Ergonomics Standard

1.0 PURPOSE

This standard specifies the requirements for the control of ergonomic hazards and reducing the risk of musculoskeletal (MSI) injuries.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 Ergonomics

Ergonomics is the science of fitting the design of the working environment to the individual. Ergonomics considers an individual's abilities and limitations for the work.

2.2 Ergonomic Hazard

The presence of risk factors in the job that occur at a magnitude, duration, or frequency that is reasonably likely to cause ergonomic injury that result in work restrictions or medical treatment beyond first aid.

2.3 Ergonomic Injury

An ergonomic injury that is work-related and requires medical treatment beyond first aid, or signs / symptoms that last for 7 or more consecutive days after employee reports them.

2.4 Musculoskeletal injury (MSI)

An injury or disorder of the muscles, tendons, ligaments, nerves, joints, bones or supporting vasculature that may be caused or aggravated by any of the following:

- Repetitive motions
- Forceful exertions
- Vibration
- Mechanical compression
- Sustained or awkward postures
- Limitations on motion or action
- Other ergonomic stressors

3.0 METHOD / PRACTICE

3.1 Identify Ergonomic Risk(s)

All tasks, assignments and circumstances where ergonomic hazards exist shall be identified via hazard/aspect risk assessment.

3.2 Control Methods

Where practicable, ergonomic hazards shall be removed. Where ergonomic hazards cannot be removed controls shall be used to reduce risk factors. It is preferable to establish layers of protection by combining the three control types.

- Engineering Controls are the preferred controls where practicable and include:
    - Equipment that is designed, constructed, positioned and maintained to reduce the harmful effects of an activity.

- Administrative Controls include:
  - Appropriate work practices and procedures to reduce the harmful effects of an activity
  - Work schedules that incorporate rest and recovery periods, changes in workload or other arrangements for alternating work to reduce the harmful effects of an activity.
  - Ergonomic assessments are conducted to ensure the equipment is compatible with the workers physical requirements and correctly adjusted for that worker.

- Applicable PPE shall be used where engineering and administrative controls do not effectively reduce the ergonomic hazard.

3.3 Training

Each Division shall identify and provide training and/or awareness on ergonomic injury prevention that may include:

- Ergonomic hazards associated with an employee's activities.
- Common signs and symptoms of musculoskeletal injury (MSI) injury.
- Work practices and procedures.
- Personal protective equipment.

3.4 Reporting and Monitoring

Employees who are experiencing symptoms of ergonomic injury:

- Shall report the symptoms to their supervisor in accordance with the SaskPower Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy and the SaskPower Workplace Ergonomic Assessment Process
- May consult a physician or a health care professional.
- Shall cooperate in the implementing of corrective measures to eliminate or reduce ergonomic risk or injury.

3.5 Investigation

- Where employees report symptoms, supervisors shall review the activities of that worker and of other workers doing similar tasks to identify any cause of the symptoms and take corrective measures to avoid further injuries.
- Ergonomic incidents are to be investigated, in conjunction with a health care provider if necessary.

3.6 Ergonomic Injury Prevention Review

- Ergonomic hazard activities shall be reviewed regularly, in consultation with Health and Safety Department and the Occupational Health Committee (OHC).
- Each Division shall identify the frequency of the review cycle.

4.0 REFERENCES

- Saskatchewan
  - The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996
- SaskPower (located on SafetyNet)
  - Hazard/Aspect Controls Policy
  - Ergonomic Training Content
  - Office and Industrial Ergonomic PowerPoint Presentations
  - SaskPower Workplace Ergonomic Assessment Process