

Alberta

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Confined Spaces

May 5: Alberta OHS published a new [bulletin](#) to help employers comply with regulatory requirements for safe work permits that must be issued before performing certain hazardous operations such as entering confined spaces and handling toxic chemicals and radioactive materials.

Action Point: Use the [OHS Insider Confined Spaces Compliance Game Plan](#) to ensure compliance with permitting requirements and avoid confined space fatalities and violations.

Powered Mobile Equipment

May 1: There were 57 reported potentially serious incidents involving forklifts across 42 industries in Alberta between 2019 and 2024. Impaired visibility resulting in being contacted or struck by, caught in or between or struck by falling objects from a forklift was a major factor in most incidents. Thirty-nine percent of reported incidents resulted in injury.

Action Point: Find out how to implement a [Powered Mobile Equipment Compliance Game Plan](#) to prevent forklift incidents and injuries at your workplace.

Incident Reporting

Apr 1: Alberta OHS issued an [updated bulletin](#) explaining the duty of employers and contractors to report workplace injuries and how government officials investigate reportable incidents. The bulletin also reminds employers and contractors not to disturb the scene unless there's an immediate threat of injury or significant personal property damage.

Action Point: Use the [OHS Insider policy template](#) to create a legally sound incident investigation and reporting policy for your workplace.

Transportation Safety

May 7: [Bill 47](#) establishing a so-called care-first automobile insurance system providing income support and retirement benefits to residents who can't work due to injuries they suffer in vehicle collisions is still in Committee. The legislation also provides for a permanent impairment benefit for Albertans who are permanently injured from the accident, and a death benefit for those who die in a collision. Individuals could also sue for out-of-pocket expenses beyond the amount provided under the insurance policy.

Training

Apr 25: As part of Budget 2025, Alberta will invest \$15 million over the next 3 years to create a new grant program empowering unions to offer apprenticeship training in high demand areas. The new funding for apprenticeship training delivered by union providers is expected to open 650 new apprenticeship seats per year.

New Laws

Apr 16: From now through June 12, Alberta will be accepting applications for funding under the \$65 million Industrial Transformation Challenge program to support technology upgrades designed to cut costs and improve operations of companies in the forestry, energy, agriculture, heavy manufacturing, and other major industry sectors.

Emergency Response

May 8: Alberta's new Budget provides \$1.5 million per year for a new Supporting Psychological Health in First Responders grant program to finance the efforts of non-profit organizations to deliver mental health services to first responders living with or at risk for post-traumatic stress injuries, as well as for prevention and treatment research.

Action Point: Find out about [workers' comp coverage](#) of PTSD and mental stress.

Infectious Illness

Apr 11: Alberta Health officials report that there have been 58 confirmed cases of measles in the province so far this year. The government is keeping an especially close eye on the rising number of cases within the south and central zones.

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.

Industry Challenges

May 5: [Bill 44](#) to promote growth and diversification of agriculture and support the emerging biogas industry passed Third Reading in the Alberta Assembly. Among other things, the legislation allows farmers to supplement fertilizer with organic materials and establish new rules for the storage and use of biogas production byproducts as a nutrient source to grow crops.

New Laws

May 7: Newly passed [Bill 40](#), *The Professional Governance Act*, gives professional regulatory organizations in Alberta greater authority to govern themselves through their own bylaws without provincial government interference. Professions the legislation covers include education, accounting, engineering, geoscience, veterinary medicine, and architecture; it doesn't apply to lawyers, teachers, and health professionals.

Drugs & Alcohol

May 7: Alberta passed [Bill 37](#), *The Mental Health Services Protection Act*, making changes to mental health and addiction services licensing rules in Alberta that will take effect in fall 2025. The Act creates 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.

Environmental

May 5: Amendments to the *Scrap Metal Dealers and Recyclers Identification Act* designed to crack down on scrap metal theft by requiring businesses to report the dollar value of the sale, type of, and per-ounce price of the metal purchased, and, in the case of catalytic converters, the vehicle identification number and/or proof of ownership to be recorded to a database accessible to law enforcement are working their way through the Alberta Assembly. [Bill 49](#) would also allow officers to issue tickets rather than a court summons and streamline the administration of justice for certain minor offences.

Environmental

May 7: Alberta's new provincial Budget 2025 allocates \$8.7 million to the Wetland Replacement Program to help municipalities and non-profits build more wetlands, which provide natural protection droughts and floods, improve water quality and create healthier ecosystems throughout the province.

CASES

Hot Work: Prime Contractor Fined \$500,000 for Fatal Welding Explosion

Two oilfield workers were killed when the tank they were performing welding on exploded. The prime contractor for the project at which workers from multiple companies were working was fined \$500,000 after pleading guilty to failing to establish a system to coordinate safety measures and ensure compliance with OHS laws at the site. That's the biggest fine Alberta has dished out for an OHS violation in 2025. The piping contractor was also fined \$50,000, as a supervisor, for failing to implement adequate hot work safety measures [*Tamarack Valley Energy Ltd.; Peace Pipefitting Inc.*, [Govt. Press Release](#), May 8, 2025].

Action Point: Don't let this happen to you! Find out how to implement a legally sound and effective [Hot Work and Welding Compliance Game Plan at](#) your workplace.

OHS Enforcement: Union & Its President Are Not "Supervisors" Under OHS Act

A local union employee brought a constructive dismissal lawsuit against the international union and its president for violating their OHS duty as a "supervisor" to provide her a safe and healthy work environment. The lower court dismissed the case after finding that the defendants weren't supervisors under the *OHS Act*. The international union wasn't her supervisor because it was a separate entity from the local union. And while he had an indirect impact on her health and safety, the president didn't meet the Act's definition of supervisor as a person who's authorized to directly address health and safety issues on a day-to-day basis. The Alberta appeals court upheld the ruling as correct. Both defendants had significant OHS responsibilities as "employers" but neither qualified as a supervisor [*Piechotta v United Food and Commercial Workers Canada Union, Local 401*, 2025 ABKB 241, April 17, 2025].

Action Point: Take [5 steps](#) to protect the individuals at your company who are considered "supervisors" against OHS and criminal liability.

Powered Mobile Equipment: Appeals Court Upholds \$420,000 Fine for

Preventable Truck Fatality

A construction supervisor doing inspections at a residential neighborhood stopped his flatbed truck behind a catch basin on the road next to the curb and put the vehicle in park intending to make it a shield for his coworker who had stepped out to inspect the catch basin. A few moments later, the supervisor drove the truck forward a few metres to clear the space without noticing that the co-worker was standing in front of the vehicle. **Result:** He hit the worker causing fatal injuries. The Crown laid 30 OHS charges against the employer and supervisor, most of which were withdrawn. But the court did convict the defendants for 2 offences apiece. The appeals court upheld 2 of the 4 convictions, finding among other things, that the lower court was reasonable in rejecting the defendants' claim that the incident location wasn't a "workplace" where OHS duties applied. The area where the truck was stopped was one in which a worker "was likely to be engaged in work" and the victim was doing just that in inspecting the catch basin when he got run over. The appeals court also affirmed the lower court's ruling that the incident was "reasonably foreseeable" and that the defendants didn't use due diligence to prevent it, such as by implementing safe work procedures for using a parked truck to shield another worker. It also upheld the fine amounts of \$420,000 against the employer and \$60,000 against the supervisor [*R v Volker Stevin Contracting Ltd.*, 2025 ABKB 244 (CanLII), April 17, 2024].

Action Point: You can prevent these kinds of tragedies and massive OHS penalties by implementing an effective [Powered Mobile Equipment Operation Policy](#) at your workplace.