**Risk Assessment**

Identified hazards that cannot be eliminated immediately must effectively be controlled to eliminate or reduce the risk. Risk estimation is used to prioritize hazards by the degree of risk they pose and to evaluate the effectiveness of implemented controls.

**Risk Assessment Matrix**

Saskatchewan occupational health and safety legislation does not require that workplaces use a tool such as the risk matrix on the next page to estimate and assign a value to the risk a hazard poses. It is recommended that workplaces select a risk matrix and use it consistently.

When assessing the risk of a hazard you first must decide how likely it is the hazard will cause harm. Think about how often the task is completed and the number of people completing the task at any one time. Once likelihood as been determined, the next step is to consider what the potential consequences would be. Consequences are based on WCB claims definitions. The final step is to use a tool such as the risk matrix on the next page to get a risk rating.

For example:

A veterinary clinic has identified that lifting dogs (or other pets) that weigh over 25 lbs/11.3 kgs onto exam, treatment and surgery tables is a hazard the clinic cannot eliminate.

When determining the likelihood that hazard could cause harm, the clinic would look at how many employees are lifting dogs (or other pets) that weigh over 25 lbs/11.3 kgs and the number of those pets lifted in a typical day. Using the risk matrix on the next page the likelihood would be estimated as a 5 (almost certain).

Next the clinic would have to decide what injuries could result from lifting large dogs, such as back, shoulder or arm muscle strains. Using the risk matrix on the next page the consequences would be estimated as a 3 (serious injury, time loss incident).

With a likelihood rated as ‘5’ and consequences rated as ‘3’, using the risk matrix on the next page the risk rating would be 15 (medium). The clinic should implement temporary precautions until the risk is addressed.



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