

Alberta

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Blasting

Mar 31: [Changes to OHS blasting regulations](#) take effect. Highlights: New requirements for employer reports of blasting certificates, employer and blaster duty to ensure that no unintended detonation of an explosive or detonator is or may be caused by any electrical energy, including static electricity, revised procedures for handling misfires, and joint duty of employers and blasters to ensure workers don't use excessive force when tamping explosives.

Action Point: One of the key requirements of OHS regulations on blasting and demolition is to keep proper logs. Find out how to implement a legally sound [blasting logs compliance game plan](#) at your workplace.

Material Handling

Mar 31: Effective today, employers at oil and gas sites must ensure that when a derrick or mast is hoisted: i. designated lifting points on the derrick or mast are identified; ii. designated lifting points are clearly marked on each derrick or mast; and iii. rigging is attached to designated lifting points only.

Action Point: Use the OHS Insider [Cranes/Hoists/Lifting Device Compliance Game Plan](#) to prevent crane violations at your workplace.

Fire Safety

Feb 24: Alberta announced that it's providing \$585,000 to support municipal fire services and the Alberta Fire Chiefs Association (AFCA). The government will also bolster ties with fire services by creating a new committee that will launch sometime later this year.

New Laws

Mar 5: In response to the new U.S. 25% tariffs, Alberta is requiring provincial government agencies, school boards, Crown corporations, and municipalities to purchase their goods and services from companies in Alberta, other parts of Canada or countries with which Canada has a free trade agreement that's being honoured. Alberta Gaming, Liquor, and Cannabis also suspended purchase of U.S. alcohol and video lottery terminals from American companies until further notice.

New Laws

Feb 15: Alberta announced that it will provide \$8.6 billion in funding to accelerate school construction over the next 7 years. The government will form public-private partnership bundles to carry out 11 school projects in Airdrie, Calgary, Chestermere, Edmonton, and Okotoks.

Infectious Illness

Mar 14: Alberta health officials have confirmed 6 cases of measles in the province so far this year. While all of these cases are from a single household, there's still concern given how contagious measles is.

Action Point: Use the [OHS Insider Infection Exposure Control Plan](#) template to guard against measles, COVID and other potential infectious illness outbreaks at your workplace.

New Laws

Mar 11: Newly tabled [Bill 40](#), *The Professional Governance Act*, proposes to give professional regulatory organizations in Alberta greater authority to govern themselves through their own bylaws without provincial government interference. The professions the legislation covers include education, accounting, engineering, geoscience, veterinary medicine, and architecture; it doesn't apply to lawyers, teachers, and health professionals.

Emergency Response

Mar 10: Alberta is transferring emergency health services from Alberta Health Services to Acute Care Alberta, while establishing a shared services entity to support provincial health agencies and service providers.

Action Point: Ensure that your company is [properly prepared for workplace emergencies](#).

Workplace Violence

Feb 11: Alberta is investing \$15.7 million during 2024-25 as part of its 10-year strategy to end gender-based violence in the province and support survivors. The funding builds on existing annual investments of more than \$150 million.

Workplace Violence

Mar 31: Effective today, workplaces open to the public between 11 pm and 5 am [must](#) have a time lock safe that workers can't open between those hours, signs indicating that the safe is in place and that only limited quantities of cash and other high-value items are present, which must be stored in a secure location.

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

Drugs & Alcohol

Feb 25: Newly tabled [Bill 37](#), *The Mental Health Services Protection Act*, proposes changes to mental health and addiction services licensing rules in Alberta that would take effect in fall 2025. Specifically, the Act would create 3 types of bed-based addiction treatment services subject to separate licensing requirements, including: i. Withdrawal management services; ii. Intensive treatment services; and iii. Non-intensive recovery services.

Action Point: Workers who come to work impaired pose significant hazards, especially when they perform safety-sensitive jobs. Use the [OHS Insider Substance Abuse Compliance Game Plan](#) to curb drugs and alcohol at your workplace.

Drugs & Alcohol

Mar 5: Alberta's newly deployed Interdiction Patrol Team (IPT) to crack down on drug illegal cross-border activities on both sides of the Alberta-Montana border is now operational. Soon to have a staff of 51 Sheriffs, the IPT will work closely with the RCMP to identify and apprehend individuals suspected of drug smuggling, human trafficking, and other illegal activities across the border.

Environmental

Mar 13: The Land Trust Grant Program will provide \$5 million in funding to 19 different projects, to help

landowners and land trusts protect nearly 21,000 acres across the province, including watersheds, riparian areas, grasslands, and other environmentally important areas.

CASES

Industry Challenges: Irrigation District Fined \$365,000 for Diving Fatality

A diver suffered fatal injuries during a dive at the Rolling Hills Reservoir and Lake Newell reservoir gates. The employer was hit with \$365,000 in OHS fines and penalties for failing to ensure the flow through the intake of a pipe, tunnel, duct, or similar installation in the vicinity of a dive, was stopped and the intake mechanism was locked out before the dive began [*Eastern Irrigation District*].

Traffic Safety: Failure to Protect Highway Worker Leads to \$180,000 Fine

A worker cleaning debris on a highway suffered serious injuries after being struck by a vehicle. The employer pled guilty to failing to ensure the health and safety of a worker and was fined \$180,000 [*Emcon Services Inc.*, [Govt. Press Release](#), March 13, 2025].

Action Point: Find out about the [traffic signaling and control requirements](#) across Canada.

Industry Challenges: Court Finds Forestry Company Not Guilty on 8 OHS Charges

Alberta prosecutors charged a reforestation company with 8 OHS violations, including failure to implement safe work procedures for tree falling, in connection with a 2020 incident in which a worker was killed by a falling tree. The case went to trial and the court found the company not guilty on all counts. The Crown has until March 20 to appeal the ruling [*R. v Blue Collar Silviculture Ltd.*, Unreported Case, Peace River Court of Justice, February 21, 2025].

Retaliation: OHS Officer Shouldn't Have Nixed Injured Worker's Reprisal Complaint

A journeyman machinist claimed that his company interfered with his medical care, removed him from the workplace JHSC and eventually fired him in retaliation for reporting a lost-time work injury. The OHS officer dismissed the complaint, but the machinist got revenge when the Alberta Board upheld his appeal, finding the officer's report to be neither rational nor coherent and that the evidence suggested that reporting the injury might have been a factor in the adverse treatment he received [*Barnson v Global Power Technologies*, 2025 ABOHSAB 5, February 14, 2025].

Action Point: Find out how to [avoid reprisals liability](#) when disciplining workers for safety violations.

Discipline: Arbitrator Cuts Refinery Worker's Safety Suspension in Half

Did an experienced millwright deserve the 2-day suspension he got for his role in causing an incident that resulted in loss of containment of light gas oil at a refinery? The company claimed the millwright violated 2 of its 5 "Life-Saving Rules" for this type of work, including issue a work permit without site verification and failure to follow safety procedures for control of hazardous energy. The union claimed that the penalty was unduly harsh especially since other workers involved in the incident weren't disciplined. The Alberta arbitrator sided with the union, reducing the penalty to a 1-day suspension to remain on the millwright's record for only 3 years, as opposed to the 6 years the company proposed [*Unifor, Local 3000CA v Imperial Oil Limited*, 2025 CanLII 9137 (AB GAA), January 30, 2025].

Action Point: Find out how to use [progressive discipline](#) effectively to enforce your workplace health and safety rules.