

NY Man Goes on Rampage in Ex's Workplace & Then His Own



It's easy to become complacent about safety hazards you think are unlikely to occur in your workplace, such as workplace violence. After all, unless you're in a high-risk industry, how likely is it really that, say, a gun-wielding assailant will show up at your company's door and start shooting'

A recent incident in New York City is a reminder that *all* workplaces are vulnerable to workplace violence to some extent.

A customer service representative for a utility company stabbed his former girlfriend at her job at a charitable foundation before going to work and attacking his own co-workers. The ex-girlfriend was stabbed in the lower abdomen and lower back. She was taken to the hospital in serious but stable condition.

After stabbing her, the worker showed up at his own workplace with a bag containing a hammer, hatchet and several knives. He attacked two colleagues, leaving one with a gash on his face and a possible fractured cheekbone, and the other with a cut on the arm.

He then ran down the stairs and out to the parking lot, where a security guard, who'd been notified of the attack, had closed the gate, thus trapping him for the police. They arrested the worker and took him to the hospital for psychiatric observation.

The lesson: Workplace violence, including domestic violence that spills over into the workplace, may not be a priority safety hazard in all workplaces. But don't get lulled into thinking that your company is immune from violence. Neither of the workplaces involved in this worker's rampage were high-risk for violence and yet both were profoundly impacted by these incidents. (Read about a survey on the impact of domestic violence on Canadian workplaces.)

Also, workplace violence doesn't just mean incidents involving guns—it includes violence in all of its forms, both with weapons such as guns and knives and without.

The OHS Insider has various resources you can use to prepare for and address workplace violence in your workplace, including:

- Workplace Violence Compliance Centre
- Five strategies for addressing domestic violence in the workplace
- How to train workers on responding to an active shooter
- A handout for workers on domestic violence
- A workplace violence threat assessment checklist
- A recorded webinar on domestic violence: rights, responsibilities and response.