

Safety - it's in your Hands



March month brings about thoughts of impending spring and celebrating all things green! Bringing us the St. Patrick's Day holiday, March is also a time for spring cleaning and working with our hands. We offer these tips to help protect them.



Protect your Hands – Use your Head

As much as our hands are our primary tools / instruments to work, we control them with our head. If we want our hands to perform at their best, we need to think and act in a safe manner. Behaviours like working our hands beyond the point of fatigue or continuing to expose them to harsh cold / hot temperatures will result in negative outcomes. We need to use our safety smarts to ensure our hands are ready to work as the tools they were intended.



This information brought to you by **Safety Services Newfoundland Labrador**. For more information, please contact us at **(709) 754-0210**.



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Give Safety a Hand

Avoiding Hand Injuries

Whether you're a machine operator, a lab technician, chef, office worker - or any kind of worker for that matter--your hands are one of your most important "instruments." Yet, so many people suffer serious (and often disabling) hand injuries every year. By recognizing hand hazards, following established safety guidelines, and using appropriate protective equipment as needed, you can save your hands from injury and yourself from unnecessary disability.

Recognizing Hand Hazards

One of the most serious yet common causes of hand injury is the use of unprotected or faulty machinery or equipment. Failure to use guards, kill-switches, push-sticks, or to follow appropriate lock-out procedures are among the leading industrial hand hazards. Wearing jewelry, gloves, or loose-fitting clothing around moving parts can also lead to injury. Chemicals, corrosives, and other irritating substances can cause burns and skin inflammation unless appropriate hand protection is used. Temperature extremes and electrical hazards are other common causes of hand injuries. In addition, constant, repetitive motion (as in assembly-line work, data entry, painting as well as texting) can cause undue stress on the wrists and hands unless protective measures are taken. The following list provides a guideline for hand safety that can help you protect your hands from injury and disability.

Hand Protection Checklist

1. Be alert to potential hand hazards *before* an event happens – factor these in your JSA's and safe work practices.
2. Be alert to possible unguarded pinch points.
3. Always use guards, shields, push-sticks, and other protective devices when appropriate. Never remove a guard.
4. Use brushes to wipe away debris.
5. Inspect equipment and machinery before and after tasks to make sure that it is in good operating condition.
6. Disconnect power and follow established lock-out procedures before repairing or cleaning machinery.
7. Never wear gloves, jewelry, or loose clothing when working with moving machine parts.
8. When working, use appropriate gloves that fit properly and are rated for the specific task you are performing.
9. Select tools designed to keep wrists straight to help avoid repetitive motion.
10. Rest and give your hands a break. Hand muscles are smaller muscles and can tire more easily than our larger muscles in our body.

Adapted from: www.safetyinfo.com

MARKING MARCH OHS TRAGEDIES

In the history of our province, March certainly goes down as one of the deadliest on the OHS front. On March 12 we remember the unimaginable loss of Cougar Flight 491 but at the end of March we also mark the tragedy of the Great Sealing Disaster. We are surrounded by the sea. Many make their living from the sea. But like everything, it is not without its unique risks. This poster is to remember all that we have lost to the ocean.



OCEAN DANGERS

The North Atlantic can be a dangerous and deadly place. History has shown us that. Although these two major March tragedies verify that fact, they are unfortunately not isolated events. Fishing trawlers as well as vessels of all shapes and sizes have capsized or lost personnel overboard as the sea claims other victims. So on this month of loss and remembrance we think of all those who never returned safely from work on the sea.

ATLANTIC BLUE

What colour is a heartache from a love lost at sea

What Shade of memory never fades but lingers to eternity

How dark is the light of day that sleepless eyes of mine survey

Is that you Atlantic Blue? My heart is as cold as you.

Lyrics: Ron Hynes



LOSS TO THE SEA

1914 Sealing Disaster

On March 31, 1914 the sealing vessel SS *Southern Cross* and its crew of 174 failed to arrive in St. John's from the Gulf of St. Lawrence as scheduled. Two days later, an already anxious public learned that sealers with the SS *Newfoundland* had spent 53 hours stranded on the North Atlantic ice floes in blizzard conditions. With a combined death count of **252**, the double tragedy caused widespread mourning and ultimately changed attitudes and legislation surrounding the Newfoundland and Labrador sealing industry. The government and public began to hold ship owners and captains more accountable for their crewmembers' safety, and society began to examine its own responsibility toward the sealers.

In 1914-15, the government held a commission of enquiry to examine the *Newfoundland* and *Southern Cross* sealing disasters. Although no criminal charges were laid, the commission's findings made it clear that sealers faced unnecessarily dangerous working conditions on the ice. To remedy this, the commission recommended that captains be prohibited from ordering their crews so far from their ships that they could not return the same day; that sealers work on the ice only between sunrise and sunset; and that all sealing ships carry wireless equipment, thermometers, and barometers. The commission also recommended that ship owners be made accountable for any injuries or deaths sustained by their crews and that sealers carry compasses, signaling equipment, and a means of providing fire on the ice.

2009 Crash of Cougar Flight 491

On March 12, 2009 Cougar 491 began its regular 90 minute, 315 km shuttle flight from St. John's International Airport, usually servicing the Hibernia oilfield. This flight was carrying workers to the SeaRose FPSO and the Hibernia Platform.

A Mayday call was issued after the aircraft reported zero oil pressure in the main gearbox at 9:40 a.m. NDT. Cougar Flight 491 attempted to return to St. John's but went down at 9:48 a.m. Those are the Wikipedia facts.

Here at home we often talk about one degree of separation between each of us in NL. As many people began to learn of this tragedy and of the 17 lives lost, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians all over this province began talking about those they knew that went down that day.

This year has brought much media attention back to March 12, 2009. The Offshore Helicopter Safety Inquiry led by Commissioner Wells released its report into helicopter safety November 17, 2010. February 9, 2011, just about 3 months later, the Transportation Safety Board released its findings.

Now that the reports are completed and the recommendations made, the real ground work continues to make offshore work healthier and safer for all those involved.

On March 12 we respectfully remember: Pilot Matthew Davis, First Officer Tim Lanouette, John Pelley, Corey Eddy, Thomas Anwyll, Peter Breen, Gary Corbett, Wade Drake, Wade Duggan, Colin Henley, Ken MacRae, Derrick Mullowney, Burch Nash, Paul Pike, Allison Maher, Keith Escott and Gregory Morris. We also send our thoughts to Robert Decker.

Source: www.heritage.nf.ca

