

LOADING DOCK SAFETY

Consult the ***Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations*** for detailed information on the roles and responsibilities of workers, supervisors and employers. The *Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act* indicates that all people have a responsibility to ensure a safe and healthy workplace. The workplace can also extend beyond the walls of the building into the receiving and shipping area of the workplace, which could involve additional hazards.

Always ensure that any damaged equipment or problems are reported immediately to the appropriate authority (your supervisor, Protection Services, 2222 or other) as the situation requires.

Loading docks can be very busy areas—trucks, lifting devices and other equipment typically move throughout loading areas on a frequent basis. Rolling conveyors, doors and moving parts can cause pinch points; and if the dock is elevated, this can pose a fall hazard. Workers and supervisors must pay attention to these hazards and implement the appropriate preventative measures.

Exterior:

- Loading area must be prepared for the size of the truck and truck load
- Areas must be kept clean and adequately maintained—repair potholes or deteriorated pavement
- Dock bumpers must be installed and in good condition
- Areas must be clearly identified for loading and unloading
- Wheel chocks must be available and used for larger vehicles (when trucks sloped, when loading / unloading, or if using motorized lifting devices)
- A signal person must be available to direct vehicles backing up
- Vehicle engines must be turned off and the driver must not be in the cab when loading or unloading is taking place
- Loading dock doors must remain closed when not in use
- Dock plates must be oriented and used correctly and in good condition; No space permitted between the truck and the dock
- Stairways and steps (if any) must be in good condition (swept or shovelled regularly; protected by concrete stop posts)
- No smoking is permitted within 9 metres of a door, air intake or building entry (University Policy 58)

Interior:

- Personnel must be trained on manual and powered equipment (e.g., lift trucks, dock levellers, forklifts, etc.)
- Personnel must be trained in Transportation of Dangerous Goods (where required) and WHMIS
- Protective footwear is mandatory; other protective equipment must be worn as required (eyewear; hearing protection)
- Air quality must be adequate—engines must be turned off when trucks are at the dock
- Adequate lighting for loading and unloading vehicles is required (dock-mounted lights)
- Area must be kept clean and swept frequently—dispose of or designate areas for used pallets, containers and garbage
- Pallets must not be stored on their sides; broken pallets must be replaced
- Proper lifting techniques must be used when handling boxes and heavy items

- All equipment must be maintained and inspected (and certified, as necessary) as per the manufacturer's specification(s)
- Pedestrians and unauthorized persons (workers, students, visitors, etc.) are not permitted at the loading zone
- Provide physical barriers at dock edges—guardrails and doors can help prevent falls
- Vehicles, forklifts, lift trucks or other lifting devices must not be overloaded—make an extra trip with a lighter load
- Where required, spill kits must be made available,

[Ministry of Labour Resource](#)

Should you have any questions or concerns about hazards in your work space, please feel free to speak to your supervisor or contact the Office of Risk Management at 613-562-5892 or safety@uOttawa.ca