

# Another Example of Why Emergency Preparedness Is Important



May 6-12 is Emergency Preparedness Week in Canada. The goal of this week is to encourage Canadians to take three simple steps to become better prepared to face a range of emergencies:

- Know the risks
- Make a plan
- Have an emergency kit.

Although the focus of this week is on home safety, it's still a good time to review your *workplace* emergency preparedness efforts, too. If you don't think it's important to ensure that your workplace and everyone in it is ready for all kinds of emergencies, just consider what happened recently in a BC sawmill – or to an employer in Ontario.

## **ON Employer Fined for Blocked Emergency Exit**

A worker at a car wrecking yard was removing a gas tank from a car. But the tank wasn't empty. Gas spilled out of the tank and was ignited by a nearby inspection lamp, causing a fire. Because the emergency exit was blocked, three workers were forced to run to the other end of the building to escape. As a result, all three suffered burns and smoke inhalation.

Their employer was fined \$5,000 for failing to ensure that emergency exits were free from obstructions and another \$55,000 for failing to provide information, instruction and supervision to a worker for the safe removal of a gas tank.