

JULY 2024 MONTH IN REVIEW

Québec

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Work Injuries

Jun 21: CNESST reported that there have been over 10 workplace deaths in Québec since the end of April, an alarming average of 2 deaths per week. The agency called on employers and workers to be extra vigilant in preventing work incidents and injuries.

Fall Protection

Jul 3: CNESST proposed [OHS regulation changes](#) to beef up fall protection at construction sites for public comment. Highlights: i. updated requirements for guardrails, safety nets, and travel restraint systems; and ii. new rules for rescuing workers after falls, including implementing a rescue procedure that prioritizes use of personal lifting devices and freeing the worker within 15 minutes.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a legally sound [Fall Protection Compliance Game Plan](#) at your site.

Fire Safety

Jun 21: With wildfire and smoke hazards on the rise, CNESST reminded employers to take measures to safeguard workers from exposure to smoke and poor air quality. Recommendations include paying attention to public advisories on air quality, postponing work that must be done outdoors, and use of N95 or higher particle efficiency respirators.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a [Wildfire Smoke Protection Game Plan](#) at your outdoor workplace.

Heat Stress

Jun 19: A study by INRS, INSPQ, and Health Canada found that Quebec's [healthcare system](#) was strained by heat throughout the summer, not just during heat waves. Researchers analyzed mortality, hospitalizations, emergency visits, ambulance transports, and Info-Santé calls that revealed significant impacts. The study called for faster public health measures to protect residents and highlighted the added strain on the healthcare system.

Action Point: Find out how to implement an effective [Heat Stress Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace.

Workers Comp

Jul 3: Newly proposed [CNESST regulations](#) update items affecting 2025 workers' comp rates, including: i. the classification units, contribution rate for each unit, and experience ratios for calculating the employer's personalized rate; ii. rates relating to financing of joint sectoral associations; iii. the flat rate for the purpose of establishing the contribution of the employer of a student who's doing an unpaid internship, the annual fixed rate, and the rate applicable to the protection of a member of a board of directors; iv. the threshold for subjection to the personalized rate and parameters of the degree of customization; and v. the insurance premiums required for retrospective adjustment of the contribution.

Environmental

Jul 8: The Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ) implemented 2 new certification programs for compostable products: *ISO 17088:2021 Plastics — Organic recycling — Specifications for compostable plastics* and *ISO 18606:2013 Packaging and the environment*. These programs allow manufacturers to certify plastics, cardboards, packaging, and other products as "compostable" based on two international standards.

Environmental

Jul 30: July 30th, 2024 is the deadline for [comments](#) on a [proposed BNQ draft standard](#) to establish a harmonized methodology for hydrogen producers, distributors, and consumers to report on the hydrogen production and carbon intensity pathway.

CASES

Electrical Safety: OK to Fire Probationary Joiner for Accidentally Electrocuting His Trainer

Hydro-Québec suspended and then fired a probationary employee training for a distribution joiner position after he accidentally electrocuted his trainer. The union cried foul, but the Québec arbitrator held that, having thoroughly investigated the incident, the company acted reasonably and in good faith in concluding that the employee was a safety risk who couldn't be trusted in a safety-sensitive joiner job [*Union of Trades Employees of Hydro-Québec, local section 1500, Canadian Union of Public Employees (FTQ) v Hydro-Québec*, 2024 CanLII 57209 (QC SAT), June 21, 2024].

Action Point: Find out how to implement a legally sound [Electrical Safety Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace.