



LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fall Protection

Feb 6: CNESST published [new regulations](#) changing OHS fall protection rules at construction sites. Highlights include clarification on the hierarchy of fall protection measures required when installing guardrails isn't possible or appropriate, and updated requirements for safety nets in line with ANSI-ASSE A10.11 and NF EN 1263, parts 1 and 2. Effective date: April 6.

Fall Protection

Feb 6: [New OHS regulations](#) clarify that prime contractors are responsible for rescuing workers from falls at construction sites and require rescue procedures prioritizing use of personal lifting devices and freeing workers within 15 minutes. There must also be a rescue worker at the site with training to free workers suspended in a net. Effective date: April 6.

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

Powered Mobile Equipment

Jan 29: CNESST published its [findings](#) on the investigation of a worker who was crushed to death while using a forklift to move boats on a trailer over a slight slope. Apparently, one of the boats being moved became unhooked and rolled back toward the roadway. After trying to catch it with the forklift, the worker left the driver's seat and ran to grab the end of the trailer. In so doing, he turned his back on the moving forklift which eventually ran him over. After the incident, CNESST issued orders banning use of the forklift and the moving of boats by forklift or tractor bucket.

Action Point: Implementing an effective [Powered Mobile Equipment Operation Policy](#) like the one on the OHS Insider site can help you prevent such tragedies at your own workplace.

Emergency Response

Jan 29: Québec and the federal government will jointly invest \$64 million over the next 3 years to support the province's efforts to combat wildfires more effectively. The money, which will come from the Fighting and Managing Wildfires in a Changing Climate Program (FMWCC), will be used to hire new firefighters and purchase wildfire firefighting vehicles, drones, telecommunications, and other equipment.

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

Training

Jan 17: CNESST began accepting [applications](#) from organizations wishing to participate in a new program called PAOSST offering financial assistance of up to \$100,000 for carrying OHS and workplace injury prevention training and education projects.

New Laws

Jan 30: Québec announced that it will invest more than \$19 million over the next 3 years to support regional export promotion organizations that help entrepreneurs develop new businesses to sell goods and services in foreign markets.

New Laws

Jan 30: Newly tabled [Bill 84](#) proposes to establish a model for integrating immigrants and cultural minorities into Québec society and French language culture. The bill also outlines what's expected of the Québec State and Québécois, especially immigrants.

New Laws

Jan 23: In a bid to ensure that all residents have health care coverage by summer 2026, Québec asked a committee of independent experts to provide scientific recommendations on how the province should reorganize its front-line health and social services. The committee report is due on March 31.

Workers' Comp

Mar 15: May 15th the last day for Québec employers to submit their workers' comp data payroll reports to CNESST listing actual 2024 payroll expenses and estimated expenses for 2025 to avoid the risk of potential late fees, interest, and penalties.

Environmental

Feb 6: The Government of Canada announced that it will provide up to \$43.5 million to support Québec's critical minerals sector. The money will be funneled through the Critical Minerals Infrastructure Fund (CMIF) for clean energy and transportation infrastructure projects, and the Critical Minerals Research, Development, and Demonstration (CMRDD) program designed to advance the commercial readiness of emerging mineral processing unit operations or technologies for development of zero-emission-vehicle value chains.

CASES

Workplace Harassment: Butt Touching Costs Senior Mine Mechanic His Job

The union grieved the termination of a mine maintenance mechanic for touching the buttocks of a student worker on repeated occasions including her final day of

work. The Québec arbitrator ruled that the employer had just cause to terminate, even though the mechanic had no history of discipline in the 27 years he worked for the mine and had apologized to the victim. The mechanic's denials were implausible, his apology was insincere, and the nonconsensual touching of a young woman was a serious and unacceptable offence, especially in a predominately male work environment [[*Union of Metalworkers, Local 6869 v. Arcelormittal*](#), 2025 CanLII 2429 (QC SAT), January 7, 2025].

Action Point: Find out how to implement an effective [Workplace Violence and Harassment Compliance Game Plan](#) at your site.

Emergency Response: OK for City to Assign Firefighters New Administrative Duties

After the pandemic, the City of Gatineau resumed its practice of implementing specific intervention plans (PPI) for firefighting at high and very high-risk buildings, but with a new format. From now on, operations officers would be responsible for completing the PPI document and inserting the information collected upon their return from a site visit. Until then, the City used lieutenant inspector-investigators to perform this task. The union claimed that this unilateral change violated the collective agreement by assigning additional work to operations officers whose primary job role is to fight fires. The City claimed the change was a reasonable exercise of its management discretion and the Québec arbitrator agreed, finding that the new PPI responsibilities satisfied the 3 criteria for making reasonable changes to workers' duties: i. they were business-related tasks; ii. it was reasonable to require those duties taking into account the job held; and iii. they were an extension of the tasks for which the operations officers were expressly hired [[*Gatineau Firefighters Association v. Gatineau \(City\)*](#), 2025 CanLII 5046 (QC SAT), January 28, 2025].

Action Point: Find out how to implement an effective and legally sound [Fire Prevention Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace.

36 Months Is Long Enough to Wait for Disabled Worker to Return

Under the terms of a collective agreement, employees may be terminated after 36 months of being on indefinite leave with a disability. In accordance with the clause, an employer closed the file of a recreation technician on leave with 22 disabilities. The union objected but the Québec arbitrator rejected the grievance, noting that courts in the province accept that 36 months is generally a reasonable accommodation as long as the employee has no reasonably foreseeable prospects of being capable of returning to work any time soon. And the medical evidence in this case demonstrated that the technician wouldn't be able to resume working within a reasonable time [[*Alliance of Professional Health and Social Services Personnel \(APTS\) v. Integrated Health and Social Services Center Montérégie-Centre*](#), 2025 CanLII 714 (QC SAT), January 10, 2025].

Action Point: Find out how to implement a legally sound [Return to Work Compliance Game Plan](#) for injured and disabled workers.