

British Columbia

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Work Injuries

Jun 1: British Columbia's workers' compensation time-loss claims rate for 2025 increased from 2.03 to 2.04 per 100 workers due to rising claims in two sectors: health care and social services, and transportation and related services. The increase was partially offset by declines in general construction. WorkSafeBC's target rate for 2026 is 1.99 or less.

Work Injuries

May 6: WorkSafeBC reported that the overall time-loss injury rate in the province's construction sector has declined 25% in the past 10 years. The serious injury rate for construction dropped by 32% over the same period. From 2021 to 2025, musculoskeletal injuries were the most common type of construction injury, with nearly 11,000 claims, followed by struck-by incidents (nearly 7,000 claims) and falls from elevation with nearly 5,800 claims.

Airborne Contaminants

May 14: WorkSafeBC added new or revised ACGIH Threshold Limit Value (TLV) and Exposure Limits to the Table of Exposure Limits for Excluded Substances (under [OHS Policy R5.48-1](#)) for: p-Chloro- α,α,α -trifluorotoluene; Cyclohexanol; 1,4-Dioxane; Germanium tetrahydride; Limonene, all isomers; 2-Methylimidazole, Inhalable; 4-Methylimidazole, Inhalable; Molybdenum - metal and insoluble compounds, as Mo, Inhalable; Molybdenum - metal and insoluble compounds, as Mo, Respirable; Molybdenum - soluble compounds, as Mo, Respirable; and Thorium dioxide, Inhalable.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a legally sound [Airborne Contaminant Exposure Control Plan](#) at your workplace.

Industry Challenges

May 19: WorkSafeBC published [proposed amendments](#) that would add comprehensive new safety requirements for shotcrete backing at construction project sites (under Part 20 of the *OHS Regulations*). Deadline [to comment](#): July 24, 2026.

Electrical Safety

May 29: Most electrical injuries (74%) in the province over the past decade have been to workers exposed to powerlines on the job even though they're not in the electrical trades, according to a new report from WorkSafeBC and BC Hydro. Such victims include construction workers, window washers, painters, surveyors, and crane and heavy equipment operators. Forty-two percent of surveyed workers said they hadn't heard of BC 1 Call, and nearly 15% were unsure of the required steps to take before digging.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a legally sound [Electrical Safety](#)

[Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace.

Transportation Safety

May 28: [Private Member Bill M217](#), which just received Royal Assent, requires the installation of dashboard cameras in commercial vehicles with a gross weight of over 8,200 kgs. Required cameras must retain at least 72 hours of footage, have at least 1,080 progressive scan high-definition resolution and night vision capability, and record at the manufacturer 's default settings on the device 's local storage. Footage is also subject to privacy protections.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a [legally sound video surveillance policy](#) to ensure safety in vehicles and at your workplace without violating workers' privacy rights.

Emergency Response

May 11: British Columbia adopted new *Emergency and Disaster Management Act regulations* requiring municipalities and regional districts in the province to complete emergency-management plans, business continuity plans, and hazard-risk assessments, in consultation with Indigenous governing bodies. Effective January 1, 2027.

Industry Challenges

May 21: Royal Assent for [Bill 14](#) authorizing BC Timber Sales (BCTS) to issue timber sales licences for a wider range for a wider range of fibre-generating and forest stewardship activities, including commercial thinning, wildfire risk reduction, and salvage of damaged trees. The government claims that the new licensing regime will create jobs and increase the province's fibre supply by as much as 17,700 truck loads, or 800,000 cubic metres.

Training

May 13: The province's new Look West program will provide \$241 million over three years to train British Columbia workers for in-demand jobs with the government to fund up to 5,000 new trades training seats, increase per-seat funding across apprenticeship programs, and cut waitlists for in-demand trades programs.

New Laws

May 29: The Governments of Canada and BC announced \$236 million in co-funding for eight projects to bring high-speed Internet access to communities across the province. As of May 2026, 96.5% of BC households have access to high-speed Internet at speeds of at least 50 megabits per second download and 10 megabits per second upload (50/10 Mbps+), as compared to 92.3% in 2017.

Drugs & Alcohol

May 13: The BC Coroners Service reported that there were 135 suspected toxic drug deaths in the province in March, roughly 4.4 per day. So far in 2026, 82% of unregulated drug deaths occurred inside in places like private residences, social and supportive housing, SROs, shelters and other locations, and 17% occurred outside in places like vehicles, sidewalks, streets, and parks.

Action Point: Find out [how to implement a workplace Naloxone Program to](#) save

lives and prevent opioid overdose deaths at your site.

Drugs & Alcohol

May 27: Although drinking has been trending down in recent years, people in British Columbia are still consuming an average of 8.8 standard drinks per week, as of 2023. This is above the national average of 8.2 and well above the recommended one to two standard drinks per week to avoid most alcohol-related risks to health. The Interior, Northern, and Island Health regions have the highest levels of drinking per person.

Action Point: Find out how to use the [OHS Insider Substance Abuse Compliance Game Plan](#) to curb drugs and alcohol at your workplace.

Workers' Compensation

May 29: WorkSafeBC issued a [discussion paper](#) proposing changes to its current workers' comp classification change policy, under which a company faces penalties for failure to provide the agency timely, complete, and accurate information (aka, meet its "positive duties"). Deadline to comment: June 26.

Environmental

May 21: In a move to support automakers, British Columbia gave Royal Assent for [Bill 16](#) officially reducing its zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) sales target from 100% to 75% by 2035. As a result, sales of new internal-combustion-engine vehicles will still be allowed after Jan. 1, 2035. The legislation also lowers the ZEV sales targets from 2026 to 2030. Meanwhile, the CleanBC Go Electric program is funding 75 new public electric vehicle charging projects in communities throughout the province.

CASES

Confined Spaces: Prime Contractor Fined \$170,000 for Confined Space Violations

A worker inside a chamber (a confined space) using pry bars to help a crane truck lift gearboxes suffered serious injury when the gearbox released and lifted forcefully upward. WorkSafeBC hit the prime contractor at the site with \$169,632 in administrative monetary penalties for multiple OHS violations, including failure to develop written confined space safety procedures and provide workers adequate training and supervision before they entered the confined space [*Metro Vancouver Regional District*].

Action Point: Find out how to use the [OHS Insider Confined Spaces Compliance Game Plan](#) to avoid confined space fatalities and violations.

Crane Safety: Failure to Equip Crane with Zone-Limiting Device Leads to \$164,189 Penalty

WorkSafeBC inspectors touring a construction site observed a crane without a required device to keep the crane from contacting adjacent high-voltage conductors. So, they fined the crane supplier and operator \$164,189 for failing to ensure that it was equipped with a zone-limiting device that prevented the crane from operating within the minimum approach distance of exposed electrical equipment [*M.R. Crane Service Ltd.*].

Action Point: Use the OHS Insider [Cranes/Hoists/Lifting Device Compliance Game](#)

Plan to prevent crane violations at your workplace.

Discipline: Photographing Supervisor's Serious OHS Infraction Is Not Harassment

A railyard worker took photos of a safety-sensitive technician cutting a rail without a required face shield. Rather than thanking him for reporting a significant safety violation, the company put a disciplinary letter in his file for taking the photos without the technician's consent, characterizing the action as bullying, harassment, and breach of confidentiality. The BC arbitrator ruled that the penalty was totally unwarranted and ordered the company to remove the letter from the worker's file, noting the letter's acknowledgement that he "acted correctly in reporting the infractions," the absence of evidence of harassment, and the fact that the worker didn't get a chance to answer the charges he was accused of [[*British Columbia General Employees' Union v Protrans BC Operations Ltd.*](#), 2026 CanLII 48712 (BC LA), May 1, 2026].