

OHS Fines Scorecard for 2024 (June 15 to July 15)



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There were only 10 OHS fines of \$25,000 or more reported across Canada from mid-June to mid-July, tied for the fewest of any 4-week period in 2024. That number would have been even lower but for the unusual fact that 3 of the fines were dished out not by an OHS enforcement agency but a court after a case that actually went to trial. However, the relative decline in fine volume was more than offset by an increase in fine amount, with 4 of the 10 fines exceeding \$100,000, including the third highest OHS fine of the year. **Result:** Of the 66 fines reported during the entire year to date, 30, or nearly 50%, have been in the 6-figure range.

OHS Fines in 2024 At A Glance (through July 15)

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
Total	66	30

Source: Bongarde

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OHS Fines of \$100,000 or More

For the second straight month, Alberta reported the highest OHS fine of the period, \$420,000, against a construction contractor for a fatality to a worker who was run over by a forklift driven by his supervisor who was apparently distracted. The supervisor also received a \$60,000 fine as a result of the incident. B.C. accounted for the following biggest fines, including the fourth highest fine of 2024, a \$391,534 administrative monetary penalty against a lumber firm for a series of repeat violations detected at multiple facilities. The other 6-figure fine occurred in Ontario where an auto dealer received a \$125,000 penalty stemming from a

worker’s fatal fall from a step ladder.

Top 5 OHS Fines of 2024 At A Glance (through July 15)

	Fine Amount	Province	Type of Company/Incident
1	\$710,488	BC	Shipyard/Confined space asphyxiation
2	\$600,000	Ontario	Truck manufacturer/Explosion during handling of flammables resulting in 6 fatalities
3	\$420,000	Alberta	Contractor/Powered mobile equipment fatality.
4	\$391,534	BC	Lumber company/Repeat violations not connected to a specific incident.
5	\$390,000	Alberta	Oil & gas/Excavation fatality.

Source: Bongarde

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Although Ontario has handed out the most 6-figure fines of any province with 11, only one of the 8 biggest fines of the year has come from Ontario. Alberta has accounted for 10 6-figure fines, including 2 of the top 5. B.C. is third on the list for 6-figure fine volume with 5, 2 of which are in the top 5, including what remains the top fine of 2024 -\$710,488 against a shipyard for a confined space asphyxiation death. Saskatchewan and New Brunswick are the only other provinces that have reported 6-figure OHS fines in 2024 with 2 and 1, respectively.

Overall OHS Fines

Of the 10 significant OHS fines reported from mid-June to mid-July, 5 came from Ontario. BC and Alberta accounted for 2 fines apiece, including a single case in which a court fined an employer and supervisor for the same incident involving a forklift fatality. The most unusual case of the period was the Ontario prosecution of Dairy Queen for a machine guarding violation that resulted in significant spinal injury to a 16-year-old summer worker whose hair got caught in a blending machine. The case went to trial. Although Dairy Queen was found guilty, the judge reasoned that the violation was basically a local incident and fined the corporation only \$7,500. The prosecutor appealed, asking for 10 times that amount. The appeals court agreed that national Dairy Queen had greater responsibility for what happened to the summer worker but increased the fine only to \$40,000. Here's a summary of all the reported OHS fines in the period.

OHS Fines Reported from June 15 to July 15, 2024* (over \$20,000)

Jurisdiction	Fine	Company	What Happened	Violation(s)
AB	\$420,000	Volker Stevin Contracting Ltd.	Worker doing construction work near a storm drain on a residential street is killed after getting hit by a vehicle driven by the supervisor.	Allowing the worker to remain within range of a dangerous part of powered mobile equipment (supervisor also fined \$60K for same incident—see below).
BC	\$391,534	Rona Inc./Rona Home Centre/Dick's Lumber	WorkSafeBC inspectors spot multiple repeat violations at warehouse, lumber yard and first aid room.	Failure to securely store oxygen and propane tanks to prevent falling or rolling, ensure that forklift operators wear seatbelts and keep up-to-date first aid procedures.

Jurisdiction	Fine	Company	What Happened	Violation(s)
BC	\$290,548	The Great Little Box Company Ltd.	Worker unstacking pallets of boxes is killed when a bundle of 2 loaded pallets crashes down on him.	Failure to perform adequate hazard assessment for handling loaded pallets, implement safe work procedures for stacking and unstacking, and properly inspecting the workplace.
ON	\$125,000	2079608 Ontario Inc., c/o/b as Woodstock Ford	Worker descending a stepladder after drying the roof of a vehicle loses their foothold and suffers a fatal fall.	Failure to ensure that the worker worked from a ladder or platform designed to be used at the required working height.

Jurisdiction	Fine	Company	What Happened	Violation(s)
ON	\$70,000	McDougall Energy Inc., d/b/a Dowler-Karn	Truck driver suffers serious injuries after falling backwards 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet into an adjacent vehicle service pit.	Failure to ensure measures were implemented to protect a worker from falling into an in-ground vehicle service pit.
AB	\$60,000	Michael O'Neill	Worker doing construction work near a storm drain on a residential street is killed after getting hit by a vehicle driven by the supervisor.	Failure, as supervisor, to take all precautions necessary to protect the health and safety of a worker under his supervision by driving over him with a company vehicle while distracted (company also fined \$420K for same incident—see above).

Jurisdiction	Fine	Company	What Happened	Violation(s)
ON	\$60,000	Forages Technic-Eau Inc./Technic-Eau Drillings Inc.	Worker gets injured while unloading boxes from a crawling carrier that was parked beside a pickup truck.	Failure to ensure that the crawling carrier's parking brake was applied before the worker exited the vehicle.
ON	\$55,000	Can Art Aluminum Extrusion Canada Inc.	Worker injured while operating a saw on an aluminum extrusion press.	Failure to ensure that a machine with an exposed moving part was equipped with and guarded by a guard or other device to prevent access to the moving part.

Jurisdiction	Fine	Company	What Happened	Violation(s)
ON	\$40,000	1222149 Ontario Ltd. (Dairy Queen and/or Embrun DQ Grill & Chill)	16-year-old summer worker gets her long hair caught in a blending machine whose guard had been removed to save time resulting in serious spinal injuries.	Failure to ensure that the: 1. worker's hair was suitably confined to prevent entanglement with the rotating spindle; 2. and machine was guarded to prevent access to the exposed spindle.
SK	\$25,000	Builder Brothers Construction Inc.	Worker falls to the ground after removing slings from a set of trusses and suffers serious injury.	Failure to ensure that a worker at risk of falling 3 or more metres used a fall protection system.

* 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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