

Section 7 – Written Instructions

There are a number of activities highlighted by the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation as requiring written instructions. Having written instructions for a task can help establish a consistent level of work performance and can help train new employees. More importantly though, written procedures explain how to safely perform the job task.

Part 7.01 – Bio-hazardous Exposure Control Program

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations requires School District No. 27 to develop and implement an exposure control plan to protect workers from the occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens and other bio-hazardous materials. The intent of the plan is to control and/or eliminate the risk of occupational exposures to blood borne pathogens.

Definitions

Bio-hazardous Materials

A pathogenic organism, including blood-borne pathogens, which is reasonably believed to cause disease in humans.

Contagious Occupational Diseases

WorkSafeBC recognizes certain contagious diseases as compensable occupational diseases. In doing so, however, WorkSafeBC also recognizes that contagious diseases are not likely to be due to the nature of any employment in which the worker was employed, except for hospital employees or workers in other places of medical care.

Disease

A disease is a pathogenic condition that presents a group of clinical conditions of the body with signs and symptoms that demonstrate laboratory findings peculiar to it and that set the condition apart as an abnormal entity.

Infectious Blood and Body Fluids

Infections or potentially infectious fluids are those body fluids that may carry either the Aids (HIV) virus or the Hepatitis virus.

Pathogen

A pathogen is any disease-causing agent or organism.

Standard Precautions

Standard precautions combine the important features of blood and body fluid precautions (designed to reduce the risk of transmission of blood-borne pathogens) and body substance isolation (designed to reduce the risk of blood-borne pathogens). Standard precautions are designed to reduce the risk of transmission of micro-organisms from both recognized and unrecognized sources of infection. These precautions apply to blood, all body fluids, secretions and excretions except sweat, regardless of whether they contain visible blood, non-intact skin and mucous membranes.

Universal Precautions

Universal precautions refer to the standardization of work practices and procedures to ensure that the blood and body fluids of every person are treated as though they are infectious. These precautions are the steps you should take to protect yourself from coming into contact with blood and body fluids of

other people. Universal precautions are an essential element of Standard Precautions.

Responsibilities

District Administration

- See that a risk assessment is performed that identifies any job classifications, tasks and/or procedures where there is potential for an occupational exposure to a blood-borne pathogen or other bio-hazardous material.
- Establish controls that are designed to eliminate and/or minimize the risk of occupational exposure.
- Ensure all required personal protective equipment is available and used.
- Implementation of universal precautions for all tasks identified as having a potential for exposure to bio-hazardous materials is developed.
- Implementation of an identification system for all bio-hazardous materials.
- That staff who will be working in proximity to potentially bio-hazardous material receive adequate instruction and training regarding the exposure control plan.
- That those staff who have the potential for exposure to the Hepatitis B virus can receive the Hepatitis B vaccine at no cost upon request.
- Any staff exposed to a blood-borne pathogen must be instructed to seek immediate medical attention and that records of all such exposures are maintained.

Principals, Managers, Supervisors

- Ensure that employees receive instruction and training regarding blood and body fluid exposure protocols, the exposure control plan, safe work procedures and the application of universal and/or standard precautions.

OHS Management Team

- Development of the exposure control plan.
- Provide or arrange for any required education and training regarding bio-hazardous materials, blood-borne pathogens, standard precautions, the disposal of bio-hazardous materials, use of personal protective equipment and exposure protocols.
- Provide safe work procedures.

Employees

- Attending and participating in any education and training sessions provided by the School District.
- Using instructed control measures and following safe work practices
- Reporting any hazards they become aware of.

Exposure Control Plan

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations require that an exposure control plan be developed and implemented any time a worker might have an occupational exposure to bio-hazardous material. There are a variety of contagious and communicable illnesses or diseases that workers in public education might be exposed to, mostly as a result of exposure to blood and bodily fluids.

Risk Identification and Assessment

The School District is required to determine which jobs or tasks have the potential for exposure to blood-borne pathogens. This can be done by:

- Listing all job classifications within the district.
- Identify job classifications where all workers have potential for exposure.
- Identify job classifications where only some workers have a potential risk for exposure.
- In job classifications where only some workers have a potential risk for exposure, the district must identify which tasks or procedures have a potential for exposure.
- Refer to the Risk Assessment worksheet in the appendix.

Once job classifications, tasks and procedures have been identified as to their potential for risk of exposure to blood-borne pathogens, the degree of risk must be determined. In the Appendix of this manual is the Risk Assessment form. By using this form it can be determined what the worker might be exposed to, the nature of contact, the degree of risk and what control measures can be put in place. This form must be completed for any job where there is potential for exposure and a copy forwarded to the Health and Safety Office.

Control Procedures

A variety of control procedures may be used to eliminate or minimize the risk of occupational exposure to bio-hazards. These include:

Engineering Controls

This is the preferred method for eliminating the risk of exposure to blood-borne pathogens as they work by removing or isolating the hazard. This can include:

- Sharps containers to safely store needles and sharps found on school grounds
- Provision of tongs and/or forceps for handling sharps that may potentially be contaminated with bio-hazardous material.

Safe Work Procedures

By changing the way tasks are performed it is possible to reduce the likelihood of exposure.

Some tasks that can be made safer by Safe Work Procedures are:

- Confinement and disposal process for needles and sharps
- Hand-washing instructions
- Proper application and removal of latex and vinyl gloves
- Disposal of garbage
- Clean-up of blood and body fluids

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

If engineering controls and safe work procedures are impracticable or do not completely eliminate the risk of exposure then personal protective equipment will be used. Gloves and splash goggles are two examples of PPE that could be used.

Standard Precautions (Universal Precautions / Body Substance Precautions)

As it is often difficult to tell if a person is infected with a blood-borne pathogen it is imperative that Standard Precautions be taken for all tasks that have been identified as having the potential for an exposure. These precautions include:

- Taking care and following proper procedures when handling any sharps

- Proper containment and disposal of needles and sharps in approved sharps containers
These containers need to be labelled as bio-hazardous
- Use of appropriate PPE
- Immediately and thoroughly washing in the event of contact with any potentially infectious material
- Ensuring that you cover any open wounds while at work

Education and Training

Principals, Managers and Supervisors are responsible to ensure that their staff are informed about the contents of this exposure control plan and must ensure that they receive adequate education and training to work safely with and around potentially bio-hazardous materials including blood-borne pathogens. Education and training of staff should include:

- The exposure control plan and where to access it
- Any applicable sections of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations
- Explanation of what blood-borne diseases are and what their symptoms can be
- Recognition of job tasks and procedures that may result in an exposure to blood-borne pathogens
- Control measures that can eliminate or minimize exposures
- Personal protective equipment, how to use it and where it is located
- Availability of Hepatitis B vaccination
- Emergency procedures in the event of an exposure to blood-borne pathogens
- Labelling and identification procedures for bio-hazardous material

After staff have had their training, they should be able to answer the following four questions:

- What bio-hazards are there at work?
- What precautions can prevent exposure?
- What emergency measures there are?
- Where to get more information?

Health Protection

An employee who may have been exposed to a blood-borne pathogen will be advised to seek medical attention right away. The employee must also be provided with any post-exposure health management necessary based on a risk assessment of the incident conducted by health care. Post exposure health management is conducted under the direction of the employee's family physician. The School District will cover the cost of vaccination for an employee who has had an occupational exposure to the Hepatitis B virus.

Potential exposures may result from any and the following:

- Penetration of the skin with a sharp contaminated with potentially infectious materials
- A bite where the skin is broken
- Blood or other potentially infectious material coming into contact with non-intact skin i.e. wounds that are less than 3 days old or through the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose or mouth

Reporting, Investigation and Corrective Action

As with any work-related accident, the appropriate report forms must be completed and submitted to the workers supervisor. The School District will then complete and submit any forms required by WorkSafeBC.

Records

As part of the exposure control plan, the following records must be maintained:

- Accident injury report forms
- Accident investigation reports
- WorkSafeBC claim forms
- Education and training records
- Hepatitis B vaccination forms and immunization records
- Risk identification records
- Exposure control plan records

Labels and Identification

Needles and sharps must be stored using an appropriate container which can be obtained by contacting your supervisor. In the event there is a need to dispose of other bio-hazardous materials such as blood soaked bandages, towels etc. the following procedures must be followed:

- Use of standard precautions when disposing of garbage or laundering contaminated materials.
- Appropriate vinyl or similar gloves must be worn.
- Secure the top of the bag to keep the waste sealed.
- Label the bag as containing bio-hazardous contaminated material.
- Dispose of garbage according to local landfill requirements.

Part 7.02 – Bullying and Harassment

On November 1st, 2013 WorkSafeBC enacted Policy D3-115-2. Tied to Section 115(1)(a) and Section 115(2)(e) of the Act, it aims to ensure that employers prevent or minimize workplace bullying and/or harassment. WorkSafeBC recognizes that preventing bullying and harassment in the workplace is not just the responsibility of the employer, it is a shared responsibility of the employer, supervisors and workers.

Not every unpleasant interaction or inappropriate comment is considered bullying and harassment. It is important to know that WorkSafeBC defines bullying and harassment as a single term and to understand how that term is defined.

Bullying and Harassment includes:

Any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that worker to be humiliated or intimidated.

Bullying and Harassment does not include:

Any reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment.

Definitions

District Administration

The term District Administration shall refer to District Senior Management and include, but not be limited to, the Superintendent, Secretary Treasurer, Assistant Secretary Treasurer and Directors.

Complainant

The person or persons making a complaint of harassment.

Respondent

The person or persons about whom the allegations are made.

Harassment

Does not include actions that are part of the employer’s normal managerial rights and responsibilities.

Personal Harassment

A pattern of repeated inappropriate behaviours (gestures, comments, questions, representations, etc.) that the harasser knows or ought to know will humiliate or diminish the employee.

Sexual Harassment

Any comment, suggestion, look, contact, real or implied action of a sexual nature that the person ought to know would be unwelcome which creates an uncomfortable environment for the recipient. Inappropriate and/or objectionable conduct, comments or materials which the person ought to know is unwelcome. Inappropriate use of power and/or authority in a manner which serves no purpose.

Frivolous

Not a breach of any policy.

Vexatious

Done to annoy and/or embarrass.

Responsibilities

Employer

- To not engage in Bullying and Harassment.
- Develop a policy statement and take steps to prevent and/or minimize the practice.
- Implement procedures for reporting and investigating complaints.
- Training workers and supervisors to recognize bullying and harassment.
- Annually review the above.

Supervisors

- To not engage in activities of bullying and harassment.
- To apply and comply with the employers policies and procedures on bullying and harassment.

Employees

- To not engage in activities of bullying and harassment.
- Report any instances of observed bullying and harassment.
- To apply and comply with the employers policies and procedures on bullying and harassment.

Reporting and Investigating

Allegations of bullying and/or harassment are treated very seriously and confidentially. There are several options available for resolving a complaint and informal approaches usually will foster a more prompt resolution to the issue.

Please consult Policy 4111.12, Bullying and Discrimination, for details regarding the harassment and discrimination reporting and investigation process.

Part 7.03 – Confined Space Program

Part 9 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation addresses confined spaces in the workplace and the inherent hazards associated with them. While one might typically associate confined spaces only with the tanks and vessels found in industrial workplaces, but they can be found in school district work sites as well.

Under the Confined Space Program, School District employee access to moderate and high-risk atmosphere confined spaces is prohibited. Employee access to low risk-confined space is restricted to authorized personnel who:

- Understand the risks associated with the low risk confined space in question.
- Has successfully completed education and training with respect to the School District confined space entry program and any safe work procedures.
- Has received education and training in how to conduct a confined space risk assessment.
- Has demonstrated proficiency in the above.
- Records of any training must be kept.

Definitions

Clean Respirable Air

When used to define the atmosphere inside a confined space, clean respirable air means an atmosphere that is equivalent to clean, outdoor air and which contains;

- About 20.9% oxygen by volume.
- No measurable flammable gas or vapor.
- No air contaminant in concentrations exceeding either 10% of its applicable exposure limit or an acceptable ambient air quality.

Confined Space

Any area which:

- Is enclosed or partially enclosed.
- Is not designed or intended for continuous human occupancy.
- Has limited or restricted means for entry or exit which may complicate providing first aid, evacuation, rescue or other emergency response.
- Is large enough and so configured that an employee could enter to perform assigned work.

High Hazard Atmosphere or High Risk Confined Space

An atmosphere that may expose an employee to risk of death, incapacitation, injury, acute illness or otherwise impair the ability of the employee to escape unaided from a confined space in the event of a failure of the ventilation system or respirator.

Moderate Hazard Atmosphere (Confined Space)

An atmosphere that is not clean respirable air, but is not likely to impair the ability of the worker to escape unaided from a confined space in the event of a failure of the ventilation system or respirator.

Low Hazard Atmosphere (Confined Space)

An atmosphere which is shown by pre-entry testing or otherwise known to contain clean respirable air immediately prior to entry to a confined space and which is not likely to change during the work.

- Low hazard confined spaces include all confined spaces that have;
- Access either by walk-in from grade or by manhole.

- Atmospheric conditions which are the same as those of outdoor air.
- No direct exposure to sewage or hazardous substances.

Low hazard atmospheres are those within a low risk confined space that are:

- Shown by pre-entry testing to have clean breathable air.
- Are otherwise known to contain clean breathable air immediately prior to entry.
- Where the quality of the breathable air is not likely to change during the work activity.

Activities in a low level hazard confined space must be limited and these activities include:

- General inspections
- Meter reading
- Sampling
- Minor adjustments
- Housekeeping
- Other activities that will not generate air contaminants in excess of 10% of permissible concentrations as established by WorkSafeBC.

Responsibilities

District Administration and Supervisors

- All confined spaces are secured against unauthorized access.
- “No access” signs are posted at each access point to a moderate or high risk confined space and that restricted access signs are posted at each access point to a low risk confined space.
- Low risk confined space safe work procedures are available and accessible to staff authorized to work in the area.
- That staff responsible for the supervision of workers are adequately trained to supervise the work prior to confined space work commencing.
- And that staff assigned to enter a low risk confined space have received adequate education and training with respect to the precautions as identified in written safe work procedures and the hazards of the space.

Managers

- That all confined spaces in the District are properly surveyed and identified.
- That the location of all crawl spaces, ceiling spaces and attics is documented and that documentation is available upon request.
- Representative sampling is taken in accordance with written sampling procedures and that where such sampling has occurred, the results are communicated, in writing, to the appropriate administrative and supervisory staff.

Employees

- Not enter into any confined space unless they have been trained and authorized to do so.
- Work in accordance with all written safe work procedures.
- Notify the Supervisor of any safety concerns and areas of potential risk.

Contractors

- Notify Maintenance of the planned work at least 24 hours prior to the entry.
- File a copy of their safe work procedures for confined space entry with Maintenance and the Health and Safety Office.
- Abide by the School District confined space procedures.

- Ensure their employees and sub-contractors perform their work in accordance with the Part 9 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations for confined space.
- Report to any unsafe condition to their School District liaison prior to entering a confined space or as soon as an unsafe condition develops.
- Notify Maintenance of any accident that occurs while working in a confined space.

Low Hazard Confined Space Entry Procedure

Pre-entry Atmospheric Testing:

A means of determining atmospheric conditions prior to entering a confined space. Under Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, pre-entry atmospheric testing is not required for low hazard confined spaces when:

- The location and control of the space ensures that a more hazardous atmosphere could not develop.
- Prior representative sampling has demonstrated that the atmosphere within the space or group of similar spaces meets the low hazard atmosphere definition.

Education and Training:

School District employees must be familiar with hazard identification practices, entry procedures and confined space communication processes before any work is started in any area deemed as a confined space. Examples may include:

- Attics lacking sufficient ventilation
- Electrical vaults
- Septic/sewer vaults
- Large water storage tanks

Assignment of Work

Work in low hazard atmosphere confined spaces shall only be assigned to workers who:

- Have received the required education and training.
- Understand the risks associated with working in a confined spaces.
- Have demonstrated proficiency in working within the appropriate safe work procedures.

Availability of a Standby Worker

When work is required in a low risk confined space the supervisor will ensure that a standby worker is available for the duration of the work project and shall ensure:

- There is a continuous means for the worker in the confined space to summon the standby person.
- That the standby person checks on the worker at least every 20 minutes.
- What form of communication will be used for interval checks and confirmation that it functions.
- The standby person has the means to immediately summon rescue personnel.

Prior to Entry

Prior to entering the low risk confined space the assigned worker shall:

- Review to ensure that criteria for representative sampling has not changed since the last samples were taken.
- Confirm the location in the confined space where the work is required to be done.
- Test the personal communication equipment to ensure proper functioning.
- Establish appropriate intervals between communication checks (not to exceed 20 minutes).
- Open/remove the hatch to the confined space.

- Visually inspect the area to ensure that the current environment is consistent with the environment in which representative sampling was conducted and report any changed conditions to the project supervisor for evaluation prior to entering the space.
- Inspect for unaccustomed/unusual odours of any kind in the confined space and report any odours or nausea to the project supervisor for evaluation prior to entering the space.

After Entry

After entering but prior to beginning the work, the assigned worker shall:

- Proceed to the work area while continuing to perform visual and olfactory environmental assessments.
- Test the communication equipment to ensure it is functioning properly.

Confined Space Rescue

Conscious Rescue

If a worker has sustained an injury but is conscious and responding appropriately:

- Assist the worker out of the space and seek first aid services or summon the first aid attendant.
- In the unlikely event that the first aid attendant is not available, call 911.
- Contact the site Manager/Supervisor and the Manager of Facilities.

If the worker starts to show signs of disorientation or if a change to his/her normal speech pattern is noted:

- Instruct the worker to come out of the confined space.
- Do not attempt to enter the area to provide assistance.
- If the worker is unable to exit the confined space without assistance call 911 for Emergency Rescue - confined space.
- Contact the on-site first aid attendant.
- Contact the site Manager/Supervisor and the Manager of Facilities.

Unconscious Rescue:

- Do not enter the confined space.
- Do not attempt to rescue the worker.
- Call 911 for Emergency Rescue and advise the dispatcher that the rescue involves a confined space.
- Contact the on-site first aid attendant.
- Contact the site Manager/Supervisor and the Manager of Facilities.

Confined Space Inventory

Identification

As part of this program the School District will contract the services of an environmental company qualified to analyze and identify spaces within the School District that meet the definition of confined space as set out in WorkSafeBC regulation. Any identified confined space or area that cannot be secured against entry must be signed with "Entry Prohibited".

Under no circumstances will School District staff enter a confined space without first discussing the job with their supervisor and making sure that any required safe work practices/procedures are in place. Many buildings in the School District contain attics, ceiling spaces and/or crawlspaces. Although these areas are not generally considered confined spaces (unless otherwise noted) it is

recognized that certain precautions will be required before entry into the areas is allowed.

Notification

Supervisors will be notified prior to any entry into an attic, ceiling space or crawlspace and arrangements will be made for someone else on the site to be notified of the entry. This person will be notified when the entry is first made and will be notified when the work is complete or the worker leaves the attic, ceiling space or crawlspace.

This program will be reviewed annually.

Part 7.04 – Drugs and Intoxicants

Safety is every School District employee’s responsibility, regardless of assigned responsibility. A factor that can contribute to workplace accidents is an employee’s physical impairment due to being under the influence of drugs or intoxicants, this can include prescribed medication.

Due to the definite hazard and risk to themselves and co-workers, no School District employee shall report to his/her workplace while under the influence of intoxicants or drugs. Should an employee report to work or be found working under the influence of intoxicants or drugs, the employee shall be removed from the work site.

Part 7.05 – Emergency Preparedness

In 2015 the Ministry of Education co-produced and distributed a guide that school districts are to follow in regard to school emergency preparedness. This guide will help school districts meet requirements and provide some standardization across the province. The Emergency Management and Planning Guide for Schools and School Districts forms the basis of the School District Emergency Preparedness Plans. It will be necessary to consult that guide in order to properly formulate each schools School Emergency Management Plan (SEMP). Once the plans are complete they must be shared with all staff at that site and a copy must be sent to the Health and Safety Office.

Content

At the beginning of each school year the Site Health and Safety Committee will review their Site Emergency Preparedness document and make any updates as needed. The completed document will include:

Establish a School Planning Committee.

- Preparing a School Emergency Management Plan is a big task and bringing representatives from all areas of school life and from the community to the planning process is beneficial. While all the members of the committee will add expertise and value to the planning process, the responsibility for the safety of students and staff in the school lies with the Principal and ultimate responsibility belongs to the Superintendent and Board of Education.

Membership on the planning committee should include:

- Principal/Vice-Principal
- Support staff representative from each relevant area – EAs, custodians, bus drivers, paraprofessionals, clerical staff
- Teaching staff representative

- Parent representatives
- First responders (fire, police, ambulance)
- Student representatives, as appropriate
- Tenants as appropriate

The names and current contact information for each member should be included in the SEMP and should be kept up to date.

Develop a school profile.

- School demographics (e.g. number of students, students with special needs, staff).
- Consider including building tenants and after school activity groups in your emergency planning committee. Include in your profile:
 - Names and contact information of tenants
 - Days and times of use
 - Identification of mobility-challenged tenants
 - Any additional appropriate information
- Contact information for individuals with responsibilities under the incident command system as well as other emergency resources.
- Hazard analysis and risk assessment/mitigation.
- Floor plan of the school showing any potential hazards, evacuation routes, assembly areas, gas and water shut-off, eyewash stations, first aid stations etc.
- Map of the surrounding area showing any potential risks, hazards, evacuation routes and assembly areas. This part of the plan pays attention to the particular surroundings of a school including student/parent reunification sites or designated community assembly areas.

Roles and Responsibilities

Assign staff to roles according to the ICS command structure and establish a school-based VTRA team (Violence Threat Risk Assessment). As part of a team approach, the Site Incident Commander should review the emergency response roles under the headings of Operations, Logistics, and Planning and identify staff members who are most suited to each role. A valuable exercise at the beginning of the year is to survey all staff regarding special skills that might be useful in an emergency.

- Staff are pre-assigned to emergency response roles as early as possible in the emergency planning process.
- Assignments are made based on the best use of staff talents and qualifications.
- Assignments are reviewed annually at the start of the school year to address changes in staffing and other adjustments.
- Staff members are cross-trained, so that each person is familiar with more than one role. This allows for individuals to fill multiple roles and to fill in for employees who may not be at the school during an emergency.
- Staff plan for the possibility that they may not be able to return to their home for some time following an emergency. If a situation arises in which a staff member is unable to make arrangements for dependents who may be left alone and vulnerable after a disaster, consideration must be given to how best to address the competing needs of the staff member and the school community.
- A school-based VTRA team is established to assess threats at the school level. The team should include the principal or designate, clinician (e.g. psychologist, counsellor) and police. Others may be assigned as deemed necessary.

Develop response protocols.

The most commonly used response protocols are drop/cover/hold on, evacuate, lockdown, lockout (hold and secure), and shelter in place. These will be described much more fully in the section on Response. It is important that the protocols be utilized in context. For example, in the event of an earthquake it is generally expected that the response will first be “drop/cover/hold on” followed by evacuation. However, it may be that the situation is such that returning to or remaining in the building or one part of the building is safer than being outside. An evacuation following a mild earthquake that occurred during a blizzard may not be an appropriate action. Each plan should account for the best interests of the students and staff in the particular circumstance.

Develop a Student Release Plan.

School plans must include a student release plan outlining how, when and to whom students will be released from the school during or after an emergency. This process includes sending information letters home to parents at the beginning of each school year, along with student release forms for parents to fill out and send back to the school. This information should be kept in several locations, both in hard copy and electronically. For example, the student release form can be duplicated and a copy placed in student lanyards to help with triage and student release. See the Templates section of the Ministry guide for templates that can be used for student release purposes. The student release plan should also consider how students will be reunited with their parents or guardians. Plans should include pre-assigned sites for reunification and parents should know the location of the primary and secondary sites. It is important for schools to be prepared for both small-scale and large-scale reunification. A “double-gated system” for reunification is effective. See the Templates section of the guide for a sample student release map/gated system. Staff with roles in the release of students should practice these procedures at least once each school year. This should include procedures to account for students and staff, to communicate with parents and to dismiss students to participating parents or alternate guardians. These drills could be tied into existing community emergency drills, such as the Great BC ShakeOut earthquake drill held each October.

Develop a Communications Plan.

Communication is a critical part of emergency response and coordination. A SEMP must describe how the school will communicate internally and externally during and after an emergency.

Internal communications refers to communication within the school site and school district and includes students, staff, tenants, and school district senior management. The internal communications strategy should clearly outline what information will be communicated, when, how and by whom.

External communications refers to communication with any individuals or groups outside the school site/school district and includes parents, first responders, local authorities, business and community organizations, provincial agencies, and media. The external communications strategy should outline when and how information will be communicated.

First Responders.

The Site Incident Commander will maintain communication with first responders during an incident. Transfer of command will occur when first responders arrive on the scene to assume management of the incident under their jurisdiction.

Parents/guardians.

The plan should specifically outline when and how the school/school district will communicate with parents/guardians in the event of a critical incident.

Media.

The communication plan will outline how media requests will be handled and who will act as spokesperson for the school site. In smaller districts, the principal and/or the superintendent may be the spokesperson for a school incident. In larger districts, there may be a designated spokesperson or media relations manager who speaks on behalf of the school and district. It is important to understand your district's protocols and practices with respect to media relations and to include this in your communications plan. It is equally important that, if a media relations specialist is not available, media training for the spokesperson be provided. The communications plan should also outline how social media will be used as vehicle for communicating externally and who will assume this responsibility.

Communication Tools should include text messaging, emails, phone trees, intranet, social media and other appropriate technologies. It should also consider how schools will communicate in the event of a power failure, loss of cell connectivity or wifi and/or a landline telephone failure. Finally, there should be someone on staff who is able to act as technology support.

Develop a continuity of operations plan (COOP).

The objective of a continuity of operations plan is to restore critical systems and the learning environment as soon as possible. Planning for the continuity of a school system in the aftermath of a disaster is a complex task. Information that is needed to continue the work of the staff and student learning, even if school resumes at an alternate site, should be available digitally and backed up to prevent loss.

Resources

Part of the planning process includes identifying documentation, equipment and resources to provide first aid, shelter, comfort, basic rescue and care for students and staff for a period that could range from a few hours to a few days. Work with your parent committee and community partners in gathering and safely storing equipment and resources, which could include items listed in the templates section of the Emergency Management Planning Guide.

Documentation

All documentation should include current student, staff and volunteer lists with pertinent information such as contact information, medical information, special considerations etc. This should also be included on an information card that is placed in a lanyard for each person in the school to wear in the event that it is necessary. All documents relating to the SEMP should be available in a number of modalities and at a number of sites. Hard copies should be filed in the school office, with the district and at one or two other sites that make sense for the context of each school. Electronic copies should be available on hard drives and online for access by handheld devices.

Conduct training and drills.

It is important that everyone directly affected, including staff, students and parents, knows about the plan and how they are to act during an emergency. The more you practice your plan the more likely it will be successfully followed during an actual emergency. Debriefing sessions following drills and emergencies is critical to improving the efficacy of your response.

Debrief and revise.

To close the emergency planning cycle, debriefing the event is important to inform the planners about how to improve mitigation, preparedness and response. Debriefing should become a routine part of emergency response drills as well as being an important aspect of recovery from an actual emergency. For schools and school districts, gathering information about what did and did not

work well during a drill or response to an emergency ensures common understandings of how to improve.

- Debriefing after a drill should take place as quickly as possible to ensure that the experience is fresh in people's minds.
- Include all parties in a debrief session so that all perspectives are considered.
- Consult with first responders or local authorities, if necessary, to gather information related to best practice.
- Revise the plan as necessary to improve the response for the next drill

Part 7.06 – Fall Protection

The School District Fall Protection Program is intended to assist all employees in the recognition, evaluation and control of fall hazards. The end result is that the risk of falls from heights can be minimized and/or eliminated.

Regulation

Part 11.2 of the regulations states that:

- Fall protection is required when there is potential for a fall from 3 m (10 feet) and greater or when a fall from a lower height involves an unusual risk.
- Free fall distance must be limited to 4 feet without a shock absorber or 6 feet with shock absorber.
- All fall protection equipment shall meet or exceed all applicable CSA or ANSI Standards that were in place at the date of manufacture.
- After a fall has occurred all equipment involved must be tagged and prohibited from use until it has been inspected and re-certified by a qualified person.

Fall Protection is not required when:

- Workers will not be within 6.5 feet or less of an unguarded edge (this 6.5 feet is referred to as the Control Zone). This Control Zone must be increased if the work being performed increases the risk of a fall (such as working on a ladder near the Control Zone).
- Refer to WorkSafeBC Guidelines Part 11 (G11.2(5)-1 Control zones and safety monitors as a work procedure acceptable to WorkSafeBC)

Responsibilities

District Administration

- Ensure that all Supervisors involved in work at heights are competent and knowledgeable in implementing this Fall Protection Program.
- Ensure that all employees required to work at heights are:
 - Instructed in the safe performance of their work and supervised while working at heights.
 - Are properly inspecting fall protection equipment at regular intervals.
- Ensure all necessary Fall Protection equipment is available to workers.
- Ensure all potential fall hazards are identified.
- Ensure development and review of safe work procedures when required.

Employees

- That they and their fellow employees are not exposed to hazards.
- To inspect all equipment prior to use and be familiar with its use and maintenance.
- Follow all policies, regulations and this Fall Protection Program.
- Report all unsafe conditions, incidents and accidents to their supervisor immediately.

Fall Protection Procedures

The supervisor in charge of the project will ensure that a Fall Hazard Assessment has been done prior to the start of work. This assessment will include:

- Identification of all potential fall hazards.
- Selection of the appropriate fall protection system.
- A check that all workers involved in the project have had adequate training in the equipment and fall protection system to be used.
- Development and implementation of a written fall protection plan when required.
- The Fall Hazard Risk Assessment is available in the appendix.

Mandatory Written Work Procedures

For certain work, WorkSafeBC regulations make it mandatory for the employer to develop written work procedures. Such work includes:

- Any work in which the worker is 25 feet or more above the ground and no guardrails are in place.

Employee Training

All employees required to work at elevation must be trained in:

- The specifics of the project being done.
- Use, maintenance and inspection of temporary elevated work areas and equipment.
- Use, maintenance and inspection of fall protection devices.
- Potential emergency situations arising from the job being performed.
- If work involves manlifts, employee must have their certificate of training on them while operating the lift.

Fall Protection Systems

To select a fall protection system for a job at heights, the supervisor must follow the priority criteria established by WorkSafeBC. The priority is:

1. Standard Guardrail System

The standard guardrail system is designed to physically separate a worker from the edge of an opening in such a way as to eliminate the fall hazard. The standard guardrail system must comply with Part 4 of the Regulation, this includes:

- The guardrail consists of a top rail at 1 meter (42 inches) above the floor level, a toe board, and an intermediate rail centered at midpoint between the top rail and the toe board.
- The posts to support the top rail and the intermediate rail shall be spaced at no more than 2.4 meters (8 feet) apart.
- The temporary guardrail system must be able to withstand a load of 125lbs applied perpendicular to the top rail.

2. Fall Restraint System

The fall restraint system is designed to restrict the movements of a worker so that the potential for falling is eliminated. It consists of:

- A body harness, according to the work being performed
- A lanyard
- An individual lifeline
- An anchoring point which may be able to stand a vertical load capacity of 363 kg (800 lb) in any one direction required to resist a fall

3. Fall Arrest System

The fall arrest system is designed to stop a worker who has fallen prior to them striking the surface below, it consists of:

- A body harness (safety belts are not permitted)
- A lanyard
- A deceleration device (also known as a shock absorber device)
- An individual lifeline
- An anchorage point able to stand a load capacity of 5000 lbs. in any direction required to arrest a fall

4. Control Zone and Safety Monitor

Guidelines Part 11.2 describe how a control zone with or without a safety monitor may be used as the means of fall protection under section 11.2(5) where it is not practicable to use a method of fall restraint, fall arrest or rope access, or where the use of a fall arrest or rope access system will result in greater hazards. The system consists of two components:

- A control zone of no less than 2 meters wide.
- A buffer zone immediately outside the inner edge of the control zone.
- A safety monitor to watch for the inadvertent approach by a worker to the edge of the elevated work area.

The safety monitor is a worker who is knowledgeable in and has direct control over the work being performed. The safety monitor must be immediately distinguishable from other workers and have the ability to stop work if required.

Part 7.07 – Infection Control

During the course of regular work activities some School District employees may be exposed to various infections or communicable diseases that are transmitted by bodily fluids. In view of this, it is important that all employees take reasonable steps to protect themselves from exposure.

General Information

The school principal must be informed regarding any student that is suspected of having a communicable disease so that appropriate steps can be taken to prevent exposure if needed. Hand washing is the single most effective means for preventing the spread of infection (with the exception of Head Lice). Employees should always wash their hands thoroughly after contact with bodily fluids/substances even when gloves are used in order to lessen the potential of becoming infected.

When hand washing:

- Remove all hand jewelry. (Jewelry should not be worn when working with students who require repeated physical contact and care as protective gloves could be torn. Also, micro-organisms can become lodged in settings of rings.)
- Wet hands with water.
- Apply soap and lather in hands for at least 20 seconds
- Rinse hands with water from wrist area to fingertips.
- Dry hands well. When washing hands frequently, it is important to dry gently but thoroughly to avoid chapping, chapped skin can possibly permit bacteria to enter body.

Disposable gloves must be worn when handling any soiled items. Please refer to Safe Work Procedures for information on safely removing soiled gloves.

Part 7.08 – Lockout Program

The School District is committed to eliminating potential injuries involving hazardous energy – whether that is electric, compressed gas/steam, chemical, hydraulic, tensioned spring, mechanical or elevated object. Only authorized and trained employees are permitted to perform maintenance, repairs, new construction and other work. All employees and outside contractors performing this work will strictly adhere to the District’s lockout procedures. Various lockout devices (breaker, switch, plug etc) are available from the Maintenance Department.

Responsibilities

Employers

- Establish written lockout procedures in order to protect School District employees working on equipment and machinery.
- Those employees required to lockout equipment or machinery will be provided with identifiable personal locks that have only 2 keys, one in the possession of the worker and one in possession of the supervisor.

Employees

- Follow established procedures developed by the employer for locking out equipment, using the appropriate lockout devices.
- Remove their lockout locks upon completion of the work.
- Keep control of their personal lock key throughout the duration of the work.

Rules for Lockout

The following rules must be adhered to while performing any work that requires lockout:

- Each employee must only use locks assigned to him/her.
- When working on a machine, each worker must lock out each point with his/her assigned lock(s).
- For jobs where more than one worker is required, each worker must attach their own lock to all lockout points. Scissor clips are used for any group lockout points.
- The person applying the first lock is responsible to immediately test to ensure the machinery or equipment is correctly locked out.
- Each employee must remove his/her lock when the work is complete. Employees must not remove locks belonging to other employees.
- The worker removing the last lock is to ensure that all guards or safety devices are replaced and that the work area is clear of people and tools before starting any machinery.

Non-compliance with the established district lockout procedures will result in immediate disciplinary action.

Lockout Procedure

These steps are to be followed when there is potential for a release of an energy source while working on any type of machinery or equipment.

Notify

The most immediate supervisor and the person(s) affected by the work must be notified before commencing work on any machinery or equipment.

Identify

All hazardous energy sources to be neutralized must be identified including:

- Electrical circuits
- Hydraulic systems
- Pneumatic systems
- Gravitational systems
- Spring loaded systems
- Steam and heat systems
- Chemical systems

Neutralize

All hazardous energy systems must be neutralized prior to lockout taking effect.

- Neutralize electrical systems. The machine should be turned OFF first at the normal start-stop station and then at the disconnect switch in the electrical room.
- Close supply valves. Vent air or gas pressure leaving vent lines open when required.
- Drain and bleed hydraulic lines to release pressure leaving bleed lines off when required.
- Block any movable parts, lower/secure suspended parts.
- Cool down any heat systems (hot water lines, etc.)

Lockout and Tag

All neutralized hazardous energy systems must be locked out and tagged prior to starting work.

- Each worker must place his/her lock on the appropriate lockout point. The only positive method of protecting employees from hazards associated with accidental starting of machines is to lock out the controls in the OFF position and to have a separate single keyed lock for each person.
- All outside contractors working for the School District are required to follow this lockout procedure.
- Most electrical disconnects with pull down handles have built in lockout devices. For other equipment it may be necessary purchase or construct attachments to which a lock can be applied. Warning tags will be placed on all switches, controls and pressure lines.
- Single pole circuit breakers are to be locked out using a single pole circuit breaker lockout. These devices fit over the breaker when it is in the tripped position and can then be locked out with a personal lockout lock. Locking a circuit panel closed is not acceptable as that prevents access to the other circuit breakers.
- Light switches are to be locked out using a wall switch cover device. These covers are screwed on over the switch and can then be locked closed with a personal lockout lock so that the switch cannot be activated. If that is not possible then the breaker must be locked out.

- For tools and machinery that uses a plug, disconnect the plug and place the male end of the plug on the machine in a location readily visible to the person performing the work. If the employee performing the maintenance may be interrupted during the task the plug should be secured by lock.

Multiple locks and lockout scissor clips

- When a job requires the services of more than one employee, each person working on the machine must have their own lock on the system. This will mean the use of a multiple lockout scissor clip. The person in charge should be the last one to remove his/her lock. The lock owner must retain the key to each lock.
- A tag should be attached to each lock out point.

Test

- The person applying the first lock in a lockout procedure is responsible to immediately test to ensure that the locked-out machinery or equipment cannot be operated. Test all equipment and systems to make sure they have been deactivated, ensuring all persons are clear of machinery. This means pushing start buttons, operating valves and inspecting moveable parts to ensure that they are at rest and positively blocked.
- It will be the responsibility of each supervisor to ensure that all personnel are fully aware of the potential seriousness of machine accidents and that they are trained in the application of the lockout procedure.
- It is the responsibility of all supervisors to make certain that this procedure is carried out.

Lock Removal

- When work has been completed, each employee should report this fact to the person in charge of the job. Each person may then remove his/her personal lock. The person removing the last lock is responsible to ensure that the machinery or equipment can be operated safely (replace or repair guards or safety devices) and that all persons are clear of the equipment.
- If the work is not complete at the end of the shift, the status of the job should be reported to the supervisor. The incoming shift shall place their locks before commencing work. The person in charge of the incoming shift will place his/her lock on the machine. At no time is the machine to be left unlocked, all work must be completed before all locks are removed.

Emergency Lock Removal

- The supervisor is the only person authorized to remove a lock in emergency situations where a lock must be removed and the lock owner is not available to remove it. All cases involving emergency lock removal must be recorded in writing and followed-up on.
- The supervisor must make every effort to contact the employee before taking any action to remove the lock. If the lock is removed the supervisor assumes full responsibility and must ensure the machinery or equipment can be operated safely and will not endanger any employee.
- The supervisor will also ensure that before an employee returns to work he/she is informed that his/her lock has been removed.

Summary

Notify the most immediate supervisor and identify the potential hazards associated with the job. Refer to local written procedures if applicable.

Neutralize all identified hazardous energy:

- Electrical
- Hydraulic
- Pneumatic
- Gravitational
- Spring energized
- Temperature system
- Chemical

Lock out and tag all operational switches or valves. Ensure all potential pinch points have been eliminated or secured. Remove locks after the job is completed ensuring the person to remove the last lock tests the machinery or equipment for safe operation (all persons and tools removed from working area).

Part 7.09 – Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention Program

Musculoskeletal injury (MSI) is defined by Occupational Health and Safety Regulation as an injury or disorder of the muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, nerves, blood vessels or related soft tissue including a sprain, strain and inflammation, that may be caused or be aggravated by work. Sometimes even the tasks that we perform at work on a regular basis can result in a musculoskeletal injury. Repetitive motion and overexertion can both cause an MSI.

Responsibilities

District Administration

- Develop and implement a Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention Program as per WorkSafeBC regulation.

Principals, Managers and Supervisors

- Consult with workers and joint committees to identify potential MSI risks.
- Investigate any reported signs or symptoms of MSI.
- Educate workers in the use of any MSI prevention control measures.
- Follow up on any control measures that are put in place to ensure they are effective.

Employees

- Report any signs and/or symptoms of MSI to their supervisor.
- Actively participate in any MSI education and training offered by the District.
- Abide by any MSI training and safe work procedures that are put in place.

Prevention Process

WorkSafeBC lists 7 steps in the MSI prevention process that are intended to assist employers in implementing an effective Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention Program.

Consultation

Consultation with the site Joint Health and Safety Committee or District Joint Health and Safety Committee is valuable during the MSI prevention process.

Education

Educate workers about the risk factors, signs and symptoms of injury, and potential health effects.

Risk Identification

Identify the jobs with a risk of MSI and what the risk factors might be.

Risk Assessment

Once a risk factor of musculoskeletal injury has been identified the degree of risk must be assessed.

Risk factors can include:

- Awkward stooping or twisting
- High force
- Repetition
- Environment

Having a risk factor on its own does not place a worker in danger of a musculoskeletal injury. The degree of risk must be measured and this takes into account many variables including frequency, amount of force and whether there is more than one risk factor associated with the same task. A risk assessment must include consultation with workers who have suffered an MSI or have shown signs/symptoms of MSI if possible. Also, valuable information can be gained from consultations with a representative sample of workers who perform the task being assessed. The basic principle of a risk assessment is looking at the extent of exposure to which a worker has during the specific task, this is done by assessing:

- Magnitude (how much)
- Duration (how long)
- Frequency (how often and how fast)

Additionally, the risk assessment must also consider what the effect might be when different risk factors are combined.

Risk Control

Once complete, any risk factors identified by the risk assessment must be eliminated, or where not practicable, controlled. Whichever course is taken, it must be done without undue delay. Risk control options include:

Engineering Controls

The arrangement, design, or alteration of the physical work environment, equipment, or materials. For example, a mechanical lifting device is an engineering control that Student Support Workers can use to reduce the risk of MSI when moving students.

Administrative Controls

Includes the use and scheduling of resources and staffing to improve how the work is organized and performed. For example, limiting the consecutive hours a custodian spends washing windows is an administrative control that can reduce the amount of repetitive motion. Administrative controls involve the manipulation of resource and staff scheduling so that the work tasks are improved and MSI risks eliminated. Examples of this can include rotating tasks between multiple employees or limiting the amount of keying a clerical employee does in one day.

Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing

May be used as a control if other controls are not practicable, or in addition to other controls. For example, workers may wear vibration-dampening gloves while using a weedeater or wear knee pads while working on their knees to install flooring.

The above control options can be applied to the three aspects of exposure:

Reducing Magnitude

- Reducing the required force needed to perform the task.
- Lighter and/or suspended tools, powered lifts or re-designing the workstation to reduce reaching.

Reducing Duration

- By reducing the amount of time that a worker spends on a certain task each day, you can reduce the duration.
- Rotating tasks between multiple workers is a good way to reduce an individual workers exposure to a specific risk.

Reducing Frequency

- Reducing the number of times in one shift that the worker is exposed to the risk.
- For mechanics, they could rely on power tools and only use hand tools when power tools are not practical.

Sometimes simply changing the rotation of tasks through the day will be enough to minimize the risk of musculoskeletal injury. This is done by spreading high risk tasks out and interspersing tasks of lower risk.

Training

If new equipment is installed to reduce the risk of musculoskeletal injury it is important to ensure that the employee is trained in the proper operation of that equipment and that they adhere to that training.

Evaluation

Following up with the worker after implementation of control measures is an important step to see if the control measures are effective.

Investigation

For investigation of a potential MSI risk, please refer to the Risk Assessment worksheet located in the appendix of this manual.

Part 7.10 – Personal Safety and Conduct

Personal Safety

Safety is everyone's responsibility, regardless of assigned responsibility. This includes such things as making sure you follow proper safe work procedures, report any observed hazards or even as simple as spreading sand/salt on walkways if you are the first person on site in the winter.

Conduct

No one is to engage in any activity or behaviour that might create a hazard to them or any other employee. Types of behaviour can include:

- Horseplay or practical jokes
- Fighting
- Unnecessary running or jumping

- Intentionally using tools and/or equipment in a way they were not designed for
- Any other act that may startle or distract other employees.

Part 7.11 – School Vehicle Operations

Anyone operating School District vehicles must have all required valid licenses and/or certifications and must adhere to all applicable laws and regulations governing the use of that vehicle. At the start of each day, prior to operating the vehicle, the employee will perform a safety pre-trip on the vehicle. This pre-trip shall include:

- Windows, clean, clear and not cracked
- Tires properly inflated and lug nuts tight
- Visible fluid leaks
- Foot and emergency brake operation
- Mirrors, clean and adjusted properly
- Head lights and reflectors, clean and clear
- Windshield wipers, intact and properly working
- Horn, clearly audible
- First aid kit, in place and accessible (if equipped)
- Fire extinguisher, in place and accessible (if equipped)
- Driver's seat, properly adjusted
- Instrument panel, no warning lights
- Oil, water and fuel levels
- Lights and turn signals, operating correctly

Any noted defects must be reported to the supervisor immediately so that any required action can be taken.

Part 7.12 – Violence Prevention Program

While School District facilities are generally very safe places to work, there may be times when violent incidents occur.

The School Act

Responsibilities of Administration, Teachers and Students

The School Act provides clear directions regarding student conduct. In summary the School Act states that:

- The School Board oversees issues regarding the suspension of students.
- Principals supervise the school and oversee the general conduct of the students, this includes taking disciplinary action if required.
- Teachers are to ensure that students comply with the code of conduct.
- Students must comply with the code of conduct and be accountable for their actions.

Section 177

This section of the act pertains to the maintenance of order within schools. It states that:

- A person shall not disturb or interrupt the proceedings of a school or an official school function.

- A person who is directed to leave the land or premises of a school by a Principal, Vice Principal, Director of Instruction or a person authorized by the Board to make that direction:
 - Must immediately leave the land and premises.
 - Must not enter on the land and premises again except with the prior approval from the Principal, Vice Principal, Director of Instruction or a person who is authorized by the Board to give that approval.
- A person who contravenes Section 177 is committing an offence.
- A Principal, Vice Principal, Director of Instruction or a person authorized by the Board may, in order to restore order on school premises, require adequate assistance from a Peace Officer.

WorkSafeBC Regulations

In Part 4 of the regulation, it defines what WorkSafeBC sees as being violence in the workplace and lays out what the employer must do. This includes:

- Perform a risk assessment when there is a risk of injury to workers as a result of violence in the workplace. The assessment must include the consideration of:
 - Previous experience in that workplace
 - Occupational experience in similar workplaces
 - The location and circumstances in which the work will take place
- Establish procedures to minimize or eliminate risk where it is identified.
- Inform workers regarding any potential risk of violence exposure in the workplace and:
 - What procedures are in place to control the risk
 - How to respond to incidents of violence
 - Reporting and investigating procedures

Responding to Incidents of Violence

(insert School District's violence prevention procedures/practices and/or VTRA protocol here.)

Violent Students

Unfortunately there may come a time where you are faced with a violent student. Each incident will be as unique as the student involved, however there are some basic guiding approaches to the incident that may help resolve the situation. These are:

- If at all possible it is best to work in pairs.
- When you come upon the situation there must be no doubt that you are the person in charge. You're body language should be both calm and confident.
- As you approach you should not focus solely on the individual. Assess the scene and any other students in the area. Bystanders should be dispersed and if possible send someone to report the incident to the office.
- It is always best if you can remove any other students from the area, that way any discipline is done privately which allows the individual to save face.
- Communicate clearly and simply. Listen carefully to what is said so that you both understand what is happening and can clearly detail the exchange in a written report later.
- Always remain in control of your feelings and responses. If you allow the student(s) to rattle you it could cause the situation to escalate. Do not take anything personally.
- While talking with the student you must also pay attention to the looks, gestures and statements made by bystanders who have not disburged as they may try to 'egg the student on'.

- Humour can be a useful tool in tense situations, if appropriate.
- Take care in your own gestures and body movements so that they do not come across as aggressive.
- Allow the student to talk, this can help relieve some of the tension.
- Be patient and give the student time to cool down.

Gang related incidents

The Youth Against Violence Line is a confidential way for individuals to report violence or gang related activity. Whether it is something that was directed at you or just something you witnessed, there are trained people available to investigate any reports. And no one is required to leave their name.

Home Visitation

There will be times when School District staff will need to visit students in their homes. This has the possibility of exposing the worker to threats and/or violence either from the student or the students family. Ways a worker can protect themselves is to:

- Adhere to the School District working alone procedure.
- Leave an itinerary of the trip with a responsible person.
- Avoiding visits outside of regular school hours whenever possible.
- Prior to a home visit, check the student's record for any past altercations or acts of violence.
- If possible, and definitely if the risk is higher, make home visitations in pairs.

Part 7.13 – Working Alone Program

In Part 4 of the regulation WorkSafeBC defines that "to work alone or in isolation" means to be assigned work in circumstances where assistance would not be readily available to the worker in the event of an emergency or if they were to fall ill. In these cases there must be a means for checking on the well-being of a worker at regular intervals to ensure that they are safe.

General Information and Guidelines

The most effective means of monitoring a person's well-being is by visual contact. Buddy systems are the best way for staying safe however that is not always practicable. If a buddy system is not possible then a system of two way voice communication will be implemented.

Procedure

Principals, Managers and Supervisors are responsible to ensure that any time they assign one of their employees to work alone that the Working Alone Procedure is implemented. Examples of these situations in the School District include, but are not limited to:

- Maintenance responding to afterhours calls
- Lone Custodians working in a school
- Employees performing home visitations
- Bus Drivers on field trips outside of normal work hours

In these situations the employee is to phone Graydon Vernon Answering Service at 1-877-604-7615

as outlined in the School District Working Alone Procedures for Custodians, Grounds or Maintenance and Transportation. Please see the appendix of this manual for those specific procedures.

Important points to remember:

- It is very common for School District employees to choose to come to work early, stay late or come in after hours. The Working Alone Program does not apply to these situations as in these cases the worker has not been assigned that work by their supervisor. As a result the employee needs to ensure that a friend or family member is aware of their activities.
- There are cases where an employee may find themselves working alone when they had not been assigned to work alone. Such as when a custodians co-worker at a school falls ill and need to go home.
 - In these instances, the remaining employee must follow the procedures as outlined in the applicable Working Alone Procedure.
- Calls to Graydon Vernon Answering Service need to be kept concise and to the point
- Even though there could be other people in the building you could still be considered to be ‘Working Alone’. As an example, a custodian might be working in a school where there are User/Rental Groups in as well as a few teachers that were working late – but unless someone tasked with checking on the custodian’s well-being, the custodian is working alone.

Reference Material

School District No. 27 (Cariboo-Chilcotin)

Policy 4114 – Blood Bourne Pathogens

Policy 4111.12 – Bullying and Discrimination

Policy 5114.3 – Violence and Intimidation

Working Alone Procedures for Custodians

Working Alone Procedures for Grounds

Working Alone Procedures for Maintenance and Transportation

Occupational Health and Safety Regulation

Part 4 General Conditions Items 4.21 – 4.23 Working Alone or in Isolation

Section 6 Bio-hazardous Materials

Part 9 Confined Space

Part 10 De-energization and Lockout

Part 11

WorkSafeBC

Publication – Preventing Musculoskeletal Injury (MSI)