

WorkSafeBC's High-Risk Strategy for Construction Taking a Risk-Based Approach to Reduce Injuries



Serious injuries account for 19 percent of all claims in construction

B.C.'s construction sector has an injury rate that is consistently higher than the provincial average. That's why WorkSafeBC has a multi-year high-risk strategy to reduce injuries in construction.

"Our 2022 high-risk strategy for construction aims to reduce the number of serious and fatal injuries in the industry," says Al Johnson, Head of Prevention Services for WorkSafeBC. "As part of our strategy, we will continue to apply our resources and efforts 'including inspections and consultations' where they will be most effective."

WorkSafeBC's focus in the construction industry this year includes the following four areas:

- **Falls from elevation:** Falls from elevation continue to drive the serious injury rate in construction.

- **Struck-by mobile equipment:** Struck-by injuries continue to drive the serious injury rate and are currently surpassing falls from elevation in terms of the number of injury claims.
- **High voltage limits of approach:** Working in proximity to high voltage power lines is a high-risk work activity. Inadequate controls continue to put workers at risk of serious injury or death during the construction phase of building structures, during maintenance of building structures, and while moving equipment and materials on a worksite.
- **Musculoskeletal and repetitive strain injuries (MSI and RSI):** Overexertion and repetitive strain injury are the main drivers of musculoskeletal injury claims in the construction industry.

“Our inspections are taking a risk-based approach to ensure the most significant risks are being managed effectively,” says Johnson. “This involves employers and their workers working together to identify hazards, evaluate risks, and implement the appropriate controls specific to the work being done on-site.”

WorkSafeBC stresses that construction employers need to ensure these efforts involve their workers, and are effectively communicated to workers through orientations, training, supervision, incident investigations, worksite inspections, and, where applicable, joint health and safety committees.

As part of its high-risk strategy for construction, WorkSafeBC is also working with external stakeholders, such as the B.C. Construction Safety Alliance, to proactively respond to evolving industry challenges and emerging risks.

“At the BC Construction Safety Alliance, our sole goal is to improve safety outcomes in the construction sector,” says Mike McKenna, Executive Director of the BC Construction Safety Alliance. “Assisting WorkSafeBC to impact those areas that

represent the most risk is a priority.”

Key Facts

- WorkSafeBC’s high-risk strategies identify and target industries and employers with a high risk of serious workplace injury and a significant contribution to the serious-injury rate. High-risk strategies include four industry sectors: [construction](#), [forestry](#), [health care and social services](#) and [manufacturing](#).
- WorkSafeBC has related focus areas on [cranes and mobile equipment](#) and [occupational disease](#).
- The construction industry had an injury rate of 3.3 per 100 workers in 2020, compared to 2.14 across all industries in the province.
- Serious injuries account for approximately 19 percent of claims in the construction industry.
- In 2021, WorkSafeBC prevention officers conducted a total of 7,131 initiating inspections, resulting in 8,145 orders. A total of 156 penalties were imposed on construction employers.
- April is Construction and Skilled Trades Month in B.C.

Source: [WorkSafeBC](#)