


Working Alone

Working alone should be avoided whenever possible. When working alone is required, developing a work alone plan can prevent incidents through pre-planning and regular supervisor check-ins. Employees who work alone or in isolation tend to be more vulnerable than those who have co-workers present. If a lone worker is injured or an emergency occurs, how does the worker get help? What if the worker is unconscious? Even though such incidents are not that common, when they do occur the consequences can be serious.




Hazard	Definition	Examples
Working Alone	A worker who is the only person working at a worksite without direct supervision and access to emergency assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working in the shop or office after hours by yourself. Working in sales or with the public by yourself despite the interaction with customers. Work that involves driving by yourself.
Working in Isolation	A worker that cannot be heard or seen by another person or is working in a location where assistance is not readily available in the event of injury, illness, or an emergency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working in a remote area where emergency services will not be able to get to you immediately or at all. Working in a storage room where people rarely use.

What is the Danger?

While it is not always hazardous to work alone, it can be when other circumstances are present. Whether a situation is a high or low risk will depend on the location, type of work, interaction with the public, or the consequences of an emergency, incident, injury, etc. This wide variety of circumstances makes it important to assess each work alone situation.

Some high-risk activities for workers who work alone or in isolation include working:

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- At heights
 - In confined spaces (such as tanks, elevators, culverts, etc.)
 - With electricity or other forms of hazardous energy
 - With hazardous products
 - With hazardous equipment such as powered mobile equipment, machinery, etc.
 - With materials at great pressure
 - With the public, where there is a potential for violence



SAFETY TALKS

Working Alone

A working alone or in isolation procedure is a legislative requirement that must establish a set of rules for communication between employers/supervisors and the individual working alone or in isolation. The procedure ensures that emergency services can be provided in a timely manner should the individual working alone or in isolation need assistance or fail to communicate they are safe.

Safety Tips

- ✓ Avoid having workers work alone whenever possible, especially for jobs with a recognized risk. Using a buddy system is a way of staying in contact with that worker.
- ✓ Assess the risks in the workplace. Work alone plans are to include a risk assessment, length of time the person will be working alone, communication methods, type of work, and developed for each individual planning to work alone to assess pre-existing medical conditions, experience, training, etc.
- ✓ Report to your supervisor if you are required to work alone or find yourself in a work alone situation.
- ✓ Take corrective action to prevent or minimize the potential risks of working alone.
- ✓ Provide appropriate training and education to both the lone worker and the person tasked to respond if there is a concern.
- ✓ Establish a check-in procedure. Make sure that regular contact is kept with all workers. Establish ways to account for people (visually or verbally) while they are working.
- ✓ Schedule higher risk tasks to be done during normal business hours, or when another worker capable of helping is present in the event of an emergency.
- ✓ Develop a travel plan when you drive somewhere alone. Ensure vehicles are well-maintained to avoid breakdowns.
- ✓ Ensure emergency supplies and first aid kits are provided for workers who are traveling or working under conditions of extreme temperature or other inclement weather conditions.

Demonstrate

Develop check-in procedures for working alone based on risk. If already developed, review existing working alone communication procedures with your workers. Ensure workers are aware of who the designated contact person will be, how they will communicate, and how often.

Include in your Work Alone Policy a complete list of work activities that are not permitted while working alone.

Discussion

What are some situations where you may have to work alone or in isolation? What tasks are being performed? If higher risk work, can this work be rescheduled during regular work hours?

How do you communicate with a worker working alone or in isolation? If the location has poor cell service, what are some alternative methods?

DID YOU KNOW?

Young Workers under 18 years of age cannot work alone between 11:00pm-6:00am



Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act and Regulation

Part 5 – First Aid

Part 9 – Working Alone or in Isolation

Code of Practice - https://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/pdf/cop_work_alone.pdf

Workers Involved in this Safety Talk

Date: _____

Name	Signature

Name	Signature

Notes

Please contact S2SA with any questions or concerns!

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