

Accreditation pilot underway



The WSIB's pilot program for accreditation has begun. On May 23, 2008, the WSIB presented a *Draft Pilot Program Standard* to stakeholders at the Centre for Health and Safety Innovation. This document can be downloaded from www.wsib.on.ca.

According to the document, the objectives of the pilot program are to evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, and cost-benefit analysis of a permanent accreditation program.

During the pilot, the WSIB will be trying to determine

- motivators for participation
- barriers to participation
- ways to achieve the goal of improving health and safety culture

- the time and money required for participation in and administration of the program.

Information sessions have been held across the province throughout July and will continue in August. These sessions will review the steps taken to get to the pilot stage, the roles of various participants in the program, the steps to obtaining accreditation status, collaboration plans with partners and auditors, and rewards.

For the dates and locations of the remaining information sessions, go to: www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsbsite.nsf/public/PreventionAccreditationConsultation.

Speeding in construction work zones

Speeding and vehicle accidents in construction work zones are becoming a significant hazard for workers. A recent QEW project, described below, illustrates the reality of the situation. Some provinces are recognizing speeding in construction zones as a serious safety issue and are taking steps to address it. Ontario needs to address it as well.

During one project last year on the QEW, there were 170 accidents, including one death, in a seven-month

period on the stretch that passes through St. Catharines, according to the *Niagara Falls Review*. During this seven-month period, the company doing the work requested that the speed limit in the area be lowered to provide greater safety to motorists and to road-side workers. At that time, the request was denied by the Ministry of Transportation.

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Certificate of Appreciation to Bob Onyschuk

On June 26, 2008, Bob Onyschuk was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation at a joint meeting of the Ottawa and Kingston committees. Mr. Onyschuk is the Director of the Ministry of Labour Job Protection Office (JPO) in Ottawa.

The JPO was established to handle the administration and enforcement of the *Fairness is a Two-Way Street Act (Construction Labour Mobility)*, which governs Quebec companies and workers doing business in Ontario.

Mr. Onyschuk was recognized for his significant contributions to the enforcement of the *Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act (TQAA)*. By constantly enforcing the TQAA, Mr. Onyschuk improved health and safety standards in Ontario construction.

From left: Richard Hayter, Unionized Building and Construction Trades Council; Marie Holdcroft, Interjurisdictional Coordinator, Job Protection Office; Bob Onyschuk, Director, Job Protection Office; Steve Cody, Ottawa committee management co-chair; and Bert Olmstead, Ottawa committee labour co-chair.

Minister of Labour visits Provincial committee



Brad Duguid, Ontario's Labour Minister, visited the Provincial committee on June 5, 2008 to discuss the state of health and safety in Ontario construction. This was his first visit to the Provincial committee since becoming Labour Minister.

Minister Duguid began by outlining some of the provincial government's

plans, which involve investing in infrastructure, innovation, and training and education. He explained that these investments are needed to ensure the Ontario workforce remains competitive. He drew attention to health and safety as a large component of what makes Ontario an attractive place to do business.

Some of the issues brought up by committee members were mandatory training, the underground construction economy, and the review of the WSIB experience-rating program. The Minister mentioned the possible role of high schools in educating students about basic workplace relations and concepts such as the internal responsibility system and legislative rights.

Overall, Minister Duguid recognized the improvements that have made construction a safer industry, but insisted that we must find ways to do better because people are still getting hurt.

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The situation was later reconsidered. On January 29, 2008, the *Niagara Falls Review* reported that the speed limit on the St. Catharines stretch of the QEW was reduced to 80 km/hr. Because it was still a construction zone, fines for speeding were still double the normal rate.

Some people are questioning whether the speed reduction and the fine increases are enough to deter drivers from speeding and driving recklessly through construction zones. Sometimes the speed limit isn't even reduced, as evidenced by the MTO's original decision about the QEW project. Therefore, in some cases the only deterrents are the elevated fines.

The Provincial committee recently asked Doug Woods, a member of the Heavy Civil and Sarnia committees, to give a presentation on the topic. He presented a statistical analysis of vehicle accidents on Ontario provincial highways. His presentation supported the viewpoint that something needs to be done to ensure the safety of both workers and drivers.

The province of Manitoba recognized this issue on its highways and responded with a Safe Roads campaign. The campaign includes radio ads, posters, and billboards reminding people to be aware of workers when driving



through construction zones. A few years ago, New Brunswick took a similar approach with its "Slow Please" campaign. According to a media release from New Brunswick's transportation ministry, studies were showing speeds in excess of 100 km/hr in 70 km/hr work zones.

As health and safety leaders in Ontario's construction industry, the labour-management network needs to determine whether the safety of highway construction workers is at risk because of speeding and reckless driving. If it is, the industry needs to think about a solution. If this issue hasn't already been brought up, consider discussing it at your next committee meeting.

IWH study shows immigrant workers are injured more often

The Institute for Work and Health (IWH) released the results of two studies about an important segment of workers: new immigrants. The IWH studies show that immigrant men, across all industries, are twice as likely to sustain workplace injuries requiring medical care compared to men born in Canada.

The study was published recently in the journal, *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. The researchers analyzed information from more than 97,000 workers that was collected between 2003 and 2005. The researchers suggest that one possible explanation for the results is that new immigrants often work in more hazardous settings. Therefore, as a group they get hurt more.

According to the Ontario government, half of all immigrants to Canada settle in Ontario. If you aren't new to Canada, you may be working with someone who is. Don't forget that workers new to construction are at higher risk for injury until they become more experienced with tasks and more familiar with the jobsite. Make sure all your new workers are properly trained and make sure your instructions are clearly understood. Remember that some workers may still be learning English and the Construction Regulation requires instructions to be provided in a language the worker understands.

CSAO has DVDs and other resources to help you train new workers. Go to www.csao.org to check them out.

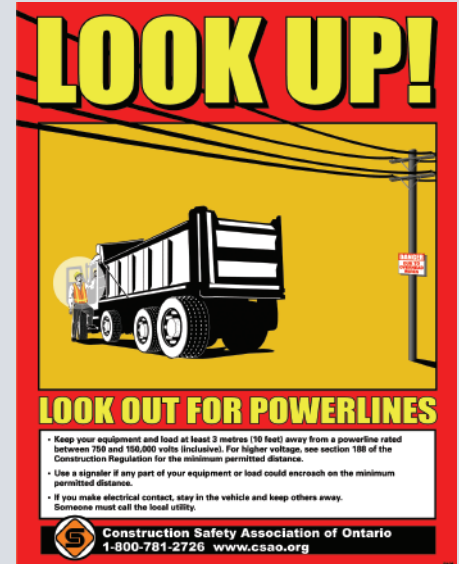
Employer fined \$135,000 after electrocution

A Sarnia-area employer was fined \$135,000 after a worker died from electrocution.

Workers were laying gravel along the shoulder of a road. One of them was on top of a spreader unit. Nearby, a subcontractor's dump truck had its box raised and was dumping wet sand. The top of the box contacted live overhead powerlines, which electrically charged the wet sand pouring from the dump truck. The

worker on the spreader was not aware of this powerline contact. This worker stepped off the spreader and onto the sand. The worker was electrocuted and died.

The employer pleaded guilty, as a constructor, to failing to ensure that a signaller was provided and stationed at all times to warn of overhead wire contact.



Employer fined \$50,000 after not reporting an asbestos removal project

A Hanover retirement home operator was fined \$50,000 after a failure to notify the Ministry of Labour of asbestos removal. Maintenance workers at the retirement home were removing a boiler from a boiler room. The boiler was insulated with a material containing chrysotile asbestos.

The company pleaded guilty, as an employer, to failing to

provide notice of work involving asbestos as required by Ontario Regulation 278/05.

The boiler was insulated with a material containing chrysotile asbestos.

