



Tool Box Safety Talk No. 12

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Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness is more than first aid training. Emergency preparedness includes evacuation planning, TDG and WHMIS training for the workers. Each roofing company must develop an emergency action plan and as well as educate employees to make them aware of their roles during an emergency. The emergency plan requires that quick and decisive response is undertaken. The emergency plan must be tested periodically so everyone understands the procedure(s). The emergency plan must be reviewed and updated as planning and employee responsibilities may change frequently. All emergencies shall be reported to the company office or emergency response agency. All workers must know how to use communication devices. Do not assume that everyone knows how to operate a cell phone or other communication device or knows how to summons emergency assistance.

Evacuation Plan

An evacuation plan should include escape procedures as well as an escape route. The emergency evacuation plan will differ greatly for a high rise building than for a residence. The escape route must be addressed for each job site as building designs and roof layouts vary. The plan shall include critical equipment that must be shut down prior to evacuation as their operation or presence may contribute to make the situation more hazardous. This might include the shutdown of bitumen heating equipment or the removal of propane cylinders, gasoline or adhesive and primer containers. Electrical generators or extension cords may be a hazard that could contribute to a fire. All workers should know the trained first aid and medical personnel. The first aiders need to know their responsibilities in the event of an emergency. The plan needs to account for all personnel following an emergency evacuation. Workers must know where assembly points or meeting places are located so a head count can take place following an evacuation. The plan needs to address how employees will be alerted to evacuate. This is particularly important when roofing at an industrial facility. A human voice may not be sufficient to alert all workers if high noise levels are being experienced at the work site. To be heard above the surrounding noise conditions, an electronic alarm may be required.

Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG)

Individuals offering for transport, transporting or handling dangerous goods need to be TDG trained and certified. TDG training provides workers with the knowledge of how to identify dangerous goods and how to safely transport and handle them. Federal dangerous goods regulations were developed to protect the public and the environment from dangerous goods incidences. Dangerous goods training is only valid in Alberta and is not valid outside the province. Training must be updated every three (3) years. Training records must be kept on file in the company office.

Employees must take reasonable emergency measures to reduce, contain or eliminate the danger to the public or the environment in the event of a spill or accidental release of a dangerous good. When transporting dangerous goods the shipping documents must be in a pocket in the driver's door or within immediate reach of the driver.

If a trailer containing dangerous goods is detached from the truck at the job site, a copy of the shipping documents must be placed in a watertight container attached to the trailer that is accessible and identifiable by emergency workers.

The person in control of the dangerous goods must immediately report any release or eminent release of dangerous goods, if a container is in danger of leaking or as the result of an accident dangerous goods need to be transferred. The person in control of the dangerous goods must immediately report to the local police and the Alberta authority by calling 1-800-272-9600. Then call their employer, the shipper (consignor) of the dangerous goods and the owner of the vehicle, if other than a company owned vehicle. A written report by the employer must be made within thirty (30) days of a dangerous occurrence or release of dangerous goods. The Alberta Roofing Contractors Association has applied for an exemption from some of the TDG requirements. These exemptions are contained in a Permit for Equivalent Level of Safety which is to be located in the glove box of the vehicle. The permit is an exemption from documentation when limited quantities of dangerous goods are transported by land vehicle. **The permit is not an exemption from TDG training.**

WHMIS

Roofers must be WHMIS trained and training records shall be kept by their employer. Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) was introduced to educate and protect workers from hazardous materials. WHMIS helps you to know more about hazardous products that you use at work. This is important as chemicals could injure you when in contact with your skin or when breathing their vapours. Even if you are not using the product yourself you may be in danger when exposed to hazardous products being used in construction by other trades. Many materials used in roofing could be hazardous to your health.

One of the key components of the WHMIS training is the use of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). The MSDS information sheets shall be contained in a binder provided by the employer and must be available at the job site. Workers need to know the job site location of the MSDS sheets should they be needed. MSDS sheets are provided by the material manufacturer and contain information on hazardous products and how to safely use them.

Labels attached to the containers identify hazardous goods. Labels will have a distinctive WHMIS border that may be any colour except orange and be placed on the container by the supplier.