



# SAFETY NOTICE



Safety Alert Number: **0000010**

Issued **28 March 2024** by Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration

## **2018 edition of CSA Z797 Code of Practice for Access Scaffold to remain in force**

### **Legal information**

The Governor in Council, on the report and recommendation of the Minister of Labour, Skills and Immigration dated February 27, 2024, and pursuant to Section 82 of Chapter 7 of the Acts of 1996, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, is pleased to amend the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations*, N.S. Reg. 52/2013, made by the Governor in Council by Order in Council 2013-65 dated March 12, 2013, to adopt the 2018 edition of CSA standard CSA Z797, “Code of practice for access scaffold”, in the manner set forth in Schedule “A” attached to and forming part of the Report and Recommendation, **effective on and after March 26, 2024**.

### **Summary**

An amendment to the *Workplace Health & Safety Regulations (WHSRs)* has been made to replace all current references requiring compliance with “the latest version” of Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard Z797, *Code of practice for access scaffold* with **a fixed reference to the 2018 version of the standard**. As a result, **the 2018 edition of the standard will continue to be in force**. The new 2023 edition of the standard **is not being adopted** at this time.

Nova Scotia regulates the use of access scaffolding through the *WHSRs*. The *WHSRs* reference CSA Z797, *Code of practice for access scaffold*. This standard requires that employers must ensure when a scaffold is required to safely perform work, it must be erected, installed, assembled, used, handled, stored, adjusted, maintained, repaired, inspected, or dismantled in accordance with the latest version of CSA standard CSA Z797, *Code of practice for access scaffold*.

Nova Scotia incorporates by reference numerous industry safety codes and standards published by standards development organizations, such as the CSA, in regulation.



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Typically, where a standard is incorporated by reference in regulations made under the Nova Scotia *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, employers must follow the latest version of the standard within four (4) months of it being issued.

In December 2023, CSA Group announced the release of the 3rd edition of CSA standard Z797. The new 2023 version of the CSA Z797 standard imposes significant changes from the previous 2018 version regarding training methods of erectors, users, supervisors, as well as for employers and training providers responsible for scaffold training programs and fall protection training.

OHS Division of the Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI) conducted an evaluation of the changes included in the 2023 version of CSA Z797 and the impacts these changes would have on industry. Based on this analysis, LSI determined that revising the *WHSRs* references to CSA Z797 from an ambulatory (i.e., requiring compliance with the latest version released in 2023) to a static reference (i.e., a fixed reference to the 2018 version) would better ensure clarity of rules for the purpose of compliance and enforcement. Without any action, as of April 1, 2024, workplaces who utilize scaffolding would have been expected to comply with the 2023 version of CSA standard Z797.

As a result of this regulatory amendment, the 2018 version of the CSA standard Z797 remains in effect in Nova Scotia and the 2023 version of this standard is **not** automatically adopted. As the 2018 version of the standard has been in place for the last five years, there should be no impact to businesses regarding compliance with this revision. The 2018 version of the standard was reaffirmed by CSA in 2023, which means that this version of the standard was reviewed for correctness without any changes to its content having been necessary.

Throughout 2024, the OHS Division will be conducting a broad evaluation of the fall safety standards referenced in regulations. As part of this work, the OHS Division will review potential changes that may be required to improve workplace safety, including further consideration of the 2023 version of CSA Z797 to further assess its utility for use in NS.



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## Contact for bulletin queries

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