



Ledcor Construction Limited

Creating a safety culture is the key

When it comes to health and safety, Vancouver-based Ledcor Construction Limited builds from the ground up. Understanding that young workers are at greater risk when on the job, Ledcor created an orientation program specifically designed to empower them.

“A number of years ago, we identified that workers under the age of 25 within our own company were being injured,” says Jim Billey, Manager of Health and Safety. “What we ended up deciding to do is ‘school’ young workers better.” The result is Ledcor’s month-long orientation and mentorship program.

In addition to learning about the company as whole, young workers receive a comprehensive orientation that first begins with a project-specific video.

Young workers learn about the staff they’ll be working with, the location of emergency facilities, personal protective equipment, safe work practices, responsibilities, and worker rights—such as the right to refuse unsafe work.

After matching up with a mentor, young workers participate in a comprehensive site tour. Throughout the tour, the mentor shows them basic safety practices, such as how to check a fire extinguisher.

When young workers go on the initial walkthrough of the site, their mentor not only identifies individual site hazards, but also explains to the young worker why there’s a risk involved and how to eliminate that risk.

Throughout the 30 day program, young workers observe and are monitored by their mentor. While this extended orientation consists mainly of job shadowing, the ultimate objective is learning how to work safely. Young workers are assured that though they may feel unproductive during this period of time, the process is part of their hard work on the job site.

During the program, mentors formally meet with their mentees to provide feedback and guidance. The evaluation happens every two weeks and allows young workers the opportunity to ask questions they might otherwise feel uncomfortable doing in the field.

Young workers receive periodic follow-ups and gain greater independence on the worksite once successfully completing their month-long mentorship.

After this point, young workers “should be more than willing and capable of going out on the jobsite and interacting with their coworkers, informing other coworkers of hazards they may have noticed, and then sharing that information with each other,” says Billey.

Having been taught that they are also responsible for workplace safety, young workers at Ledcor learn that the well-being of themselves and their coworkers is the number one priority.

“That’s the backbone of our company: safety comes first,” says Billey. “That’s the culture we always try and promote.”