

# OHS NEWS

## WORKPLACE SAFETY IS EVERYONES' CONCERN

MAY 2014

### *Update on Workplace Health and Safety Regulations*

At the time of writing and publishing this newsletter, we do not have any specifics regarding the up coming opportunity to comment on the draft Workplace Health and Safety Regulations (WHSR) Phase 2 wording.

However, as in past consultations, there will be a notice on the Department's [homepage](#) under the heading of Public Consultations (scroll down the page—right hand side). For example, there is currently a link to the new [apprenticeship agency](#). The expectation is the Phase 2 WHSR draft will be available in May.

Introduced in June of 2013 the WHSR will eventually incorporate all the current regulations other than *Underground Mining Regulations*.

The parts covered in Phase 2 are: First Aid; Sanitation and Accommodation; Personal Protective Equipment; Excavation and Trenching; Blasting Safety; Confined Spaces; Surface Mine Workings; Occupational Diving; and Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees.

Also, at this time the Division has begun work on the Phase 3 portion of the WHSR. This final phase includes: Handling and Storage of Materials; Tools; Mechanical Safety and Robotics; Cranes; Hoists; Mobile Equipment; Lock-out; Premises and Building Safety; Construction and Demolition; Electrical Safety; Welding and Cutting; Burning and Soldering; Equipment for Firefighters; and Violence in the Workplace.

If you have any comments or suggestions regarding requirements being considered in Phase 3 please submit them to [OHSNewsletter@gov.ns.ca](mailto:OHSNewsletter@gov.ns.ca) Please write "Phase 3 WHSR" in the Subject line of your e-mail.

### *May 4-10 NAOSH Week*

The [North American Occupational Health and Safety Week](#) will take place from May 4th to the 10th.

This annual event take a community based approach across the country with events and activities coordinated by local, provincial, regional committees.

The partners in NAOSH Week are: the [Canadian Society of Safety Engineers](#) (CSSE); [the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety](#) (CCOHS); Labour Program of [Human Resources and Social Development Canada](#) (HRSDC); [Threads of Life](#); and the [American](#)

[Society of Safety Engineers](#) (ASSE).

The goal is to focus workplace parties, organizations, associations and the public on the importance of preventing illness and injury at the workplace, at home and in the community.

If you wish to see what events are taking place

at or near your community or you wish to 'post' your event please go to "[Events](#)" and follow the instructions. The main site also has ideas and [resources](#) for those wishing to host an event.

Join the [NAOSH Week Symposium](#), "[Make Safety a Habit!](#)" on May 5th.; John Savage Ave. Dartmouth

### **This Issue:**

<i>Update on WHSR</i>	1
<i>NAOSH Week May 4-10</i>	1
<i>Hand Tool Hazards</i>	2
<i>New Field Office for OHS Inspectorate</i>	2
<i>Update: Safety Services NS Conference</i>	2
<i>Recent OHS Incidents &amp; Court Case</i>	3
<i>FYI—GHS update (WHMIS)</i>	3
<i>Steps for Life events May</i>	4
<i>Reminder: 2014 TLV booklet available at Regional Libraries</i>	4

## Hand Tool Hazards

We likely view power tools, with their moving blades, bits (drill), abrasives, as being more hazardous than hand tools. However hand tools also have their hazards that may result in a variety of injuries.

In addition to the more common acute injuries, such as cuts, lacerations, and bruises, extended use of hand tools can cause musculoskeletal injuries of various kinds: tendonitis, bursitis, carpal tunnel, tennis elbow etc.

Some of the factors contributing to injuries are: static load; work/body position-

ing; vibration; tissue compression.

### *Static Load*

The effort that occurs when muscles are kept tense as when you have arms extended in front of you while holding on to a tool. Muscles subjected to long periods of static load are vulnerable to fatigue which may make them susceptible to injury.

### *Work/body positions*

Occasionally hand tools need to be used while being in an awkward position. Awkward positions while using hand tools can lead to fatigued and cramped mus-

cles. Also when in an awkward body position, muscles not directly being used with operating hand tools are impacted as well, as the rest of the body tries to compensate for being misaligned.

### *Tissue Compression*

Firm grips over an extended period of time results in soft tissue compression—tingling and numbness are the result.

### *Vibration*

Some hand tools, such as any that are striking or percussive, can produce vibration which is transmitted unto the operator.

Above excerpted from [CCOHS Hand Tool Ergonomics](#). Also check [Hand Tools](#) for specifics

Some other consideration:

Knives/box cutters—cut away from body; don't use blade as a screwdriver

Screwdriver—don't use as a chisel or pry-bar

Blunt tools—require more force to use that can lead musculoskeletal injury

Hammers—use the appropriate one for the task; make sure the head is firmly attached; check handles aren't cracked or splintered

In Nova Scotia [Part 9 of the OSGR](#) has requirements for tools (non and powered)

## FYI—OHS Move

On May 15th a portion of the OHS Division will be moving to a new field office in Burnside.

The OHS inspectorate of the Central Region as well as staff from OHS Technical Services will be going to Garland Avenue in Dartmouth.

Also included in this move will be staff from the Technical Safety Branch (Elevators and Lifts, Power Engineers, Crane operators, etc.); as well as staff in the Skills and Learning section.

## Update: Safety Services 32nd Annual Safety Conference

Safety Services Nova Scotia's Annual Safety Conference took place on March 26-27. Unfortunately the start of the Conference took place during a wild and blustery winter storm.

If you had planned to attend but cancelled because of the weather, you can still view a number of the presentations that were given.

Safety Services has made available 5 presentations on their website for public viewing. These include:

- 04B-05B Temperature stresses in the workplace

- 04B-05B Temperature stresses in the workplace Training handout
- Intro to OHS Officer Role
- Workplace Health and Safety Regulations (WHSR) update, and
- WCB Basics

These may be viewed at [Safety Services Conference Presentations](#).

Safety Services has also sent a password to those delegates who had registered which will allow them access to audio re-

cordings and additional PowerPoint slides from many of the conference sessions. These will be available to registered delegates for the next month.

## Recent Incidents and Court Case

This selection of incidents investigated by our officers serve to encourage you to check and see where you stand with regards to these, or similar issues.

### *Arc Flash/Communication*

Electrical work was being undertaken on a panel in an electrical room when an arc flash occurred. The flash completely disconnected the “on-off” breaker handle. After the incident power was restored and the handle was placed loosely back into the panel. The owner of the premises was not advised of the incident, no lock-out was in place nor any signs posted warning of danger. Three days later the issue was discovered and the Division

notified. Know what your duties and responsibilities are under the Act.

### *Guarding*

An employee injured three fingers while working on a dough dividing and moulding machine. On investigation it was noted that the machine in question had a number of deficiencies in relation to the manufacturer’s specifications, safe-guarding and lock-out. The Occupational Safety General Regulations has requirements for [Lock-out](#) (section 61) and [Mechanical Safety](#) (section 84).

### *Excavator Rollover*

While attempting to position an excavator to load onto a

float the operator was unable to control the machine as it slid into a ditch. On investigation it was determined that the machine was mechanically sound but an unusual mixture of frozen snow, mud and ice had filled the excavator tracks causing them to be smooth and therefore lose traction. Additional care needs to be undertaken when environmental conditions are such that they may create conditions not previously experienced.

### *FYI— Jail time for Supervisor in Ontario Court Case*

[Summary \(Ontario Newsroom\)](#)  
[Full Case \(Canlii\)](#)

An Ontario Court of Justice

sentenced a Supervisor to a 45 day jail sentence. A worker slipped and fell off a roof more than 3 m. high; leaving him paralyzed from the waist down. There was no fall protection and the injured worker indicated he was never trained in the use of fall protection equipment.

In addition to the jail sentence for the supervisor, the company was fined \$75,000 and a company representative was fined \$2,000 for obstructing a Ministry investigation.

This is an interesting case since it included previous records of violations and disregard for compliance.

## Update—Federal WHMIS Globally Harmonized System (GHS)

In December of 2011 Canada and the United States announced a series of initiatives with regards to regulatory co-operation. This also included an initiative, commonly referred to as the Globally Harmonized System (GHS), meant to align and synchronize common classification and labeling requirements for workplace hazardous chemicals.

The system covers all hazardous chemicals and may be adopted to cover chemicals in the workplace, transport, consumer products, pesticides and pharmaceuticals. The target audiences for GHS include workers, transport workers, emergency responders and consumers.

Currently Bill C-31 is being studied by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance and the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce. It has provisions to amend three pieces of legislation: 1) the Hazardous Products Act (HPA); 2) Part II of the Canada Labour Code;

and 3) the Hazardous Materials Information Review Act. Proposed amendments to the HPA are: i) changes to definitions and terminology; ii) technical changes to regulatory authorities as they relate to classification criteria and hazard communication; and iii) changes related to compliance and enforcement under HPA.

For additional information including preparing for GHS implementation please go to [Health Canada WHMIS/GHS](#). To read the complete summary of the C-31 Overview (pdf) go to: [C-31 Overview \(English\)](#); [C-31 Overview \(French\)](#)

Also, CCOHS has released a free recorded webinar to help you better understand the approach, and outline proposed new hazard classification and communication obligations. To learn more and register go to: [GHS Webinar](#).

**LABOUR AND ADVANCED  
EDUCATION**

Occupational Health and Safety Division  
P.O. Box 697  
Halifax, NS  
B3J 2R7

Phone: 902-424-5400  
Fax: 902-424-5640  
Toll Free: 1-800-952-2687 (9-LABOUR)  
E-mail: [ohsdivision@gov.ns.ca](mailto:ohsdivision@gov.ns.ca)

For further information come see us on  
the Web at:

<http://gov.ns.ca/lae/healthandsafety/>

*Steps for Life—May*

[Steps for Life](#) is an annual, 5 k walk, fundraising event by the [Threads of Life](#) organization.

The event brings together families and co-workers who have been impacted by workplace tragedy with neighbours, community, and health and safety professionals to help raise both funds and awareness for Threads of Life.

There are currently 3 locations in Nova Scotia with Steps for Life events. Click on the individual events for details and contact persons: [Halifax](#), May 3rd at Point Pleasant Park; [Sydney](#), May 4th at Open Hearth Park; and [Windsor/West Hants](#), May 4th at Smiley's Provincial Park.

Join in or organize a team from your workplace to take part in this most worthwhile event.

*Reminder re: TLV booklet availability*

The Division has provided a 2014 Threshold Limits Values (TLV) Booklet to each of the 9 Regional Libraries in the province where they will be available for reference. The libraries are: Annapolis Valley Regional Library; Cape Breton Regional Library; Colchester-East Hants Public Library; Cumberland Public Libraries; Eastern Counties Regional Library; Halifax Public Libraries; Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library; South Shore Public Libraries; and the Western County Regional Library

[Part 2, Occupational Health](#), of the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations*, clause 2.3 cites the booklet. It states an employer is to comply with, and ensure compliance with the TLV for exposure to all of the following gases, vapours, mists, fumes, dust, chemical substances, physical agents.

*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](#)