

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.

ELEMENTS OF SAFETY

What is your company's safety culture, is there a health and safety management system in place?

The main purpose of a safety management system is to provide a systematic approach for managing safety risks, improving safety processes and demonstrating your corporate due diligence and reinforcing overall, a safety culture.

6 elements of an effective safety management system:

- ♦ A safety plan
- ♦ Policies, procedures and processes
- ♦ Training
- ♦ Monitoring
- ♦ Supervision
- ♦ Reporting

While the process may sound daunting there are a number of free resources available to get you started. See links below

[OHS Answer Fact Sheets](#)

[IHSA](#)

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Health and safety is the joint responsibility of management and workers. Managers and supervisors are accountable for non-compliance to health and safety legislation.

The policies and procedures put in place are designed to protect everyone. Management needs to ensure workers are trained and understand their responsibilities to maintain the safety processes.

Training is essential. Best practices, proper use of tools, PPE, are all key in ensuring that workers are aware of risks and hazards and how to avoid them.

Follow up, monitoring of incidents can assist management with the shortfalls within the system, and areas for improvement.

Supervision to ensure only trained individuals operate equipment or perform certain tasks. Correction of unsafe acts and promoting awareness.

Lastly, reporting, workplace inspections, hazard analysis, incident investigations, statistics and safety audits are the documents that will assist with the continuous improvement required to grow and improve a company's safety program.

ONTARIO INVESTING IN CONSTRUCTION SECTOR TO COMBAT LABOUR SHORTAGE

The Ontario government is working for workers by investing \$3.7 million to help up to 2,500 workers start or advance in well-paying careers in the construction industry. This decade, Ontario will need 100,000 more construction workers to help deliver the province's ambitious infrastructure plans, including 1.5 million homes by 2031.

[Learn more](#)



WSIB TO HOLD AVERAGE PREMIUM RATE FOR ONTARIO BUSINESSES

In an effort to continue supporting Ontario businesses post-pandemic, the WSIB has announced that they will be holding the average premium rate for the 2023 year. This hold puts the premium rate at the lowest level in over 20 years, at about \$1.30 for every \$100 of insurable payroll. The goal of this hold is to support small businesses in their financial recovery from the pandemic and provide incentive for business to further invest in health and safety.

The overarching objective of the WSIB is to continue improving support to injured workers, while mitigating the financial impact on businesses, and the hold is intended to aid this objective. The WSIB has also revealed that over the next few months they will continue making efforts to support safe businesses and putting the safety of workers first. Individual 2023 premium rates for Ontario businesses can be accessed via the WSIB's website as of November 1st, 2022 and will be mailed later in the month.

POST INSPECTION SURVEY TO IMPROVE H&S PROGRAMS

The Ministry's Occupational Health and Safety Branch is measuring the impact of our work to ensure our programs and services are as effective and efficient as possible. To best identify what's working and how to improve, we need to hear directly from workers and employers that have had interactions with our occupational health and safety inspectors.

[Learn More](#)

TSSA FUELS SAFETY PROGRAM

In 2020, TSSA implemented educational sessions associated with the audit program for heating contractors. They had published an advisory (FS-248-20 dated April 8, 2020) which provided information on the revised changes to the audit program which resulted from the recommendations from the Auditor General of Ontario and to support the TSSA's transition to an out-come based regulator. **Within this program, there is a requirement for contractors to validate work performed by their employees and, if applicable, their sub-contractors.** During the educational sessions, industry stakeholders asked TSSA to set out standards for the validation program to ensure the consistency of TSSA audits and industry validation programs.

Audit Parameters

The Propane, Gaseous and Fuel Oil Regulations have seven primary requirements that are a contractor's responsibilities. They are as follows:

1. Only install approved equipment
2. Technicians shall be certified for the work
3. Call for initial inspection by the distributor where fuel is being used for the first time
4. Employees comply with the regulation (s)
5. Incident Reporting
6. Identification, action as required and reporting of non-compliances (unacceptable conditions)
7. Requirement to tag (pressure test tag/installation tag) equipment upon installation completion (in the Fuel Oil Regulation and the Natural Gas and Propane Installation Codes)

The TSSA is in the process of outlining the acceptable standards for these programs, which are expected to be released soon.

See the link below for further information:

[News - Fuels - TSSA](#)



COURSE SPOTLIGHT:



INVESTIGATING & REPORTING INCIDENTS

Incident investigations are essential to any successful health and safety program, as they provide the greatest opportunity for improvement when used as a prevention tool. Yet all too often, investigations are not prioritized. Untrained employees are ineffective investigators and uninformed workers are often unwilling to participate in the investigation process.

The goal of this full-day training program is to provide a framework and resources to build an effective workplace incident investigation program and prepare individuals for competency on an investigation team. This course is currently available at a significant discount for IHSA members.

Learn more about this program and see upcoming dates on the [IHSA website](#).

WHY YOU SHOULD REVIEW YOUR COMPANY'S VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT POLICY

We tend to generate workplace safety policies to address requirements of the “buyers” of construction services or as required by legislation. What happens if you develop a policy and never review, update or ensure compliance?

Following the *Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act* there is a clear requirement for all employers to have a policy on Violence and Harassment, in fact Section 32.0.1 (1) states: An employer shall,

- (a) prepare a policy with respect to workplace violence;
- (b) prepare a policy with respect to workplace harassment; and
- (c) review the policies as often as is necessary, but at least annually.

Covid-19 really changed the look of our workplace, but, did we update our policies to reflect the impact of COVID-19? Likely many didn't, so what is the big deal it is only a policy. On March 8, 2022, Pathways to Independence, a Belleville, Ontario business was convicted and fined \$135,000 for failing to reassess (update and review) the risk of workplace violence.

Pathways committed an offence contrary to section 32.0.3(4) of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* by failing to reassess the risks of workplace violence as often as is necessary to ensure that the related policy under clause 32.0.1 (1) (a) and the related program under subsection 32.0.2 (1) continue to protect workers from workplace violence.

A employee was killed by a violent resident of the home because the Violence and Harassment policy and program were not updated since 2019, where COVID-19 restrictions (lockdown) added additional risks of workplace violence.

The bottom line, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* has requirements to review policies as often as necessary so have a look at the dates of your policies and ask, when was this policy last assessed, reviewed and updated.

Keep in mind you likely need to consult with the Joint Health and Safety Committee (or Safety Representative) as well, or you might find yourself in court.



CONSTRUCTION'S “FATAL FOUR”



Falls



Struck by an object



Electrocutions



**Caught in or in
between an object**

**Together, these account for over 60%
of all construction-related deaths.**

Source: OSHA

WORKING SAFELY IN COLD WEATHER

Winter weather can expose workers working outdoors or in cold temperatures to frostbite, hyperthermia, and cold stress, all of the which can be fatal.

The following work practices can help workers stay staff in cold weather:

- * Know the symptoms of cold stress, reddening skin, tingling pain, swelling, leg cramps, numbness and blisters.
- * Dress properly— layers of loose fitting clothing, insulated gloves and boots
- * Be aware—monitor your physical condition and that of your coworkers
- * Stay dry and pack extra clothes; moisture can increase heat loss from the body
- * Take frequent breaks in warm dry areas
- * Drink warm liquids

SAFETY DAYS TO REMEMBER

April 28th - WSIB Day of Mourning
World Day for Safety & Health
May 1-7 - CMHA Mental Health Week