OHS Insider Newsletter – August 2026



The August 2026 edition of the OHS Insider Newsletter focuses on current and emerging workplace risks that OHS leaders need to manage with stronger monitoring, documentation, training, and prevention systems. This month's issue covers air quality on job sites, top OHS compliance cases from the first half of 2026, summer driving risks, the Month-in-Review, case alerts, and infectious illness preparedness.

The lead article looks at air quality on all job sites, both indoors and outdoors. Air quality hazards can come from dust, wildfire smoke, welding fumes, silica, diesel exhaust, chemical vapours, solvents, poorly maintained HVAC systems, mould, humidity, and inadequate ventilation. The article reminds OHS leaders that air quality affects respiratory health, physical performance, comfort, long-term illness risk, and infectious illness transmission.

The article emphasizes the importance of monitoring. Outdoor job sites may need to track air quality indexes, weather, temperature, humidity, wind direction, particulate levels, wildfire smoke, and dust-generating work. Indoor workplaces may need to monitor carbon dioxide, particulate concentrations, temperature, humidity, ventilation performance, and contaminants linked to specific tasks. The key point is that OHS professionals cannot control hazards they cannot identify.

Another major article reviews the top OHS compliance cases of 2026 so far. The issue highlights the Supreme Court of Canada's recognition of a new tort for intimate partner violence, a major British Columbia storage rack penalty, and a privacy decision involving AI-based driver surveillance. The

broader message is that OHS compliance is shaped not only by statutes and regulations, but also by how courts, tribunals, and arbitrators apply the law to real workplace situations.

The summer driving article is especially timely. Summer may feel like an easier driving season than winter, but it brings serious hazards, including increased traffic, road construction, fatigue, heat, distracted driving, impaired driving, vehicle breakdowns, cyclists, pedestrians, motorcycles, recreational vehicles, and changing traffic patterns. The article reminds employers that transportation safety affects more than trucking companies. It applies to construction, utilities, public works, delivery, logistics, agriculture, landscaping, healthcare, field service, and any organization where employees drive for work or between sites.

The Month-in-Review section highlights developments across Canada, including federal Ebola screening requirements, Alberta focused initiative inspections across multiple sectors, rising time-loss claims in British Columbia health care and transportation, proposed Manitoba penalties for failure to report serious incidents, New Brunswick SAFIS workers' compensation revisions, Newfoundland and Labrador workers' compensation coverage for psychological injury due to workplace harassment, Ontario first aid regulation updates, Québec workplace sexual violence prevention requirements, and Yukon administrative monetary penalties.

The case alerts section reinforces several important compliance lessons. A federal arbitrator upheld a no-drug policy for safety-sensitive airline employees based on fitness for duty. A lumber company was fined $355,000 after a fatal machine safety incident. A prime contractor was fined for confined space violations. Mining companies and an officer were fined after a fatal helicopter-related fall. A Québec arbitrator upheld termination for repeated refusal to wear a face mask during COVID. The Supreme Court of Canada's intimate partner violence decision is also discussed from an OHS workplace violence perspective.

The issue closes with an Ask the Expert feature on infectious illness preparedness. Summer can create a false sense that

infectious disease risks have passed, but the newsletter argues that summer is the right time to review response plans before fall and winter respiratory illness season. OHS leaders should review policies, responsibilities, reporting procedures, PPE supplies, cleaning resources, hand hygiene, ventilation, isolation procedures, outbreak cleaning protocols, business continuity plans, and communication processes.

Overall, the August 2026 OHS Insider Newsletter is a practical issue for safety leaders who want to stay ahead of invisible and emerging risks. It connects air quality, infectious illness, transportation safety, workplace violence, machine guarding, confined spaces, privacy, AI, enforcement, and legal compliance. If your organization is trying to improve prevention, demonstrate due diligence, and respond faster to changing conditions, this month's edition is well worth reading.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW THIS MONTH

https://ohsinsider.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Douglas-10870516.mp3

IMPORTANT DATES

August 3–Ontario/Northwest Territories/Nunavut–Civic Holiday

August 3–Alberta–Heritage Day statutory holiday

August 3–British Columbia–BC Day statutory holiday

August 3–New Brunswick–New Brunswick Day statutory holiday

August 3–Saskatchewan–Saskatchewan Day statutory holiday

August 10–Québec–Amendments to *OHS Safety Code for Construction Work* governing personal fall protection during metal bridging work take effect

August 10–Québec–Amendments to OHS *Regulation respecting concrete pumps and distribution masts* take effect

August 17–Yukon–Discovery Day statutory holiday

August 29–Nationwide–Ebola travel restrictions scheduled to

expire

THIS MONTH’S CONTENT IN FULL

- Monitoring Air Quality on All Job Sites: Protecting Worker Health Indoors and Outdoors
- Is Your Workplace Ready for the Next Infectious Illness Outbreak? – Ask the Expert
- **Transportation Safety: Managing Summer Driving Risks**
- The Top 10 OHS Compliance Cases of 2026 (So Far) & Their Impact on You
- Month In Review

ADDITIONAL TOOLS AND READING

- **How to implement an effective Workplace Domestic Violence Prevention Plan to protect your own workers.**
- **How to create a legally sound Substance Abuse & Fitness Duty for Policy at your workplace.**
- **Implement a legally sound Machine Guarding Compliance Game Plan at your workplace.**
- **Use the OHS Insider Confined Spaces Compliance Game Plan to avoid confined space fatalities and violations.**
- **How to implement effective rigging safety practices to prevent crane, hoisting and lift accidents.**
- **Implement a 10-step Excavations Safety and Compliance Game Plan at your workplace.**
- **Use the OHSI face mask policy template to enforce mask restrictions in your workplace.**