



A series of bulletins intended to keep members informed and safe

**Number 6**  
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**Subject:** Workplace Health and Safety Committees

The objective of Part II of the *Canada Labour Code* is to reduce, as much as possible, the number of accidents and injuries, as a result of work activities. TELUS and SHAW employees are covered by the *Canada Labour Code*.

### **Who sits on the workplace health and safety committee?**

Each committee consists of at least two people. They are appointed by the employer, in accordance with the following: at least half of the committee members are employees in the bargaining unit. Bargaining unit members are selected by the TWU.

A committee has two chairpersons, one of whom is chosen by the employer-members and the other by the employee-members. They alternate chairing committee meetings and have equal authority on the committee.

### **Powers and duties of a health and safety committee**

H&S committees have a wide range of powers and duties, which includes the following:

- consider and expeditiously dispose of health and safety complaints;
- participate in the implementation and monitoring of programs for the prevention of hazards;
- participate in all of the inquiries, investigations, studies and inspections pertaining to employee health and safety;
- participate in the implementation and monitoring of a program for the provision of personal protective equipment, clothing, devices, or materials;
- ensure that adequate records are kept on work accidents, injuries and health hazards;
- participate in the implementation of changes that may affect occupational health and safety, including work processes and procedures;
- assist the employer in investigating and assessing the exposure of employees to hazardous substances;
- inspect each month all or part of the workplace, so that every part of the workplace is inspected at least once a year.

The committee may request from the employer any information that it considers necessary to address workplace hazards. It has full access to all government and employer reports, studies and tests relating to the health and safety of employees. The committee cannot access an individual's medical records without the individual's consent.

Visit the TWU Health & Safety webpage at [www.twu-canada.ca/safety/english.shtml](http://www.twu-canada.ca/safety/english.shtml).

### **TWU National Health & Safety Committee**