

OHS NEWS

WORKPLACE SAFETY IS EVERYONES' CONCERN

SEPTEMBER 2013

Fall Traffic Safety

While summer is still with us; summer vacations are ending for students as well as many adults. Road traffic will once again be on the rise. All drivers, whether travelling to and from work or driving for a living need to be prepared and alert.

School busses will be on the road once again; remember to stop in both direction when a school bus has flashing red lights. Also pay particular attention in school zones and crosswalks. Remember, where the approaching speed limit is 50 km/h the speed limit in school zones has been reduced to 30 km/h ([Safer School Zone Q&A](#)). Fines are double for speeding in a school zone.

Some additional items to consider:

- Pay attention to crosswalks, there will be increased pedestrian traffic as well. Be aware of and obey crossing-guards; come to a full stop at the crosswalks. Also there will likely be increased bicycle traffic.
- Don't use hand held phones while driving. For information on distractions and other road safety matters please see the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal booklet [Road Safety: It's everyone's responsibility](#).
- Construction, both road and building, continues through the fall so pay attention to any traffic control signs and signalers.
- Adjust for fewer daylight hours; sun is rising later and setting earlier.
- Leaves are beginning to fall and could cause slippery road conditions especially on rainy days

Be patient—let's make sure we all arrive to our destination safely.



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Common Orders

A selection of recent orders written by OHS Officers. They are presented to raise awareness of potentially similar issues at your workplace.

- First aid kits—not available, wrong size for number of workers, not monitored and restocked
- First Aid Certifi-

- cate—no one certified, certification expired, no proof of certification
- Fire extinguishers—not annually inspected
- Electrical rooms—messy and used for storage of unrelated materials
- Electrical Panels—empty/blank slots
- WHMIS?MSDS—

- no WHMIS training, no MSDS sheets, sheets not up-to-date
- Eye wash stations—not capable of delivering 15 minutes of flow
- Fall Protection—no fall protection while at heights greater than 3 meters or over unsafe ground
- Guarding—no

- guarding around openings in floors or temporary stairs
- Scaffolds—improperly set-up, missing braces
- Safeguards—missing safeguards around various tools and machinery
- Electric—safe distance when working near unknown voltages

Cross Canada Hazard Alerts

Excerpts from a selection of Hazard Alerts issued by Provincial Jurisdictions across Canada. They are presented to raise awareness of potentially similar issues at your workplace.

British Columbia **Jack Stands Fail (full alert)**

A worker replacing front brakes on a semi-truck jacked up the front end and supported it with jack stands. Later another worker began replacing the truck's rear engine mounts. While underneath the front end jacking up the engine, the jack stands failed, caus-

ing serious injuries.

On investigation, WorkSafe BC learned, none of the workers involved knew the weight of the truck's front end or the rated capacity of the jack stands. As it turns out the front end weighed more than the stands rated load.

Arc Flash (full alert)

An electrician working inside a circuit breaker cabinet reached up to access equipment and accidentally contacted an energized busbar with a ratchet. The current flowed from the busbar

through the ratchet to a neutral busbar resulting in an arc flash. Equipment had not been disconnected and locked-out.

New Brunswick **Battery Explosion (full alert)**

Worker received injuries to their face and eye when they were struck by pieces of plastic and acid from a battery exploding. On investigation it was found that a combination of cold weather, boosting procedures and a discharged battery were the cause of the explosion.

Prince Edward Island **Overhead Power Lines full alert)**

A farmer escaped serious injury when the boom of a self-propelled mobile sprayer he was operating contacted a 138,000 volt power line. On investigation it was found the farmer raised the sprayer boom to clear trees and shrubs at the end of the field. While turning the vehicle with the raised boom it either hit, or came close enough to, the power line to cause an arc and the tires to burst into flames.

Recent Incidents

A selection of recent workplace incidents investigated by OHS Officers. They are presented to raise awareness of potentially similar issues at your workplace.

Fall

An employee fell from a plank and injured themselves, while in the process of removing roof brackets and planks at the end of shingling job. The employees had worn fall protection while shingling the roof. The employee stepped on the end of a plank that extended beyond the roof bracket, causing the other end to pull the bracket free and the employee to fall.

Electrical Contacts

A worker came into contact with live electrical equipment while working at a cabinet that had 3 power buses.

Another employee came into contact with live electrical equipment. The work entailed disconnecting and removing old electrical equipment.

On investigation neither incident had locked-out the equipment or undertaken hazard identification procedures.

Burns

An employee received some burns when an Acetylene gas line ruptured while using a cutting torch.

Trip and Fall

An employee tripped and fell down a set of stairs entering into the workplace building. Weather and stair conditions did not appear to be a factor.

Seat-belt

An employee avoided being ejected from their work vehicle by wearing their seat belt. The employee was a steam drum roller when it came into contact with a soft shoulder causing the machine to slide down an embankment and landing on its side. The employee received some bruising.

Tools

An employee was injured while using a nail gun.

While joining two pieces of wood with a nail gun, the gun hit a knot. This caused the gun to bounce back, the knot to be ejected from the board, and the gun to fire a second time with the nail travelling through the knot channel and striking the operator.

Machine Contact

While cleaning a machine that was turned off, an employee was injured when the machine was turned on again. Lock-out procedures need to be in place to ensure machines cannot be suddenly restarted while employees are working on or near them and could come into contact with moving parts.

Ladder Safety

Ladders—stepladders, extension ladders—are used extensively at home and at many workplaces. They are used daily and are relatively straightforward—no complicated instructions, no buttons to push, machinery to engage—simply open or lean and climb. Yet everyday there are accidents, some serious, involving using ladders improperly.

Regulatory requirements for ladders are found in the Occupational Safety General regulations (OSGR) Part 13.

Among some of the requirements are:

- Commercially Manufactured portable ladders in a workplace must meet CSA Z11 “Portable Ladders” and cannot be Grade 3 portable ladders.
- Non-commercially manufactured wooden ladders must be made of No 1 or 2 spruce, pine or fir (graded according to latest CSA 0140 “Softwood Lumber”) or other lumber providing an equivalent level of safety
- The ladder must be placed on firm footing and secured in adequate manner against movement.
- If the ladder is used as a means of access or exit it has side rails that extend 1 meter above the platform or landing
- Inspected by a competent person before each use and annually
- When working 1 meter above a safe surface maintain 3 points of contact
- Users: ascend or descend facing the ladder,; stand in center of ladder, do not work from top 3 rungs; step ladder do not stand on material shelf, the top or top step
- Remove from service if faulty rungs, side rails.



Photo from SafetySmart.com

Additional Resources:

WorkSafeBC:

- [Ladder Safety videos](#)
- [Ladder Safety e-course](#)
- [Ladder Extension](#)

CCOHS

New Campaign—Fisheries & Life-jackets

The Nova Scotia Fisheries Sector Council, the Fisheries Safety Association and the Workers’ Compensation Board are partnered in launching a province wide campaign to remind fishermen of the importance of wearing life-jackets while working on water.

The focus of the initiative, called ‘Who Do You Wear Your PFD for?’, is on getting into the fishing communities and talking with fishermen and their families.

The Occupational Health and Safety legislation requires that PFDs be worn where there is a risk of drowning.

Watch for campaign initiatives at various community fishing events in your area and ‘take the pledge’ to wear a PFD.

[News report](#) on launching of the Campaign at the Wedgeport Tuna Tournament on August 24th.

2 Consultations—Still time for Input

PROVINCIAL

The provincial public consultation for the proposed new system for administrative penalties continues. The deadline for providing your comments is September 26, 2013. Information, including a discussion paper and how to submit your comments may be found here: [AP Public Consultation process and material](#)

FEDERAL

The deadline for submissions/comments to Health Canada regarding the new Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals—GHS, is September 15, 2013. Information on the process may be found here at [Health Canada Request for Comments](#). In [French](#).

Note: there is also a [Description of Proposed Amendments](#). In [French](#)

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or our OHS Knowledgebase
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FYI—SSNS Conference

Highlight March 26 and 27, 2014 in your calendar; Safety Services Nova Scotia will be holding their 32nd Annual Workplace Safety Conference.

The Conference, “From Vision to Visible Results”, will be at the Westin Nova Scotian hotel, Halifax.

Safety Services Nova Scotia will be announcing program highlights throughout the Fall and registration will be opening soon.

We'll be sure to follow any updates from SSNS and pass them along to you.

FYI—Office of the Employer Advisor

[The Office of the Employer Advisor](#), OEA, is an independent society providing employers services such as: advocacy, education programs, statutory interpretation, consultations, assistance with WCB? OHS procedures and regulations.

OEA is holding consultations and meetings with employers regarding submissions to WCB Draft Policies on Psychological Injury and Contractor/Subcontractor.

September 6 in Halifax (10 to 12 noon) and September 10 in Truro

(10:30 to 12 noon) are sessions dealing with Psychological Injury; also on September 10 in Truro (1:30—3:00 pm) there will be a session on Contractor/subcontractor.

Contact the OEA Office at 442-9366 for further information.

Follow this link—[OEA sessions on WCB Policies](#)—for the draft policies as well registration forms for the upcoming sessions and additional information.

Links to related agencies:

- [Nova Scotia WCB](#)
- [Workers Compensation Appeals Tribunal \(WCAT\)](#)
- [Workers' Advisers Program \(WAP\)](#)
- [Workplace Safety and Insurance System \(WSIS\)](#)
- [Office of the Employer Advisor Nova Scotia](#)
- [Service Canada / Français](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety \(CCOHS\) / Français](#)
- [CanOSH \(Canada's National Workplace Health and Safety Website\) / Français](#)