Ontario Announces Construction Health and Safety Action Plan



On May 11, 2017, Ontario's MOL announced its Construction Health and Safety Action Plan. Why the focus on construction' Because about 30% of all work-related traumatic fatalities and occupational disease fatality claims for workplaces in Ontario occurred in the construction sector, although it comprises only 6.7% per cent of all provincial employment.

Created with input from construction employers, workers and other industry stakeholders, Ontario's plan contains 16 recommendations to create a more knowledgeable, skilled sector and to increase the sector's compliance with OHS laws.

Through these recommendations the government and its safety partners are working to:

- Develop online tools, apps and web portals to provide easy access to construction health and safety information such as key hazards
- Conduct multi-media campaigns and targeted enforcement blitzes to raise awareness of construction health and safety, and key hazards
- Explore options for increasing and expanding fines for violations of the *OHS Act* and *Regulation for Construction Projects*
- Consider roof anchors and other solutions for working at

heights to prevent falls, which are the number one cause of construction deaths
- Embed construction health and safety topics in existing school curricula and apprenticeship training programs
- Consult with stakeholders on an accreditation program that would recognize employers who successfully implement OHS programs
- Create and better distribute resources to fill gaps in existing health and safety information for employers and workers.

The recommendations include:

1. Create a culture and climate of safety within construction by planning, creating and supporting ongoing multi-media OHS awareness campaigns that promote the importance of workplace occupational health and safety with industry stakeholders as well as consumers.
2. Increase safety knowledge in the construction sector by promoting awareness of the top construction sector hazards (falls from heights, motor vehicle incidents, struck by objects, machinery) and how to control these hazards through new and improved information channels, including industry, government and other stakeholder partnerships.
3. Support the role of the supervisor in creating and maintaining a culture that fosters worker participation in identifying and mitigating workplace hazards.
4. Identify and develop “workplace friendly” resource tools focused on the top hazards in construction, with a particular focus on small and medium-size businesses.
5. Build and support multi-stakeholder partnerships and distribution channels that enable better flow of health and safety resources.
6. Create a strategy for career-long health and safety learning for the construction sector.
7. Develop stronger partnerships with the education system

to reach students, teachers and employers that participate in construction-directed experiential learning programs.

8. Identify, review and enhance health and safety content of apprenticeship training standards.
9. The MOL is to work with health and safety system partners to create plain language resource materials on high-priority hazards to help small and medium-size employers interpret existing legislative and regulatory requirements and understand what is required to comply.
10. The MOL to support the development of guidance material, in the future, when making regulatory changes to assist the construction sector in complying with new requirements.
11. The Chief Prevention Officer to work with stakeholders to improve the use and design of fall-protection equipment in the residential construction and roofing sectors.
12. The MOL to explore opportunities to work with the Ministry of the Attorney General and stakeholders to expand the application of tickets to a broader range of contraventions of the construction project regulation and increase the current fine amounts.
13. The MOL to work with stakeholders to explore the use of Administrative Monetary Penalties under *OHS Act* and identify specific offences to apply them to the construction sector.
14. The CPO to explore opportunities to work with stakeholders to create incentives that motivate excellence in health and safety beyond minimum compliance, such as accreditation.
15. The MOL to conduct strategic enforcement campaigns in construction based on risks and high hazards for the sector on a continuous basis.
16. Enhance information sharing within OHS system and other stakeholders to support blitzes and other targeted enforcement.

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