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Nova Scotia Launches Consultations on IRS and Crane Safety

The Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Workforce Development has launched two consultations.

The OH&S Division is requesting responses to the discussion paper, "[Promoting the Internal Responsibility System in Nova Scotia](#)". The discussion paper presents a variety of options for promoting a greater awareness and application of the Internal Responsibility System. The Division is seeking the [feedback](#) of all interested parties by January 9th, 2009.

In addition, the Department has started a [review of Crane Operators Regulations](#) under the Technical Safety Act. The review focuses on how the current laws may be streamlined to reflect technological change, improve consistency, and meet the needs of a changing economy now and in the future, while ensuring that minimum regulated safety standards are achieved.

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CSA Standards in Laws Available for Free

The [Canadian Standards Association \(CSA\)](#) has opened a [website](#) where you can view CSA standards referenced in federal, provincial and territorial Occupational Health & Safety regulations. The pilot site - to be run for 2 years - was developed by CSA in collaboration with all government departments responsible for OHS.

The standards may be viewed or purchased. They cannot be saved or printed directly from the site.

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Ontario WSIB Implements New Return to Work Rules for Construction

Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) has implemented new rules for the construction sector to help injured/ill construction workers get back to work. The rules came into force September 1, 2008.

The re-employment policies oblige an employer to re-employ a worker who has suffered a lost-time injury. Although the employer must offer to re-employ the injured worker under certain conditions, employers will not be required to create jobs that do not exist, nor offer preferential treatment to injured workers.

The WSIB will work with trade unions and industry associations until at least April 2009 to educate the construction industry and its workers on the policies. While the education program is underway, the associated penalties will not be enforced.

See [press release](#).

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Ontario WSIB Pilots Accreditation Program

Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) is piloting a new accreditation program. The program addresses a WSIB mandate under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act to:

- develop standards for the accreditation of employers who adopt health and safety policies and operate successful health and safety programs
- accredit employers who meet the standards.

The Accreditation Program aims to encourage workplaces to create a positive health and safety culture and safety habits by meeting the following objectives:

- To set a specific standard for recognition of Ontario workplaces with superior health and safety management systems and practices
 - To recognize employers with superior health and safety management systems and practices
 - To encourage non-accredited workplaces to work towards achieving the Accreditation Standards
 - To encourage accredited workplaces to engage in the continuous improvement of their health and safety management systems and practices.
 - To encourage accredited workplaces to champion health and safety in their industries.
- Accreditation Pilot Objectives.

All workplaces operating in Ontario may participate in and be accredited by the WSIB.

Accreditation is voluntary.

See [details](#).

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Quebec Issues Report on Workplace Stress

The Quebec [Institut de recherche Robert-Sauvé en santé et en sécurité du travail \(IRSST\)](#) has released a report on workplace stress. Called [Strategic Approach to Preventing Occupational Stress](#), the report evaluates seven different intervention projects at three organizational settings (a higher education establishment, a hospital centre and business units in the public forestry sector).

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British Chemical Labelling Rules Take Effect

The Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 came into force on 1 October 2008. The regulations implement European Commission Directive 2006/8/EC, commonly known as the second Adaptation to Technical Progress of the Dangerous Preparations Directive (the 2nd ATP).

The changes do not affect the main legal duties but do adjust:

- the rules and procedures for classifying and labelling a chemical preparation containing carcinogens, mutagens and substances toxic for reproduction
- the generic concentration limits to be used for the evaluation of the hazards for the aquatic environment
- the classification and labelling requirements for preparations containing ozone depleting substances
- the specified warning phrases on labels for certain preparations to make them clearer and more consistent.

As a result of some of these changes, chemical suppliers may need to take account of any large quantities of newly re-classified chemicals they have stored on site at any one time to ensure that they comply with the amended Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 1999.

See [details](#).

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UK Injury Statistics

The British [Health and Safety Executive](#) has released [statistics on work-related ill-health, injuries, dangerous occurrences, enforcement and gas safety](#) for 2007/2008. Key figures include:

- 2.1 million people were suffering from an illness they believed was caused or made worse by their current or past work.
- 229 workers were killed at work, a rate of 0.8 per 100 000 workers.
- 136 771 other injuries to employees were reported, for a rate of 517.9 per 100 000 employees.
- 299 000 reportable injuries occurred, according to the Labour Force Survey, a rate of 1000 per 100 000 workers.
- 34 million days were lost overall (1.4 days per worker), 28 million due to work-related ill health and 6 million due to workplace injury.

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Health Protection Agency Says Compact Fluorescent Lights Can Give off Emissions

New research by the British [Health Protection Agency](#) has shown that some energy saving compact fluorescent lights can emit ultraviolet radiation at levels that, under certain conditions of use, can result in exposures higher than guideline levels. Not all open (single envelope) fluorescent light bulbs have significant UVR emissions but if people are in very close proximity to some of them, the exposure to bare skin is like being outside in direct sunlight. Given its research findings, the Agency is recommending some precautionary measures for the use of certain types of compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). The Agency's view is that open (single envelope) CFLs shown in Figure 1 should not be used where people are closer than 30 cm to the bare light bulb for over 1 hour a day. The Agency advises that for such situations open CFLs should be moved further away or replaced by the encapsulated (double envelope) type shown in Figure 2. The larger long tube "strip lighting" design fluorescent lights, commonly used in offices, workplaces and homes for many years, can also be used on ceilings without any special precautionary measures.

The Agency and government departments are calling on the European Union, relevant product standards bodies and the lighting industry to consider how product standards for lights can be tightened up.



Figure 1

See [Advice sheet](#) and [press release](#).
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Figure 2

New European Certification Standard

The [European Network of Safety and Health Professional Organisations](#) launched its new European Certification Standard. EurOSHM (European Occupational Safety and Health Manager) is a voluntary European certification standard for occupational health and safety. It helps to verify the competence of OH&S professionals. ENSHPO is also working on a technician level European standard to be released in the very near future.

See [further background information](#) and [information on the application process](#).
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Europe Approves Code Against Injuries

The European Union has adopted the [European Code Against Injuries](#). The code is called the first awareness raising tool for injury prevention and safety promotion in the European Union. The code contains simple, appealing and straight-forward messages that, if adopted, could save thousands of lives. The code contains tips in 10 areas:

- Be a Safe Driver
- Be a Safe Road User
- Prevent Falls
- Guard Against Accidental Poisoning
- Know the Dangers of Fire
- Be Safe Near Water
- Play Sports Safely
- Use Safer Products
- Be Safe at Work
- Know the Risks of Alcohol, Drugs & Medication

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China Ties Mayor's Fate to Coal Mine Safety

Mayors in Henan province in China will be suspended or removed from office in the event of large coal mine accidents in their cities. "Mayors will be suspended or removed from office if a large accident takes place involving the deaths of more than 50 persons, or two large accidents involving the deaths of 30-49 persons a year," according to a government circular.

In some cases, officials colluded with businessmen to form groups with common interests to protect illegal companies and mine owners, even staging elaborate cover-ups.

The latest tragedy claimed 35 people in an explosion in Yuxian, Hebei province, on July 14, 2008. It was initially covered up for three months and finally revealed by victims' families on the Internet.

See [China Daily news story](#).

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Top 10 Most Expensive Accidents in History

See write-ups [10 of the most expensive accidents history](#).

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