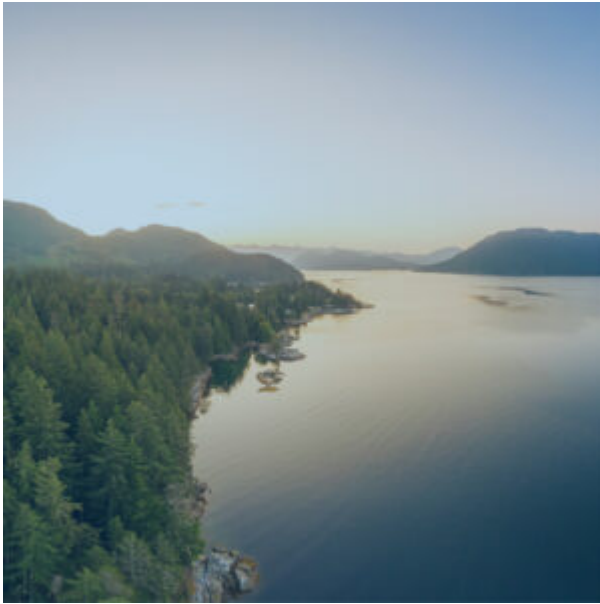


Month In Review – British Columbia



LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fall Protection

Jan 29: WorkSafeBC inspectors will focus primarily on vertical falls from ladders, scaffolds, work platforms and fixed structures in carrying out scheduled OHS inspections at construction sites in 2024. Other priority areas will include verifying compliance with struck by mobile equipment, overexertion and musculoskeletal injuries prevention requirements.

Action Point: Use the OHSI Fall Protection Compliance Game Plan to prepare for inspections and avoid violations at your site

OHS Inspections

Jan 29: WorkSafeBC says it will prioritize high-risk hazards in carrying out targeted OHS inspections in 2024. Within the manufacturing sector, inspectors will focus primarily on lockout tagout and deenergization of machinery and equipment during servicing musculoskeletal injury risk identification, training and prevention.

Action Point: Use the OHSI Lockout Tagout Compliance Centre resources to avoid lockout violations

Ergonomics

Jan 25: From now through April 26, 2024, WorkSafeBC will conduct public consultations on proposed amendments to OHS regulation to safeguard workers from activity-related soft tissue disorders (ASTDs) of the limbs and for determining whether ASTDs are work-related for purposes of workers comp.

Action Point: Use the resources on the OHSI Ergonomics Compliance Centre to prevent MSIs at your workplace

Hazard Assessment

Feb 9: Comments closed on proposed OHS changes spelling out that employers must, in consultation with the JHSC, identify and assess workplace hazards and take steps to either eliminate or control the hazards they identify, while maintaining records documenting each step of the process.

Action Point: Find out how to implement an effective hazard identification and assessment game plan at your workplace

Emergency Response

Feb 22: BC closed consultations with experts in building design, engineering and fire and life safety on whether to incorporate innovative single egress stair (SES) designs into the province's building and fire codes. Current BC rules generally require buildings of 3-storeys or higher to have at least 2 egress, or exit, stairwells per floor.

Fire Safety

Jan 31: In partnership with the Western Forestry Contractors' Association, BC launched a new 2-year pilot project to provide forestry and other silviculture workers training on how to prevent and mitigate wildfires.

Action Point: Use the resources on the OHSI Fire Safety Compliance centre to prevent fires and explosions at your workplace

Drugs & Alcohol

Feb 7: Effective today, pharmacists must keep buccal nicotine pouch products behind the counter. Anybody wanting to purchase these products will now have to consult a pharmacist who will then be able to inform the customer of the health risks associated with nicotine dependency. Intended as a nicotine-replacement product to help adults quit smoking, use of buccal nicotine products has increased among youth, making it a potential gateway for nicotine use.

Action Point: Take 5 steps to prevent workplace smoking and avoid fines under smoke-free laws

Privacy

Jan 29: The new *Intimate Images Protection Act* allowing individuals to file money damages lawsuits against those who publish their intimate images online without consent officially took effect. BC also launched a new Intimate Images Protection Service to support victims, explain their legal rights and help them get their images off the internet as soon as possible.

Action Point: Find out how privacy laws affect workplace safety

Workers Comp

Jun 28: That's the deadline to comment on a WorkSafeBC discussion paper outlining changes to the formula it uses to determine a worker's average earnings at the time of injury, as well as the worker's average net earnings after making deductions from gross earnings. These formulas play a crucial role in calculating the benefits workers receive for work-related injuries.

Workers Comp

Feb 29: That's the final day for the first group of BC employers to submit their actual 2023 payroll numbers and 2024 estimates to WorkSafeBC. For some employers, the reporting deadline is either March 15 or March 31, depending on the last 2 digits of their employer account number.

CASES

Fall Protection: Prime Contractor Fined \$43,359 for Not Implementing OHS Compliance System

WorkSafeBC inspectors issued a stop-work order after spotting a slew of OHS violations at a townhouse construction site, including missing or improperly constructed guardrails in fall risk areas, missing handrails on stairways and unguarded table saws. The prime contractor for the site was ordered to pay \$43,359 in administrative monetary penalties for failure to implement a system to ensure OHS compliance at the site, a high-risk and repeat violation [VPAC Construction Group Ltd.].

Action Point: Use the OHSI Fall Protection Compliance Game Plan to prevent fall injuries and OHS violations at your site