

December 2003



# Season's Greetings

The staff and board of directors of the Alberta Municipal Health and Safety Association would like to take this time to wish all of you a happy and healthy holiday season, and all the best in 2004.

## New Occupational Health and Safety Code Released

The Honorable Clint Dunford, Minister of Alberta Human Resources and Employment announced the release of the Occupational Health and Safety Code on November 13, 2003. The announcement took place at the City of Lethbridge Transit Maintenance Shop. Mr. Dunford chose to make the announcement at this site because Lethbridge Transit Maintenance had achieved a milestone of going 4,599 days without a WCB Lost Time Injury. Congratulations to the City of Lethbridge!



The Occupational Health and Safety Code will come into effect on April 30, 2004. The code works in conjunction with the Occupational Health and Safety Act which was amended in December 2002 and the OH&S Regulation which came into effect in March 2003. The new Code replaces 11 of the existing occupational health and safety regulations.

The effective date of next April is to allow employers to become familiar with the new requirements and start implementing them by the time the OHS Code is enforced. You can start implementing and following the new OHS Code now as long as the minimum standards of the existing regulations are also met. In most cases the provisions of the new Code are more stringent, so this is not a concern, but in a few cases the requirements have been relaxed.

The new OHS Code is broken down into 39 parts - 29 parts apply to all industries; 10 apply to specific industries and activities. The Code includes revisions to existing provisions in the 11 regulations as well as some new provisions. In addition to the Code, Alberta Human Resources and Employment has also developed an interpretation guide to help users understand more about the requirements.

AMHSA will be offering training on the new OHS Act, Regulation and Code by the New Year. The course will be 1/2 day, and will cost \$85.00 (this includes a copy of the legislation). We are currently drafting a schedule for the workshops, but have not confirmed our plan with the municipalities yet. We are hoping to set up workshops in the following locations:

Location	Date
Grande Prairie	Wednesday, February 4
Edson	Wednesday,

Edson	February 11
Stony Plain	Tuesday, February 10
Lloydminster	Tuesday, February 17
Red Deer	Thursday, February 26
Drumheller	Thursday, January 15
Okotoks	Monday, January 12
Lethbridge	Tuesday, January 13

In addition to the scheduled workshops, municipalities are welcome to contact us to arrange a workshop on-site.

For more information about the code and interpretation guide, you can go to [www.whs.gov.ab.ca](http://www.whs.gov.ab.ca). To purchase a copy of the new legislation, contact the Queen's Printer at: [www.qp.gov.ab.ca](http://www.qp.gov.ab.ca) or call them at 427-4952 in Edmonton or 297-6251 in Calgary. The legislation is \$65.00 + GST.

## More OHS Code news...

The Canadian Petroleum Safety Council has been undertaking a number of initiatives to help its Alberta members prepare for the changes to the OHS requirements. One of these efforts is an "OHS Gap Analysis" CD-Rom which was developed in conjunction with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers and Shell Canada.

The CD-Rom contains a very detailed section by section comparison of the Code with existing requirements. The Canadian Petroleum Safety Council feels that it is important to share health and safety information and so is offering their CD to organizations outside of their own industry. The cost of the CD is \$25.00 (including shipping and GST). For more information contact the Safety Council at (403) 250-9606.

## Preventing Violence at Work - a new WCB initiative

The WCB has developed a program to help employers prevent violence in the workplace. The following is a summary of a news release about their program.

A psychiatric patient with a hidden knife stabs a nurse. A worker upset about his job assignment screams at his supervisor and injures another worker. What are the chances that your company will experience an act or threat of violence? Like most companies, you probably think the odds are pretty slim.

So why should you consider developing a workplace violence procedure in your safety plan? For starters its the law! Workplace violence is now included in the

OHS Code. As well, violence is a serious, recognizable and preventable problem that affects your bottom line.

To make a difference in your workplace, you need to:

- **Identify** the impact of violence on your business by conducting a risk assessment
- **Prevent** by informing workers about hazards specific to their job
- **Respond** with policies and procedures to reporting incidents and training

How do you respond and prevent violence in the workplace? The Alberta Workers' Compensation Board has classified workplace violence into four categories: stranger violence; client/customer violence; employee violence; and violence related to personal relationships. If you or your organization needs to create a workplace violence program, here are some tips to get started....

The news release then describes and discusses their 5 tips: consult the experts (your staff); talk about it; walk the talk; practice the plan; take it seriously. If you would like more information about developing a workplace violence prevention program, or to arrange a seminar at your municipality, contact the WCB Corporate Security team at (780) 498-4990 in Northern Alberta, or (403) 517-6003 in Southern Alberta.