

ACTION PLAN CHECKLIST

- Develop a Health and Safety Program. Include aging workforce issues in areas such as job hazard analysis, new employee orientation and inspections.
- Review tasks for good ergonomic design. Poorly designed jobs will affect all workers including older workers.
- Conduct a worker survey. Questions may include work discomfort, identifying problem jobs and solution ideas.
- Assess the organization's ability to provide a flexible, respectful and inclusive work environment. Promote work-life balance and reduce rigid working conditions.
- Develop health promotion activities. Investigate health and fitness alternatives for older workers and increase awareness of chronic illnesses .
- Open communication throughout the workplace is required to address older workers reluctance to discuss health issues or work related pain due to perceived negative consequences.
- Provide opportunities for older workers to use and share their knowledge, experience and adaptability to reduce health and safety risks.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information on Safe Work or any other safety and health program contact:

www.safemanitoba.com

Call: 957-SAFE in Winnipeg

Or 1-866-929 SAFE



Safe Work audio and power point presentations can be viewed at:

www.safemanitoba.com

or

www.dolhyergonomics.com

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SAFE WORK for an

AGING WORKFORCE



UNDERSTANDING HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES OF OLDER WORKERS



**SAFE
WORK**

S SPOT THE HAZARD
A ASSESS THE RISK
F FIND A SAFER WAY
E EVERYDAY

AGING WORKFORCE ISSUES

AGING WORKFORCE REALITIES



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The workforce is aging. In 1980 the average age of a Canadian worker was 35 years old. In 2007 it was 41 years old. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older workers have many advantages: experience, the ability to learn new skills quickly, and a strong work ethic. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injury rates are increasing for older workers. From 2000-2005 the number of WCB claims for older workers rose 35% while employment only rose by 13%. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to demographics, economics and a worker shortage, more older workers will be in the workforce. This will require workplaces to recognize the diversity of their workforce. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a natural aging process for overall health and fitness. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no single pattern of change with age. The effects are varied and greatly individualized. An older worker should not be stereotyped. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes with age may involve vision, hearing, strength, flexibility, balance, heat regulation, sleep patterns, endurance, reaction time and long term memory. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout your life, genetics, lifestyle, work demands and chronic diseases all affect a person's work capacity. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older workers may be affected by chronic diseases such as arthritis and hypertension. Other issues include sleep disorders, greater use of medications and a slowing down of the body's metabolism. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing job hazards and developing health and safety programs together with a worker's awareness of their changing abilities can lead to safer work for older workers. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aging workforce issues can be positively or negatively influenced by the workplace, the individual and/or by society's perceptions of older workers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A worker's health and ability to work depends on many factors. There is no set age when specific issues become a concern. A proactive safety program along with health promotion can offset aging worker issues and create a safe work environment for all workers. |

Spot the Hazard	Assess the Risk	Find a Safer Way Everyday
Noisy Workplace Hearing loss may occur with age.	Workplaces with noise levels >85 dBs may cause hearing loss	Ensure there is a hearing conservation program.
Poor Lighting Vision changes may occur with age.	Measure illumination, reflection, glare, contrast etc.	Example: increase the size of lettering.
Forceful Exertions Strength may decrease with age.	Conduct an ergonomic assessment: force, posture and repetition.	Example: introduce job rotation to reduce length of time at the task.
Physically Demanding Work Endurance may decrease with age.	Evaluate the physical demands of the job.	Provide tools to reduce effort, e.g., an ergonomic shovel.
Chemical Exposure Older workers may be more susceptible.	Depends on current and past workplace exposures, chronic diseases and medication use.	Measure chemical exposure levels, conduct a worker survey and consult with physicians.