



6-minute safety talk for plumbing

Instructor Guide

WHMIS

Many chemicals used in plumbing can cause conditions ranging from minor skin irritation to serious injury and disease. If workers are expected to work with hazardous materials, their employer is required to inform them that the materials are hazardous and train the workers in their safe use.

All B.C. workplaces that use materials identified as hazardous (“controlled products”) by the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) are required to follow the WHMIS system. The system uses consistent labeling to help workers recognize hazardous materials. The system and labels provide specific information on handling, storing and disposing of such materials.

Demonstration and Discussion Topics

- Discuss** hazardous materials to which plumbers may be exposed, including adhesives, solvents and cleaning products.
- Tour the shop** with the students, pointing out these hazards.
- Distribute** the student handout.
- Use** the student handout as your discussion guide.
- Explain** what the WHMIS system is.
- Discuss** how the WHMIS system is designed to protect workers.
- Review** the list of 4 questions, reminding students that they need to understand safety issues before they start work, and that it is okay to ask questions if they don't understand something or they need a reminder.
- Review and discuss** the list of safety tips.
- Emphasize** that good housekeeping and careful handling are mandatory.
- Explain** the WHMIS labels and the meaning of each label.
- Provide examples** of the types of injuries and health problems that can occur because of exposure to hazardous materials (rashes, chemical burns, asthma and emphysema, and even cancer).
- Discuss** the attitude that “it won't happen to me”. Remind them that a hazardous material incident can and will happen if they take shortcuts or are careless.

Resource

- WHMIS at Work
http://www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/by_topic/assets/pdf/whmis.pdf