

# Health & Safety Guide for New Retail Workers



*Produced by BC Retailers*

## **At your new job, think about safety ...because what you don't know can hurt you.**

Every workplace has its hazards, but no one ever expects accidents to happen to them at work. In fact, new and young workers are injured on the job every day.

In the retail industry, the leading causes of injury are:

- Handling bags, boxes and other objects
- Using tools and equipment (e.g., from box cutters to pallet jacks)
- Slips and falls

Many other causes of injury are less frequent but still common. That's why a group of BC's retail companies and organizations have partnered with the Workers' Compensation Board to produce this *Health & Safety Guide for New Retail Workers*.

Representatives from the contributing retail organizations listed below have met regularly to share resources and experiences and to jointly explore solutions to health and safety concerns in the retail sector. Their goal in producing this *Guide* is to share some of the results of their joint efforts and to demonstrate their collective commitment to worker health and safety.

The *Guide* has information for people who are thinking about a new job in the retail industry or are just getting into the workforce. It is intended to increase awareness while providing some specific safety tips for workers in retail. Specific information for employers is provided in the form of additional references.

You can find the *Guide* online by going to either [www.retailcouncil.org](http://www.retailcouncil.org) or to [www.retailbc.org](http://www.retailbc.org). For more information you can contact any one of the people listed on the last page of this booklet. Each of these people contributed to the development of this *Guide* and will be happy to help you. You can also contact the Workers' Compensation Board of BC (WCB) Prevention Information line at 604 276-3100 or toll free at 1 800 621-SAFE (7233). Online, go to [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com) and search for "*Retail Guide*".

Best wishes for a safe and healthy experience when you start your new job!





## Contributing Retail Organizations

7-Eleven  
Hudson's Bay Company  
Kerrisdale Cameras  
BC Liquor Distribution Branch  
London Drugs  
Buy Low Foods  
Mountain Equipment Co-op  
Canada Safeway  
Overwaitea Food Group  
Costco Wholesale  
Retail Council of Canada  
H. Y. Louie Co. Limited/Tober Enterprises Ltd.  
Sears Canada  
Home Depot  
The Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors  
The Retail Merchants Association of BC



*Special thanks to the Workers' Compensation Board Prevention Division for providing its support for the development of this Guide.*

## Healthy expectations

Are you thinking about a new job or a new position, or are you just getting into the workforce? Congratulations on choosing retail as a potential career! Finding or starting a new job can be intimidating, especially if it's your very first job. But keep in mind – it's about more than just working and getting paid. It's also about *safety*.

When you start your new job you will have a responsibility to protect yourself and the people around you from injury – that's the law. However, it's important to know what to expect from your potential employer before you start. Not only do you have a duty to work safely, you also have rights.

As a worker you have three basic rights related to health and safety:

- **The right to know** and to be trained in safe work practices in all aspects of your job.
- **The right to participate** in health and safety matters either directly or through a work site health and safety committee or representative.
- **The right to refuse work** if you have reasonable cause to believe that the work process, equipment or environment poses and undue risk of injury to you or another person.

So when you are considering a new job, remember that it's a two-way responsibility. You will be expected to take your job seriously just as your employer will be expected to take your health and safety seriously.



# About this guide

## Purpose of this guide

The purpose of this *Guide* is to help you gain valuable lifetime knowledge about safety in the workplace, particularly the retail industry. The *Guide* has 5 sections:

**Section 1** – Questions and concerns you might have about health and safety

**Section 2** – Safety tips

**Section 3** – Dealing with emergencies

**Section 4** – Finding more information

**Section 5** – Helping us improve this *Guide*/Contacts

This *Guide* is to be used as a general resource only. Not all workplace hazards are covered. For further information see Section 4 of this *Guide*. **For specific legal or regulatory requirements, consult the British Columbia *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation* and the *Workers Compensation Act*.** These can be found online at [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com).

## Who should use this guide

The *Guide* has important information for people who are thinking about a new job in the retail industry or who are just getting into the workforce. It focuses on what you need to know to have a safe and healthy work experience, and discusses your rights and responsibilities around health and safety on the job.

## How to use the information

We encourage you to review the *Guide* before you meet with a potential employer and to keep it as a handy reference after you start your new job.

## If you are an employer

In the *Guide* you will find helpful references to other publications that have been written with your needs in mind. For example, the WCB publication *Health and Safety for Retail Small Business* is particularly helpful for small to medium employers in the retail sector. That booklet can be found online at: [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com).

# Section 1

## Questions and concerns you may have about health and safety

Good employers are serious about safety. They provide safety training so that their new workers can identify hazards, and they have a safety program to deal with safety issues as they arise.

When you are considering or starting a new job, here are some questions you may have.

**Q: What dangers or hazards will I have to watch for on this job?**

Your employer or supervisor must tell you about any dangers or potential hazards they know about at your worksite – that’s the law. However, it’s good to start with a general sense of the health and safety issues that can arise.

**... for the employer**

For more information, see the WCB booklet: “**3 Steps to Effective Worker Education and Training**”

This booklet can be found online at [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com)

**Common health and safety concerns in the retail industry include:**

- Handling and lifting materials
- Slipping, tripping and falling
- Using ladders
- Cuts and bruises
- Violence in the workplace
- Shopping and robbery
- Harassment
- Exposure to chemicals, biological hazards and diseases
- Biological hazards (like infectious diseases)
- Travelling safely to and from work

Section 2 of this booklet includes specific advice on each of these topics to help you work safely right from the start.

***Q: What safety training or education will I need? Will you provide this training?***

Your employer is responsible for providing the training you need to do your work safely. Until you have the right knowledge and skills, you have to be under the direct supervision of someone who has them.

Your orientation should include basic information about health and safety at the workplace. For example:

- How to get first aid
- How to report injuries and accidents
- How to report potential hazards and unsafe work conditions
- Where emergency exits are located
- Who is responsible for health and safety (you should meet them)
- What the potential hazards are on the job site

***Q: What sort of emergency procedures will I be trained in?***

Emergencies can arise at any workplace, so emergency procedures must be in place for activities such as evacuation, chemical spill clean-up, or fire fighting. These procedures will include knowing the location of exits, fire extinguishers, the first aid kit and any other specialized equipment needed to handle emergency situations. Your employer or supervisor should explain these procedures during your first few days on the job.

Being prepared for emergencies is further discussed in **Section 3** of this *Guide*.

***Q: Will I be required to use any safety gear or protective clothing?***

If there are hazards in the workplace, your employer has to protect you from them. Your employer is required by law to provide you with safety gear specific to your job tasks, though you may be required to provide some basic safety gear yourself. Check with your employer.

Examples of safety gear common in the retail industry include:

- Safety vest (when working around moving equipment such as forklifts and vehicles)
- Work gloves and safety shoes (when handling garbage or working in storage areas)
- Disposable waterproof gloves (when cleaning bathrooms)
- Cut-resistant gloves (for some cutting and equipment cleaning operations)
- Eye protection and gloves (to protect you from chemicals)

***Q: If I have health and safety concerns, who should I speak with?***

Your supervisor or manager should always be kept informed of all safety concerns. In addition, some workplaces will also have either a “worker health and safety representative” or a “health and safety committee”.

***Q: If I am injured on the job, what should I do?***

By law, you are required to report any work related injury to your supervisor and first aid attendant as soon as possible. An employer will be sure to go through this with you. .

As well, every workplace has to provide some level of first aid. For a very small, low-hazard workplace close to a medical facility, a first aid kit may be all that is required.

Larger worksites may require a first aid attendant and possibly a first aid room. In your orientation, you should expect to find out some specific information about first aid procedures in the work place, such as:

- How and when to report an injury
- Whom to report the incident to
- Where a first aid attendant or first aid room or first aid kit is located

As well, if an accident happens your employer should have a system for investigating the accident and reporting it to the WCB. Your responsibility in the process is to **be as helpful as you can be** to your employer (or WCB official) to get at the cause of the accident.

***Q: How will safety information be communicated to me?***

Your employer should have written policies and provide additional guidance for working safely. An employer committed to safety will communicate safety information to employees in a variety of ways, such as: through your supervisor, e-mail, a health and safety notice board, staff meetings, posters and notices, the health and safety committee, or a worker health and safety representative. Safety will be considered part of the job.



***Q: What if I think a certain task is likely to endanger my co-workers or me?***

You have the right to refuse work if you have reasonable cause to believe it is dangerous to you or someone else. The first thing you should do is tell your supervisor or manager that you think the task is dangerous. Together, you should be able to discuss the issue and find a safe solution. If the two of you cannot find a solution, a third or fourth person may be brought into the discussion to help resolve the situation. If a solution can't be found, you or your employer may contact the WCB.

Not only do you have a right to refuse unsafe work, you are also protected from disciplinary action by your employer if you refuse unsafe work.

***Q: Will I be required to work alone or late at night?***

If you are required to work alone, your employer will have specific procedures and safeguards for working alone and must review them with you as part of your training. There may also be specific procedures for working late at night, even if you are not alone.

***Q: Are there any other hazards that I may be exposed to?***

Some examples of hazards for which you should expect more information and training include:

- Working with electrical equipment
- Going into walk-in refrigeration units
- Working with chemicals

**Ask your employer about locking out any electrical equipment that you may be exposed to.**

# Section 2

## Tips for working safely

### Handling & lifting

Improper handling and lifting of heavy or bulky objects is a major source of strains, sprains, neck and back injuries, cuts, bruises, broken bones and hernias. Any one of these injuries can affect you **for the rest of your life**.

#### Signs and symptoms of sprains and strains

It is important to recognize the early signs and symptoms of sprains and strains. The sooner treatment starts, the better.

Signs and symptoms include:

- Swelling
- Redness
- Difficulty moving a particular body part
- Numbness
- Tingling, and
- Pain

If you notice any early signs or symptoms of sprains and strains, report them to your supervisor, manager or employer (or first aid attendant, health and safety committee, safety representative, supervisor).

Sprains and strains (known as musculoskeletal injuries, or “MSIs”) are the most common type of work-related injury. These can arise from repetitive movement or from overexertion, which is associated with lifting.

Most MSIs result from overexertion, and many of these are associated with lifting. When lifting, you need to think about the force required to lift the load and about your posture. Muscles and tendons can be overloaded, especially when your body is in an awkward posture. However, a bit of prevention can go a long way toward ensuring injury-free muscles and joints.

#### **... for the employer**

*Employers are required to conduct risk assessments to identify potential MSI hazards. For more information about preventing musculoskeletal injuries, see these WCB publications:*

- *Ergonomic Tips for the Hospitality Industry (a series of 8 pamphlets)*
- *Back Talk: An Owner’s Manual for Backs*
- *Understanding the Risks of Musculoskeletal Injury (MSI)*
- *Preventing Musculoskeletal Injury (MSI)*

*Each of these free publications can be found online at [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com)*

## SAFETY TIPS

### *Preventing injuries from lifting*

- Where possible, avoid lifting and carrying heavy or awkward objects. Instead, use mechanical devices such as forklifts, hoists, carts, and dollies
- Get help from others
- Lift smaller loads by planning and adjusting weight distribution ahead of time
- Hold the object you are lifting as close to your body as possible
- Avoid awkward work postures such as bending, reaching, and twisting
- Try to keep the load between your knees and shoulders, without twisting your body; pivot with your feet instead of twisting your back
- Bend at your knees, not at your waist — this will help you keep your centre of balance and let the strong muscles in your legs do the lifting
- Lift smoothly and slowly
- Get a good grip — use your hands, not just your fingers, to grip the load
- Avoid performing the same lifting task repeatedly over a long period — if possible, vary the task with another activity that uses different muscles.

## SAFETY TIPS

### *Working in storage areas*

- When stacking boxes and items, stack the heaviest items at knee to chest level to minimize lifting
- Make sure stacked boxes or other items are stable enough not to tip
- Use a ladder or step stool to reach high items
- Watch for ice in cold-storage areas
- Take micro-breaks, stretch, and vary the load (alternate heavy and light items)

## Preventing slips, trips and falls

Many injuries occur in the Retail industry due to slips, trips and falls on slippery floor surfaces or in cluttered walkways. To avoid these injuries, a bit of caution can go a long way.

### Preventing falls from height

Falls from height can occur as a result of obscured visibility. In retail, however, the most common type of fall is from a ladder.



### SAFETY TIPS

#### *Preventing slips and trips*

- Wear well-fitting, non-slip footwear
- Keep walkways and aisles clear of boxes and other clutter
- Don't carry more than you can safely handle
- Ensure you can see where you are going when carrying large items
- Clean up spills right away or mark the area to warn others and report the spill to your supervisor

## Using ladders



Many workers are injured each year by falls from ladders. Always inspect a ladder before use. If a ladder has a loose, broken or missing rung, a split side rail, or other hazardous defects, report to the supervisor. Don't use it.

If you do use a ladder, here are some **tips** to help protect you and your co-workers.

### **SAFETY TIPS**

#### ***Working with ladders***

- Take a close look at the ladder before you use it to ensure no parts are broken, cracked or missing
- Make sure you place the ladder on a firm, level surface
- Make sure the areas around the base and the top of the ladder are clear of obstructions
- Don't place ladders against flexible or movable objects
- When you are on the ladder, keep your centre of gravity between the side rails, especially if you are carrying materials
- Don't stand on the top two steps of a ladder
- Make sure the base of the ladder is one foot out for every four feet high

## Avoiding cuts and bruises

Knives and power tools and equipment are two common sources of cuts, lacerations and bruises in the retail industry. Here are some tips for using knives or tools.

### SAFETY TIPS

#### *When you use a knife:*

- Use the right knife for the job and make sure it's sharp.
- Always cut away from yourself and always store knives separately
- Use a flat surface or cutting board
- Never use a knife for anything other than cutting
- Hold the knife in your stronger hand
- To clean the knife, direct the edge away from you and wipe with the cloth on the dull edge of the blade
- Wear leather or metal mesh gloves if your employer requires them

### SAFETY TIPS

#### *When you use a power tool or other equipment:*

Machinery with moving parts can catch or cut the body, clothing or jewellery. The misuse of portable power tools can lead to permanent disabilities. Toes and fingers have been cut off by mishandled power tools.

- When you use a tool, be sure it is the right one for the job
- Never use a tool to do something for which it was not intended
- If you need to use power tools or equipment, your employer will provide training in their safe use

### *... for the employer*

*There should be written procedures for checking workers' wellbeing and getting emergency help when they need it.*

*For further information, see the WCB booklet **Take Care: How to Develop and Implement a Workplace Violence Prevention Program.**"*

*This booklet can be found online at [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com)*

## Preventing violence

Workers in the retail industry experience more cases of violence than do workers in many other types of work. There has to be a system in place to ensure your well being if you work alone. Such a system must include check-ins at designated time intervals and provisions for emergency rescue if it is ever needed.

Whether you work alone or not, there are several potentially dangerous situations that can arise in the workplace. A bit of caution can go a long way to protecting you in these circumstances.

### **SAFETY TIPS**

#### **Handling potentially dangerous situations**

##### **Working alone**

If you are required to work alone...

- Someone should contact you regularly to make sure you're okay
- You should have an emergency phone number handy
- If possible, do not open back doors and leave them open and unattended
- If possible, do not empty the garbage at night, especially if the dumpster is in a secluded spot or back alley
- Give a friendly greeting to anyone who enters the store

##### **Irate customers**

If you work in the retail industry, it is almost inevitable that you will have to deal with an irate customer at some point.

- Focus on the emotions first, try to remain calm, and try to calm the other person
- Try to avoid escalating the situation. Find ways to help the irate customer save face.
- Listen carefully and try to put yourself in the customer's shoes, so you can better understand how to solve the problem
- If you can't address their concern, take the customer's name and number and promise to forward the information to your manager or supervisor
- If you cannot calm the person, ask for help

##### **Making deposits**

- Avoid making night deposits
- Vary the time of deposit
- Avoid making deposits alone
- When making deposits with another person, have them face the other way to keep an eye on everything while you make the deposit

# Shoplifting and robbery

The main concern in the event of theft or robbery is safety – yours, your co-workers' and your customers'. Money and merchandise taken during a robbery can be replaced, people can't be.

## Shoplifting

The chances of shoplifting increase when you work alone. If you think someone is shoplifting contact security or someone professionally trained to deal with the situation. Never approach or try to apprehend shoplifters, especially if you are working alone. After the shoplifter leaves, write down as much information about them as possible. This should include the shoplifter's height, weight, hair and skin colour, race, and clothing as well as possibly vehicle make, colour, approximate year, and plate number.

## Preventing robbery

The best way to prevent injury resulting from robbery is to prevent the robbery from happening in the first place. Some businesses have internal security staff and specific instructions for dealing with robbery, but others may not. Here are some tips to help protect yourself.

### *... for the employer*

#### **Hardening the Target**

- *The store should be kept clean and well-stocked*
- *Posters or signs should not block the area around the register from view*
- *If possible, workers should be able to see out and customers and police should be able to see in*
- *Make a cash drop or safety deposit box available*
- *Post signs advising that "Minimum cash is kept on premises."*
- *Operate only one register from late at night through early morning.*

## **SAFETY TIPS**

### ***Make the store attractive to customers, unattractive to robbers:***

- Keep the store clean, tidy, and well-lit
- When there are no customers at your sales counter or check out, keep busy by cleaning, dusting, sweeping, etc.
- Get away from the sales counter when there are no customers in the store

### **Stay alert**

- Be aware of cars parked across the street or off to one side of the lot
- Look for anyone who may be watching the store or loitering in or around it
- If you are concerned about a person or vehicle, do not hesitate to contact your supervisor or the appropriate authorities
- Know the location of phones or available help outside the premises
- Connect with potential customers
- Give a friendly greeting to everyone who enters the store
- When a shopper is nearby, act friendly and briefly look directly into their eyes
- Ask people alone in the aisle if they would like any help

### **Keep the cash register fund to a minimum**

- Ask customers for exact change or the smallest bills possible

## If a robbery occurs

Your employer will provide specific instructions for dealing with robberies. However, the following tips may be helpful:

### SAFETY TIPS

- **Keep it short**  
The longer a robbery takes the more nervous the robber becomes
- **Stay calm**  
Handle the entire situation as if you were making a sale to a customer. Keep it short and smooth so that the robber doesn't get nervous.
- **Obey the robber's orders**  
Let the robber know you intend to cooperate with them — just give them the cash and merchandise they ask for and do exactly as they say
- **If you are not sure what the robber is telling you, ask**
- **Tell the robber about any possible surprises**  
Tell the robber beforehand if you must reach for something or move in any way; tell them if another employee is in the back room so they are not startled
- **Don't try to stop the robber**  
Trying to fight with a robber is foolhardy, not heroic — if you don't see a weapon, always assume they have one
- **Don't chase or follow the robber**  
It will only invite violence and it may confuse the police as to who is involved with the robbery
- **Write down some notes**  
Right after the robber has left makes notes about their appearance, mannerisms, and any features, the time and the direction they took when they left
- **Call the police or appropriate authorities**  
Dial 911 or your local emergency number

# Harassment

An unwelcome behaviour or comment that is harmful to the work environment is considered to be harassment. Harassment takes many forms but can generally be defined as an insulting, intimidating, humiliating, malicious, degrading or offensive comment or act directed toward another person or group. This would also include bullying, sexual harassment, or offensive displays.

Although harassment typically doesn't include physical violence, it can be very harmful and it does affect the overall health of the work environment. Harassment may not be the kind of incident you would report to the WCB, but it can affect your health and your ability to work safely.

## SAFETY TIPS

### *Dealing with harassment*

- **Tell the harasser to stop**  
Do this right away by saying it or writing it in a letter or e-mail; if that doesn't work . . .
- **Tell your employer** or the person your employer has appointed to receive and handle harassment complaints
- **Talk about it** to someone you trust (a co-worker, friend or relative)
- **Write it down**  
To help you make your case in an investigation, write down each remark or incident (the exact words if possible), including dates, times, places and the names of any witnesses

## Exposure to chemicals

If you are expected to work with chemical or biological materials, your employer will provide training in how to handle hazardous materials. There is a system called WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System) that uses consistent labelling to help you recognize hazardous materials. The system and labels provide specific information on handling, storing and disposing of such materials. Workers successfully trained in how to handle hazardous materials will be able to answer these 4 questions:

- What are the hazards of the products you are using?
- How do you protect yourself?
- What should you do in case of an emergency or spill?
- Where do you get more information on these products?

If you are expected to work with chemical or biological hazards, your employer will provide WHMIS training.



### SAFETY TIPS

- Read the labels on chemicals
- Use all protective equipment recommended by the manufacturer and employer
- When you are done, store chemicals properly
- Use the chemical only as directed

## Biological hazards

Contact with blood or body fluids may be uncommon in the retail industry but it can and does occur. Contact with blood and body fluids poses a risk of contracting hepatitis, H.I.V. (and A.I.D.S.), and other infections.

### *... for the employer*

*For more information, see the WCB booklet: "HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B and C: Preventing Exposure at Work"*

*This booklet can be found online at: [www.worksafefbc.com](http://www.worksafefbc.com)*

## SAFETY TIPS

### 1. *Cleaning*

When cleaning bathrooms you may come across blood spills and bodily wastes such as vomit or feces:

- Use disposable waterproof gloves to avoid contact with skin
- Use disposable towels to clean up all visible materials
- Discard towels and gloves in a waterproof garbage bag
- Disinfect the area with a bleach solution

### 2. *Preventing infection*

You can be exposed to infected blood and other body fluids if your skin is punctured by a contaminated sharp object, such as a needle. To reduce your risk of exposure:

- Don't pick up potentially contaminated sharp objects unless you have been instructed how to do so safely
- Wear disposable waterproof gloves
- Use tongs or pliers to pick up needles or other sharp objects
- Place needles in a disposal container specifically designed for sharps
- Look before reaching above and behind boxes, furniture and equipment
- Do not lift garbage bags by hand from underneath. They may contain sharp, contaminated objects



### 3. *If you think you've been exposed to infection:*

- Get first aid right away
- Report the incident to your supervisor
- Seek further medical attention, preferably within two hours

*Vaccination against Hepatitis B must be made available at no cost to you upon request if you have, or may have, occupational exposure to the Hepatitis B virus.*

## Travelling to and from work

Your employer can't control the environment outside the workplace. However, there are several things you can do to ensure a safer trip to and from work.

### SAFETY TIPS

#### ***If you are driving,***

- Lock your doors and roll up your windows before driving into the parking lot
- Scan the parking area for suspicious persons — have a plan ready in case you are uncomfortable with the situation
- Park in well-lit areas — avoid alleys, wooded areas, and tunnels
- Avoid having to reach back into the vehicle for anything
- After work, try to avoid walking to your vehicle alone, or at least have someone watch from a window

#### ***If you are taking a bus,***

- Plan to arrive at a bus stop just before the bus arrives
- Avoid isolated or poorly lit bus stops
- If you see suspicious or menacing people at your stop, get off at the next stop
- If possible, have someone meet you when you arrive at your destination

#### ***If you are confronted...***

- If attacked, scream — as loudly and as long as possible — and as soon as possible run to the nearest well-lit area
- If someone grabs your purse, deposit bag, or other property, do not resist and do not chase the thief
- Call the police immediately and try to recall the mannerisms of the attacker

# Section 3

## *Dealing with emergencies*

Every workplace should have a plan for dealing with emergencies. You should be instructed in that plan within your first few days on the job and have refresher training from time to time.

Once you have been trained, you should be able to answer the following questions:

- Where are the emergency phone numbers posted?
- Where are the fire extinguishers and how and when should they be used?
- Where are the fire alarms and fire exits?
- What is the evacuation plan for the building?
- What should you do during an earthquake?
- In case of evacuation, where outside the building is the assembly point and who should you report to?
- What other specialized equipment may be needed in case of an emergency, and how is it used?

Ask your employer to go through the emergency plans and procedures for your store. For example, ask them to review what to do in the case of an earthquake, fire or bomb threat.

### *... for the employer*

*For more information, see the WCB publication "What to do in case of a fire in your public building"*

*This publication can be found online at: [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com)*

# Earthquake!

## During an earthquake... duck, cover and hold!

- Get under a table or desk if you can and stay there until the shaking stops
- Grab a table leg or other solid object and hold on until the shaking stops
- Stay away from objects that might fall on you
- Keep well away from glass – it might shatter
- **If you are in a car**, stop the vehicle as soon as possible, preferably in an area away from bridges, trees, power lines, etc. and stay in the vehicle

## If you must evacuate

The only reasons for leaving a building due to earthquake are:

- (a) the building is on fire
- (b) there is structural damage to the building (e.g. newly cracked or buckling walls, crumbling)
- (c) there is a gas leak

*If you must evacuate:*

- Follow the evacuation procedure for your building
- Don't panic
- Stay clear of the outside of the building – windows may shatter, raining glass over you
- Go to your pre-planned assembly point according to your employer's evacuation procedure
- Follow your workplace procedure for returning to work once the earthquake is over

# Fire

Fires can be started by many things – heating systems, cooking, discarded cigarettes, electricity, appliances, poor housekeeping, and the improper storage of chemicals are but a few examples.

Quick action can prevent a small fire from becoming uncontrollable. Unfortunately most people have never used a fire extinguisher or even seen one in use, let alone taken the time to note where they are located in their building.

Check your building procedures for the steps to take in case of fire.

## **At least remember this:**

- Review your buildings evacuation plan
- Know the location of fire extinguishers and escape routes.
- If you spot an unintended fire, sound the nearest alarm.
- Use a fire extinguisher only if you have been trained to do so.

## First Aid

It is important to get first aid promptly if an injury occurs.

All businesses will have a first aid kit on-site. The type of kit and the need for a first aid attendant will depend on the number of employees, the type of industry, and the travel time to the nearest hospital. Most small retail stores require only a basic first aid kit, which includes such items as bandages, scissors and latex gloves.

Your employer will provide information on how and where to get first aid at your workplace. When you get that training, you will know:

- How to get help if you are hurt but do not require an ambulance
- Who to report incidents to
- Whether there is a first aid attendant, first aid room, or first aid kit available

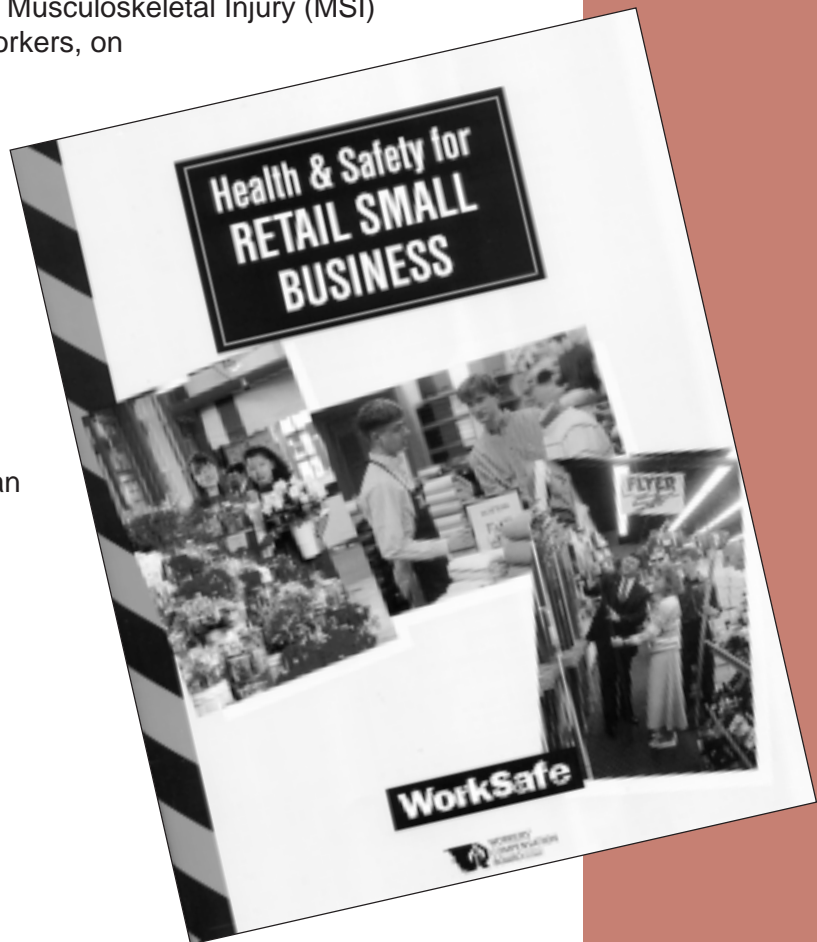
# Section 4

## *Finding further information*

### **WCB Resources for Retail**

- Health & Safety for Retail Small Business
- Small Business Guide to Health and Safety
- Take Care: How to Develop and Implement a Workplace Violence Prevention Program
- Understanding the Risks of Musculoskeletal Injury (MSI)  
An educational guide for workers, on sprains, strains, and other MSIs.
- What to do in case of a fire in your public building
- 3 Steps to Effective Worker Education and Training
- B.C. Workers Compensation Act
- B.C. Occupational Health and Safety Regulation

Each of these publications can be found at [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com)



# Section 5

## Help us improve this Guide

It is important for us to know if the subject and content of our health and safety publications are useful to you. Your opinion matters and it will help us to make future versions of this *Guide* more relevant to your needs.

Please complete the form on the following page and fax to the Retail Merchant's Association at 604 736-3154, or mail to us in the envelope provided.

## Contacts

Name/Company/Title	Phone	E-Mail
Laurie Lowes London Drugs Limited Manager Health and Safety	604 272-7115	llowes@londondrugs.com
Betty McNichol Costco Wholesale Western Canada Regional Safety Manager		bmacnichol@costco.com
Mike Stortz Overwaitea Food Group Employee Development Specialist	604 888-2079 Ext: 2296	mike_stortz@owfg.com
Brian Burgess Sears Canada	604 420-8578 604 787-0863 (cell)	bburgess@telus.net
Pat Smith 7-Eleven Canada	604 293-5644	Psmith@7-Eleven.ca
Ray Taylor B.C. Regional Manager Buy-Low Foods	604 888-7061 Local: 352	ray_taylor@buy-low.com
Terrie Binns Associate Relations Consultant B.C. Alberta	604 320-6806 Ext: 4400	Terrie.binns@staples.ca

## Tell us what you think about this *Guide*

On a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) please rate the following:

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
The topics in the Guide are relevant to your work	1	2	3	4	5
The information is useful	1	2	3	4	5
The information is interesting	1	2	3	4	5
There is enough general information	1	2	3	4	5
There is enough health and safety information	1	2	3	4	5
The information is easy to read	1	2	3	4	5
The information is easy to understand	1	2	3	4	5

Do you like the size of this booklet?  
Suggestions?

Yes

No

Do you have any suggestions or comments on how this booklet could be improved?

Is there anything in this booklet that you will implement or have already implemented as a result of reading this booklet?

You are a:

Worker

Employer

Supervisor

Health & Safety Personnel

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate the number of people that work in your store or company:

1-10

11-20

21-50

51-100

over 100



