

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 October Edition of the Safety Newsletter where we are spotlighting worksite Safety Inspections.

Worksite Safety Inspections are a cornerstone of proactive risk management and a vital part of our commitment to health and safety. They go beyond compliance—they are strategic tools for cultivating a culture of safety, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Why Worksite Inspections Matter

Proactive Hazard Identification and Prevention: Inspections are a preventive tool that helps identify unsafe conditions and practices before they lead to incidents. This includes everything from malfunctioning equipment to poor ergonomics or inadequate emergency procedures. By catching these issues early, we can implement corrective actions that protect staff, students, and visitors.

Risk Management and Safety Culture: Inspections promote visibility, trust, and engagement, reinforcing that safety is everyone's responsibility. Universities are complex environments with diverse activities—from laboratories and workshops to administrative offices. Inspections help assess risk levels and tailor safety protocols accordingly. UNBC conducts different types of inspections (Formal, Informal, Specialized & Regulatory) based on the nature and risk of the work being done. This layered approach fosters a culture of safety and accountability.

Continuous Improvement of Safety Programs: Inspections are not just about identifying problems—they're also about evaluating and improving existing safety programs. Here at UNBC, inspection findings are reviewed by the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC), which collaborates with managers and union representatives to refine safety strategies and submit recommendations to university leadership. Findings may identify training needs, the need to refine safety strategies, and support long-term safety goals.

Legal Compliance – Regulatory Inspections: Universities in BC are subject to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation under WorkSafeBC (WSBC). Regular inspections are mandated to ensure compliance with safety standards across buildings, equipment, and work practices. Failure to meet these standards can result in legal penalties, reputational damage, and increased liability. Regulatory bodies such as WSBC, Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC), Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) conduct audits and inspections to verify adherence to these laws. Non-compliance can lead to penalties, reputational damage, and increased liability.

Documentation and Accountability: Inspection reports serve as a formal record of safety conditions, actions taken, and areas needing improvement. These documents are essential for tracking progress, ensuring follow-up, and demonstrating due diligence. BC regulations require inspection records to be kept for at least three years.

Engagement and Awareness: Inspections engage various stakeholders, JOHSC members, supervisors, staff, and sometimes external experts. This collaborative process increases awareness of safety issues and empowers individuals to take ownership of their work environments. Informal daily inspections, for instance, encourage staff to remain vigilant and report hazards immediately.

In summary, inspections are not just a regulatory checkbox, they are a strategic mechanism for safeguarding health, enhancing operational resilience, and promoting a proactive safety culture.

Regular Inspections: Prevent injuries and illnesses, ensure regulatory compliance, promote employee engagement in safety, support hazard identification and risk mitigation, and provide documentation for due diligence

Inspections are more than a checklist—they're a chance to connect with workers, reinforce safety values, and build trust.

When employees see safety personnel actively engaging with the worksite, it sends a clear message: Safety is everyone's responsibility.

Roles & Responsibilities

Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment & Control

Accident Investigation & Reporting

Occupational Health & Safety Fundamentals

Ergonomics for injury prevention & accommodation

Worksite Inspections

Policies & Procedures

Hazardous Materials & Occupational Hygiene

Emergency Preparedness & Response

Legitimation: Acts & Regulations

Fire Safety Planning, Systems & Inspections

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Fun Fact!

UNBC Safety Culture Starts with Visibility - Research consistently shows that visible leadership engagement, frequent safety observations, and on-site presence of safety personnel are leading indicators of a strong safety culture and are correlated with improved safety outcomes.

Types of Inspections

UNBC conducts various types of inspections tailored to the nature and risk of work. Here are the general types of inspections.

Formal Inspections

Formal inspections are conducted on a scheduled basis and documented using standardized checklists. These records are systematically reviewed by both management and the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) to ensure accountability, track progress, and guide continuous safety improvements.

Informal Inspections

Ongoing, day-to-day observations conducted by supervisors, faculty, staff, and safety personnel play a critical role in identifying emerging safety concerns. These informal inspections foster a culture of vigilance and encourage prompt reporting of hazards, ensuring that potential risks are addressed before they escalate.

Specialized Inspections

Specialized inspections are initiated in response to incidents, equipment modifications, or significant operational changes. These inspections are crucial for ensuring that operations do not resume until it is safe to do so. They also help identify root causes and prevent recurrence. Depending on the complexity or severity of the situation, these inspections may require the involvement of external experts or technical specialists to ensure thorough assessment and appropriate corrective actions. R

What to Look for During Inspections

- **Physical Hazards:** Slips, trips, falls, equipment malfunctions, poor lighting, noise levels.
- **Chemical Hazards:** Proper labeling, storage, ventilation, PPE usage.
- **Biological Hazards:** Sanitation, exposure controls, waste management.
- **Ergonomic Risks:** Repetitive tasks, workstation design, manual handling.
- **Behavioral Observations:** Safe work practices, use of PPE, adherence to procedures.

Best Practices for Effective Inspections

- Use a checklist tailored to the worksite
- Engage workers in the inspection process
- Document findings clearly and objectively
- Assign corrective actions with timelines
- Follow up to ensure issues are resolved
- Analyze trends to inform training and prevention strategies

Your Role in Inspections

Whether you're a supervisor, worker, or visitor, you play a role in maintaining a safe environment. Speak up, report hazards, and participate in inspections. Your voice matters. Contact Us - For questions, concerns, or to report a hazard email safety@unbc.ca. Call the Safety Office (250) 960-5530, Call **UNBC Security** at 250-960-7058 or use the **UNBC SAFE APP** to report.

As we transition into the fall season, bear sightings continue to be reported.

To help ensure the safety of everyone on campus, please keep the following guidelines in mind to minimize the risk of bear encounters:

- **Make Noise:** When walking in forested or low-visibility areas, speak loudly to alert wildlife of your presence.
- **Travel in Groups:** Bears are less likely to approach groups of people.
- **Avoid Attractants:** Do not leave food, garbage, or scented items outdoors. Use bear-proof containers where available.
- **Stay Alert:** Watch for signs of bear activity such as tracks, scat, claw marks, or scavenger birds.

Report bear sightings or encounters immediately to UNBC Security at 250-960-7058 or use the UNBC SAFE App to report wildlife activity or hazards.



If you see any positive safety initiatives, please photograph them, and send the pictures to safety@unbc.ca

App Store



Google Play



Working together for safety

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