



The Workers Compensation Board (WCB) extends its heartfelt thanks to all utility workers for their tremendous efforts in reshaping our Island back to normal.

Here are safety tips that workers and Islanders should be mindful of during work, cleanup and using equipment as the post-storm clean up continues.

1. When using ladders or cranes

- Before using a ladder identify all hazards in the area such as power lines. There is a potential for injury or death one a ladder makes contact with a power line.
- Inspect your step ladder for splits, twists, broken braces, loose hinges or loose steps, before use.
- Ensure the ladder is stable and firm on its legs. Avoid placing your ladder on slippery and unstable surfaces
- Do not place a step ladder on boxes, carts, scaffolds or unstable objects.
- Avoid sitting or standing on the top of the step ladder.
- Keep your body between the rails, if you cannot reach
- When climbing up or down always face the ladder and maintain three point contact- both arms and a leg on the ladder.
- When using a crane truck, try to avoid contact to a power line
- Once a crane has contacted a high power voltage line, the ground area of the crane truck has been energized. DO NOT MOVE.
- If in immediate danger and need to move, keep your feet together and slowly shuffle (toe to heel and never leaving the ground) at least 10 metres away.

Sources for more info:

[*Safety matters at work: Use your step ladder safely*](#)

[*Safety Talk: Ladder Safety*](#)

[*Electrical Safety: Crane Truck Contact*](#)

2. When using a chainsaw

- DO NOT USE a chainsaw if you have not received formal or workplace training on chainsaw safety.
- Wearing PPE- a hard hat with shield, gloves, chainsaw pants, neck guard, chainsaw boots- is a must
- Make sure the chainsaw is clean and in good condition
- Test the chainsaw before use, and always cut at waist level or below.
- Be aware of 'chainsaw kickback' and how to maintain control when it happens
- Make sure you and others are protected from flying debris
- Make sure other workers are nearby in case you get injured. Bystanders or coworkers should be 30 feet away from anyone using a chainsaw.
- Scan your cutting area for possible hazards such as nails or cables outside or inside the wood or debris around.
- Avoid contact with power lines or cutting them until it is disconnected from a power source.
- If an injury/cut happens, apply direct pressure on the wound.

Sources for more info:

[*Preventing chainsaw injuries during tree removal after a disaster*](#)

[*Bulletin 272: Chainsaw Safety*](#)

[*The Forest Professional*](#)

3. Keen attention to workers/contractors new to a job

- New workers must be aware of possible hazards in their work environment
- Supervisors MUST ensure new workers are well trained, and new workers must routinely practice work related skills under supervision from an experienced co-worker/supervisor.
- New workers should inform their employer or supervisor about any safety concerns.
- Employers MUST take every safety precaution to ensure a new worker is safe, accord to the OHS Act.

Source for more info:

[*What You Don't Know*](#)

Know your workplace hazards: [*Guide to Performing a hazard assessment*](#)

- Biological: Bacteria, viruses, insects, fungi, animals, and plants- can lead to viruses or diseases.
- Chemicals
- Ergonomic: relating to work stations or designs; repetitive movements, poor lighting, awkward posture, etc. can lead to physiological problems
- Physical: Noise, vibration, radiation, heights, extreme temperatures also lead to physiological problems
- Safety: Slipping/tripping hazards, insufficient machine guarding, equipment malfunctions, heavy machinery operating
- Psychosocial: Stress, violence, harassment, emotionally draining work, increased fatigue.

4. Avoid working fatigued

Working fatigued is as bad as working while impaired. It can lead to poor judgement, planning, communication, attention, memory, reduce your ability to handle stress and lead to stress related effects such as mood swings.

- If you are a worker, tell a supervisor if you or a coworker is unable to work due to fatigue
- Take breaks in between shifts to address fatigue, PPE limitations and/or heat of cold related illnesses.
- Supervisors must prevent a worker from working if there are signs of fatigue or impairment
- Supervisors should create shifts that give workers enough time to rest- 10 hours of rest time in a 24 hr. period
- Supervisors must provide a work environment with adequate lighting and temperature.
- Encourage workers to maintain a healthy lifestyle such as eating healthy and getting enough rest.

Source for more info:

[Prevention Update: Fit for duty](#)

5. When using gas or propane fueled equipment

The use of some alternative sources of electricity for heating, cooling, or cooking can cause carbon monoxide (CO) - an odorless, colorless and tasteless gas- to build up in a worksite building or home and can poison the people and animals inside. Here are safety tips to prevent CO poisoning

- Generators, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline/propane fueled equipment should never be used inside an enclosed worksite, basement, garage, or mobile office – or even outside near a window.
- Educate workers on the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning and the importance of getting medical assistance immediately.
- Inform workers of working alone procedures to ensure that they are in contact with someone who can provide assistance in hazardous situations.
- Recognize potential ventilation problems in enclosed areas where gases of burning fuels may be released.
- Equip appropriate respiratory machines nearby. Ensure workers are adequately trained to properly use respirators, have been fit-tested, and are clean shaven before use.

Sources for more info:

[*Carbon Monoxide Hazard Alert*](#)

[*Generator Safety*](#)