

# Month In Review – Québec



## LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Airborne Contaminants

Apr 22: Newly effective [OHS regulations](#) require employers to report health and safety information about specific contaminants and hazardous materials in their workplace to the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) every three years. The agency would then share that data with other government agencies to advance public safety.

**Action Point:** Find out how to implement a legally sound [Airborne Contaminant Exposure Control Plan](#) at your workplace.

### Transportation Safety

May 5: The Ministry of Transport reminded road users that free passage for electric vehicles at toll plazas on Highways 25 and 30 and on certain ferries of the Société des traversiers du Québec will end on April 1, 2027. Initially planned for a five-year period, the free public transportation service was extended twice by the government.

### New Laws

Apr 2: Royal Assent for [Bill 15](#) which amends the *Professional*

Code by streamlining the regulatory processes of the professional system and broaden certain professional practices in the field of health and social services.

## New Laws

Apr 9: The governments of Canada and Québec shook hands on a Workforce Tariff Response agreement that will provide \$122.5 million over three years to support businesses within the softwood lumber, steel, and other industries affected by tariffs. The money will also be used to provide new skills development training for the impacted workers.

## New Laws

Apr 11: Applications for admission to study programs leading to one of the five most in-demand trades in the Québec construction industry increased by 80% between January and March 2026, the government announced. More than 7,600 people applied for admission to programs in the trades of carpenter, electrician, lineman, plumber, and refrigeration technician during the period.

## Training

June 1 is the deadline for small and medium enterprises in Québec [to apply](#) for Artificial Intelligence Training for Innovative and Agile Businesses funding for training projects to help workers develop AI skills. Submitted projects must be led by eligible collective promoters, such as a sectoral workforce committee, employers' association, or union, and target workers from at least two companies.

**Action Point:** Find out about [the 11 ways you can use](#) Artificial Intelligence to improve workplace safety and OHS compliance without trampling on workers' privacy rights.

# CASES

## **Due Diligence: Fall Protection Violation Was the Fault of the Worker, Not the Employer**

CNESST inspectors cited a bridge contractor for a fall protection violation after observing a worker on a platform more than three metres above a frozen river whose harness wasn't attached to the lifeline. The contractor blamed the worker claiming it exercised due diligence to comply with the law and prevent the violation. The Québec court agreed and dismissed the charge. The contractor clearly did its OHS "homework," the court explained. "Everything was in place during the site visit. The structure was clear; the rules were clear as well. The equipment was safe. The worker had the necessary equipment" and wasn't "exposed to any abnormal risks." He was also experienced and there was no evidence of inadequate supervision [[CNESST v. Stellaire Construction inc.](#), 2026 QCCQ 1600 (CanLII), April 21, 2026].

**Action Point:** This case is a bit of an outlier. Due diligence defences that seek to shift blame to workers almost never work. Use the [OHSI Due Diligence Scorecard](#) and accompanying Case Summaries to draw other important lessons to help you assess whether your own OHS program meets due diligence standards.

## **Machine Safety: Company Didn't Use Due Diligence to Prevent Panel Saw Guarding Violation**

While touring the workshop of a composite manufacturing plant, a CNESST inspector observed a panel saw without proper guards to prevent worker access to the blade. The company claimed that it inherited the saw when it took over the plant in 2019,

adding that the saw was hardly ever used and that CNESST inspectors didn't say anything about it during previous inspections. But the Québec court wasn't impressed and rejected the company's due diligence defence. And while laying out nearly \$2,000 to correct the violation after the inspection might have demonstrated good faith, it didn't affect whether the company took the reasonable steps necessary to prevent the violation in the first place as the standard of due diligence requires [[CNESST v. Composite Produit Innovative inc.](#), 2026 QCCQ 1587 (CanLII), April 14, 2026].

**Action Point:** Find out how to prevent these kinds of violations by implementing a legally sound [Machine Guarding Compliance Game Plan at](#) your workplace.

## **Workplace Distractions: OK to Suspend but Not Fire Ski Lift Operator for Using Tablet on the Job**

The owner of a ski lodge suspended and later fired a worker that he spotted glancing at the tablet on his lap while operating a ski lift with skiers on it, in violation of the lodge's zero-tolerance no electronics use at work safety policy. Based on the incident, the Québec arbitrator upheld the 10-day suspension but not termination. The title "zero-tolerance" belied the fact that other workers had received only warnings for the same offence. This was the worker's first offence and there was no evidence to suggest he was unwilling or unable to learn from his mistake and correct his conduct or that the "relationship of trust had been irreparably broken," the arbitrator concluded [[Union of Workers of Val Saint-Côme v. Val Saint-Côme Tourist Resort Inc.](#), 2026 CanLII 17900 (QC SAT), February 27, 2026].

**Action Point:** The good news is that the lodge did have a [Mobile Devices in the Workplace Policy](#) barring the use of tablets and other distracting devices on the job. The bad news

is that, at least in the arbitrator's eyes, it didn't enforce the policy fairly.

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