

OHS NEWS

WORKPLACE SAFETY IS EVERYONES' CONCERN

DECEMBER 2013

32nd Annual Workplace Safety Conference



Fatigue management programs; Mental health first aid; Safety Performance reviews. These are a few of the approximately 40 planned topics and sessions that will be part of Safety Services Nova Scotia 32nd Annual Workplace Safety Conference, March 26-27, 2014.

The theme for the conference is “From Vision to Visible Results”. The conference is designed to provide learning opportunities, motivation, and networking opportunities that will help everyone build and improve their safety culture...with results that can be seen.

Delegate and exhibitor registration begins Monday December 2; with early bird rates available.

The full conference program will be issued in early January. Regular updates, as conference sessions are booked, will be highlighted in Safety Services NS' weekly electronic newsletter, tweeted via #SSNS2014 or posted on the Safety Services NS' Linked In discussion group.

To register you may use any of the following:

www.safetyservices.ca

Call 902-454-9621 or toll free 1-866-511-2211

E-mail contact@safetyservices.ca

Winter Driving

Winter driving can be quite a challenge; particularly in our winters which may have above zero temperatures with rain for part of the day and then drop to below zero and sleet or snow the next.

Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Dedicated website offer the following tips:

- If possible—don't drive during a storm (call 555 for highway conditions, or 1-888-432-3233 for local road conditions)
 - Be aware of 'black ice'
 - Adjust speed to the conditions
 - Follow traffic at a safe distance
 - Maintain your vehicle
 - Do not use your cruise control in slippery conditions
 - Have a winter survival kit in your vehicle
 - If possible don't park on the roadside.
- Use this link to access the TIR brochure (pdf) [Tips of Safe Winter Driving.](#)

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The Nova Scotia RCMP also have a brochure with their [Top Ten Tips for Safe Winter Driving.](#)

Tips include: pre-trip preparations and planning, driving according to conditions, tires, vehicle maintenance, know the limits of your vehicle, etc.

Drive safe, arrive safe.

Cross Canada—Court Cases

Excerpts from a selection of court cases across Canada. They are presented to raise awareness of potentially similar issues at your workplace.

Traffic Control Violation

A traffic control company was fined \$100,000 in Ontario after a worker was fatally injured.

Two workers were setting up an automatic traffic counter in a passing lane. The workers turned their warning lights on, stopped in the passing lane, opened their doors and began setting up the equipment. A pick-up truck struck the work vehicle causing it to spin and strike one of the workers causing fatal injuries.

On investigation it was determined the employer failed to ensure flow of traffic was properly controlled with a sign truck equipped with flashing arrow and positioned properly ahead of the work vehicle. In Nova Scotia Part 24, ‘Temporary Workplaces on Highways’, of the [Workplace Safety Regulations](#) outline the requirements for traffic control. Generally speaking it requires the employer to adopt a code of practice for the work they will be doing. This can be either the Temporary Workplace Traffic Control Manual (published by TIR) or developing their own and submitting it to the OHS Division Director for approval (before using it).

Dismantling Salvage

A salvage company in Ontario was fined \$60,000 for failing to properly supervise a worker permanently injured when a tire exploded. The employee was dismantling a truck and used a propane torch to loosen the lug nuts on a tire so he could remove it. The worker had not deflated or removed the tire from the rim.

In the process of removing the lug nuts the tire eventually exploded, throwing the worker more than 20 feet.

On investigation it was determined the cause was the increased tire pressure as a result

of heating the rim to remove the lug nuts. The tire had degraded and was not able to withstand the increased pressure as well as flammable gases within the tire all contributed to the explosion.

In Nova Scotia, Welding, Cutting, Burning and soldering requirements are in Part 16 of the [Occupational Safety General Regulations](#).

Fall Protection

In Saskatchewan 3 separate incidents of Fall Protection Violations led to fines for the companies involved.

No, No, No—A picture is worth a thousand words

There are numerous images over the web of unsafe work practices. These images are from around the world but don't kid yourself they all too often happen here as well. Stop, take the time to use the appropriate tools and safe work procedures.



FYI—Recent orders issued

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

Unguarded openings in floors and temporary stairways

Orders on no, or improper, guarding around floor openings between stories in multilevel buildings being constructed. Employers need to ensure that these openings are properly guarded or employees wear fall protection where appropriate.

Related to the above, where temporary stairways are built between levels and have 4 or more risers they need to meet the requirements of guardrails and railing as note

in Section 142 (4) in the Occupational Safety General Regulations.

Ladders

These orders reflect the following:

- Improper grade for workplaces—the regulations require either CSA 1 or 2 be used in the workplace. Grade 3 is NOT to be used in the workplace.
- Damaged rungs or side rails
- Wooden ladders that are built on site not meeting the requirements of section 149(1) of the OSGR—essentially using subpar lumber

- Where being used as access or exit, ladders not extending 1 meter (3 feet) above a platform or landing
- Ladders being set up on uneven ground and not secured against movement

Scaffolding

Orders for improper set-up, damaged or missing components, being erected on uneven ground using poor or inadequate levelling methods, and not being secured against movement.

Yearly Inspections

Orders have been written regarding the requirement for yearly inspections (and tags) for a variety of indus-

trial lift trucks, hoists, pallet jacks, and lifts. Also fire extinguishers where present need to have their annual inspection marked.

First Aid

Orders for either: no required first aid attendant; no kits available or not stocked; no certificate available

Fall Protection

Orders for working at heights of 10 feet or more, or under 10 feet but above an unsafe surface without fall protection

Training

Orders regarding need for: first aid training; fall protection

FYI—Working in the Cold

The following contains excerpts from [Cold Environments: Working in the Cold](#), a CCOHS (Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety) publication.

If you work or employ people who work in cold environments, you will need to consider how the colder temperatures will impact the activities that need to be undertaken.

A cold environment impacts workers in three ways: air temperature, air movement (wind speed), and humidity (wetness). To work safely these challenges need to be met by: proper insulation (layered protective clothing), physical activity, and controlled exposure (work/rest schedule).

What our winters lack in frigid sub-zero air temperatures of the Prairies, they more than make with wind speeds and humidity. The CCOHS page notes that water conducts heat

away from the body 25 times faster than dry air. Which could be why we may feel a lot chillier on a cold damp day than a colder (air temperature) dry day.

Now is the time to plan for the colder winter days yet to come. Cold injury can be minimized by using properly designed equipment, wearing appropriate clothing, and developing safe work practices.

Also you should reconsider any emergency/first aid procedures you may have. Expect that delivering first aid in warmer temperatures is considerably different in sub-zero temperatures.

Finally, have people trained and aware of what the symptoms of hypothermia are as well as recognizing possible frostbite.

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For further information come see us on
the Web at:

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

or our OHS Knowledgebase
[Knowledgebase](#)

New Campaign

“What Matters Most” is the title of the new campaign presented by the Workers’ Compensation Board of Nova Scotia and the NS Department of Labour and Advanced Education.

The ad features vignettes of workers returning to what matters most—coming home from work.

If you’d like to see the video (currently airing on television) and learn more about the campaign go to [What Matters Most](#)

FYI—Mainstay Awards

The 5th Annual Mainstay Awards will be announced in May 2014. Nominations for 17 awards in 8 categories are now open with a January 15, 2014 deadline.

Mainstay Awards are presented by the Workers’ Compensation Board of Nova Scotia and the Department of Labour and Advanced Education.

Award Categories include:

- Safety Award of Excellence—Organization
- Safety Award of Excellence—

Individual

- Safety Transformation
- Safety Award for Small Business
- Individual Safety Champion
- Employer Safety Champion
- Employer Return to Work Champion
- Health and Safety Educator.

For more information and nomination guidelines please go to the following site:

[Mainstay—excellence in workplace safety](#)

Happy and Safe Holidays to all and a Happy and Healthy New Year

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](#)