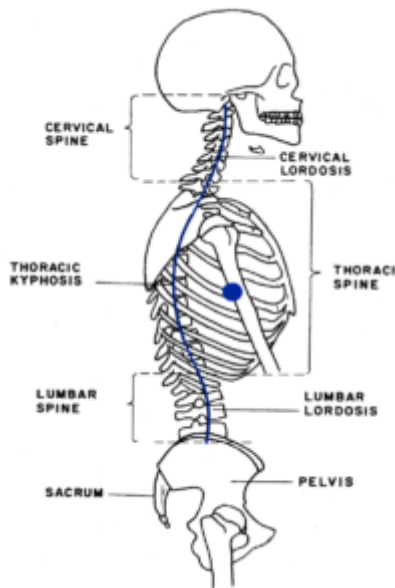


Prepare for the MOL's Ergonomics Inspection Blitz in February



In February, inspectors from the Ontario Ministry of Labour (MOL) will blitz workplaces in the construction, health care, industrial and mining sectors looking for hazards involving manual materials handling that can lead to musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs).

Ontario, like several other jurisdictions, doesn't directly require employers to protect workers from MSDs. But you do, in fact, have a duty to do so. This duty stems from what's commonly known as the "General Duty" clause—that is, the part of the *OHS Act* that requires employers to take every reasonable precaution to provide a safe and healthy workplace and protect workers from known risks.

How do we know that this general duty includes an obligation to protect workers from MSDs? The MOL has a webpage dedicated to MSDs and how to prevent them. And the MSD Prevention Guideline for Ontario says that "controlling MSD hazards...is the law." In addition, the very fact the MOL is conducting an inspection blitz on MSD hazards is pretty compelling evidence of an employer's duty to address such hazards.

So what can you do to ensure that your workers are protected from MSDs—and that your workplace will pass muster if it's hit during the inspection blitz? The OHSInsider.com has many resources that you can use.

Articles

First, you need to understand employers' legal obligations under the OHS laws of Ontario and across Canada to protect workers from MSDs. Once you understand your legal duty, we'll tell you how to identify and assess ergonomics-related hazards.

Once you've identified such hazards in your workplace, you'll need to implement measures to address those hazards. But convincing management to invest in

ergonomics can be a tough sell. We'll tell you how to cut through senior management's resistance and get money for ergonomics improvements.

And we give you seven strategies to make your ergonomics program a success once it's up and running.

In addition, because the inspection blitz is going to focus on manual materials handling, here's information on how to protect workers when they're moving or storing materials.

Model Tools

Here are some tools to make it easier for you to protect workers from MSDs:

- Manual Handling Checklist
- Ergonomic Risk Factor Checklist
- Checklist for Evaluating Ergonomics Programs
- Form for Investigating Neck, Shoulder and Upper Back Injuries
- Form for Investigating Injuries to the Hips, Knees and Feet
- Form for Investigating Elbow, Forearm and Hand Injuries

Training Materials

For materials you can use to train workers on MSDs and ergonomics-related hazards, go to SafetySmart, where you'll find:

- 35 safety talks for workers on ergonomics
- 36 articles
- several e-learning courses
- and much more!