

Grouse Mountain



Safety is at the top

At Grouse Mountain, safety is a healthy mix of training, on-the-job learning, and documentation. More than half of the North Vancouver resort's workforce is made up of young workers.

"Our goal is to ensure that young workers understand and practice safety at all times so that they can protect themselves and ensure that others around them work in a safe manner," says Anita Bhandari, Grouse Mountain's Health and Safety Manager.

On their first day, young workers begin their training with two orientations: one for the base of the mountain, and one for the top of the mountain.

The second day of training is where young workers learn how to be safe front-line employees. They receive their health and safety training through department specific orientations, group discussions, videos and a PowerPoint presentation presented by a member of the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

Training topics include:

- emergency procedures
- right to refuse unsafe work
- personal protective equipment
- department specific safety

During training, young workers receive a health and safety handbook that outlines Grouse Mountain's policies and procedures. A checklist is also reviewed with the trainer during the orientation. This checklist is initialed by the young worker after they have received – and understood – what is being taught.

"Young workers have a tendency to follow what is practiced," says Bhandari. "So it is important that we lead by example."

At the beginning of their employment, young workers job shadow an experienced employee who will teach them the basics of the job. They learn how to use and store equipment properly, but – more importantly – young workers learn why it is stored and used in certain ways. Young workers are also monitored by their supervisors or by an assigned co-worker to ensure safe work habits are being adopted.

Grouse Mountain also uses specific checklists to document additional equipment training. From a brush-cutter to a specific vehicle, young workers sign a form to indicate that they have been properly trained and understand how to operate each piece of equipment.

For young workers at Grouse Mountain, on-the-job safety is not just for the workplace. Rather, young workers learn that proper safety training produces results that are far reaching.

"One mistake could change your whole life forever," says Bhandari. "We all want to go home the same way we arrived in the morning."