

The 8 Most Important New OHS Laws of 2026 & How to Comply With Them



Part of your job as an Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) coordinator is to brief your CEO and other executive officers about the new safety laws and regulations that impact your company and its OHS program. That should include a mid-year briefing. Here are the eight most significant OHS laws that have come down so far in 2026 to include in your briefing, along with a series of action points to take to ensure compliance with each law.

1. Revised Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations

Changes: On June 17, Transport Canada published revised *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations* (TDGR) that take effect on June 4, 2027. In addition to extensive technical amendments designed to align Canadian TDG requirements with international standards, the new TDGR includes significant changes that will directly impact operations.

What To Do: OHS coordinators for manufacturers, warehouses, chemical distributors, oil and gas companies, laboratories, and other companies involved in shipping dangerous goods should review their current [TDG policies](#), [shipping documents](#), classifications, and [Safety Data Sheets](#) (SDS) and make the

revisions necessary to ensure compliance with the new TDGR requirements by the June 4 deadline. Focus especially on:

- **Expanded classification rules for articles containing dangerous goods:** To reduce uncertainty for shippers, the TDGR amendments introduce new UN entries and clearer classification rules for equipment, machinery, and other articles that contain dangerous goods as integral components.
- **Revised rules for Class 3 combustible liquids.** You may have to revise current classifications for liquids with flash points between 60°C and 93°C, which are now more clearly addressed as Packing Group III dangerous goods in specified circumstances.
- **New shipping document requirements for elevated-temperature (“HOT”) materials.** Shipping papers will have to include additional information identifying elevated-temperature dangerous goods designed to improve hazard communication during transport.
- **Marine shipments require additional flash point information.** Certain marine transport documents will have to list the product’s flash point.

2. New Federal Requirements for Physical Hazards & Airborne Contaminants

Changes: In February, the Government of Canada published OHS regulations requiring federally regulated employers to take significant new safety measures to improve management of hazardous substances. The changes take effect on February 11, 2027.

What To Do: Between now and February 11, OHS coordinators of maritime, railway, aviation, road transport, and other federally regulated companies should take the following

actions:

- **Update hazardous substances inventory.** Review your existing chemical inventories to: i. confirm that they identify locations, responsible departments, and applicable SDS; and ii. add substances used, produced, handled, or stored by contractors.
- **Review [contractor management](#) procedures.** Update contractor onboarding and site access processes to require disclosure of hazardous substances brought into the workplace and ensure those substances are incorporated into hazard assessments.
- **Audit chemical exposure assessments.** Review [industrial hygiene programs](#) to confirm that sampling is conducted in accordance with the new requirements, including assessment of breathing zones and workers with the highest potential exposures.
- **Review chemicals without established exposure limits.** Identify hazardous chemical agents that do not have an established ACGIH exposure limit and implement controls to keep exposures as low as feasible.
- **Evaluate engineered nanomaterials.** Employers that manufacture, handle, or use engineered [nanomaterials](#) must establish or update exposure control programs in accordance with CSA Z12885 requirements.
- **Strengthen heat and cold stress programs.** Review your [heat stress](#) and [cold stress](#) programs, identify work activities where ACGIH thresholds may be exceeded, and update prevention procedures in consultation with the workplace joint health and safety committee (JHSC) or safety representative.
- **Test and manage radon risks.** Review buildings and work areas where employees may be exposed to radon and confirm that controls meet the new 200 Bq/m³ exposure limit for non-nuclear workplaces.
- **Assess non-solar [UV radiation](#) hazards.** Employers using UV-generating equipment or processes should verify that

exposure controls meet the updated requirements.

3. New Ontario Training Requirements for Workers Operating Mobile Elevating Work Platforms at Construction Sites

Changes: In May, the Ontario Ministry of Labour (MOL) introduced a new OHS *Elevating Work Platforms Regulation* (O. Reg. 117/26) establishing comprehensive training requirements for construction project workers who operate [mobile elevating work platforms](#) (MEWPs), including boom lifts and scissor lifts. Starting January 1, 2027, employers must ensure MEWP operators receive both classroom and hands-on instruction covering equipment selection, hazard assessment, inspections, stability, fall protection, emergency procedures, and safe operation. Existing operators who previously completed compliant MEWP training may continue to rely on that training for five years.

What To Do. To ensure compliance, OHS coordinators of affected companies will have to:

- Identify all workers who operate or may be required to operate MEWPs.
- Review identified workers' existing training records to determine whether they'll need refresher or replacement training under the new regulation.
- Confirm that MEWP training programs cover all of the required classroom and practical competencies.
- Review and, if necessary, revise written MEWP [safe work procedures](#) and rescue plans.
- Verify that supervisors are qualified to oversee MEWP operations.
- Establish a system for tracking MEWP training completion and expiry dates.

4. New Safety Requirements for Automotive Lifts in British Columbia

Changes: WorkSafeBC updated Part 12 of the *OHS Regulation* governing automotive lifts, portable vehicle lifting devices, jack stands, ramps, and other vehicle supports. The amendments, update the technical standards for automotive lifts, expand OHS requirements beyond traditional automotive lifts to cover a broader range of vehicle support equipment, and clarify employers' obligations for equipment inspection, maintenance, safe use, and worker protection when vehicles are raised.

What To Do. To ensure compliance by the January 1, 2027 effective date, OHS coordinators at repair shops, auto dealerships, fleet maintenance facilities, tow truck operations, and other sites where [automotive lifts](#) are used should:

- Identify every type of vehicle lift and support equipment used at their facilities, including two-post and four-post lifts, scissor lifts, portable lifting devices, jack stands, and vehicle ramps.
- Verify that each type of equipment meets the updated standards for that type of equipment.
- Review automotive lift inspection and preventive maintenance programs.
- Ensure that manufacturers' operating and maintenance instructions are followed and kept readily available.
- Review and, if necessary, revise written safe work procedures for lifting and supporting vehicles.
- Verify that mechanics and technicians are properly trained on lift operation, vehicle positioning, load limits, locking mechanisms, and the correct use of required secondary vehicle supports.

- Maintain records of inspections, maintenance, repairs, and worker training to demonstrate compliance during a WorkSafeBC inspection.

5. New OHS Administrative Monetary Penalties in Ontario, Manitoba, & Yukon

Changes: In addition to fines, many provinces allow OHS enforcers to issue administrative monetary penalties (AMPs) without going to court. Last year, Ontario became the ninth [jurisdiction to allow AMPs for OHS violations](#) (the others are Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, the three territories, and the federal jurisdiction). This year, Manitoba and Yukon expanded their AMP regimes to include failure to report OHS incidents and/or workers' compensation offences.

What To Do: As an OHS coordinator, you need to recognize that it's not just about the money. Like OHS penalties, AMPs create a record of non-compliance that inspectors may consider in imposing future AMPs and convicting courts may deem an aggravating factor calling for a higher fine. Many provinces publish the names of companies that receive AMPs. Given these stakes, companies on the receiving end of AMPs should seriously consider whether to appeal.

6. New Employer Workplace Sexual Violence Prevention Duties in Québec

Change: On May 27, the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) published new [OHS regulations](#) requiring Québec employers to take measures to prevent workplace sexual violence and psychological harassment

(SCV), including: i. give workers written information about SCV risks at the particular workplace; ii. ensure workers receive SCV prevention training by a competent person; iii. implement SCV reporting and complaint procedures; and implement SCV investigation protocols. Effective date: May 27, 2027 (except for training rules which take effect on May 27, 2028).

What To Do: Recognize that sexual and domestic violence becomes an OHS issue when it occurs in the victim's workplace. That makes it essential to ensure that your current [Workplace Violence Prevention Plan](#) accounts for and protects against risk of domestic and sexual violence, regardless of where you operate.

6. New Federal, British Columbia, Ontario, & Québec PPE Rules

Changes: As they do most years, several jurisdictions have implemented important changes to their OHS regulations affecting PPE. Despite their significant impact on operations, these PPE changes don't get a lot of fanfare and are easy to overlook.

What To Do: Here's a summary of the key 2026 PPE changes that OHS coordinators must be aware of:

- **Federal:** Proposed COHS revisions designed to harmonize federal PPE regulations would also require employers to designate a qualified person to assess required PPE and confirm that it's suitable for workers of all body types, both male and female.
- **British Columbia:** Operators and passengers of all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiles, and motorcycles wear [headgear](#) meeting CSA CAN3-D230-M85, British Safety Institution Standard BS5361.1976, Snell Memorial Foundation 1995 Standard for Protective Headgear, or the

U.S. Federal Standard for Motorcycle Helmets.

- **Ontario:** Effective July 1, 2027, workers at construction projects who are exposed to side impact hazards must be furnished Type 2 protective headwear that meets CSA Z94.1 or ANSI Z89.1; head protection must also include a chin strap or other retention system if there's a risk of its becoming dislodged.
- **Québec:** [Proposed amendments](#) to OHS forest management work regulations revise required PPE standards for chainsaw users, including safety [footwear](#), [leg protection](#) devices, and protective clothing.

7. Relaxed Filtering Respirators Rules in Ontario

Changes: Ontario is one of the only provinces where all filtering respirators must meet NIOSH standards. Almost every jurisdiction allows for respirators to meet some version of CSA Z94. But that changed on July 1, when new [OHS regulations](#) took effect making Canadian-made respirators meeting CSA Z94.4.1 and the CSA Certification Program an acceptable alternative to NIOSH approval for filtering respirators in Ontario. That should make life easier, especially for Ontario companies that also operate in other provinces and territories.

What To Do: It's essential to implement a legally sound and effective [Respiratory Protection Equipment Compliance Game Plan](#) at your site no matter where in Canada you operate.

8. Mandatory Free Menstruation Products & Sanitation Requirements in Manitoba

Changes: In March, Manitoba became the first province to

require employers to provide workers free menstruation products in workplace restrooms, effective September 1, 2026. Employers must also provide at least one choice of tampon and one choice of pad along with a covered container for disposal of menstrual products near each toilet in a washroom. A week later, the province finalized [amendments](#) to WSH Regulations requiring employers and prime contractors at certain construction project sites to ensure that hot water for handwashing is provided, starting April 1, 2027.

What To Do: While [specific requirements vary slightly by jurisdiction](#), all companies should implement a [Sanitation and Toilets Compliance Game Plan](#) to ensure that the toilet facilities at their site:

- Are of the right type for your particular site.
- Include at least the required minimum number of toilets.
- Are in a proper location.
- Are properly designed.
- Are properly equipped.
- Are properly maintained.