

# Live Safe! Work Smart!

Health and safety e-news for Ontario teachers

## ? You Asked Us

**Q:** What is the Ministry of Labour doing to ensure that employers are fulfilling their responsibilities under the law to provide job site-specific health and safety training?

**A:** The Institute for Work and Health's research found that new workers are up to four times more likely to be injured during their first month on the job than at any other time. Injuries are often preventable if workers are well trained and supervised. The Ministry of Labour has hired 200 new inspectors to put emphasis on enforcement. Inspectors pay special attention to requirements for employers to provide proper training. When inspectors visit a workplace, they may ask:

- Is this workplace prepared for new workers?
- Are you ensuring your new workers are ready for work?
- Do you provide orientation to introduce your new workers to your workplace?
- Does your job-specific training ensure that every worker who takes on a new task understands how to perform the work safely?
- Are all new workers, especially young ones, closely supervised?

**The Ministry of Labour's website has more information on new and young workers and enforcement.**

## Tish's Tips

Did you know? Passport to Safety PINs and passwords never expire! If you have unused PINs, use them as you begin second semester. If you've misplaced your PINs, they can be replaced. Passport to Safety tells the students that safety is a #1 priority in your classroom, and students can attach their certificates to their job portfolios. Remember it's free, and can be used at any time!

## Specialist High Skills Major

BY TISH AMICO

The Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) is a new Ministry of Education approved program that allows students to focus on knowledge and skills that are of particular importance in certain economic sectors, and to obtain certifications recognized in those sectors, as they work towards meeting the requirements for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

A few of the certifications that are being offered in each sector involve safety. It is true that introducing students to the importance of health and safety prior to them leaving high school gives them a good start, but it is also important to know that the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its regulations still apply to all workplaces.

The OHSA requires that employers provide specific job-related health and safety training to all employees. So students, teachers and employers should know that even if a student has a school-issued "certification", workplace-specific safety training is still required.

Although this type of educational awareness - the Specialist High Skills Major - is of benefit to students entering the workplace in particular sectors, it does not remove the employer's legal obligation to provide on-site job-specific health and safety training. Employers' responsibilities do not change,



Portable safety-related skills include First Aid and CPR.

and they must ensure that all workers have the specific training necessary for their particular job, regardless of the skill sets new workers already possess.

This innovative program, delivered through classroom instruction, will acquaint students with the vocabulary, the concepts, and the importance of health and safety knowledge before they leave our high schools, and, as such, plays a vital role in helping to keep our students safe as they move to the next stage of their lives.

Be sure students with a certificate don't think they are now exempt from job-specific training. They still need all the health and safety training that the employer must legally provide!



## Bright Idea

To familiarize students with hazard identification and how to remedy unsafe conditions, take a school tour with your class. Have your students note any hazards they see, and how to fix them. Record findings in a chart, and discuss!

**We welcome your thoughts, comments and suggestions for future newsletters at 416 326 8561 or [tishamico@sympatico.ca](mailto:tishamico@sympatico.ca).**

## Links

- [www.passporttosafety.com](http://www.passporttosafety.com)
- [www.ldao.ca](http://www.ldao.ca)
- [www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/new\\_workers.html](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/new_workers.html)