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MANAGEMENT AND EXECUTIVES RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN IT COMES TO SAFETY

The changes to Alberta OHS legislation introduced in 2018 have presented some significant challenges for management. Before we jump into the changes however, there are two key concepts in Canadian occupational health and safety law that I'd like to remind you of.



First, is the internal responsibility system. This means that everyone in the workplace is responsible for occupational health and safety. Employers have the greatest degree of control and authority, so they have the most responsibility. Workers and others also have responsibilities.

This is all supported by;

- Internal monitoring by joint work site health and safety committees; or
- Health and safety representatives; and by
- External monitoring and enforcement by government OHS officers.

The second concept critical to OHS law is the three fundamental rights of workers.

These are:

- The right to know;
- The right to participate; and
- The right to refuse dangerous work

There are three new specific elements that need consideration when looking at your safety program from a management perspective.

Firstly, management must ensure the protection and maintenance of the health and safety (physical, psychological and social well-being) of employees.

Secondly, to ensure workers are not subjected to, or participate in, harassment or violence.

Lastly, ensure workers have competent supervision.

