

OHS NEWS

MAY 2015



Day Of Mourning—April 28

April 28 is the day that has been set aside to join the rest of Canada and more than 80 countries worldwide to remember those who died, were injured or became critically ill at work.

The following is an excerpt from a [press release](#) regarding the ceremonies that took place on the 28th.

At the Halifax ceremony, held at Province House, Labour and Advanced Education Minister Kelly Regan and Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia vice-president of prevention, Shelley Rowan, joined Ms. Estella Hickey, Threads of Life member and mother of Kyle Hickey (aged 22) who was tragically killed at the workplace.

Ceremonies were also held at Kentville, Trenton, Port Hawkesbury and Sydney.

Ms. Regan noted, "These families and loved ones live with their tragic loss every day. Their loss serves as a reminder to all of us that our work is not done. We have to do more to eliminate workplace illnesses, injuries and fatalities."

In 2014 there were 19 workers who lost their lives at work or because of work-related injuries. To date in 2015 there have been seven workplace fatalities.

Ms. Hickey said, "For me, it is another day to remember our son Kyle, taken away so young. I believe everyone that goes to work should come home at the end of the day to their loved ones."

Stuart MacLean, CEO of the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia said, "The human impacts of workplace injury serve as stark reminders of the importance of our work. We pause to remember the workplace tragedies of the past, and to pledge our commitment to making changes that will ensure every Nova Scotian comes home from work safely."

Mr. Rick Clarke, president of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, echoed the sentiments of all when he said, "Our thoughts today are with the families, friends, and co-workers of the 19 workers in Nova Scotia who did not come home in 2014," said Rick Clarke, president of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour. "These statistics are a compelling reminder that more needs to be done to protect workers. Working together we can make a difference, but we must, each of us, make a commitment to that goal."

"Awareness, education, training and enforcement are all crucial to bring about the changes that are needed."

This Issue	
<i>Day of Mourning - April 28</i>	1
<i>FYI—Recent Incidents</i>	2
<i>WHMIS after GHS: Transition Period</i>	3
<i>OHS Division: Education and Outreach</i>	3
<i>May: NAOSH Week and Steps for Life</i>	4
<i>OHS Live Twitter Chat</i>	4

OHS Events
May 4: NAOSH Week Launch 2015
May: Steps for Life Fundraiser Event
May 27: OHS Live Twitter Chat



FYI—Recent Incidents

The following is a brief review of incidents investigated by our officers. This serves to highlight workplace incidents and encourage you to check and see where you stand with regards to these issues.

Slips, Trips and Falls

1) Due to the extended icy winter conditions there were several incidents of employees slipping and falling on ice at the workplace or in the parking lot of the workplace.

During ice breaking/clearing procedures an employee slipped and injured their back when they hit the ground.

The employer undertook their own internal investigation of the incident and found the following:

- Ice had been broken up by 'loader' and worker was clearing chunks
- Work area was also icy due to weather conditions
- Loose chips of ice likely contributed to the slipping/fall hazard

- Worker was wearing winter boots
- There had been a failure to assess the workplace for potential hazards

The remedial steps undertaken to prevent similar occurrences included:

- Stress importance of undertaking a hazard assessment before starting work
- Recommend the wearing of ice cleats when on icy surfaces
- Use additional salt/sand for traction particularly where employees are working

Due to prompt internal investigation and remedial actions taken by the employer, no additional orders were warranted.

2) While descending a ladder from one work area to another a worker got their foot caught in a rung and fell backwards injuring their arm. The employer undertook an investigation and found the following:

- Travel on this ladder is a regular part of the work
- The worker had been employed several years and was trained
- The appropriate PPE was being worn
- It was determined the worker lost focus of the immediate task and lost their footing

As a remedial action the employer would remind all workers the need to stay focused on the task at hand even when simply in transit between work levels. No additional orders were warranted.

3) Worker fell from a shelving unit at a warehouse facility and injured their back. The shelving units are quite tall (25 feet) and are accessed by workers via stairways.

Products are placed on the shelving by pickers (Material Handling Equipment). Employees physically move the material from the inside of the shelving at this location to

an active shelving section .

On investigation OHS Officers found:

- Employee had climbed up the shelving unit to look for a product, on the way down they slipped and fell into a wooden pallet
- Employee was fully aware that climbing the racking and shelving was prohibited but did it on a frequent basis
- No safe work procedure (SWP) in place noting hazard of climbing shelves

Order issued for lack of a SWP.



WHMIS 2015—After GHS: Transition Period

The old WHMIS system (WHMIS 1988) is being replaced by a new system (WHMIS 2015) over the next three years (*for more information go to page 4*).

A multi-year plan was recently announced. From now until May 31, 2017, suppliers (manufacturers and importers) can use WHMIS 1988 **or** WHMIS 2015 to classify and communicate the hazards of their products.

From June 1, 2017 to May 31, 2018, distributors and suppliers importing for their own use can use WHMIS 1988 or 2015.

Phase	Timing	Suppliers		Employer*
		Manufacturers and Importers	Distributors	
Phase 1	From February 11, 2015 to May 31, 2017	WHMIS 1988 or WHMIS 2015	WHMIS 1988 or WHMIS 2015	Consult Federal/ Provincial/ Territorial regulator
Phase 2	From June 1, 2017 to May 31, 2018	WHMIS 2015	WHMIS 1988 or WHMIS 2015	WHMIS 1988 or WHMIS 2015
Phase 3	From June 1, 2018 to November 30, 2018	WHMIS 2015	WHMIS 2015	WHMIS 1988 or WHMIS 2015
Completion	December 1, 2018	WHMIS 2015	WHMIS 2015	WHMIS 2015

- *Requirements may vary— follow your local jurisdiction for possible updates regarding on requirements and transition timing.

Chart reproduced from CCOHS [WHMIS 2015—General](#)

OHS Division: Education and Outreach.

The Education and Outreach branch, which consists of a manager, 2 outreach officers and an information specialist, has been busy delivering education and awareness to businesses and associations on various OHS matters.

From January to end of April staff have presented at 25 industry/association events and have many more scheduled in the upcoming months. Staff were also busy developing material to help educate employers and workers on changes to the Administrative Penalty system.

As time progresses Education and Outreach staff will participate in a review and renewal of the OHS website, and a review and revision of the OHS New Officer Training Program and Complaint Intake Project—how the Division records, responds and tracks OHS workplace complaints called into the 1-800 number.

Staff have also been involved with the OHS Education Trust Fund, Four companies were recently awarded grants totaling \$90,000. To find out more about the Education Trust Fund please go to [LAE OHS Trust Fund](#).



NAOHS Week & Steps for Life

May 4, Launch of North American Occupational Health and Safety Week:

“Make Safety a Habit for Your Career” was the theme for this year’s NAOSH Week.

Other events held throughout the week included:

Steps for Life:

May 2 and 3, several walks took place in support of families who had a loved one suffer a workplace fatality, a life-altering injury or occupational disease.

Mainstay Awards:

Minister of Labour and Advanced Education Kelly Regan and CEO of the Workers’ Compensation Board, Stuart MacLean presented awards to those who have demonstrated excellence in the leadership of workplace safety.

Workplace Health and Safety Insurance System: Annual General Meeting was held May 5, at the Best Western Hotel in Dartmouth.

Safety First Symposium:

May 8, the Safety First Symposium was held at the Nova Scotia Community College Marconi Campus, Sydney.

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](#)

OHS Live Twitter Chat

In an effort to raise awareness and offer information about the importance of workplace safety, the Occupational Health and Safety Branch will be hosting a live Twitter chat on **Wednesday, May 27th at 12:30 pm.**

Scott Nauss, Senior Director, Occupational Health and Safety will respond to questions on Twitter to provide on-the-spot information to workers, employers, parents and others who have questions about safety in the workplace, including rules and regulations.

The main objective of the live Twitter chat is to ensure workers, especially young workers starting their first job or a summer work experience, are aware of the rules around workplace safety (specifically around fall protection), and to let them know about the supports available. We also want to connect with employers to promote workplace safety and let them know about the resources available to them through the OHS division.

If you have a Twitter account, it would be great if you could tweet the following – using the #talksafety hashtag to help get people to participate.

Get answers to your workplace safety questions: Twitter chat w/ NS OHS director Scott Nauss. May 27 at 12:30 pm. Join in using #talksafety

Our twitter handle is @NSLAE

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