



When an inspector visits...

Tips to help WorkSafeBC inspections go smoothly

WorkSafeBC prevention officers conduct inspections at worksites to make sure that businesses are complying with the Workers Compensation Act (the Act), the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation and other relevant guidelines, policies and standards.

A WorkSafeBC occupational safety officer, occupational hygiene officer, ergonomist or engineer may visit your worksite to conduct an inspection, depending on the area of interest and the nature of your business.

There are different reasons for a visit but the main ones are as follows:

- A routine, periodic inspection, to make sure that your workplace is as safe as possible.
- Follow up after a workplace incident has occurred, to determine the cause and details.
- Investigating a complaint related to health and safety in your workplace.
- As part of WorkSafeBC's Serious Injury Prevention Initiative (SIPI), which focuses on inspections and employer engagement within particular industries and sectors, to help prevent injuries.

Prevention officers may conduct inspections at any reasonable hour of the day or night, including weekends. They do not typically provide advance warning of an inspection. However, they will always try to minimize the impact of their visit on your operation and customers. Therefore, if the timing is bad, they may agree to come back again.

The way you deal with an inspection and the officer can play a significant part in influencing how the visit goes. Train your teams on what to do, and make sure everyone in the organization understands what to do when an inspector calls! Create a good impression and make the officer feel at ease.

Remember the reason for the visit is to make sure the workplace is as safe as possible for everyone. Prevention officers can offer a wealth of experience and knowledge to help you improve workplace health and safety so don't be afraid to ask questions.

Here are some tips to help ensure that your next inspection goes smoothly:

- When an officer arrives on site and introduces themselves, greet them politely.
- If a staff member greets the officer, they should inform a manager immediately and ask the officer to wait. (Discuss the specifics of your procedure for managing an inspection with your entire team and make sure that this is communicated in advance, so that everyone knows what to do on the day).
- Request to see the officer's credentials.
- The officer will typically provide an overview of the purpose of their visit and outline how it will proceed (what they would like to look at, how long the visit should take...).
- Accompany the officer throughout their visit and take notes.
- The officer will observe the workplace and workers. They may interview employees and ask to see documentation, such as training records or risk assessments.
- Be cooperative and provide the information that the officer requests.
- At the end of the visit, the officer will provide a summary of their key findings and you may ask for additional clarification, if needed.
- A written inspection report may be provided at the end of the visit. Alternatively, a report will be forwarded to the worksite within seven days of the inspection. Be sure to provide the correct contact information so that there aren't any delays in receiving the report.
- If the officer issues any orders to address health and safety issues within the workplace, this will be explained at the end of the visit, along with advice on how to fix the problem. (An order is issued when an aspect of a workplace is not in compliance with the Act or the Regulation).
- Attend to any items contained within the report in a timely manner. It is good practice to follow up with the officer to let them know that you have made progress.
- If you are unclear about any orders that are issued or disagree with them, you can contact the officer to request more information. This also applies in cases where you believe any aspect of the report to be inaccurate or incorrect.
- If orders are issued, there will be deadlines. The officer will return to the workplace to check that the concerns have been addressed.
- Keep a copy of the inspection report, detailing when any reported issues were addressed and by whom. Inspections form an important part of your health and safety program and keeping copies helps to demonstrate due diligence.
- You must display the report at the worksite so that all employees may read it.
- Don't forget that the [go2HR Industry Health & Safety Team](#) is also on hand to help you!

Remember, an officer has the legal right to:

- Enter workplaces unannounced.
 - Tour, observe and inspect the workplace.
 - Take photos.
 - Interview workers.
 - Inspect records.
 - Remove items from the workplace for further investigation.
 - Stop unsafe work.
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