



## MUSEUM OF HEALTH CARE – HEALTH AND SAFETY

### General Health and Safety

*You have the ultimate right to refuse any work you feel is unsafe. Museum staff and volunteers are expected to notify management if they have health and safety concerns. Do not hesitate to let your supervisor or the health and safety officer (Paul Robertson) know if you have a health and safety concern.*

As with many other older buildings, the Ann Baillie Building has its quirks. These are just a few quirks to look out for! Please check page 2 of the front desk manual for emergency contact information. Call extension **2143** in case of any emergency.

- Occasionally, pieces of the carpet curl up and create a tripping hazard. If you notice any of these hazards, please inform the Museum Manager.
- There is no air-conditioning in the Ann Baillie Building, with the exception of the Conference Room. During the summer months, it occasionally gets very hot in the building. In the event of high temperatures, be sure that you are drinking lots of water, and come dressed appropriately. Inform staff if you are feeling light-headed or unwell. If you need a break from the heat, take a few minutes in the conference room. There is a water cooler located in the kitchen.
- If you are involved with digital photography, be aware that the photographic lights get extremely hot. Do not touch the bulbs or reflectors while they are on, or just after they have been turned off.
- Please alert your supervisor if you are injured in any way. This event will be recorded in the incidence log in the Health and Safety binder on the table outside the kitchen. There is also a first aid kit located in the closet in the kitchen.
- Consult with your supervisor before using any power tools or using the stepladder. Please do not leave tools or hardware lying around.
- When doing heavy lifting, be sure to lift with your legs, and plan your route. Ask for assistance if you have any doubts about lifting the object safely.
- Keep public hallways clear. If hallways are needed for exhibit installation or other projects, be sure not to obstruct areas directly around corners.

- Occasionally, spray glue, paint, and other fume-causing agents may be used in the museum. If you are using these substances, make sure you are in a well-ventilated area. Remove yourself from the area if you start to feel lightheaded. If others are using these substances and the fumes bother you, please let them know and get some fresh air on the front porch.
- If you notice any additional health and safety concerns, please alert the health and safety representative, Paul Robertson.

### **Tour Safety**

- When giving tours, particularly outdoors, please come equipped with appropriate gear, including hats, sunglasses and sunscreen. You may also wish to bring a bottle of water – make sure you keep hydrated.
- When giving the walking tour, you may experience problems safely crossing King Street. If traffic is particularly heavy, cross at the Barrie Street lights. Take your time and be mindful of your visitors when crossing the street.

### **Artefact Safety**

- Many of the artefacts in the Museum of Health Care's collection are metal, and therefore susceptible to rust. In addition, rust particles (hematite) are a suspected carcinogen, so wear a particle mask for protection while handling these materials and thoroughly clean up afterwards. Wear heavy gloves to handle these artefacts.
- Be sure to get your tetanus shot up-to-date.
- Watch out for powdery green corrosion on metals, and a waxy green substance on composite leather and brass artefacts – both are poisonous if ingested. Contact the local poison control centre if swallowed (1-800-267-1373), and wash skin thoroughly with soap and water if contact occurs. Wear heavy gloves to handle these artefacts.
- Older artefacts may have been painted with lead paint. If you notice paint flaking, alert the curator and wear a particle mask. Wear heavy gloves to handle these artefacts. Other hazardous materials that may be found in the collection include mercury and leaking batteries – if you notice these substances, do not touch them – alert the Curator to their prescience.
- Use extreme caution when handling herbal specimens or old drugs and patent medicines. Always consult with the curator before handling these items. Ziploc bags can be used to contain items with loose material.

- Watch out for mould growth on textiles, leather and paper. Some moulds are potentially toxic, can trigger asthma and cause other respiratory problems. When working with artefacts with suspected mould, be sure to work in a well-ventilated area (i.e. the balcony) and wear a particle mask. Doctors' bags are a particular concern, as they can also harbor other bacteria, and dried medicine particles.
- Many surgical instruments have sharp edges, and may be dirty. Exercise extreme caution while handling these artefacts. Remain aware of the location of sharp points at all times. Be sure to wear gloves. If unsure of the cleanliness of the instrument, consult the curator to determine if rubbing alcohol should be applied.
- Occasionally, acetone is used for cleaning metal artefacts and for applying accession numbers. Please use this substance in a well-ventilated area. A health and safety fact sheet on acetone is located in the closet where it is stored. Please read the warning label before using. Avoid contact with skin.
- Most importantly, be aware of your own health while cataloguing. If something is giving off a strong smell that makes you feel lightheaded or nauseous, remove yourself from the area and get some fresh air, after alerting another staff member. Many objects in our collection are composed of older plastics and rubbers, and we do not know what the potential health hazards these may pose when deteriorating.

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I have read and understood the above information.

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Trainee's Signature

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Date

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Supervisor's Signature

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Date