

Safety Alert of THE MONTH

April 2017

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS IN BC'S FOREST INDUSTRY

Effective Worker Safety Reps and Safety Committees

Susan is a newly assigned safety representative for a small forest consulting company of 12 people. Her manager gave her this new responsibility because she communicates well with her co-workers and has a passion for safety. What does Susan and others like her need to know to do their jobs well?



Depending on the size of your company, you may have a worker safety representative (10 to 19 workers) or a health and safety committee (20 or more workers). What do successful worker safety reps and committee members do?

- They have a good understanding of the hazards at the worksites and how to assess the risks of those hazards. The rep or committee can't do everything so this risk assessment is used to identify the high priority items and make recommendations to fix them.
- Committees and reps are most effective when they understand their roles and limitations. For example: reps and committee members inspect, investigate and make recommendations to management to fix the safety issues. Management is responsible for considering and responding to recommendations and taking action when appropriate.
- They are strong communicators. They have a role in answering questions about safety, listening to concerns of their co-workers and promoting safety among the crew.
- They conduct thorough workplace inspections which include assessing worker activities, not just the work environment and equipment.
- They are actively involved in incident investigations. This includes gathering and analyzing the information and identifying corrective actions to prevent future incidents.
- They are interested in training and learning new skills. There is always something new to learn about safety.



There are new regulations that require:

- **an annual evaluation of health and safety committees**
- **mandatory training of new committee members and reps**
- **participation of the committee members and reps in incident investigations**

This WorkSafeBC link has more information on the new regs and training:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/joint-health-safety-committees>

