



BRITISH
COLUMBIA



BC HOUSING

Contractor Safety Program

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CONTRACTOR SAFETY PROGRAM

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BC HOUSING CONTRACTOR SAFETY

BC Housing is committed to providing safe and healthy working conditions, preventing accidents, and promoting positive attitudes toward safety and health within our organization, and expects full cooperation and participation from all contractors in this safety program.

BC Housing maintains the highest standards for occupational health and safety in equipment design and operation, and complies with all applicable laws and regulations.

BC Housing requires all contractors to plan for and design safety into every project on BC Housing managed property, with appropriate standards and safe work procedures, based on WorkSafeBC's Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, the minimum requirement all BC Housing contractors must meet.

Contractor training and education on safe work procedures and workplace hazards are also required under WorkSafeBC's regulations. BC Housing expects contractors to be knowledgeable about workplace hazards.

BC Housing reserves the right to terminate a contractor who does not comply with the *Workers Compensation Act* and WorkSafeBC regulations, at any time. An infraction may disqualify the contractor from working on future BC Housing projects.

Disclaimer

The information presented here is, to the best of our knowledge, current at the time of publication and is intended for general application. This publication is not a definitive guide to government regulations, practices and procedures applicable under every circumstance. Contractors need to consult the appropriate regulations and statutes during a contract.

BC Housing would be pleased to answer individual requests for additional information about the contents of this program. However, we cannot guarantee the accuracy of, nor assume liability for, the information presented here.

Please forward all inquiries to: ohs@bchousing.org

INTRODUCTION

An effective health and safety program:

- Eliminates or reduces the likelihood of workplace accidents and incidents
- Controls specific workplace hazards
- Proves an employer has done due diligence

We designed this safety program in accordance with [WorkSafeBC's Occupational Health & Safety Regulation](#) (OHSR) to ensure the health and safety of all BC Housing contractors and their employees and/or subcontractors.

This safety program sets out BC Housing's minimum requirements for contractors on occupational health and safety policies, general site work procedures, and emergency procedures, when performing work activities on BC Housing operated properties.

DEFINITION

The term “**contractor**” includes contractors, consultants, subcontractors, suppliers, vendors, and their workers.

In this safety program, volunteers who perform work on BC Housing's managed property are considered contractors.

EMPLOYER AND CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 BC Housing

Our responsibility is to help contractors coordinate health and safety activities by:

- Providing contractors with information on all workplace hazards in your work areas
- Ensuring the requirements of the Workers Compensation Act and WorkSafeBC Occupational Health & Safety Regulation are met
- Ensuring a system is in place to evaluate a contractor's safety program and safe work procedures, before commencing onsite work (if required)

Coordinating Multiple Employer Workplaces

Unless otherwise stated, Contractors are primarily responsible for workplace health and safety responsibilities for their workers and their sub-contractors. If there are multiple contractors, two or more, who use the same work area at the same time, then BC Housing, unless assigned to another qualified individual or organization, will assume the coordination responsibilities of the contractor. If any questions regarding this on a jobsite, please contact the building manager or site representative prior to starting work.

1.2 Contractors

Contractors must:

- Ensure workers are properly trained in and follow all aspects of workplace safety and health related to the services in your contract
- Ensure any services provided under contract are carried out in accordance with the [Workers Compensation Act](#), [WorkSafeBC regulations](#), and all applicable statutes and regulations
- Provide immediate notice to BC Housing of any damage, injury, or threat of damage or injury to persons or property while working on BC Housing property
- Provide BC Housing with a copy of your current safety program, exposure control plan, and safe work procedures, upon request
- Train and educate workers in all aspects of workplace safety, in accordance with the WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation
- Ensure staff, residents and the public are kept safe at all times
- Provide all necessary tools, materials and equipment for workers to perform tasks safely
- Understand and be knowledgeable about workplace hazards.

WorkSafeBC Registration

Contractors under contract to BC Housing must:

- Be registered with [WorkSafeBC](#) and be in good standing
- Ensure all overdue or outstanding assessments are paid
- Provide BC Housing with your WorkSafeBC registration number or Certificate of Clearance

If you are unsure of your registration status with WorkSafeBC, contact the Employer Service Centre at 604.244.6181 or toll free at 1.888.922.2768.

Failure to comply with all applicable health and safety requirements will be cause for immediate termination or suspension of a contract, until the deficiency is rectified in a manner that is acceptable to BC Housing and/or WorkSafeBC.

1.3 Notice of Project

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation requires contractors to notify WorkSafeBC in writing, using the Notice of Project (NOP) form, about undertaking certain projects, including names of the:

- Owner
- Prime contractor
- Person in charge of the project
- Person responsible for health and safety on the project

[Click here](#) to find out the types of projects requiring a Notice of Project and how to submit the form to WorkSafeBC.

WorkSafeBC prevention officers and managers monitor NOPs in their areas and select projects for follow up, based on the risk level and size/nature of the project or other circumstances. As a result, you may or may not be contacted for more information.

A copy of the NOP must be posted at the worksite. All NOPs for working with Asbestos or Lead (NOPA or NOPL) are to be submitted to BC Housing at amp@bchousing.org.

1.4 Contractor Workers

Contractors' workers are responsible for their own health and safety, as well as their fellow workers, while under their supervisors' direction. Worker responsibilities include:

- Being alert to hazards
- Reporting hazards and incidents/accidents to supervisors
- Reporting injuries to the first aid attendant
- Reporting any unsafe acts and conditions immediately to supervisors
- Using and wearing protective clothing and equipment when required
- Refusing unsafe work
- Learning and following safe work procedures and the company's safety program

1.5 Accident/Incident Investigations

Employers and contractors are required by regulation to investigate accidents and incidents. The WorkSafeBC OHSR states:

“Except in the case of a vehicle accident occurring on a public street or highway, every employer must immediately initiate an investigation into the cause of every accident which:

- a) Is required to be reported by the Regulation
- b) Resulted in injury requiring medical treatment, or
- c) Did not involve injury but had a potential for causing serious injury.”

Contractors are responsible for conducting their own accident/incident investigations while onsite. Contractors are required to prepare accident investigation reports in accordance with the WorkSafeBC OHSR. BC Housing may request copies of these reports for our records.

BC Housing may decide to conduct an independent accident investigation, depending on the nature and severity of the accident, when it affects our employees, property, and/or tenants.

1.6 Contractor Safety Meetings

BC Housing recommends contractors hold safety meetings on a regular basis (aka crew talks) to ensure workers understand the requirements and potential hazards of the job, as well as safety precautions and safety equipment required.

BC Housing may ask to sit in on these meetings or request meeting documentation for our records.

1.7 Right to Refuse Work

Everyone employed in British Columbia is covered by the Workers Compensation Act and workers must abide by the legislation. This law gives workers the right to refuse unsafe work and work practices. Workers can refuse to perform a duty they have reasonable cause to believe would endanger their own and/or other employees' health and safety, including BC Housing staff.

A worker exercising this right:

- Must immediately report the problem to their supervisor,
- Shall not be disciplined for exercising this right, and
- May be temporarily assigned alternative work at no loss in pay, until the matter is resolved.

The contractor must inform a BC Housing representative immediately if this situation occurs.

1.8 Contractor Site Orientation

Before contractors begin any work on BC Housing property, all activities must be coordinated with the Building Manager or designated representative. The BC Housing representative will discuss the following topics with contractors and your workers:

- 1) General site rules
- 2) Emergency evacuation
- 3) Fire protection, if applicable
- 4) Resident and public relations/safety
- 5) Site specific hazards, concerns and/or procedures
- 6) First aid (where applicable)

1.9 Worker Training and Orientation

Contractors are responsible for ensuring every new worker receives adequate worksite training and orientation, before starting work. The supervisor must continue to follow up to ensure workers can demonstrate safe work procedures. In addition, it is the responsibility of the Contractor to ensure only qualified workers perform duties requiring government licensing or certification.

Contractors and supervisors also have to be trained to administer your health and safety program and provide training for your workers.

BC Housing can ask to see contractor training records at any time. Please ensure these records are readily available upon request.

2.1 First Aid Services and Injury Reporting

Contractors are responsible for supplying first aid equipment, supplies, facilities and services. (See [sections 3.14 to 3.20 of the WorkSafeBC OHSR](#) for more information.)

Contractors providing services within BC Housing buildings must ensure workers are informed and aware of the location and availability of first aid, when required.

Part three of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation also requires employers to keep up-to-date written procedures for providing first aid, posted in conspicuous locations throughout the workplace. Posting this notice will ensure the following two requirements are communicated:

- The authority of the first aid attendant to treat injured workers, and
- The responsibility of the employer to report injuries

If posting is not practicable, employers must use other measures to communicate the information to workers.

In the case of an injury resulting in time loss and/or medical aid, you are required to report the incident/injury to WorkSafeBC within three business days of the:

- Injury's occurrence, or
- Employer's representative being notified of the injury, via a completed Employer's Report of Injury or Occupational Exposure Form 7.1

Under [Division 10, Section 68 of the Worker's Compensation Act](#) an employer must immediately report fatalities and serious injuries; major failure or collapse of a building, bridge, tower, crane, hoist, temporary construction support system or excavation; or major release of a hazardous substance to the WorkSafeBC Prevention Emergency Line at 604.276.3301 in the Lower Mainland or toll-free at 1.888.621.7233.

2.2 Fire Emergency

BC Housing properties have fire safety measures in place to protect occupants and visitors, such as smoke alarms, heat detectors, fire alarms, evacuation routes, assembly areas and other safeguards.

When working at a BC Housing site, contractors need to be familiar with the onsite fire safety measures. You can obtain this information from the BC Housing contract administrator or Fire Safety Director/Deputy Fire Safety Director at the property.

CHAPTER 3: GENERAL SITE RULES

Contractors and your onsite workers must abide by the following general site rules:

- 1) All workers are expected to show up fit for work and should not be impaired or under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances.
- 2) All workers are to wear personal identification when working onsite in public areas or tenanted suites.
- 3) A worker shall treat all individuals present in the workplace with courtesy and respect.
- 4) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be maintained in good condition and used correctly when required for the work.
- 5) Only properly trained and authorized workers shall operate tools, equipment and machinery.
- 6) All unsafe acts and conditions must be reported to your supervisor or safety representative without delay.
- 7) A worker who sustains any injury, no matter how slight, must report it to the first aid attendant or their supervisor immediately.
- 8) Workers are expected to maintain good housekeeping in their areas of responsibility.
- 9) Workers shall not engage in any improper activity that creates a hazard. This includes practical jokes, fighting, unnecessary running or similar conduct.
- 10) Smoking is only permitted outdoors in designated smoking areas, or at a minimum 3 meters (10 feet) from any doorways, opening windows and air intakes, and where indicated. Care must be taken to properly extinguish and discard butts so as not to create a fire hazard.
- 11) Workers shall not engage in behavior towards any individuals that could cause injury or threatening behavior in which the individual could reasonably believe they are at risk of injury.
- 12) Workers shall not conduct or communicate themselves to any individual in a way that the worker knew, or reasonably ought to have known, would cause an individual to be humiliated or intimidated.
- 13) Ensure all equipment, material and tools are used in accordance with WorkSafeBC regulations and are secured at the end of the workday to avoid accidents, misuse, theft, or vandalism.

If anyone is found in violation of these rules and procedures, BC Housing will take appropriate action, from issuing informal/formal reminders to banning individual access to the site, and may cancel the contract depending on the severity of the violation.

Effective safety and health inspections are one of the most important incident/accident prevention tools in a company's safety and health program. Using properly trained inspectors in a planned inspection program will:

- Reduce incidents, accidents and property damage
- Prevent the likelihood of accidents from occurring
- Improve worker communication and company morale
- Over time, save the employer money

Too often, safety inspections are aimed primarily at finding and recording unsafe conditions. This narrow focus tends to ignore other causes of incidents, such as unsafe actions and personal factors. In addition, workers and supervisors are generally aware of the inspection team's arrival a day or two beforehand. This warning system sometimes creates a preparatory atmosphere before the inspectors arrive. As a result, safety inspectors often observe the workplace and workers on a superficial basis only, and rarely see actual situations causing incidents, injuries and property damage. In order for your inspection team to be effective, they must inspect the workplace during its regular day-to-day status, along with the activities and conditions in which incidents, injuries and property damage could/may occur.

An effective inspection program takes planning, preparation and training. Inspectors must be trained in what to look for, and you require a system that:

- Maintains consistency of inspections
- Records and reports any deficiencies to management, the safety committee and supervisors
- Follows up on and monitors any deficiencies identified

Contractors must ensure worksites are regularly inspected so workers are not exposed to hazards that could endanger their health and safety. BC Housing may send a representative to site inspections; the site supervisor will accompany our representative on the inspection. Contractors are required to correct any hazards and/or unsafe conditions identified during the inspection without delay.

The site inspector shall provide a copy of the Inspection Report to the contractor supervisor and BC Housing's representative working with the contractor. In addition, one copy has to remain posted at the worksite until the items in the report have been corrected.

BC Housing must be advised of any recommendations from inspections/observations that may affect our operations, staff, or property to allow for review by the employer or OHS representative/committee.

GENERAL SITE WORK PROCEDURES

Written safe work procedures have a positive impact on safety, health, productivity and quality control. BC Housing expects contractors to provide workers with safe work procedures that comply with the WorkSafeBC OHSR, as part of your safety program.

Contractors also have to follow specific safety policies and procedures that pertain to your organization and workers, as outlined below.

5.1 WHMIS

As employers, contractors are responsible for protecting workers from exposure to chemical or biological substances that could cause adverse health effects. Your Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) program must comply with [WorkSafeBC WHMIS requirements](#).

BC Housing maintains an inventory of controlled products on our worksites. If you need more information on WHMIS or Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) information of products that workers may be in contact with, please contact your BC Housing representative.

5.2 Noise, Vibration and Temperature

Contractors have to meet [WorkSafeBC requirements for noise, vibration and temperature exposure](#). Contractors are required to develop and implement exposure control plans for workplace exposure to temperature extremes, and administer a noise-hearing conservation program, when these conditions exist.

5.3 Radiation and Radiofrequency Radiation

Contractors also have to adhere to [WorkSafeBC radiation compliance requirements](#) and [Health Canada's Radiofrequency Exposure Guidelines](#). Contractors exposed to these conditions, equipment, and telecommunication antennas are required to develop and implement exposure control plans for workplace exposure to radiation.

BC Housing maintains an inventory of radiofrequency radiation on worksites. If you need this information due to your contract requirements, please contact your BC Housing representative.

For additional information on the hazard of radiation, refer to Chapter 6: Exposure to Hazardous Substances.

5.4 Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment

Contractors and workers are required to provide, maintain and wear personal protective clothing and equipment (PPE) listed in the [WorkSafeBC Regulation](#). For example, snug, well-fitted clothing is worn for protection against natural elements. Footwear must provide an appropriate level of protection; CSA approved footwear is required for all construction activities. Hard hats are required when there is a danger of head injury from falling, flying or thrown objects, or other harmful contacts. Workers must wear properly fitting safety eyewear appropriate for workplace conditions, if handling or exposed to materials likely to injure or irritate the eyes.

BC Housing may request or require contractors to use specific PPE during the term of a contract.

5.5 Confined Space Entry

BC Housing has created a Confined Space Program (CSP) to protect the health and safety of personnel required to enter a [confined space](#), as defined by WorkSafeBC's Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.

BC Housing's inventory of confined spaces includes places commonly found on the property of buildings and houses, such as vaults, boilers, attics, crawlspaces, maintenance holes and sumps. We identify confined spaces through:

- BC Housing internal work orders (reminders and notices to contractors to check before entry)
- Signage at entry points

Before a contractor's worker is permitted to enter a confined space, you have to implement a written [confined space entry program](#) that complies with the WorkSafeBC OHSR. In addition, BC Housing will provide a copy of any existing hazard assessment of the space before entry.

Contractors needing to enter areas BC Housing has identified as confined spaces are required to:

- Gain permit authorization from the Regional Entry Coordinator before entering
- Follow BC Housing's Confined Space Program requirements and your company's confined space program
- Identify and resolve any discrepancies between BC Housing's and your company's confined space programs with our Confined Space Program Administrator (in the event of a discrepancy, BC Housing's Confined Space Program takes precedence)
- Provide adequate confined space entry instruction and training to all personnel assigned confined space duties before starting the entry work
- Have hazard assessments and entry procedure documents prepared by a qualified professional for the confined space work
- Provide BC Housing with a photocopy of all confined space documentation (including entry permits)
- Upon completing an entry, submit a completed permit to the Regional Entry Coordinator

To obtain an Entry Permit, contact the Regional Entry Coordinator in your area.

Region	Business Hours	After Business Hours
Lower Mainland	778.452.2826	604.682.4852
Vancouver Island	250.978.2931	250.213.8798
Interior	250.612.8049	250.612.8049
North	250.562.9251	250.562.9251

5.6 Lockout

Contractors must develop and implement a Lockout Program and lockout procedures in compliance with [WorkSafeBC OHSR](#) requirements to:

- Ensure affected workers are educated and trained in lockout procedures and ONLY AUTHORIZED workers perform lockout on equipment
- Follow lockout policies and procedures for maintenance or repairs on a machine, process or system, when potentially hazardous energy or substances could endanger anyone's safety or health

Inform the site supervisor and onsite BC Housing personnel of the activity before proceeding.

5.7 Fall Protection

Contractors are responsible for training and educating workers on fall protection measures, as well as fall protection systems and procedures specific to your worksite.

Any contractor or worker working 3 meters (10 ft.) or more above ground is required to use a fall protection system for personal protection. In addition, you must develop and be able to provide a written fall protection plan under the [WorkSafeBC OHSR](#), if requested.

Depending on the site location, the contract administrator may have information on roof anchors, equipment or other fall protection measures.

5.8 Excavation

Before beginning an excavation, locate and identify utility services in the area, such as electrical, gas, steam, water and sewer services. Any danger to workers from these utility services must be eliminated or controlled.

Contact BC One Call, a central agency you can call to find out what is buried on your site. BC One Call provides a 24/7, 365 days, telephone service at 1.800.474.6886 or *6886 on the TELUS & Rogers mobility system (to get free airtime). You will be asked to:

- Provide contact information
- Identify the exact location of your planned excavation
- Identify how deep you will be digging
- Confirm when you plan to begin work
- Confirm if you are digging on public or private property or both
- Identify where on the property you will be digging

You can submit a ticket anytime online via www.bconeccall.bc.ca or call 1-800-474-6886 during 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. PST (excluding stat holidays).

When the excavation is greater than 1.2 meters (4 ft.), and less than 6 meters (20 ft.), the walls of the excavation must be at a 45 degree cutback slope, properly shored, or use a trench box. Contractors have to properly position and use a ladder to safely access and egress from the excavation.

Contractors must carry out excavation work in accordance with the written instructions of a professional engineer

or professional geoscientist when:

- The excavation is more than 6 meters (20 ft.) deep, or
- Support structures other than those specified in the regulation are used in the excavation, or
- An improvement or structure adjacent to the excavation could endanger workers, or
- The excavation is subject to vibration or hydrostatic (water) pressure

A professional engineer's plan and written instructions to support or slope the excavation sides must include information on expected subsurface conditions. A copy of the plan and any written instructions must be available at the site, signed and sealed by the engineer.

5.9 Tools, Machinery and Equipment

Contractors are responsible for providing their own equipment and maintaining it in safe working order, as required by WorkSafeBC.

Ensure the tools, machinery and equipment you bring onto BC Housing sites are in good working condition. All electrical devices must be a minimum three wire and properly grounded. Contractors must:

- Use CSA certified powder actuated tools in proper working order that comply with the [WorkSafeBC OHSR](#) (Part 12.51 – 12.57)
- Ensure only workers who are educated and trained in powder actuated tools work with this equipment
- Ensure all equipment, material, and tools are secured at the end of the workday to avoid theft, misuse, or accidents

5.10 Ladders, Scaffolds, Temporary Work Platforms

Contractors must keep ladders, scaffolds, and temporary platforms in good working condition and adhere to [WorkSafeBC OHSR](#) specification requirements. If the equipment is damaged or does not meet requirements, you must take it out of service and repair or replace it immediately.

5.11 Cranes and Hoists

Contractors working in or around cranes or hoists must ensure the equipment:

- Is designed, constructed, erected, disassembled, inspected, maintained and operated by the crane manufacturer or a professional engineer, and
- Meets the requirements and standards listed in [WorkSafeBC's OHSR](#)

5.12 Rigging

Rigging procedures must comply with [WorkSafeBC's OHSR](#), with qualified workers trained and educated in these procedures.

Ensure qualified workers—familiar with the rigging that will be used and the code of signals authorized by the WorkSafeBC Board for controlling hoisting operations—perform or supervise rigging and slinging.

5.13 Mobile Equipment (vehicles, scissor lift, booms and giraffes)

Contractors are responsible for:

- Ensuring all mobile equipment meets the requirements of the [Motor Vehicle Act](#) or the [Industrial Roads Act](#)
- Maintaining mobile equipment in a safe operating condition, in accordance with [applicable regulations](#)
- Keeping maintenance records for any equipment service, repairs or modifications
- Adequately instructing all workers operating the equipment in its safe use, and ensuring demonstrated competency in operating the equipment
- Protecting workers when moving equipment and from the equipment's moving parts
- Allowing only authorized workers to operate mobile equipment
- Ensuring lifting devices have appropriate clearance with any overhead obstacles
- Ensuring personal vehicles are parked in designated areas only

5.14 Electrical Safety

Contractors are required to inform workers of existing onsite electrical hazards before starting work, including any new electrical hazards that may develop during a BC Housing contract. Contact BC Housing before digging to ensure underground power and/or services have been adequately identified to prevent accidental contact.

5.15 Housekeeping

Keep the work area clean and free of loose materials and debris. Safely and neatly stack any materials stored at the workplace and do not block fire egress routes. Collect and place all waste in appropriate waste containers every day. Remove or bend over any protruding nails or screws from waste materials; place them in scrap containers for disposal.

EXPOSURE TO HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Many hazardous substances and situations may be encountered at the workplace. If not properly identified and assessed, these hazards have the potential to expose workers to serious injury or occupational disease.

6.1 Types of Hazards

Hazardous substances fall into three categories: biological, hazardous materials or physical, which may include, but are not limited, to:

Biological

- > Bodily fluids
- > Mould/bacteria

Hazardous materials

- > Asbestos
- > Mercury
- > Radon
- > Chemicals
- > Pesticides and fumigants
- > Silica
- > Lead
- > Radiofrequency radiation

Physical

- > Animals
- > Heat stress/Hyperthermia
- > Violence in the workplace
- > Cold stress/Hypothermia
- > Noise
- > Working alone

6.2 Working with Hazardous Materials

Exposure Control Plan

Under the WorkSafeBC OHS Regulation, contractors require an exposure control plan when workers risk exposure to a hazardous substance or situation in the workplace. The plan may be simple or complex, depending on the hazardous substance and/or size of the contract. An exposure control plan should contain work procedures specific to the hazardous exposure location, with step by step instructions defining what is required to reduce exposure.

Here is a general list of items requiring contractors to implement an exposure control plan:

- > **OHSR 5.57 Controlling Exposure** – If it is not practicable to replace a material referred to in section 5.57(1) of the WorkSafeBC OHSR (designated substances) with a material that reduces risk, the employer must implement an exposure control plan
- > **OHSR 6.3 Asbestos** – If a worker is or may be exposed to potentially harmful levels of asbestos
- > **OHSR 6.34 Biological Agents** – If a worker is or may be exposed to biological agents such as bodily fluids
- > **OHSR 6.60 Lead** – If a worker is or may be exposed to lead in excess of 50% of the exposure limits, or if exposure through any route of entry could result in elevated lead body-burdens, as defined by WorkSafeBC
- > **OHSR 7.20 Ionizing and Non-ionizing Radiation** – If a worker exceeds or may exceed an applicable action level for ionizing or non-ionizing radiation
- > **OHSR 7.29 Heat Stress** – If a worker is or may be exposed to thermal conditions which could cause heat stress
- > **OHSR 7.34 Cold Stress** – If a worker is or may be exposed to thermal conditions that could cause cold stress

or injury

If any of the preceding conditions is applicable to work the contractor is performing, BC Housing may request a copy of your exposure control plan and safe work procedures to review before work begins.

An exposure control plan must include a:

- Statement of the exposure control plan's purpose
- Statement of the supervisors, workers and other individuals' (when required) responsibilities
- Hazard identification and risk assessment of all hazardous substances associated with the job/task/procedures being performed
- Site control measures required to reduce the risk of overexposure
- Worker education/training to ensure workers understand the risks of exposure; can competently use and maintain exposure control equipment; understand other control measures (e.g. administrative controls); and inspect, use and clean PPE and are aware of its limitations
 - As of January 1, 2024, WorkSafeBC requires [mandatory training and licensing for asbestos abatement work](#). Asbestos Abatement contractors must now be licensed to operate in B.C., and anyone performing asbestos abatement work must be trained and certified
- Written work procedures for safe handling of hazardous substance(s) or operating control measures
- Description of hygiene facilities, as applicable, in accordance with relevant material data safety sheets (MSDS) and supplier labels
- Description of worker and equipment decontamination procedures, as applicable
- Records of documentation

6.3 Hazard Control/Safe Work Procedures

The WorkSafeBC OHS Regulation recognizes some substances are more hazardous than others; consequently, these substances have additional regulatory requirements. Each contractor is responsible for being in compliance with all relevant parts of the [OHS Regulation](#).

Contractors who disturb or work with hazardous substances must develop safe work procedures for specific hazards, by documenting:

- How to perform the work safely
- Health precautions to be aware of
- Control measures to contain the hazardous material
- Safety equipment required
- PPE required
- How to store and dispose of materials
- How to set up the area and how to clean up when the work is complete

The following workplace risks require elimination or control procedures to ensure worker safety:

Asbestos-containing Building Materials

BC Housing maintains an inventory of all materials tested for the presence of asbestos fibres in many of our buildings, and we continue to add to this inventory. Contractors and subcontractors are responsible for checking the inventory to ensure you are not disturbing asbestos-containing materials (ACM) without safety precautions.

If you think the contract work may disturb suspected ACM, arrange for additional sampling.

Contractors can view the properties inventory by registering and logging into [BC Housing's hazmat website](#), or by contacting your contract administrator to arrange a viewing.

If asbestos-containing materials are present, contractors must comply with the [WorkSafeBC OHSR](#) related to working safely with asbestos, and have written safe work procedures for working with, removing and disposing of asbestos-containing building materials.

Lead-based Paint and Other Lead Products

Depending on the age of the building, lead may be present. Before performing any work that might disturb suspected lead-containing materials, conduct a survey to determine if lead is present. If so, implement a [safe work procedure](#) before disturbing the materials.

Mercury in Switched and Light Materials

Mercury may be present in a building, depending on its age. Before performing any work that might disturb suspected mercury-containing materials, conduct a survey and, should mercury exist, implement a safe work procedure before disturbing the materials.

Mould Growth on Building Materials

Depending on the work you're performing, you may locate mould growth that was not identified earlier. In this event, please inform BC Housing and develop a safe work procedure to follow, consistent with the [New York City Department of Health protocol guidelines](#) adopted by the Canadian government.

Needles and Sharps

Depending on the worksite, needles and sharps may be present. Follow safe work procedures for removing and disposing of these items, in accordance with the [WorkSafeBC OHSR](#).

WHMIS Products

BC Housing staff have access to a database of all controlled products BC Housing uses through our online WHMIS database. You can obtain copies of material safety data sheets through your contract administrator.

Ozone-depleting Substances

Depending on the age of the building, ozone-depleting substances may be present. Before performing any work that might disturb suspected ozone-depleting substances, conduct a survey. If found, implement a [safe work procedure](#) before disturbing these materials.

Polychlorinated Biphenyls

Again, depending on the age of the building, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) may be present. Before doing any work that might disturb materials suspected of containing PCB substances, conduct a survey. If present, implement a safe work procedure before disturbing the materials.

Radioactive Materials in Smoke Detectors

Radioactive materials may be present in smoke detectors, depending on the age of the building. Again, conduct a survey before performing any work that might disturb suspected radioactive materials in smoke detectors. If found, implement a safe work procedure before disturbing the materials.

Radiofrequency Radiation

Communication antennas are located on some BC properties, especially high-rise buildings. The antennas generate a range of radiofrequency (RF) radiation, some of which can be harmful to human health.

Safety Code 6 is one of a series of safety codes prepared by the [Consumer and Clinical Radiation Protection Bureau, Health Canada](#). These safety codes specify the requirements for the safe use of, or exposure to, radiation emitting devices. Code 6 establishes safety limits for human exposure to RF electromagnetic energy in the frequency range from 3 kHz to 300 GHz.

BC Housing complies with Safety Code 6 and has posted signage in all applicable buildings indicating the level of hazard. Staff and contractors who access roof areas where antennas are present, or work near antennas, need to be aware of the hazard and take the appropriate actions indicated on site signage.

If communication antennas are present, contact a BC Housing representative to find out the hazard level for the antennas.

Animal Fecal Matter and Carcasses

Animal fecal matter and/or carcasses may be present at some worksites. Follow safe work procedures for removing and disposing of these items.

Pesticide Use

BC Housing follows the provincial [Integrated Pest Management Program](#) guidelines and [WorkSafeBC standards](#) for applying pesticides. All pesticide application is performed by contracted external services. MSDS sheets of the products we use are available from your contract administrator.

Violence in the Workplace

BC Housing provides social housing for a broad demographic of residents, some with complex social and health care needs. A small proportion may exhibit aggressive tendencies towards violence or threats. Contractors need to have procedures in place to ensure the security and safety of workers in these environments, and are required to operate in compliance with the [WorkSafe BC OHSR governing violence in the workplace](#) in all circumstances.

Contact building management staff for more information on potential site specific risks.

Working Alone

Contractors and workers who work alone or in isolation tend to be more vulnerable than those with coworkers present, particularly during night shifts. If a lone worker is injured or an emergency occurs, how does the worker get help? What if the worker is unconscious? Even though such incidents aren't common, the consequences can be serious when they do occur.

When a contractor's workers is required to work alone or in isolation, and assistance is not readily available in case of emergency, injury or ill health, the contractor is responsible for creating written safe work procedures and training workers to use them. In addition, employers must implement a procedure for checking on the well-being of workers working alone or in isolation.

Specific requirements for working alone or in isolation are described in [Sections 4.20.1– 4.22 and 4.23 of the WorkSafeBC OHSR](#).

If any of the preceding conditions apply to your contract, BC Housing may ask to review a copy of your safe work procedures before work starts.

The list above may not identify all of the possible worksite hazards you may encounter. Nevertheless, contractors are responsible for ensuring worker health and safety, as described in [Part 2, Division 4 of the Workers Compensation Act](#). Our contract administrators may conduct audits to ensure compliance with all contract specifications.

BC Housing maintains samples of current procedures for addressing hazards, available through your contract administrator. More information is also available in the [Safety at Work](#) section of WorkSafeBC's website.

6.4 Hazmat & Safety Annual Acknowledgement Form

BC Housing has developed a new process to inform contractors, consultants and/or suppliers of potential work hazards to enhance safety for our staff and contractors:

- Contractors performing work on BC Housing properties and buildings—drilling holes, fastening to floors/walls/ceilings, mounting equipment, running cabling, for example—must sign and submit a Hazmat & Safety Annual Acknowledgment (HSAA) form
- The form enables contractors to access BC Housing's [Hazmat Inventories](#) website before going to a worksite
- This online tool lists current inventories for each property and provides quick links to other websites like BC Housing, WorkSafeBC and the Ministry of Environment
- By signing this form, contractors acknowledge that:
 - 1) You and your employees will check the property inventory at hazmat.bchousing.org for potential hazards (asbestos, lead, etc.) before work activities commence on the property and building
 - 2) Safe working conditions will be established and maintained in accordance with [WorkSafeBC's Occupational Health and Safety Regulation](#)
 - 3) BC Housing's online resources, outlining potential property hazards such as asbestos, lead-based paints, confined space, violence in the workplace, working alone, etc., will be reviewed

Remember to consider other potential worksite hazards you might encounter, depending on the type of work your employees are performing.

Please email webhazmat@bchousing.org for more information.