

OHS NEWS

WORKPLACE SAFETY IS EVERYONES' CONCERN

NOVEMBER 2014

Reminder: Public Consultation Phase II WHSR

The consolidation of the occupational health and safety regulations continues with the release of the draft Workplace Health and Safety Regulations (WHSR), Phase II, for public consultation. As part of its commitment to workplace health and safety, Labour and Advanced Education (LAE), invites your submissions and comments on the draft. **Open until December 19, 2014**, the consultation process is being coordinated by LAE Policy and Planning.

The Department has a consultation page link where you will find the WHSR consultation document, a WHSR fact sheet and details on how and where to submit any comments. Please go to [Workplace Health and Safety Regulations—Request for Public Comment](#).

The WHSRs are meant to be user-friendly, ensure consistency with national standards and improve workplace health and safety.

The components included in this phase are four previously stand-alone regulations:

- Occupational Health
- First Aid
- Occupational Diving
- Blasting Safety

Also included are several parts of the existing Occupational Safety General regulations:

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Working in Cold Weather: Plan and Prepare Now

Temperatures are dropping. While we are not at the stage of below zero weather and wind chill, it's best to start planning now, particularly for employers who have people working outside.

Consider how a cold environment will impact your workers. Consider the air temperature, the wind, and

humidity.

The combination of these environmental factors plus the type of activity will have an impact on the work being done and the workers themselves.

Minimize any cold related injuries by using properly designed equipment, wearing appropriate clothing

and developing safe work practices.

Also reconsider any emergency and first aid procedures you may have. Delivering first aid in subzero weather is considerably different than in warm temperatures.

Train your employees in recognizing the signs of hypothermia as well

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as recognizing possible frostbite.

Additional resources:

[Cold Environments: Working in Cold](#) also

[Cold Environments: Health Effects and First Aid](#) CCOHS publications

[Cold Stress](#)—CDC NIOSH (USA)

Reminder: New Administrative Penalties System

The new Administrative Penalties system took effect on October 1, 2014.

Key highlights :

- The focus will be on raising awareness and enforcing the law through compliance orders before issuing administrative penalties.
- Administrative penalties will be issued for high risk contraventions, such as working at heights with no means of fall protection, working with machinery that has no guarding, or no lock-out/tag-out; regardless of whether it is a first-time inspection. They will also be issued when it is a repeat violation and the inspectee cannot show ‘due diligence’.
- The fine structure (see below) will be predictable—there is a structured fine schedule outlining penalty amounts for contraventions and how they escalate with repeat contraventions.
- The Appeal process has been simplified and extended to 30 days from 21—the Labour Board will manage appeals for both compliance orders and administrative penalties.

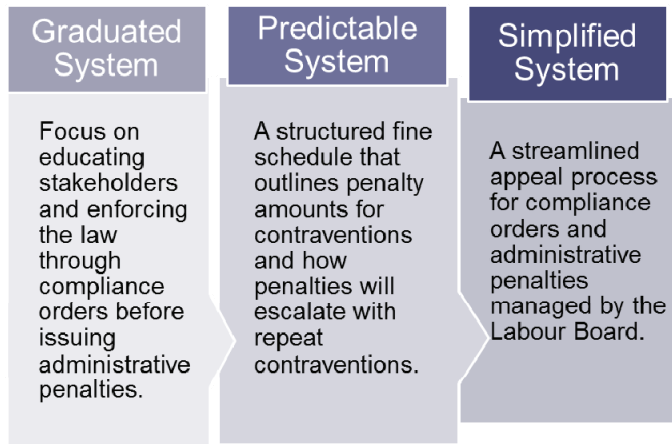


Illustration sourced from FAQ document

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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.

Leaks / Mould

Several incidents where leaks in roofs or from pipes have led to damp ceilings/walls/carpets etc. Left unattended or without remediation these areas can become sources for mold and potential health issues.

Falls / Trips

1) After having a load removed from a trailer, a driver climbed on to the bed to sweep away

debris before leaving. While sweeping the employee slipped and fell to the ground injuring a wrist and knee. While the height was below 3m, which would require a means of fall protection, safe work procedures may still be developed to address potential fall hazards.

2) An employee tripped over a piece of equipment and fell on some metal objects; thereby sustaining a cut on the arm. Although the general work area was clear, caution is required where potential tripping hazards exist.

Guarding

An employee sustained a minor injury to a finger when he attempted to restart a piece of equipment manually by pulling on a belt.

When the employee pulled on the belt, the belt pulled his finger into the wheel and sliced off a small portion at the tip of a finger.

Unguarded belts and pulleys that may be accessible to employees need to be guarded. As well, awareness of hazards, training

and safe work procedures may also be required.

Mobile equipment runaway

An operator of a forklift planned on using the forklift to access a roof.

After parking the forklift and dismounting, the forklift began to roll back. The operator had forgotten to engage the brake.

Minor injuries were sustained in trying to stop the runaway forklift. OHS regulations require forklift operators to be trained.



6th Annual Mainstay Awards May 2015

Recognizing excellence in Workplace Safety

The call for nominations is now open and submissions are due by the end of January 30, 2015.

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

There are 17 awards available in eight categories, recognizing individuals, organizations and employers whose efforts have made

Nova Scotia workplaces safer.

The categories are:

- Safety Award of Excellence—Organization
- Safety Award of Excellence—Individual
- Safety Transformation
- Special Award for Small Business
- Individual Safety Champion

- Employer Safety Champion
- Health and Safety Educator

Employers, groups and individuals can be nominated by their peers, associations, affiliates or apply directly themselves.

For more information contact the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia at 1-800-902-870-3331 or mainstaywards@wcb.gov.ns.ca

To enter, go to [Award Categories](#), click on the appropriate category and follow the instructions.

Judging is undertaken by a panel with representation from the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia and Nova Scotia Labour and Advanced Education. A shortlist will be developed from the nominations and these candidates may be visited on-site.

To read about winners from 2014 go to [Mainstay Winners](#).

Seasonal Hazards

Are you prepared for the differing conditions that will accompany our changing seasons?

For example: falling leaves. While falling leaves can be pretty, they can also be dangerous, particularly on rainy days. Layers of wet leaves on roads become a sliding and braking hazard for stopping vehicles. Also daylight conditions—earlier sunset, and darker overcast skies—may cause driving hazards.

Working in colder environments is cause for concern. While there are no specific regulations for working in a cold environment, an employer has the responsibility to consider workplace hazards and eliminate or control them. Workplaces will need to consider the type of work being performed in cold environments and consider what hazards could happen.

Even before the snow and ice arrives, there is rain. Consider entry way floors and how they may become wet and slippery. Once snow does arrive parking lots and walkways into workplaces will need to be cleared and salted or sanded to minimize slip and fall hazards.

Cold and influenza should also be addressed. What precautions should you take? Perhaps all that is needed are simple reminders to employees about the washing of hands as well as coughing and sneezing etiquette.

Additional Resources:

[Stopping the spread of Germs at home, work and school](#)—CDC (USA)

[Good Hygiene Practices](#)—CCOHS

[Common Cold; Seasonal Influenza](#)—CCOHS

High Pressure Sales Tactic—WHMIS

As a result of receiving aggressive sales calls and tactics, employers have contacted us regarding requirements for Workplace Hazardous Information System (WHMIS) training. The calls appear to be part of a regular campaign and imply the need for annual training and/or posting of particular safety posters in order to be in compliance with OHS legislation.

Instruction and training provided to employees concerning controlled products is decided at the workplace in consultation with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety committee or representative. The regulation requires an annual review of training BUT not annual training in WHMIS. For more information please go to [WHMIS Posting and Training Requirements for Nova Scotia](#) prepared by the Division.

Public Consultation Phase II WHSR (cont.)

- Part 4—Sanitation and Accommodation
- Part 3—Personal Protective Equipment
- Part 14— Excavation and Trenching
- Part 12— Confined Spaces
- Part 15— Surface Mine Working

A new component dealing with committees and representatives (joint occupational health and safety committees and health and safety representatives) is also being added.

We encourage everyone to review the material and provide your comments. This is your opportunity to have a say in regulations that will help shape your workplace safety.

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](#)

New Administrative Penalties Regulations (cont.)

- Penalties if warranted will be issued by the OH&S Officers, **not** an Administrator. An Officer will have up to 14 days to decide whether to issue a penalty on a written order—if that is not possible (where further investigation may be required) the director has the ability to notify the person that they are being considered for a penalty at a later date.
- The 3 year administrative penalty history (with regards to potential fine amount increases) continues; however as of October 1 all inspectee histories will start over.
- All revenues generated by the administrative penalty system will be directed to the Occupational Health and Safety Education Trust Fund. For more information go to ['New Administrative Penalties System'](#)

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For further information come see us on the Web at [Health and Safety](#).
