Sun exposure at work increases risk of skin cancer

Sun exposure is a serious occupational hazard. Exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun via skin or eyes can cause a number of health effects, including:

- Skin cancer
- Sunburn
- Skin damage
- Cataracts
- Eye lesions and cancer

Sun exposure is the leading cause of skin cancer.

About 1 in 3 new cancer cases in Canada are skin cancer.\(^1\)
It is the most common type of cancer in the country.\(^1\)
Skin cancer and other sun-related health effects are largely preventable by limiting exposure to sunlight.

Approximately 1.5 million Canadians are exposed to sun at work.\(^2\)

- Outdoor workers have higher sun exposure during work and leisure time than indoor workers.\(^3\)
- About 67% of outdoor workers in Canada spend 2 or more working hours in the sun daily.\(^4\)
- The largest industrial groups exposed to sun in Canada are construction, farming, and building care and maintenance.\(^2\)

Outdoor workers have a 2.5 to 3.5 times greater risk of skin cancer than indoor workers.\(^5\)

As many as 7,000 skin cancers were attributed to occupational exposure to the sun in 2014.\(^6,7\)

For more information on prevention, please contact sunsafetyatwork@ryerson.ca.