

Implications of new safety legislation

By JACOB KATSMAN

York University is currently working on a program to reduce the danger to its employees from chemical hazards, after two levels of government passed workplace health and safety legislation in 1987.

The Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS) is intended to improve safety practices in industrial workplaces, but governs universities as well.

In 1985 two people died in Ontario, and another 2,128 were injured by chemicals at work. Thirty-eight of those injuries were permanent disabilities.

Under WHMIS York's Faculty of Science and other departments working with hazardous materials have to comply with the three basic WHMIS requirements, including comprehensive labelling with special handling procedures on all hazardous materials, easily-accessible, bilingual records of dangerous substances in the workplace, and worker training, so employees understand the information on the labels and material safety data sheets.

"The workers' training can be very beneficial," said Ilpo Lehto, president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) at York.

"Often people don't know what their rights are with health and safety. Through WHMIS workers will be better informed," said Lehto.

Co-chair of science health and safety committee, Jane Grant said that WHMIS will make the work place safer because of better housekeeping.

"If a worker cleaning in a York lab accidentally overthrows a bottle containing hazardous material, the WHMIS label would serve as immediate guide to the worker's next action."

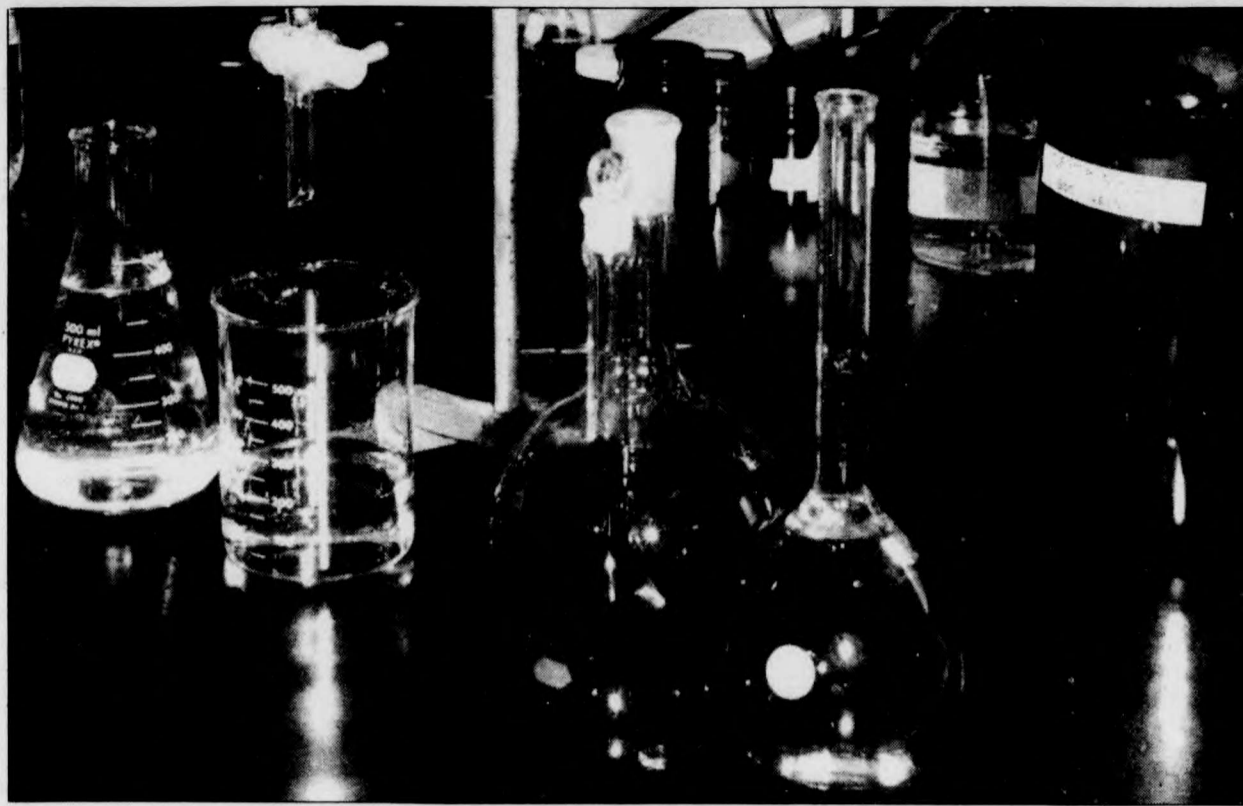
The label would tell the worker whether the substance is poisonous, toxic, flammable, corrosive, dangerously reactive, or safe.

But one faculty member doubts WHMIS will make a big difference to safety for University researchers.

Chemistry professor Clive Holloway wrote a letter to *Excalibur* stating his feelings regarding York's implementation of WHMIS.

In his letter Holloway said that he failed to see how WHMIS, a government agency, could know more about an unknown substance than the person developing it already have.

Holloway said, "All it will do is take the employer off the hook in the relatively unlikely event of a problem.



BABAK AMIRFEIZ

Hazardous materials will undergo comprehensive labelling specified under WHMIS regulations.

"The WHMIS legislation was not designed for the worker's protection but for the employer's protection, who, having filed all the appropriate pieces of paper and displayed all the required notices, can simply turn around and say: 'Na-na! I told you so!'"

Holloway told *Excalibur* that WHMIS legislation was designed for industries handling large quantities of hazardous materials. "Universities handle small quantities of many materials.

"There are hundreds of tubes and bottles in the lab," he said. "This means thousands pieces of paper.

The paper itself could create a fire hazard."

Holloway called WHMIS a "blanket legislation," saying that trying to adopt it to a university environment would be a challenge.

The estimated cost of WHMIS to York is \$100,000, said Richard Grundsten, of York's Department of Occupational Health and Safety (DOHS). DOHS is developing a computer system which will store all the needed information on York's stock of hazardous materials and make this information readily available to workers, employers, professors and students.

This system will be tied into the main York terminal and will be available to anybody who has access to a computer on campus.

Although plans are underway toward implementing WHMIS, York is behind schedule. Both the Federal and Provincial governments passed WHMIS legislation in 1987, but York's system won't be ready until late next fall. Grundsten said the University received an extension from the government and the implementation date has been postponed until October 31, 1989, but claims, "We are not behind any other universities."

York debating team placed 43rd

By KEVIN YARDE

One of York's two debating teams placed in the upper half at the 120-team annual World's University Debating Championship at Princeton University last month.

At the tournament, the York 'A' team finished 43 out of 120 teams (top third), beating out rivals from King's College and Concordia University.

The first place team was from Sydney, Australia, beating out the University of Toronto in the final round.

U of T's second-place finish was the best from a Canadian school,

beating out the American teams from Harvard and Yale, both highly respected.

York's 'B' team placed 107th in intense competition.

The York 'A' team was led by Marc Potvin (President of the Debating Society) and Steve Roberts of Glendon College. The York 'B' team was led by Monty Bhardwaj and Eric Dansereau.

"This tournament was not only a means for competitors from York to 'strut' their stuff, but also to put York on the map," said Potvin.

Last fall, York teams competed in two Canadian tournaments. At the Leger Cup in Montreal (at Concordia University) York's 'A' team finished fourth overall. The team was led by Potvin and Bharadwaj.

Plans are in the making for Poland to come to York.

Poland would like to come to Canada as part of an East/West dialogue. Next year's Worlds Tournament will be held in Glasgow Scotland. York's Debating Society is presently planning to attend this event. Canada was awarded host of the tournament for 1991, and U of T will host it.

SCOTIABANK'S MBA SCHOLARSHIPS: SUPPORT YOU CAN BANK ON.

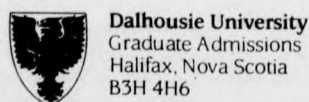
Even the most dedicated student needs financial support. So in 1987, Scotiabank created a unique scholarship for outstanding MBA students. The Scotiabank Scholarship Program reflects our commitment to the education and development of future business and community leaders.

Scotiabank awards two scholarships annually at both Dalhousie and McGill Universities. Each Scotiabank Scholar will receive \$12,500 per year and be offered a position of employment with

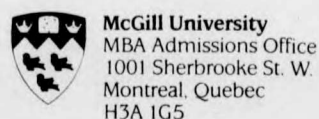
Scotiabank between academic years.

Applicants should be under 28 years of age on September 1st, 1989, and must be Canadian citizens, landed immigrants, or citizens of Caribbean countries (Dalhousie only) or Asian countries (McGill only). The deadline for applying is April 15, 1989. Students must also complete an application to the MBA program at either university by this date.

For more information, write to your preferred university today.



Scotiabank



KAPLAN
STANLEY H. KAPLAN EDUCATIONAL CENTER
OF CANADA LTD.

(416) 967-4733

Excalibur's
Editorial
Elections
March 9

ELIGIBLE VOTERS LIST

If your name is not on this list, and you feel that it should be, talk to Adam.

Adam Kardash
T.J. Robers
James Hoggett
Garry Marr
Nancy Phillips
Farhad Desai
Scott Goodman
Alan Grad
Sari Haber
Martin Hyde
Jonathan Kardash
Jacob Katsman
Elan Katsir
Lorne Manly
James Flagal
Bob Shairulla
David Webster
Daniel Wolgelerenter
Mark Right
Jerome Ryckborst
Tania Hewett
Cathi Graham
Susan Vanstone
Howard Kaman
Roslyn Angel
Leo MacDonald
Mark Dillon
Lauren Gillen
Roy Lunardi
Heather Sangster
Randy Ugolini
Pam Serkowney
Chris "Hunt" Hurst
Morley Conn
Babak Amirfeiz
Andre Souroujon
Brian Krog
Paul Quattrini
Richard Abel
Paul Gazzola
Riccardo Sala
Merle Menzie
Mary Jankulak
Stuart Ross
Patty Milton

PREPARE FOR:

**LSAT GMAT
MCAT SAT
GRE DAT**

SPEEDREADING

**ADVANCED
MEDICAL
BOARDS**