

# Amusement Devices Mechanic Training Program

Photo: Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage

## The Opportunity

Nova Scotians and visitors have hours of fun on many popular rides, including roller coasters, water slides, go-carts and carnival rides. In fact, people are always seeking new thrills and engineers and designers keep creating exciting new amusement rides. But as amusement device technology raced ahead, safety standards and legislation lagged far behind. With no formal training, operators were getting injured and passengers were in danger. The situation needed to change.

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour recognized that the province's Amusement Devices Safety Act was too outdated to effectively regulate the operation of new generation and aging amusement devices. Department personnel began revamping this act in 2004. Later that year, two serious, non-fatal accidents involving passengers pushed progress on the new act into high gear. It was introduced and passed quickly.

Proclaimed in July 2005, the new Amusement Devices Safety Act replaces its 30-year-old predecessor. It places high safety standards on the province's amusement devices industry. The new legislation demands annual ride inspections and mandatory licensing and training, while laying stiffer penalties for non-compliance.

The National Public Safety Committee, a cross-Canada committee of safety regulators, now considers Nova Scotia the superior model for amusement devices legislation in Canada.

## The Response: The Amusement Devices Mechanic Training Program

A key regulation in the new Act requires mechanics to be specifically certified to work on amusement devices. But at the time the regulation passed, no appropriate training was

available. To address this gap, the regulation had been designed with a 12 month transition phase to allow enough time for the mechanics to be trained. To help mechanics obtain necessary training and comply with the new legislation, Environment and Labour partnered with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) to develop and deliver proper training. The amusement devices industry enthusiastically supported this initiative. The province of New Brunswick also signed on as a funding partner.

The resulting 'Amusement Devices Mechanic Training Program' is based on best practices for ensuring public safety and industry compliance. Mandatory training for existing amusement ride mechanics began in the fall of 2005. Training for new mechanics and ride operators will start in 2006.

The new training program combines classroom sessions with practical training. Trainees complete modules on electrical, mechanical, hoisting, rigging and blocking systems, as well as hydraulics and pneumatic systems. Maintenance, testing and inspection, and occupational health and safety complete the course content. For hands-on experience, trainees erect, dismantle and maintain real rides at NSCC's Bayers Lake location in Halifax.

Mechanics who complete the course and score 70 per cent or higher on a written examination receive a certificate of completion from NSCC. This qualifies them to apply for a certificate of competency from Environment and Labour. This document, in turn, allows them to work legally on amusement devices. It also shows that the mechanic has passed one of the toughest – and one of the only – amusement devices mechanic training programs in North America.



## Improving Competitiveness and Compliance

The new Amusement Devices Mechanic Training Program enhances Nova Scotia's competitiveness in several ways. Unique in North America, the program has become an international model of protection and compliance. As such, it has attracted interest from many jurisdictions in Canada and the United States. Some would like to adopt our training modules, while others have already sent mechanics here for training. The program has created new revenue for the province and its educational partner, the NSCC. With New Brunswick on board as a funding partner, the program is a cost-effective example of interprovincial cooperation.

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour and its partners made this training available that would have been otherwise too costly if industry had to develop it alone.

By introducing high standards to the amusement devices industry in the province, Nova Scotia is protecting public safety to an unparalleled degree. Residents and tourists alike can safely enjoy the many thrill rides and amusements available. By preventing injuries, the new legislation and training program also prevents pain and suffering and costs to injured individuals. Costs to the health system and insurance industry, lawsuits, and negative publicity for the province's tourism industry are also avoided.

The legislation also cuts costs for the amusement devices industry by lowering insurance premiums. Insurers have started offering 10 per cent rebates to companies that train their employees through the NSCC program. Lower insurance costs mean higher earnings for amusement companies in the province, a boost for the sector.

Cost savings, efficiency and revenue are all beneficial. More importantly, Nova Scotians are safer this year because of the new amusement devices legislation and training program.

Improved safety and greater competitiveness – it's an unbeatable combination.

## Where can I get information about the Amusement Devices Mechanic Training Program?

For more information, contact Jocelyn Connolly, NSCC Customized Training.

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## About the Competitiveness and Compliance Initiative

The Amusement Devices Mechanic Training Program supports the goals of the Competitiveness and Compliance Initiative (CCI). The CCI is a key part of *Better Regulation – Everyone's Business*, the Government of Nova Scotia's far-reaching plan for improving regulation in the province.

Environment and Labour is the main regulatory department in Nova Scotia. Through the CCI, the department is changing the way laws are designed, communicated and enforced in Nova Scotia.

The CCI is a multi-year, systematic approach to making sure that our regulatory programs meet the needs of Nova Scotians. In short, the CCI is working to make a brighter future for our people, economy, environment and communities.

## Where can I get more information on the Competitiveness and Compliance Initiative?

To find out more about the CCI, visit:

[www.gov.ns.ca/enla/cci](http://www.gov.ns.ca/enla/cci)



**Environment and Labour**  
Public Safety