

# Airborne Contaminants – 2023 Year in Review



## ALBERTA

### LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Jul 13:** Alberta issued an [OHS approval](#) giving employers the option to use an alternative method to adjust the occupational exposure limit for respirable crystalline silica for work shifts lasting longer than 8 hours. Specifically, employers may now consider weekly work schedules in determining the need to adjust the respirable crystalline silica OEL.

**Action Point:** Implement a legally sound [airborne contaminant exposure control plan](#) at your workplace.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

### LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Sep 5:** WorkSafeBC began accepting applications for asbestos abatement licenses ahead of the new [OHS regulations](#) requiring asbestos abatement contractors to be licensed by January 1, 2024.

**Action Point:** Implement an [Asbestos Exposure Control Plan](#) at your workplace.

### CASES

**Airborne Contaminants: Contractor Fined Nearly \$300,000 for**

## Not Minimizing Workers' Exposure to CO

A construction worker using a gas-powered pressure washer in the parkade of a high-rise building suffered serious injuries from exposure to carbon monoxide (CO). WorkSafeBC inspectors determined that the parkade's gas detection and ventilation system failed to turn on in response to the elevated levels of CO. As a result, it issued a \$297,647 administrative monetary penalty against the contractor for a series of high-risk OHS violations, including failing to implement an exposure control plan to minimize workers' exposure to hazardous substances [*Beedie Construction Ltd.*, June 6, 2023].

**Action Point:** Take [measures](#) to protect your workers against carbon monoxide poisoning at work and at home

## ONTARIO

### LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Apr 11:** Newly [proposed OHS regulations](#) reduce exposure limits for diesel exhaust in underground mines while also allowing for the use of track-mounted robots fitted with high-definition cameras to identify loose rocks, misfired explosives and other safety hazards in mines. The new rules take effect on July 1, 2023.

## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

### LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Aug 30:** With hurricane season and power outage risks coming to their peak, the PEI WCB issued new [safety tips](#) to help employers safeguard their workers from carbon monoxide poisoning hazards, especially those that rely on portable generators to keep their businesses running.

**Action Point:** Take [measures](#) to protect your workers against carbon monoxide poisoning at work and at home.

# QUÉBEC

## LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Apr 6:** With power outages raging across much of the province, CNESST reminded employers and workers to be extra careful around carbon monoxide, including tools or heaters that may release the gas. Ensure the area is well ventilated and be alert to the signs of carbon monoxide inhalation, including headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, impaired vision, sleepiness and convulsions.

**Action Point:** Take [measures](#) to protect your workers against carbon monoxide poisoning at work and at home.

**May 24:** CNESST proposed new *Construction Safety Code regulations* to beef up protections against workers exposed to crystalline silica dust at construction sites, including via use of source exhaust ventilation systems, isolating workers from emission sources and containment of and/or moistening of dusts containing crystalline silica.