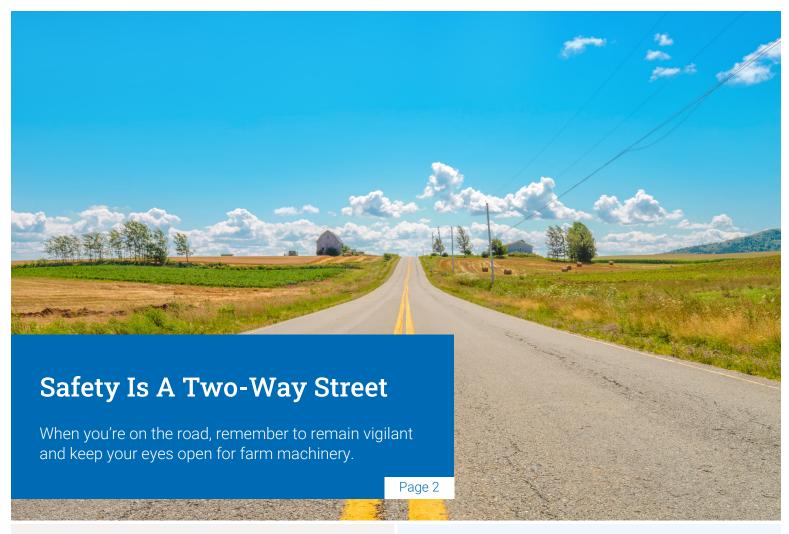
# TheSignal



Stay informed about workplace and technical safety.

Join the Safety Branch Contact List.



Nova SAFE - Harassment & Violence

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#### Safety Is A Two-Way Street

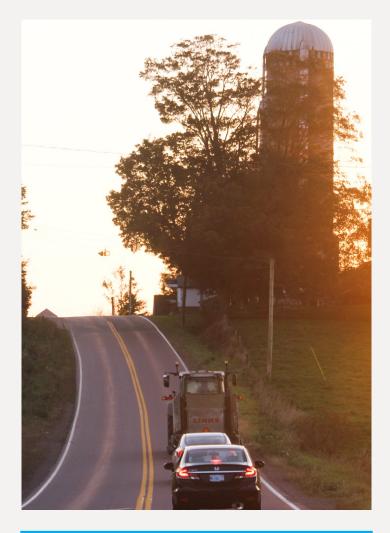
Spring brings busy roadways in Nova Scotia – seasonal work starts to pick up, tourists begin arriving, and people are generally on the move. It's also a busy time for our farmers. Driving farm equipment from the farm to the field is essential for a successful planting season.

Safety is everybody's responsibility, and we all have a role to play in keeping our roadways safe. When you're on the road, remain vigilant and keep your eyes open for farm machinery. Taking your eyes off the road for even a moment can create an unsafe situation. If you're travelling on the road at 80 km/h, it will only take 6.5 seconds to close a distance of 100m to a tractor travelling 25 km/h.

Farmers use various safety signage to alert other drivers that they are travelling slower than typical traffic. Slow Moving Vehicle signs and hazard lights on tractors and implements are your sign to slow down. Never assume that it is safe to pass farm machinery. It can be difficult to negotiate left or right turns with large equipment, and it may be necessary for the operator to swing their equipment to the far sides of the road to make their turn.

By working together, we can keep our roadways safe for everyone's use. Be patient when you're behind farm machinery. Following a tractor for 4 km at 40km/h only takes six minutes. Take that time to slow down, stay safe, and remember that safety is a two-way street.

Jamie O'KaneFarm Safety CoordinatorNS Federation of Agriculture



Website: Nova Scotia Federation of

<u>Agriculture</u>

Leading & Lagging Indicators

Measuring safety performance is crucial for improvement, but it can be challenging. Leading and lagging indicators offer a comprehensive approach. Focusing on proactive measures like safety training (leading) can reduce injury rates (lagging). Learn more: <u>Leading & Lagging Indicators</u>

#### **Sun Safety**

While we need some UV exposure to support production of Vitamin D, outdoor workers are often overexposed and at greater risk of sunburn, eye damage, or developing skin cancer.

Workers and workplaces both have a role in workplace sun safety. Workplaces can be more sun safe by implementing a sun safety program. Workers can follow six simple steps to protect themselves from both solar UV radiation and heat from the sun

- 1. Cover up when going outdoors
- 2. Seek shade between 11am 3pm
- 3. Wear sunglasses with 100% UV protection
- 4. Use SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum sunscreen
- 5. Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated
- 6. Report skin changes to your doctor

Safety Bulletin: Sun Safety



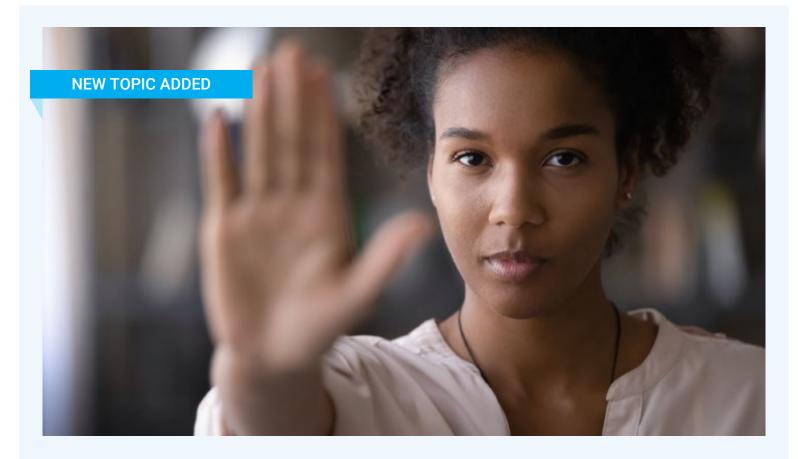
Raising awareness of the importance of sun safety and helping workplaces implement sun safety programs within their occupational health and safety management systems.

Learn more: Sun Safety at Work

#### **UV** Index

Understanding the UV Index is key to staying safe in the sun. UV levels indicate the intensity of harmful rays. Higher UV means greater risk. Remember to check the index regularly, especially if you're going to be working outdoors.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	+
LOW		MODERATE			HIGH		VERY HIGH			EXTREME	
prote	nal sun ection uired	Between 11am – 3pm work tasks should be done in shade  Take breaks in the shade  Protective clothing appropriate to the work tasks should be worn  Sunscreen and lip balm (minimum SPF 30)				Between 11am – 3pm, work tasks should be rescheduled to avoid outdoor work (if rescheduling is not possible, work tasks should be done in shade)  Take breaks in the shade  Protective clothing appropriate to the work tasks should be worn  Sunscreen and lip balm (minimum SPF 30)					



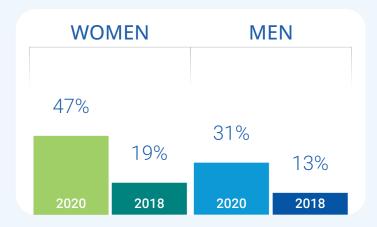
#### Nova SAFE — Harassment and Violence

The Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI), Safety Branch is continuing to add new safety topics and trusted resources to <u>Nova SAFE</u>. Our most recent update are the topics of Harassment and Violence.

Harassment in the workplace has increased. In a survey conducted by the Federal Government in 2020 found that 47% of women and 31% of men reported harassment in Canadian workplaces. These incidents are an increase from 2018 when 19% of women and 13% of men said they had been harassed at work.

Although not currently part of our legislation, it is important for all workplace parties to help create a work environment that is psychologically safe. LSI recently completed a series of province wide consultations focused on preventing harassment in the workplace, findings from this consultation will be shared later this year.

Violence in a place of employment means the threats, including a threatening statement or



threatening behaviour that gives an employee reasonable cause to believe that the employee is at risk of physical injury, or conduct or attempted conduct of a person that endangers the physical health or physical safety of an employee.

The Safety Branch in partnership with the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) will provide a number of different free online training courses focused of on psychological health and safety in the workplace and violence in the workplace. Nova Scotians can take up to 5 courses each year for free. You can register for courses on the <a href="CCOHS Nova Scotia">CCOHS Nova Scotia</a> OHS Training site.

Find helpful information, direct links to legislation, educational offerings and other resources – all on Nova SAFE, Safety Information Made Simple.

#### **Updated Publications**

You can also find updated materials related to this topic on our <u>Publications</u> page, including the <u>Assessing the Risk of Workplace Violence Guide</u> and the Violence Risk Assessment Form.

Available in either English or French.

### Assessing the Risk of Workplace Violence Guide

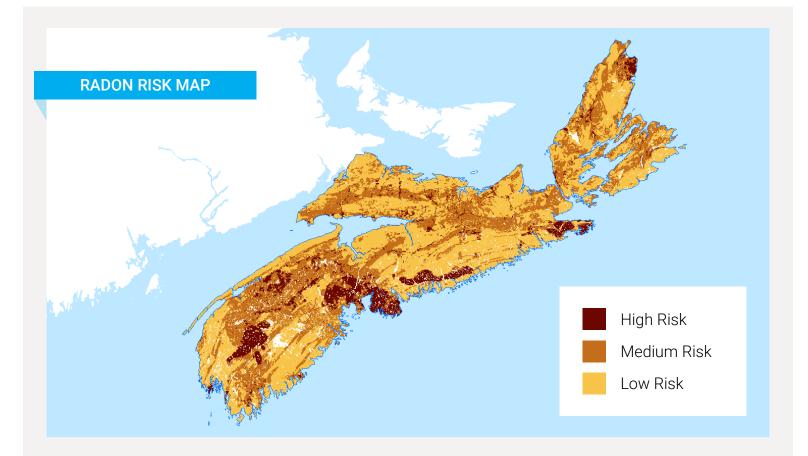


#### <u>Violence Risk Assessment</u> Form

	1,0.1100011				
Name of Workplace:	Assessment Date:				
Assessors:					
Workplace or Tasks covered by this Assessmen	t:				
Questions					
When you are open to the public, are there times when only one employee is present?	Do your employees sell or dispense cannabis medications or alcohol?				
□ Yes □ No	☐ Yes ☐ No				
Do your employees handle cash or other valuables?	Do your employees work in community-based settings (i.e nurses, social workers and other home care staff)?				
Do your employees provide a service where	□ Yes □ No				
they may feel threatened by another person?  Yes No	Do your employees walk to their vehicle or building during times when there is limited light (i.e., lateful or early Winter)?  Yes  No Do your employees work during periods of intense organizational change (i.e. mediator during strikes or lock-outs)?  Yes  No				
Do your employees offer care services for others (i.e. health care or community workers)?					
☐ Yes ☐ No Are your employees involved in enforcing					
discipline to others (i.e. teachers)?					
☐ Yes ☐ No  Do your employees deliver or collect items	Do your employees deal with or handle firearms or other weapons?				
of value? □ Yes □ No	☐ Yes ☐ No				
Do your employees exercise authority over others (i.e. enforcement officers)?	Have employees in the workplace experience violence in the past?				
□ Yes □ No	Yes No				
Do your employees inspect other people's private property (i.e. planning inspectors, assessment officers)?	Does a risk of violence exist in the industry sector?  Yes No				
assessment orncers)? □ Yes □ No	Do incidents of violence occur in other				
Do your employees provide security services (i.e. security guards, sheriffs)?	workplaces in the same industry? ☐ Yes ☐ No				

#### NS Health & Safety Charter

The NS Health and Safety Charter represents a commitment from leaders in Nova Scotia to the continuous growth of a positive workplace safety culture, sharing best practices, and improving health and safety throughout the province. Learn more: <u>NS Health & Safety Charter</u>



#### Potential For Radon In Indoor Air

Radon is a radioactive gas formed naturally by the breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water. While the link between workplace radon exposure and increased risk of lung cancer is well established, recent epidemiologic studies have linked an increased risk of developing lung cancer to exposure to radon at levels found inside some homes. It is estimated that radon exposure is linked to roughly 16% of lung cancer deaths in Canada and is the leading cause of non-smoking related lung cancer.

The Canadian Radon Guideline is < 200 becquerels per cubic meter (bq/m3). In confined spaces, like homes, radon can accumulate to relatively high levels and become a health hazard. Radon concentrations are usually higher in winter than in summer, but this seasonal variation may be less relevant as more homes become energy efficient. Sealing buildings (to conserve energy) and reduce the intake of outdoor air can allow the build-up of radon and increase the risk of elevated radon levels. Radon cannot be detected by the senses – it has no colour, odour or taste – but it can be detected with special devices.

Testing is the only way to find out how much radon is in a home. Some areas of Nova Scotia have a higher risk of radon because of the local geology. The Radon Risk Map for Nova Scotia from the Department of Natural Resources website shows areas with high, medium and low risk. Test results have shown that 40% of buildings in the high-risk areas, 14% of buildings in medium-risk areas and 5% of buildings in low-risk areas exceed the radon guideline. These results tell us that even homes in low-risk areas should be tested.

Furthermore, radon levels can vary widely from one home to another, even on the same street.

There are two options for testing: either do-it-yourself or hire a professional. Buy do-it-yourself radon test kits from a home improvement store, from the Lung Association of Canada (call 1-888-566-5864) or online.

If hiring a professional radon measurement service provider, ensure they are certified and will conduct a long-term test. To find a certified radon professional in Canada, call the Canadian National Radon Proficiency Program at 1-800-269-4174.

Combining smoking and radon exposure significantly increases a smoker's risk of lung

cancer. A patient who is a life-long smoker but not exposed to radon will have a 1 in 10 risk of getting lung cancer. Adding exposure to high levels of radon increases the risk to 1 in 3. On the other hand, a never-smoker's lifetime lung cancer risk at the same high radon level is only 1 in 20.

Understanding the risks associated with radon and taking proactive steps to assess and mitigate its presence in your home is paramount. Whether you choose a DIY testing approach or enlist the help of certified professionals, the goal is a safer living environment. With radon being a silent threat, it's crucial to acknowledge its potential impact on health and make informed decisions to ensure the well-being of yourself and your loved ones.

#### Safety First in Cape Breton Symposium

The <u>Safety First in Cape Breton Symposium</u> is Cape Breton's signature safety event, bringing together a variety of employers and workers from all sectors across the Island, united in their pursuit of making Cape Breton the safest place to work. This year's Symposium is set to take place Wednesday, May 8, 2024, at Membertou Trade & Convention Centre from 7:30am-3:00pm.



The Symposium format, which has always consisted of concurrent breakout sessions on diverse topics, is shifting this year to a plenary style allowing attendees the opportunity to engage in all the content of the day, while networking with their peers. A new component added this year is "Have Your Say Soap Box," which gives attendees an opportunity to sign-up to share a learning or challenge they are facing in their workplace about health and safety.

The Symposium usually takes place during what is now known as <u>Safety and Health Week</u>, formerly known as North American Occupational Safety and Health (NAOSH) Week.

This year, Safety and Health Week takes place from Monday, May 6, 2024 to Saturday, May 11, 2024.

The planning committee has coordinated many new activities to coincide with Safety and Health Week, including placing signage on Transit Cape Breton buses, a flag raising, banner installation, reading a proclamation at the Sydney Provincial Building and City Hall, as well as profiling safety and health professionals from various sectors who live and work in Cape Breton.

Also, as part of the Symposium, the 2024 Safety First in Cape Breton Awards will be handed out to individuals and organizations who have gone above and beyond to improve their workplace safety culture. If you know of a deserving individual or organization, please consider nominating them for a Safety First in Cape Breton Award.

To learn more about the award categories, or to submit a nomination, please visit <u>Safety First Awards</u>. The deadline to submit a nomination is noon on April 26, 2024.



#### About the Safety First Network

The Safety First in Cape Breton Network works to promote safe workplaces to industry, create awareness around safety regulation, share safety success stories, lead by example, and provide access to the latest information relating to workplace health and safety.

#### Did you know?

Unama'kik is the word Mi'kmaq use to refer to Cape Breton Island, and loosely translates to Land of Fog.





#### **Embracing Innovation**

The Safety Branch has been embarking on an innovative path this past year. The <u>Nova SAFE</u> mobile friendly website has been a great resource for our clients, partners, employers, and employees across the province to get safety information at their finger tips. Round two of content updates is already underway, with the April release of <u>Harassment and Violence</u>, followed by additional topics arriving in June and October.

In partnership with the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, the branch has developed a new course for New and Vulnerable Workers. This 5 module program is available in both English and French. Participants can register for free through SkillsOnlineNS and other Nova Scotia sector council marketplaces.

Work has progressed on developing a digital strategy for 2024 and 2025, with intentional methods to document and plan how we interact with technology in the future. Should we be using drones for inspections? How will new technologies like green energy affect Nova Scotians and our regulatory approach to new products and services?

The branch has been leveraging Tableau data analytics to look differently at our work and

impact. This important work cross references data points to provide greater insights in when, where, and how we are showing up in Nova Scotia workplaces. This work has only begun and has already proven to be a highly informative system of displaying trends in our work patterns.

The innovative work is not only in Occupational Health and Safety, but in Technical Safety as well. Recently the branch launched our elevators, lifts, and amusement device online inspection booking tool, the <a href="Inspection Scheduler">Inspection Scheduler</a>. This new service allows our clients to schedule, cancel and update their bookings as well as upload pertinent information for review by our inspectors. This is just another example of listening to our industry partners and implementing a practical solution that meets our clients needs.

#### Occupational Exposure Limit Changes (2024)

In Nova Scotia, the occupational exposure limits are established under Part 2 of the Workplace Health and Safety Regulations. These regulations reference the latest version of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) Threshold Limit Values (TLVs) and Biological Exposure Indices (BEIs).

There are more than 800 TLVs for chemical substances and physical agents. If workers are exposed above these limits, they may suffer negative health effects. It is therefore critical to ensure that no worker is exposed to a substance beyond the limits established by ACGIH.

The ACGIH is a charitable scientific organization that advances occupational and environmental health. The ACGIH has several committees that continuously review current scientific findings and update the TLVs when appropriate. Every year, the ACGIH announces which substances will be reviewed. The review process typically takes a few years to complete. Once the review process is complete, then the ACGIH announces if any new TLVs are set, removed, or changed. These changes are automatically adopted as occupational exposure limits in Nova Scotia.

The new or revised TLVs for 2024 include the following:

- Acetylsalicylic Acid [Aspirin] (Reduction)
- Bensulide New
- Benzene (TLV-TWA Reduced; TLV-STEL Removed)
- Buprofezin New
- tert-Butyl Hydroperoxide (Notation Added)
- Captafol (New TLV-TWA Skin Limit; Notations Added)
- Diacetyl (Notations Added)
- Epichlorohydrin (Reduction)
- Ethylene Glycol Dimethyl Ether New
- Fenoxycarb New
- Fentanyl and Fentanyl Citrate, as Fentanyl New



- Formic Acid (TLV-STEL Removed)
- Halothane (Reduction)
- Hexane [Commercial, <54% n-Hexane] —</li>
   New
- Branched Hexane Isomers (TLV-TWA Reduced; TLV-STEL Removed)
- Methylcyclohexane (Reduction)
- Methyl Ethyl Ketone (Reduction)
- Pentaborane (TLV-TWA Removed; TLV-STEL Reduced and Changed to Ceiling Limit)
- Phenylethyl Alcohol New
- Phthalic Anhydride (New TLV-TWA Skin Limit)
- Sevoflorane New
- Triclosan New

#### How do these changes affect you?

The goal is to reduce exposures to acceptable levels to maintain a healthy and safe work environment. Employers, supervisors, and employees must work together to identify hazards in the workplace and implement appropriate control measures. Good sources of information regarding workplace hazards include safety data sheets (SDSs), product labels, and information gathered from chemical suppliers.

Employers can also engage with experts, like occupational hygienists, to help with hazard identification, exposure assessment, and controls. This can be done through a variety of methods, including elimination, engineering

controls, administrative controls, and personal protective equipment.

Although new TLVs are set every year, the OHS Division will support workplaces in their efforts to demonstrate compliance when occupational exposure limits are introduced or changed. Using the Pathways to Compliance model, the OHS Division will work to promote awareness of these changes, seek to understand the obstacles faced by workplaces as they adapt, and guide them towards solutions that will achieve compliance.

Please contact the Safety Branch's OHS Division at 1-800-952-2687 to know more about occupational exposure limits.

#### New & Vulnerable Worker Safety Course

In a partnership between the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour and the Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI), Safety Branch, we have developed the English and French versions of the New and Vulnerable Worker Safety e-learning course. This course has been launched on SkillsOnlineNS and all sector council marketplaces.

This course is intended to provide new and vulnerable workers with the knowledge and tools to enter new jobs safely. It overviews occupational health and safety roles, responsibilities, and systems. It also examines common workplace hazards and introduces basic risk mitigation strategies. This course has 5 modules for approximately 3 hours of seat time.

- 1. Introduction to OHS
- 2. OHS Roles and Responsibilities
- 3. OHS Systems and Processes
- 4. High Risk Hazards
- 5. Occupation-Specific Information

Learn more: Course Overview



#### Code of Practice for Access Scaffold

The Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI), OHS Division 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 Workplace Health and Safety Regulations (WHSR) 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 <u>not</u> 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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We'd love to hear from you.

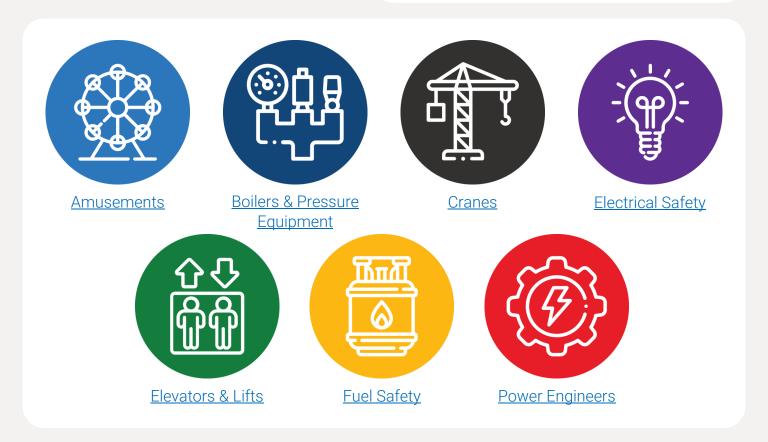
Providing your feedback will help us continually improve our newsletter and include more of the content you'd like to see.

Feedback Survey

#### **Technical Safety & Public Awareness**

Question: What do these all have in common?

Click the icons to learn more.



<u>Answer</u>: They are regulated industries that are overseen by the Technical Safety (TS) Division within the Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI), Safety Branch.

The Safety Branch is committed to working with Nova Scotians to build a stronger culture of health and safety. Within the Technical Safety Division, we prioritize industrial and public safety by ensuring compliance with Acts, regulations, and safety standards across our seven distinct units (listed above). We regulate the safety of these technical devices to ensure that we can all safely live, work, and play throughout Nova Scotia.

We work closely with our clients, partners, and the public to establish and enforce compliance with provincial regulations and safety standards. Through promotion, verification, education, and enforcement initiatives, we raise awareness, enhance efficiencies, and implement programs that mitigate safety risks.

Ongoing learning is essential as the technologies we regulate evolve. Therefore, we continually work to modernize our systems to deliver better service and enhance safety compliance. For instance, our Elevators & Lifts and Amusements industries required a simpler method to schedule, cancel, and reschedule routine inspections, particularly after the introduction of the new Maintenance Control Program (MCP) in 2021. This led to the development of our new online tool, the Inspection Scheduler.

## INSPECTION SCHEDULER

Launched in January 2024, Safety Branch's Inspection Scheduler is a new and easy-to-use online tool that was developed to help streamline the process of booking routine device inspections for Amusements, Elevators and Lifts, and Passenger Ropeways/Conveyors (Ski Hills).

The Inspection Scheduler can be used from any internet-connected device, whether that's a PC, smartphone, or tablet and can be accessed from the <u>Amusements</u> or <u>Elevators and Lifts</u> webpage — or by simply scanning the QR code.

The future of the Inspection Scheduler is exciting. We continue to evaluate the progress and success of our initial launch, while also looking at the possibility of expanding the service across our other Technical Safety units for faster and more efficient inspection scheduling and device maintenance.



#### Wait To Inflate - Inflatable Amusement Devices

Amusement Devices, as their name suggests, are designed to entertain and bring us joy. However, there are extremely important safety measures that need to be met first to ensure that everyone can enjoy these rides safely.

Every year, over 500 amusement devices — both stationary and traveling — require inspection throughout the province. These include Ferris wheels, go-karts, water slides, and inflatables such as indoor and outdoor bouncy castles.

This spring, the Amusements Devices unit is launching the <u>Wait to Inflate</u> awareness campaign focused on sharing important safety information about operating inflatable amusement devices. The campaign will help to highlight regulation requirements, licensing

details, properly inspecting the device before use, and general guidance for safe operation. For safety's sake, remember to "Wait to Inflate." You can learn more about this campaign through our social media channels, or sign up to the <u>Safety Branch Contact List</u> to stay informed.

Safety Bulletin: <u>Inflatable</u> Amusement Devices

# Father's Day for me is a trip to the cemetery.

PAUL HICKEY, Kyle Hickey's father



On April 28th, we observe the Day of Mourning. Please take a moment and pay tribute to those who have died or been injured at work.

#### dayofmourning.ns.ca



#### Remembering Westray

May 9th marks the 32nd anniversary of the Westray Mine Disaster. We remember the 26 miners who died in this workplace tragedy. This unfortunate event led to stronger provincial workplace health and safety laws, and the passing of Westray Bill C-45; a federal law introduced to improve workplace safety.

Learn more: The Tragedy of Westray

#### Davis Day

June 11th is William Davis Miners' Memorial Day, where we pause to reflect, remember, and honour those who've died in Nova Scotia coal mines. On this day we commemorate all the miners and their families who have helped shaped our province and their ongoing efforts to improve workplace safety.

Learn more: Miners Memorial Day: Davis Day

#### Steps For Life

Walk With Us! Every year, thousands of Canadians are injured or killed on the job. More are diagnosed with diseases caused by work. By walking in Steps for Life, you make a difference for hurting families today, and help keep workers safe tomorrow. Learn more: Steps for Life — Halifax

#### **Safety Branch by the Numbers**

Reporting period: Jan 1, 2024 to Mar 31, 2024

722

Workplace Inspections

8

Opened OHS Investigations

877

**Total Inquiries** 

**596** Occupational Health and Safety

281 Technical Safety



Serious Injuries



Serious Incidents



Workplace Fatalities

3 Acute / 1 Chronic

**531** 

Orders Issued

36

Administrative Penalties

0

Summary Offence Tickets

38

Charges Laid

# MAKE THE RIGHT CALL.

Call **1-800-9LABOUR** for workplace and public space safety issues, concerns and regulations.



#### **Special Thanks To Our Contributors**

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# You Can Make a Difference

Serve on an agency, board or commission.





# TO APPLY, VISIT NOVASCOTIA.CA/ABC OR CALL 1-866-206-6844

The Government of Nova Scotia has an Employment Equity Policy. We welcome applications from Aboriginal people, African Nova Scotians, other racially visible people, persons with disabilities, women, and other employment equity groups. Applicants are encouraged to self-identify.

# Safety Information Made Simple

- Plain language summaries
- Helpful definitions
- Direct links to legislation
- Additional resources

Scan the QR code or visit

NovaScotia.ca/NovaSAFE







Safety Branch Labour, Skills and Immigration