

Part A. Introduction - Using this manual

A. 1 Who is this self-help manual for?

This manual is intended for all new or established workplace safety and health committees and worker safety and health representatives in Manitoba.

It can be used as an effective orientation tool for new committee members to learn their responsibilities. It also can help an established committee evaluate what you do well and assess what can be improved to make your committee more effective.

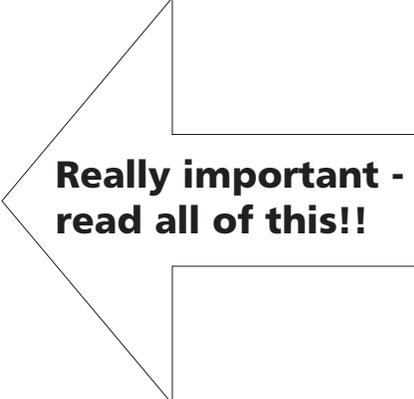
However, you will still need training about topics covered here - your responsibilities, health and safety principles, specific topics and activities, etc.

A. 2 Please read the rest of this introduction first

It explains how the manual is laid out for your ease of use and why it is designed the way it is. It will help you make sense of the rest of the document. The Table of Contents also is a useful guide.

Knowing health and safety is one thing. It's another to be an effective safety and health committee member or representative. That's why we recommend you read all of Part B next. You'll use many of the processes explained there as you go through the health and safety content of the manual.

Next, it's time for Part C. Again, please read the whole thing before moving on. The principles and key concepts are important to know about, before going on to the five steps to a healthy and safe workplace.



**Really important -
read all of this!!**

The manual is based on a 5-step process that safety and health representatives and committees can use to carry out their responsibilities. The steps are identified in Part C, and explained in a tool numbered SH.1 in the Safety and Health Toolbox:

- Step 1: Where does it hurt? (symptoms)
- Step 2: What makes it hurt? (hazards)
- Step 3: How do you find symptoms and hazards? (surveillance “detective” work, reporting, maps)
- Step 4: What fixes the hazards? (prevention and other changes)
- Step 5: How do we get the fixes we need? (making the “case”)

We also recommend that you work through each step in what is a problem-solving cycle designed specifically for workplace safety and health committees and representatives. The “method to the madness” will become apparent as you do this.

A. 3 How is this manual organized?

The first three Parts provide a grounding for the five steps. The steps are covered in Part D.

Each part is organized the same way:

Key vocabulary

The first time a key word or phrase is used, it’s highlighted in bold in the text. The words or phrases are defined on the right-hand side of the first page or pages, so you know how they are being used in this manual. A glossary at the end of the manual lists and explains all the terminology and acronyms used.

What’s this part all about?

Explains what the basic concepts and how they can be used. Sometimes there’s a “*Did you know?*” box at the side. This provides a reminder, more information or other useful ideas.



Why is this step important?

Reminders about why this step is important for your goal of a healthy and safe workplace and/or effective committees or representatives.

What tools can we use to learn more about this step?

The tools are at the back of the manual in three toolboxes: Committee Process (CP.1 - 21), Safety and Health (SH.1 - 14) and Using the Law (L.1 - 4). Each toolbox has a list of the contents.

When the tool is mentioned in the text of “What’s this part all about?”, there is a “screen shot” on the side. This is a small picture of the tool, so you know what to look for in the toolboxes.

Committee Activity boxes on the side of the page also give you a chance to use the tools.

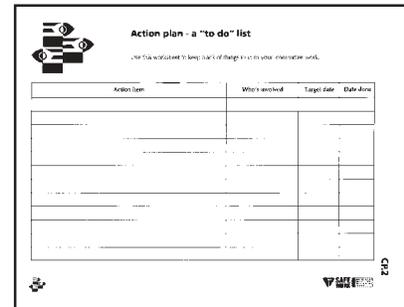
Next steps

This is usually a list about what you can do to find out more about the topic, ideas about how to use the tools or a reminder about the *Resource Guide* that is at the back of the manual. The *Guide* provides information about organizations and resources that will help you. It is organized so you can start with local organizations, and spread out to ones in Canada and elsewhere. There are also resources by topic, particularly the six hazard categories.

What’s the law say about this step? Who’s supposed to do what?

These tables summarize the law that applies to the step. Also see the Using the Law Toolbox for a complete list of committee responsibilities (L.3).

When we use the word “law” in this manual, we mean *The Workplace Safety and Health Act*, the *Workplace Safety and Health Regulation* and other regulations and the codes of practice that go with the regulations. Rather than use the proper names all the time, we usually use WSH Act or the Act and WSH reg.



COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

Action plans

We strongly encourage you to start with the Action Plan - a “to do” list (CP.1) in the Committee Process Toolbox. As you go through the manual, use it to list what you need to do or want to follow up on. This will help you as a committee member, and your committee, keep on track.