



HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

# WORKPLACE HEALTH

To better meet the needs of our workplace partners, we will now be including an additional newsletter "Employee Health and Wellness." We hope that you find the new newsletter informative and we encourage you to share it with your employees.

## NACL's Pandemic Plan is Near Completion

A pandemic flu, whether it is pH1N1 or another virus, may have a serious impact on the daily operations of your organization. By creating a pandemic response plan, a business can do its best to prevent, or at least minimize, the impact of these potentially devastating effects. Response plans are necessary to ensure business continuity is maintained during a pandemic. Having a pandemic plan will also help reduce the spread of flu and comfort employees during this stressful period.

The Norfolk Association for Community Living (NACL) is a not-for-profit agency that has been helping to promote and support the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all aspects of our community since 1953. NACL has taken a necessary step to ensure that the service to their clients as well as the health and welfare of their employees is maintained and supported during a pandemic.

NACL began its Pandemic Plan following the Health Unit's 2007 networking breakfast on pandemic planning. Since then, NACL has organized a team to prepare for the threat of a pandemic for all its work locations throughout Norfolk County.

Some of the components of their plan include:

- Fit-testing of staff by trained in-house fit testers.

- Training employees to work in several different areas in order to assist in continuity of services during large staff absenteeism.
- Hand hygiene training for staff.
- Proper use of protective personal equipment (masks, gowns and gloves) of staff as trained by the Health Unit's Communicable Disease team.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and other international health agencies, including Health Canada, have recommended the development of pandemic plans to help reduce the impact of the next pandemic on the world's population. If your organization is interested in learning more about creating your own pandemic plan, contact Kris Lutzi, Senior Public Health Inspector, 519-426-6170 Ext. 3261, kris.lutzi@hnhu.org or visit [www.hnhu.org](http://www.hnhu.org). To download a copy of the Health Unit's 'Influenza Pandemic Response Plan: A Tool Kit For Business Continuity Planning,' visit [www.hnhu.org](http://www.hnhu.org), then click H1N1 Flu INFO, then At Work, then Plan & Prepare.



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# Employers & Alcohol Liability



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### December:

- Dec. 22 – Olympic Torch is Coming to Town
  - Simcoe 8:58 a.m.
  - Delhi 10:25 a.m.
  - Courtland 10:57 a.m.

### January:

- Alzheimer's Awareness Month
- Jan. 18 to 24th – National Non-Smoking Week
- Jan. 27 – Family Literacy Day

### February:

- Feb. 9 - Workplace Networking Breakfast on An Employers Guide to Workplace Health.

### March:

- Mar. 23 - Workplace Networking Breakfast on An Employers Guide to Workplace Health.

Hosting or organizing a social function is a great way to show appreciation and thank employees for the year's achievements. Before your workplace makes alcohol available at social functions this holiday season, it is important to understand the legal responsibilities.

An employer has two, major, legal concerns when hosting, organizing or sponsoring events involving alcohol. The first is as a provider of alcohol. An employer is considered a provider if the workplace is hosting a function with a special-events permit or if an event is organized and held at a licensed restaurant. As a provider, there must be measures put in place to ensure that alcohol is not served to a person who the provider knows or ought to know is already intoxicated.

The second legal concern is as an occupier. Occupier liability occurs when alcohol-related injuries occur on the property of the employer (or the property the employer rents) even if the employer did not provide the alcohol. The legal concern of occupier's liability deals with injuries or harm that occurs on the property.

It is the responsibility of an employer to ensure the safety of their employees and their guests through preventive measures.

- Plan to monitor the event to ensure that individuals who are already intoxicated are not served alcohol.
- Intervene with guests who are participating in activities that may cause harm to themselves or others.
- Ensure that no person who is visibly intoxicated leaves the premise without the host taking some action to make certain they arrive home safely.

The bottom line is that, as an employer, you are making sure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm from occurring as the result of the over consumption of alcohol.

### When planning the next employee event consider the following:

- Ask your insurance agent about party alcohol liability insurance.
- Follow the workplace's alcohol policy. For policy development resources, review Let's Take Action on Alcohol Problems in the Workplace and

Canadian Workplace Alcohol and Drug Policy and Programmes.

- Make food available throughout the event. Eating won't prevent a person from becoming impaired, but food will slow the absorption of alcohol in the blood stream.
- Offer an attractive array of alcohol-free beverages. Please see a sample recipe for a mocktail on page 4. For more mocktail ideas, please visit [www.hnhu.org](http://www.hnhu.org).
- Promote the Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines.
- Stop serving alcohol long before the event is to end to avoid serving people just before they drive or otherwise try to get home.
- Have a plan to be sure that guests who may be intoxicated can be taken home safely.
- Hire bartenders who have taken the Smart Serve Program. For more information on the Smart Serve Program, visit [www.smartserve.org](http://www.smartserve.org).
- Consider having a cash bar. If people are paying for themselves, they may limit their alcohol intake.

Consider these suggestions to benefit the health and safety of your employees. Keep the celebrations safe this season!

For more information about employer alcohol liability, visit: [www.madd.ca/english/research/liability\\_employer.pdf](http://www.madd.ca/english/research/liability_employer.pdf)

## Low-Risk Drinking GUIDELINES

### Maximize Life, Minimize Risk

Many people have heard mixed messages about whether drinking alcohol has good or bad effects on a person's health. The Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines are intended to help people make an informed decision about the amount of alcoholic beverages they consume.

- 0** Zero drinks = lowest risk on an alcohol-related problem
- 9** Women – up to 9 standard drinks a week
- 2** No more than 2 standard drinks on any one day
- 14** Men – up to 14 standard drinks a week

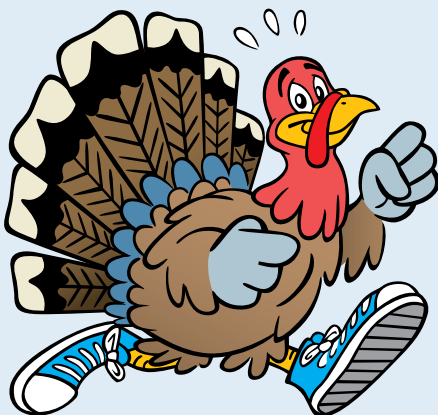
One standard drink is 5 oz. of wine or 1.5 oz. of spirits or 12 oz. of beer. (Note: Coolers and higher alcohol beers have more alcohol than one standard drink.)

- If you don't already drink, don't start for "health reasons."
- If you do drink, avoid getting drunk or intoxicated.
- Wait at least one hour between drinks.
- Have something to eat.
- Drink non-alcoholic beverages, such as water, soft drinks or fruit juice.

The Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines are for people of legal drinking age. The Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines have been developed by a team of medical and social researchers from the University of Toronto and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

*University of Toronto and the Centre of Addiction and Mental Health. (n.d.) Low-risk drinking guidelines. Retrieved Dec. 4, 2000, from <http://www.lrdg.net/guidelines.html>*

## Workplace Wellness Ideas this Holiday Season



- Hold a "turkey trot" for your employees. Staff members who exercise three times a week for at least one-half hour are entered in a draw to win a turkey.
- Invite a yoga instructor to your workplace to hold a demonstration. Consider a follow-up worksite introductory yoga class for employees to sign up for before or after work.
- Host a healthy holiday potluck. Invite participants to bring a dish reflective of their holiday traditions.
- Hold a decorate a door/office/lunch room competition. Provide prizes to the most colourful, most creative, etc.
- Provide employees with one day of paid work off to volunteer for an organization in your community.
- Organize a lunch-time walking club. Pedometers can be borrowed from the Health Unit.

# MOCKTAIL recipe

Alcohol-free!



## INGREDIENTS

- Mock Champagne
- 4 cups club soda
- 4 cups ginger ale
- 3 cups unsweetened white grape juice
- Ice

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Chill club soda, ginger ale and grape juice overnight.
- Combine all ingredients in a large pitcher and serve immediately over ice.

# Planning Workplace Health for the New Year!

The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit's Workplace Health Program provides a free situational assessment to workplaces in Haldimand and Norfolk counties interested in creating or improving their workplace health program.

Our situational assessment is an online survey that each employee in your organization completes to help you collect data on employees' health behaviours. The *Health at Work Needs Assessment Questionnaire* takes a comprehensive approach to measure the workplace health, personal health and organizational needs of a workplace. Sections of the questionnaire include: general health, nutrition, physical activity, smoking and alcohol, social work environment, my health and my job, physical work environment and employee interest.

Our workplace health promoter is available to analyze the data, create a personalized report on the information and present the information to your organization on-site with a focus on the business case for workplace health.

The Health Communication Unit (THCU) at the Centre for Health Promotion, University of Toronto (U of T), recommends the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit's situational assessment tool on their website [www.thcu.ca](http://www.thcu.ca).

For more information on the *Health at Work* situational assessment tool, please contact Julia Hartley, Workplace Health Promoter at 519.426.6170 Ext. 3236 or e-mail [julia.hartley@hnhu.org](mailto:julia.hartley@hnhu.org).



When the mercury plummets and the snow starts to fall, even the most dedicated walker can be tempted to hibernate for the season. Canada's winters are long, but they shouldn't keep you from enjoying nature and getting exercise. Included in this newsletter you have a copy of our "iCANwalk in the winter" poster. This is part of a campaign to encourage people to continue to be active in the winter. To order more posters and pamphlets to place in your workplace, please contact Heather Keam at the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit 519-426-6170 Ext. 3208, [heather.keam@hnhu.org](mailto:heather.keam@hnhu.org).