

Our Vision is:

To provide awareness, education and training, creating positive work environments with reduced risk.

Our Mission is:

To improve the health and safety of all members of the Mechanical Contractors Association of Toronto.

PROTECTION AGAINST ASBESTOS

A recent report shows that Canadians continue to suffer from exposure to Asbestos and it remains a significant health threat. Known as the other “silent killer” Asbestos causes all manners of cancers and lung diseases.

The report showed approximately 152,000 Canadians are exposed to asbestos in their workplaces each year. Although banned, it is still found in older buildings and during renovations.

The report prepared for the CSA (Canadian Standards Association) showed omission and inconsistencies in how asbestos management is regulated, conflicting definitions of asbestos as well as lack of training and awareness.

Ontario’s OHSa requires employers and supervisors identify workplace hazards including asbestos and take every precaution for the protection of a worker. Regulation 278/05 Asbestos on Construction Projects, applies to building owners’ obligations to prepare and maintain an asbestos management plan.

Workers Health & Safety Centre E-BULLETIN
National asbestos standard needed, report concludes
(mailchi.mp)

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VACCINATION MANDATES & EI ELIGIBILITY

Service Canada reports -There have been recent updates surrounding vaccination requirements in workplaces. **Employers**, if you have adopted a mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policy, ensure it has been clearly communicated, and that if not complied with, the result would be loss of employment.

Employee’s that lose or quit because of non-compliance with their employers mandatory vaccination policy, won’t be eligible for EI regular benefits.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/ei/ei-list/ei-roe/notice-covid-19.html>



ONTARIO ADDED NEW RESOURCES TO PROTECT WORKERS

[Ontario Newsroom](#)

The Ontario government is continuing to protect workers and people from COVID-19 by providing businesses with new tools and educational resources, including a new safety plan builder and additional inspectors. More than 100 new health and safety inspectors have graduated in October and will be visiting workplaces in construction, industrial and health care settings. With the support of provincial offences officers, the inspectors will be deployed to help educate workers and businesses about the newly-launched vaccine certificate.

The addition of these graduates means Ontario now has a total of 507 labour inspectors, the largest ever number in provincial history. Over the coming weeks, in consultation with local public health units, Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development inspectors and other provincial offences officers will continue conducting inspection and education campaigns to ensure businesses are following COVID-19 safety requirements.

Since March 2020, provincial inspectors have conducted more than 65,000 COVID-related workplace inspections, issuing 79,200 orders and stopping unsafe work 102 times. Data from the most recent visits, conducted over the summer, shows the education assistance provided by inspectors helped double the number of businesses who were fully compliant with their responsibilities under the *Reopening Ontario Act*. Having a written safety plan is mandatory for businesses permitted to be open under the *Reopening Ontario Act*.

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WORKPLACE SAFETY PLAN BUILDER

As an employer it’s your responsibility under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect a worker.

All businesses that are operating must have a written safety plan by law. The plan must be made available to anyone who asks to see it and posted in a place where it will be seen easily.

To help businesses stay on top of health and safety guidance, the province has also launched the new [Workplace Safety Plan Builder](#), a free interactive tool making it easier for workplaces to create and update their COVID-19 safety plans. The tool was developed specifically to support small businesses and was designed with their input.

Businesses can now also access [free training for their health and safety representatives](#) through Ontario’s Small Business Health and Safety Training Program. Small businesses will be reimbursed \$150 for the representative’s training time.

To learn more, visit [Ontario.ca/COVIDSafety](#), which includes a safety plan guide and other helpful resources for businesses.

[Small Business Toolkit](#) - Ontario Health and Safety System Partners

COVID-19 UPDATE

Published November 10, 2021 from [Ontario Newsroom](#).

The Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, is pausing the lifting of capacity limits in remaining higher-risk settings as outlined in [A Plan to Safely Reopen Ontario and Manage COVID-19 for the Long-Term](#).

The phased and cautious approach to Ontario’s safe reopening includes ongoing monitoring and assessment of key public health and health care indicators. While Ontario’s hospital and intensive care capacity remains stable and the province continues to report one of the lowest rates of active cases in the country, certain public health trends, including the effective reproduction number and percent positivity have increased slightly over the past week.

An increase in cases was always expected as more people move indoors due to the colder weather and as the province eased measures. However, out of an abundance of caution, existing capacity limits and physical distancing requirements for higher-risk settings where proof of vaccination is required will remain in place to ensure the province has the required time to better understand any potential impact on hospitalizations and ICU admissions.



Ontario’s cautious approach is working, with weekly cases incidence rates still well below the national average and the province tracking below the lower range scenario for ICU projections outlined by the Ontario COVID-19 Science Advisory Table on [October 22, 2021](#). However, the province has continued to be guided by the evidence, ensuring that key indicators continue to be assessed through each mile-

stone of its plan to gradually lift public health and workplace safety measures.

Ontarians are urged to remain vigilant and continue following public health and workplace safety measures in place and to get vaccinated if they have not done so already. Achieving the highest vaccination rates possible is key to reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission and significant surges in cases. Responses will continue to be tailored to local context, with the ultimate goal of limiting disruption to people and businesses across the province.



ONTARIO PROVIDING FINANCIAL RELIEF TO EMPLOYERS

Ontario’s Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) is cutting premium rates in 2022 by \$168 million, bringing the total reduction in premiums since 2018 to \$2.4 billion. In addition, the government is intending to introduce legislation that, if passed, would allow for a significant portion of the WSIB’s current reserve, currently valued at \$6.1 billion, to be distributed to safe employers. This proposed change would help employers cope with the impacts of COVID-19.

[Learn more](#)



NEW SILICA CONTROL TOOL PILOT PROGRAM FOR CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

A new online silica control tool is now available in Ontario as part of a pilot project. Created in British Columbia by the **BCCSA**, this proprietary Silica Control Tool™, will be available to a group of 70 workplaces in Ontario under a 12-month pilot program, beginning this fall.

The pilot will be funded by the **Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW)** and access to the tool will be provided in partnership with the BCCSA and the **Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)**.

[Learn more about this pilot project here.](#)



WINTER HAZARDS “REMINDER”
Slips, Trips and Falls

As winter approaches us, we have to start thinking of one of the most common accidents that happen during the winter months: people slipping and falling because of ice or snow. However, many of these kinds of incidents can be avoided by taking a few basic steps to prevent a slip and fall.

- When getting out of a vehicle, use special care, as the ground may be icy.
- Try not to carry any large items that may reduce your ability to see what is in front of you.
- If possible, use a cart or other means of transporting materials.
- Always look at the ground in front of you for trip hazards, icy or wet patches
- Take your time when walking on snow or ice;
- If you have the misfortune of having a slip, try to avoid using your arms to break your fall.
- If you are falling backward, try and tuck your chin into your chest to prevent hitting your head against the ground.
- Try not to create a **new hazard** when you come in with snow-covered footwear. If the inside area is getting wet and slippery from all the water and snow, let someone know so it can be made safe.