

The purpose of this newsletter is to unite all the UNBC campus's (Prince George, Prince Rupert, Terrace, Gitwinksihlkw, Quesnel, Likely, Ft St John) and grow our UNBC Community's Safety Culture together by regularly communicating important Safety information. UNBC's mission is to Ignite, Inspire, and Lead change.

## Welcome to the February edition of our Safety Newsletter!

As winter continues to embrace our Northern campus, it's essential to stay informed and prepared for the unique challenges this season brings. In this issue, we'll discuss safety culture, mental health resources, and the fundamentals of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS). Let's work together to keep our community safe and warm during these frosty months!

**What is a safety culture** – A safety culture in the workplace refers to the collective attitudes and practices aimed at ensuring employee safety. It positively impacts both physical and mental well-being. Workplace culture is influenced by leadership, management, supervision styles, peer pressure, conditions, and logistics. In a strong safety culture, everyone shares values prioritizing health and safety, actively engaging in injury and disease prevention.

**Why is a workplace Safety culture important** - It has been proven that a safety culture enables higher employee satisfaction, improved productivity, reduced number of incidents and prevents injuries. Safety cultures pave the path to more informed management and improve employees' perception of more support available from management. Safety cultures, furthermore, enhance overall safety knowledge including the fact that everyone is accountable.

**What can you do to improve the safety culture at your workplace** – Every member of our UNBC community plays a vital role in fostering a positive safety culture.

### As an employee:

- Participate in safety training and consistently apply safety practices throughout the workday.
- Encourage your co-workers to follow safety procedures and guidelines.
- Engage in safety activities or committees and understand your organization's values.

### As a manager:

- Demonstrate your commitment through your actions, ensure employees are well trained.
- Coordinate monthly safety talks and reward employees who report safety hazards or concerns.
- Implement a positive reporting process, involve and engage workers, and maintain a trained and active health and safety committee.

Working together and promoting a supportive work environment with your co-workers – It is important that you feel comfortable speaking regularly about health and safety at work. It helps you to be on the same page with your co-workers and your employer when it comes to following the rules and procedures.

It's also important that you feel comfortable talking to your co-workers in general. Engaging in casual, informal conversations helps to build trust and strengthen relationships. Showing genuine concern for your colleagues' well-being fosters a culture of support and empathy. By checking in and offering support, you can help your co-workers stay engaged and productive. This trust leads to better collaboration and communication, creating stronger team cohesion and a more positive workplace atmosphere.

**Mental Health & Early Intervention** - Openly discussing mental health helps normalize these conversations and reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues. This encourages others to speak up and seek help when needed. If you notice signs of mental health struggles in a co-worker, here are some tips for starting the conversation:

- **Choose the Right Setting:** Find a private and comfortable place to talk.
- **Be Empathetic:** Express your concern without judgment. For example, you could say, "I've noticed you seem a bit down lately. Is everything okay?"
- **Listen Actively:** Give them your full attention and let them share their feelings without interrupting.
- **Offer Support:** Let them know you're there for them and suggest resources if appropriate, such as an employee assistance program or mental health professional.

**Remember, reaching out and showing that you care can make a significant difference in someone's life.**

### Fun Fact!

Did you know that we have 6100 types of chemicals in UNBC Chemstores!

## Mental health support resources available:

Provider	Services	Contact Information
Fire, Police, Ambulance	Emergency support, transportation to hospital	9-1-1
Campus Security	First Aid, student and employee support	250-960-7058
Homewood Health	Employee and Family Assistance	1-800-663-1142
Suicide Crisis Line	Emotional crisis support	9-8-8
Kids Help Phone	Emotional support, under the age of 20	1-800-668-6868
United Way	Free, confidential support	2-1-1, or bc.211.ca
PACT	Mobile mental health professional response	1-778-349-4612 Text: 778-349-3459

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>Occupational Health &amp; Safety Fundamentals</b>	<b>Policies &amp; Procedures</b>	<b>Legitimation: Acts &amp; Regulations</b>
<b>Hazard Analysis, Risk Assessment &amp; Control</b>	<b>Ergonomics for injury prevention &amp; accommodation</b>	<b>Hazardous Materials &amp; Occupational Hygiene</b>	<b>Fire Safety Planning, Systems &amp; Inspections</b>
<b>Accident Investigation &amp; Reporting</b>	<b>Worksite Inspections</b>	<b>Emergency Preparedness &amp; Response</b>	<b>Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee</b>

In February, we will focus on Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) Fundamentals, which are essential for maintaining a safe and healthy work environment. This month's overview provides a general introduction to these principles. Throughout 2025, we will delve into each topic.

### General OHS Fundamentals:

**1. Worker Rights:** Workers have the right to know about hazards, participate in health and safety activities, and refuse unsafe work.

**2. Employer Responsibilities:** Employers must provide a safe workplace, ensure workers are trained, and comply with OH&S regulations.

**3. Joint Health and Safety Committees:** These committees, required in workplaces with 20 or

more employees, play a crucial role in identifying hazards and recommending improvements.

**4. Hazard Identification and Control:** Employers and workers must identify potential hazards and implement controls to mitigate risks. This includes using the hierarchy of controls: elimination, substitution, engineering controls, administrative controls, and personal protective equipment (PPE).

**5. Incident Investigation:** All workplace incidents must be

investigated to determine causes and prevent recurrence.

**6. Training and Education:** Continuous training and education are essential for maintaining a safe work environment. This includes understanding safety systems, programs, and resources.

**7. Mental Health and Well-being:** Promoting a psychologically healthy workplace is also a key aspect of OH&S, addressing issues like stress, bullying, and harassment.

## Positive Observations

### Promoting a Safety Conscious Culture for our UNBC Community

The Chemstores safety board has excellent safety posters displayed including WHMIS, TDG and Laboratory Safety Guidelines.



During orientation week in January, the guide wore high-visibility apparel, making it easy for new students to identify their leader during the tour.



If you see any positive safety initiatives, please photograph them, and send the pictures to [safety@unbc.ca](mailto:safety@unbc.ca)

App Store



**Working together for safety**

*We would like to thank everyone for participating in our growing Safety Community at UNBC!*

Google Play

