

OHS Fines Scorecard for 2024 (December 15 to January 15)



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Not with a bang, but a whimper. That's how the year in significant OHS fines reported across Canada came to an end. In fact, the year's final 4-week period, running from December 15, 2024 to January 15, 2025 had the lowest fine volume of the entire year, with only 7 OHS fines of over \$25,000 reported. The falloff is likely due to normal year-end wind down rather

than a harbinger of a long-term lull in OHS enforcement activity. If previous patterns repeat, reported OHS fine volumes and amounts will likely rebound strongly in January and February.

While fine volumes hit a one-year low, one of the reported fines during the recent period was for \$351,000, making it the tenth biggest OHS fine of 2024. Conversely, this was the only reported OHS fine in the period that totaled 6 figures, making December through January the lowest for fines of at least \$100,000. Here are the totals for the entire reporting year.

Table 1. OHS Fines in 2024 at a Glance

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| Period | Total Reported Fines | Reported 6-Figure Fines |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Jan to mid-Feb | 11 | 6 |
| Mid-Feb to mid-March | 11 | 4 |
| Mid-March to mid-April | 10 | 2 |
| Mid-April to mid-May | 12 | 9 |
| Mid-May to mid-June | 12 | 5 |
| Mid-June to mid-July | 10 | 4 |
| Mid-July to mid-August | 14 | 6 |
| Mid-August to mid-September | 12 | 4 |
| Mid-September to mid-October | 9 | 4 |
| Mid-October to mid-November | 19 | 11 |

| Period | Total Reported Fines | Reported 6-Figure Fines |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Mid-November to mid-December | 9 | 4 |
| Mid-December to Mid-January | 7 | 1 |
| Total | 136 | 60 |

Source: Bongarde

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6-Figure OHS Fines

Of the 136 OHS fines reported in Canada in 2024, 60, or roughly 42%, totaled \$100,000 or more. The message is clear. If government OHS officials and prosecutors come after your company, it’s fairly likely that you’ll have to shell out somewhere in the vicinity of 6 figures to settle the case—assuming, of course, that you opt not to take the risks of going to trial the way the vast majority of accused companies do. Key risk factors contributing to higher OHS penalties include:

- Violations that result in a fatality or serious injury.
- Violations that involve heavy equipment like cranes or pressing and cutting machines.

- High-risk operations like confined space entry, excavation, blasting, or multi-story building construction.
- A history of violations and failure to comply.

Accordingly, the biggest fine of the recent period was the \$351,059 administrative monetary penalty (AMP) against a BC prime contractor for an incident involving 2 rooftop derrick cranes resulting in serious injury to a worker. Here's a look at the Top OHS fines reported for the entire year:

Table 2. Top 10 OHS Fines of 2024

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| | Fine Amount | Province | Type of Company/Incident |
|---|--------------------|------------------|--|
| 1 | \$840,000 | Saskatchewan | Power company/3 OHS violations resulting in fatal fall of 2 workers from a bucket truck. |
| 2 | \$783,068 | British Columbia | Smelting facility/Fatal fall during overhead crane inspection. |
| 3 | \$710,488 | British Columbia | Shipyard/Confined space asphyxiation. |
| 4 | \$700,000 | Saskatchewan | Power company/Exposure to energized electrical conductor resulting in serious injuries. |

| | Fine Amount | Province | Type of Company/Incident |
|----|--------------------|------------------|---|
| 5 | \$600,000 | Ontario | Truck manufacturer/Explosion during handling of flammables resulting in 6 fatalities. |
| 6 | \$420,000 | Alberta | Contractor/Powered mobile equipment fatality. |
| 7 | \$391,534 | British Columbia | Lumber company/Repeat violations not connected to a specific incident. |
| 8 | \$390,000 | Alberta | Oil/Gas sector excavation fatality. |
| 9 | \$360,000 | Alberta | Heavy equipment/crane fatality. |
| 10 | \$351,059 | British Columbia | Rooftop cranes/serious injury. |

Source: Bongarde

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As usual, Ontario led the nation in 6-figure OHS fines reported in 2024 with 17; but only one of those fines made the Top 10 list for the entire country. BC dished out as many 6-figure fines as Ontario did during the year and accounted for

4 of the Top 10. While Alberta imposed far fewer overall fines than Ontario and BC, 13 of them were for \$100,000 or more, including the sixth, eighth, and ninth highest OHS fines of 2024. Saskatchewan reported the single largest and fourth largest OHS fines of the year and 9 OHS fines of \$100,000 or more. Northwest Territories and Nunavut didn't hand out many fines but the ones they did levy made an impact with 3 in the 6-figure range. New Brunswick and Nova Scotia were the only other jurisdictions that reported 6-figure OHS fines in 2024.

Table 3. 6-Figures OHS Fines in 2024 By Jurisdiction

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| | Jurisdiction | Reported 6-Figure Fines in 2024 |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Ontario | 17 |
| 2 | Alberta | 17 |
| 3 | British Columbia | 13 |
| 4 | Saskatchewan | 9 |
| 5 | Northwest Territories | 2 |
| 6 | Nova Scotia | 1 |
| 6 | New Brunswick | 1 |
| 6 | Nunavut | 1 |

Source: Bongarde

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Overall OHS Fines

In terms of fine volume, BC handed out the most fines of the period with 5. Ontario reported only 1 OHS fine from December to January. Saskatchewan was the only other jurisdiction to report a significant OHS fine in the period.

Table 3. OHS Fines Reported December 15, 2024 to January 15, 2025* (over \$25,000)

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| Jurisdiction | Fine | Company | What Happened | Violation(s) |
|--------------|-----------|-----------------------|--|--|
| BC | \$351,059 | Onni Contracting Ltd. | Prime contractor of construction project fined for incident involving 2 rooftop derrick cranes resulting in a worker's injury. | <p>Failure to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow its dropped object and leading edge safety program. • Have required documentation for the cranes available at the site. • Adequately address hazards associated with the weight of recovery equipment, other workers in proximity, and traffic control in its recovery plan. |

| Jurisdiction | Fine | Company | What Happened | Violation(s) |
|--------------|----------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| SK | \$75,000 | Saskatchewan Health Authority | Worker suffers serious injury in a stepladder fall. | Failure to ensure that ladders are designed, constructed, used, and maintained to perform safely resulting in serious injury to a worker. |
| ON | \$70,000 | Steed and Evans Ltd. | Worker suffers critical injury after being hit by a vehicle driven by a coworker. | Failure to position adequate warning signs or barriers to protect the worker. |
| BC | \$69,935 | Aspen Planers Ltd. | WorkSafeBC inspectors visiting sawmill observe an unguarded conveyor belt tensioner with in-running nip point, an unguarded chain and sprocket drive and associated auger, and a chain conveyor with an open top, which exposed a moving chain conveyor. | Failure to ensure (both repeat and high-risk violations): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belt conveyors had guarded nip points; and • Machinery and equipment were fitted with adequate safeguards. |

| Jurisdiction | Fine | Company | What Happened | Violation(s) |
|--------------|----------|-----------------------|---|--|
| BC | \$47,408 | Caliber Projects Ltd. | Subcontractor's workers at multi-employer construction site suffer injuries, one serious, when the forming wall they're spraying concrete on cracked and falls toward them. | <p>Failure, as prime contractor, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the partially assembled structure was supported to safely withstand the loads imposed on it during erection; • Ensure that health and safety activities at the site were coordinated; and • Do everything reasonably practicable to establish and maintain a system of regulatory compliance. |

| Jurisdiction | Fine | Company | What Happened | Violation(s) |
|--------------|----------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| BC | \$43,615 | Bluepoint Construction Limited | WorkSafeBC inspectors observe multiple deficiencies in the traffic control system at a road re-paving construction site, including 2 traffic control persons next to moving traffic. | <p>Failure, as prime contractor, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the health and safety of all workers at the site. • Use control measures to limit worker exposure to traffic. • Ensure traffic control devices were installed and positioned effectively. |

| Jurisdiction | Fine | Company | What Happened | Violation(s) |
|--------------|----------|---------------------------------|--|--|
| BC | \$26,602 | Cascadia Apartment Rentals Ltd. | WorkSafeBC issues a stop-work order at apartment building for renovation carried out without a hazardous materials survey or asbestos control plan. A hazardous materials survey conducted later confirms that drywall disturbed during the renovation work was an asbestos-containing material (ACM). | Failure to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A qualified person inspected the worksite to identify hazardous materials before renovation work began; and • Workers at risk of asbestos exposure were adequately trained in the hazards and work procedures to be followed. |

* BC OHS fines get reported a month late but are included in the most recent period to ensure continuity and consistency for comparison purposes across all provinces.

Source: Bongarde

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