous materials. There is a system called WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System) that uses consistent labeling to help you recognize hazardous materials. The system and labels provide specific information on handling, storing and disposing of such materials. Workers successfully trained in how to handle hazardous materials will be able to answer these 4 questions:

- What are the hazards of the products you are using?
- How do you protect yourself?
- What should you do in case of an emergency or spill?
- Where do you get more information on these products?

If you are expected to work with chemical or biological hazards, your employer will provide WHMIS training.

# SAFETY TIPS

- Read the labels on chemicals
- Use all protective equipment recommended by the manufacturer and employer
- When you are done, store chemicals properly
- Use the chemical only as directed

## Resources:

"A Guideline on Chemical Handling and Storage"

"The Plan for Controlling Chemical and Biological Hazards in the Workplace"

Bulletin # 111 – *The Workplace Health Hazard Regulation* -

[http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/pdf/w210\\_053.88.pdf](http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/pdf/w210_053.88.pdf)

Bulletin # 145 – *Workplace Hazardous Material Information System* -

[http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/pdf/w210\\_052.88.pdf](http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/pdf/w210_052.88.pdf)

Bulletin # 195 – *Hazard Watch* - [www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/bltn195.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/bltn195.pdf)

## Biological hazards

Contact with blood or body fluids may be uncommon in the retail industry but it can and does occur. Contact with blood and body fluids poses a risk of contracting hepatitis, H.I.V. (and A.I.D.S.) and other infections.

# SAFETY TIPS

## 1. Cleaning:

When cleaning bathrooms you may come across blood spills and bodily wastes such as vomit or feces:

- Use disposable waterproof gloves at all times to avoid contact with skin
- Use disposable towels to clean up all visible materials
- Disinfect the area with a bleach solution
- Discard towels and gloves in a waterproof garbage bag

# SAFETY TIPS

## 2. Preventing infection:

You can be exposed to infected blood and other body fluids if your skin is punctured by a contaminated sharp object, such as a needle. To reduce your risk of exposure:

- Don't pick up potentially contaminated sharp objects unless you have been instructed in how to do so safely
- Wear disposable waterproof gloves
- Use tongs or pliers to pick up needles or other sharp objects
- Place needles in a disposal container specifically designed for sharps
- Look before reaching above and behind boxes, furniture and equipment
- Do not lift garbage bags by hand from underneath. They may contain sharp, contaminated objects

## 3. If you think you've been exposed to infection:

- Get first aid right away
- Report the incident to your supervisor
- Seek further medical attention, preferably within two hours

See **Bulletin #161** – *Managing Exposure to Human Blood/Body Fluids* at [www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/bltn161.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/bltn161.pdf).

*Vaccination against Hepatitis B may be made available at no cost to you if you have, or may have, occupational exposure to the Hepatitis B virus.*

## TRAVELING TO AND FROM WORK

### ...for the employer

Employees can be exposed to dangerous situations when leaving very late or very early for work. Manitoba's Employment Standards Code requires that a worker be provided with transportation if leaving or arriving at work after midnight or before 6 a.m.

Your employer can't control the environment outside the workplace. However, there are several things you can do to ensure a safer trip to and from work.

## SAFETY TIPS

If you are driving,

- Lock your doors and roll up your windows before driving into the parking lot
- Scan the parking lot for suspicious persons – have a plan ready in case you are uncomfortable with the situation
- Park in well-lit areas – avoid alleys, wooded areas and tunnels
- Avoid having to reach back into the vehicle for anything
- After work, try to avoid walking to your vehicle alone, or at least have someone watch from a window

If you are taking a bus,

- Plan to arrive at a bus stop just before the bus arrives
- Avoid isolated or poorly lit bus stops
- If you see suspicious or menacing people at your stop, get off at the next stop
- If possible, have someone meet you when you arrive at your destination

If you are confronted,

- If attacked, scream – as loudly and as long as possible – and as soon as possible run to the nearest well-lit area
- If someone grabs your purse, deposit bag or other property, do not resist and do not chase the thief
- Call the police immediately and try to recall the mannerisms of the attacker



## Section 3

Dealing with emergencies

# Section 3

## Dealing with emergencies

Every workplace should have a plan for dealing with emergencies. You should be instructed in that plan within your first few days on the job and have refresher training from time to time.

Once you have been trained, you should be able to answer the following questions:

- Where are the emergency phone numbers posted?
- Where are the fire extinguishers and how and when should they be used?
- Where are the fire alarms and fire exits?
- What is the evacuation plan for the building?
- In case of evacuation, where outside the building is the assembly point and who should you report to?
- What other specialized equipment may be needed in case of an emergency, and how is it used?

Ask your employer to go through the emergency plans and procedures for your store. For example, ask them to review what to do in the case of a fire or bomb threat.

### **Fire**

Fires can be started by many things – heating systems, cooking, discarded cigarettes, electricity, appliances, poor housekeeping and the improper storage of chemicals are but a few examples.

Quick action can prevent a small fire from becoming uncontrollable. Unfortunately most people have never used a fire extinguisher or even seen one in use, let alone taken the time to note where they are located in their building.

Check your building procedures for the steps to take in case of fire.

### **At least remember this:**

- Review your buildings evacuation plan
- Know the location of fire extinguishers and escape routes
- If you spot an unintended fire, sound the nearest alarm
- Use a fire extinguisher only if you have been trained to do so

## First Aid

It is important to get first aid promptly if an injury occurs.

All businesses must have a first aid kit on-site. The type of kit and the need for a first aid attendant will depend on the number of employees, the type of industry, and the travel time to the nearest hospital. Most small retail stores require only a basic first aid kit, which includes such items as bandages, scissors and latex gloves. Your employer will provide information on how and where to get first aid at your workplace. When you get that training, you will know:

- How to get help if you are hurt but do not require an ambulance
- Who to report incidents to
- Whether there is a first aid attendant or first aid room
- The location of a first aid kit



## Section 4 & 5

Finding further information

Help us improve this Guide

## Section 4

### Finding further information

#### **Retail Council of Canada**

Box 37054 St. Vital Centre  
Winnipeg, MB  
R2M 5R3  
253-1654 or toll free 1-888-254-1654  
[www.retailcouncil.org](http://www.retailcouncil.org).

#### **SAFE Work**

#### **Workers Compensation Board**

333 Broadway  
Winnipeg, MB  
R3C 4W3  
957-SAFE or toll free 1-866-929-SAFE  
[www.safemanitoba.com](http://www.safemanitoba.com)

#### **Workplace Safety and Health Division**

200-401 York Ave  
Winnipeg, MB  
R3C 0P8  
945-6848 or toll free at 1-800-282-8069  
[www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety](http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety).

## Section 5

### Help us improve this Guide

It is important for us to know if the subject and content of our safety and health publications are useful to you. Your opinion matters and it will help us to make future versions of this Guide more relevant to your needs.

Please complete the form on the following page and fax to Retail Council of Canada at **204 253-2413**, or mail to:

#### **Retail Council of Canada**

Box 37054  
RPO St. Vital Centre  
Winnipeg, MB R2M 5R3



# Help us improve this Guide

We want to know if this Guide is useful to you. Please complete the form below and fax it to the Retail Council of Canada at 204-253-2413.

Tell us what you think about this Guide					
On a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) please rate the following:					
		Strongly Disagree		Strongly Agree	
The topics in this Guide are relevant to your work.	1	2	3	4	5
The information is useful.	1	2	3	4	5
The information is interesting.	1	2	3	4	5
There is enough general information.	1	2	3	4	5
There is enough health and safety information.	1	2	3	4	5
The information is easy to read.	1	2	3	4	5
The information is easy to understand.	1	2	3	4	5
Do you like the size of this Guide?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No			
Suggestions?	<hr/> <hr/>				
Do you have any suggestions or comments on how we could improve this Guide?	<hr/> <hr/>				
Is there anything in this Guide that you will implement or have already implemented as a result of reading it?	<hr/> <hr/>				
Which of the following are you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Employer <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor <input type="checkbox"/> Employee <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Safety Personnel				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____				
Please indicate the number of people that work in your store or company:	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 51-100 <input type="checkbox"/> Over 100				







## safety & health guide for new retail workers

