

# Safety Sound-off

## VIDC Occupational Health & Safety Committee Newsletter

### Making A Difference: Effective JOHSC's

Evidence suggests having an effective JOH&S Committee can and will make a difference. In a recent project conducted by Worksafe BC, researchers conducted a systematic literature review and held an expert forum in order to determine the factors that aid and impede the effective functioning of JHSCs

#### Key Findings

- There is evidence that a JHSCs' perceived effectiveness and ability to solve problems is linked with safer workplaces.
- The literature shows that worker empowerment and involvement in health and safety is an important factor in lowering injury rates.
- Effective JHSCs need to be given a clear mandate. Committee members must be trained and empowered to understand and carry out that mandate.

#### Objectives

- Determine the factors that facilitate and impede JHSCs in performing their functions, and the relationship between these factors.
  - Identify gaps in knowledge.
- During the workshop, group discussion centered on key themes identified during the literature review, including:
- Role and scope of committees: Empowerment of JHSCs and the role of worker members with respect to their co-workers – workshop participants noted that the role of the committee may differ based on industry and worksite, and that this role may change over time.
  - Committee membership and building member capacity: Selection and number of worker members, training and education, and access to information – it was noted that a properly conducted evaluation of what committee structure works best is needed.
  - Management and external support for committees: Enforcement and legislation regarding JHSCs, management support, management practices, and systems regarding occupational health and safety were discussed.

#### Conclusions

The findings of this project underscore that

an effective JHSC is an important part of a safe and healthy workplace. Committee members require a clear mandate, along with the education and training necessary to carry out that mandate. In order to improve JHSC effectiveness, the researchers recommend the development of guidelines governing the provision of information, education, training and resources to JHSCs.

#### Future Directions

There is a lack of good quality evidence about the composition of an effective JHSC, as well as the nature of appropriate training and empowerment. Feedback from the expert panel suggests the need for a cluster-randomized controlled trial of a model JHSC program. The model program should have a clear mandate, a high quality education and training program, and access to all necessary information. This project led to the creation of a web-based resource tool for JHSCs. This online, freely accessible resource provides committee members with education, training,

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#### Health & Safety

##### Dates to remember:

- April 28, 2014: **Day of Mourning**
- June 13-15, 2014: **Pacific Northwest Labour History Conference & Miner's Memorial**

and downloadable materials and tools designed to promote health and safety in the workplace. Why not try it out with your committee?

**Attention!** There are some things seriously wrong with this picture!! See if you can spot the issues and send them by April 14, 2014 to: [vpcu-pe374@gmail.com](mailto:vpcu-pe374@gmail.com) to have your name entered to win a prize. The lucky winner will be announced at the April 2014 VIDC meeting and list of issues will be published in the next newsletter along with the next photo!





## Welcome to our VIDC Health and Safety Newsletter.

Our Committee members are:  
Sarah Fairbrass, Chair; Martha Higgins;  
Robert Klassen; Kathy Mercer; Ryan Foster.

[www.vidc.cupe.ca](http://www.vidc.cupe.ca)

## Only the Best for our Furry Friends!

Made in Canada labels. But, what do you really know about how and where your pet food is made, where the ingredients are sourced or what is actually in it?

What to Consider:

### Chicken/ Turkey/lamb etc meal versus animal meal

- When your ingredient list says contains a species specific meal, the ground meal is from that specific animal. It also means it may contain bone, blood, feathers etc. but at least it is from the animal named.
- When the ingredient list says contains animal meal, this can mean from any animal including meats from cats, dogs, dead zoo animals etc.

### Rendered Protein Sources

- Rendered protein sources come from rendering plants that grind various forms of 'meat'. These can include meats from veterinary and animal shelter disposal, public zoos, and road kill. While these animal carcasses of course need to be disposed of and processed in some way, this is something you should be aware of when making personal ethical pet food choices. (or choosing to leave Fido at the vet following his death or euthanasia)  
<http://www.sacbee.com/2013/10/20/5835384/sacramento-rendering-plant-looks.html>

### Human Grade Versus Made in Human Grade Facility

**Human-Grade or Food-Grade** refers to the quality of a finished product. The term applies to a product that is legally suitable and approved for consumption by a person ("edible").

**Feed-Grade** applies to a product that is not suitable for consumption by people and is only legally allowed to be fed to animals ("inedible") because of the ingredients it contains or the way it (or its ingredients) have been processed.

**Rendered Ingredients** – This is where the 'meal' content in your pet food is derived. It is a low cost method to maintain high pro-

tein levels in pet food (although not high quality). The lean meat from carcasses is removed for human consumption. What remains becomes rendered protein and may contain "carcass (bones, organs, blood, beaks, etc.) This is what goes into pet food, "commonly known as "by-products," "meal," "by-product meal," " (1) In addition to carcasses other "leftovers" from the human food industry (restaurant grease, out-of-date supermarket meat etc) and "4D" livestock animals (dead, dying, diseased, disabled) are also used in the rendering process. Rendering removes kills bacteria, viruses, parasites and other infectious organisms. "There is evidence however that prions are not inactivated or killed by the rendering process." (2)

*Prion: "A microscopic protein particle similar to a virus but lacking nucleic acid, thought to be the infectious agent responsible for scrapie and certain other degenerative diseases of the nervous system." (3) including BSE (mad cow disease)*

[http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/about/pubs/meatinspectionreport/chapter\\_7.pdf](http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/english/about/pubs/meatinspectionreport/chapter_7.pdf)

[http://www.petmd.com/dog/nutrition/evr\\_pet\\_food\\_for\\_your\\_pets\\_sake#.Us4acPRDsjU](http://www.petmd.com/dog/nutrition/evr_pet_food_for_your_pets_sake#.Us4acPRDsjU)

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/prion>

The information provided here is simply meant to educate. It does not mean the pet food you are feeding is not nutritionally balanced, however you may want to consider how that nutritional balance is derived. Is it from human grade protein rich sources or is it from additives and vitamins included because the protein sources in the food are not adequate to provide balanced nutrition

on their own?

Are all the protein sources derived from North American sources or are they from overseas where food regulation is not as stringent?

Basically, with pet food you do indeed get what you pay for. High quality locally sourced and produced pet foods simply cost more money, the same way high quality locally sourced and produced people food costs more money. Of course, this also provides community jobs with decent wages, something trade unionists stand for.

Contact your pet food manufacturer for more information. Any of them should respond to your questions. If they don't, you might want to consider switching to a pet food provider who will.

### Article Sources:

For further reading and information please see:

<http://www.thehonestkitchen.com/articles/what-is-human-grade-pet-food-really/>

<http://healthypets.mercola.com/sites/healthypets/archive/2012/05/07/human-quality-pet-food.aspx>

<http://petfood.aafco.org/labelinglabelingrequirements.aspx>

<http://www.dogfoodadvisor.com/>

