

Federal

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

WHMIS

Jan 1: Starting today, all Safety Data Sheets must comply with new [GHS 7 WHMIS rules](#) revising the hazard information that must be listed in Sections 9 and 14 of the SDS. The rules took effect in 2023 but up to now employers could use either the GHS 7 or the previous version of the SDS.

Action Point: Be sure to do an [SDS inspection](#) to assess whether your current SDSs meet the new requirements and, if not, [get an updated version of the SDS from the supplier](#) of the product. Find out more about [the new SDS standards](#) and the 6 things you must do to comply, along with [templates of written requests](#) and [other records you'll need to document compliance](#).

WHMIS

Jan 1: January 1 is the final compliance deadline for [new GHS 7 rules](#) for classification of certain hazardous products. Highlights: i. revised classification for flammable gases; ii. revised classification for aerosols; iii. new classification for chemicals under pressure; and iv. new criteria for classification in Specific Target Organ Toxicity – Single Exposure, Category 3.

Combustible Dusts

Jan 1: [Changes](#) to *Hazardous Product Regulations* hazard statement rules for combustible dusts take effect January 1. Previously, the required hazard statement for combustible dusts was: "May form combustible dust concentrations in air." Under the new rules, the SDS can use either the original statement or a new version: "May form explosive dust-air mixture."

Action Point: Find out about the 3 steps you should take to [protect workers from combustible dusts](#).

Industry Challenges

Dec 1: The ESDC launched a new inspection blitz targeting federally regulated trucking companies that misclassify "employees" as "independent contractors" to circumvent minimum wage, paid leave, OHS rights and other "employee" protections under the *Canada Labour Code*, and limit access to EI and CPP benefits. The agency will share its inspection findings with the CRA.

Transportation Safety

Nov 26: The federal government introduced [new draft regulations](#) giving the Commissioner of Official Languages power to impose administrative monetary penalties of up to \$50,000 against Air Canada, Marine Atlantic Inc., VIA Rail Canada Inc., and designated airport authorities for violations of the *Official Languages Act*. The new regulations, which are now open to public comment for 30 days, will take effect in 2026.

Action Point: Find out [whether you must provide multilingual safety training](#) to your

workers.

Transportation Safety

Nov 17: The federal government and several provinces and territories signed a memorandum of understanding to promote free trade in the interprovincial trucking sector by establishing national safety standards for steering axle weights, signage, lighting, and flags for oversized vehicles and entry-level training.

Emergency Response

Nov 26: From now on, national weather Warnings, Advisories, and Watches will use a new colour-coded system to convey the seriousness of the event's potential impact, including Yellow (moderate/local/short-term), Orange (major/widespread/a few days), and Red (extensive/widespread/prolonged).

Fire Safety

Dec 1: The federal government's newly tabled Budget 2025 allocates \$257.6 million over 4 years to Natural Resources Canada for leasing waterbombers and other aircraft to bolster provincial and territorial aerial firefighting capacity.

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

New Laws

Nov 19: All 14 of Canada's jurisdictions signed an agreement to break down interprovincial trade barriers making it easier for businesses to sell products across the country, and for people to buy Canadian-made goods. The new Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement (CMRA), which takes effect in December, covers thousands of products, from manufacturing inputs and health technologies to clothing, toys, industrial products, tires, and vehicles - but it doesn't apply to food.

OHS Enforcement

Dec 3: Newly tabled [Private Member Bill C-258](#) proposes to amend the *Criminal Code* to require lower court judges to "stay," that is, end OHS, environmental, and other prosecutions if the period between the day on which a charge is laid and the actual or expected end of trial before the court exceeds 30 months, unless the prosecutor proves that the period is reasonable by demonstrating that exceptional circumstances exist. The legislation essentially codifies the rules set down by the Canadian Supreme Court in a case called *R. v. Jordan* to prevent unfair and unreasonable prosecution delays that violate defendants' Charter rights to a speedy trial.

New Laws

Nov 20: Royal Assent for [Bill C-3](#), which provides for Canadian citizenship by descent by making all persons who were born outside the country citizens of Canada if one of their parents was a citizen before the law takes effect. Citizenship by descent beyond the first generation is also allowed for a Canadian parent who's been physically present in the country for at least 1,095 cumulative days (i.e., 3 years) before their child's birth or adoption.

New Laws

Nov 17: The federal government published [regulations](#) implementing newly passed interprovince trade and labour mobility legislation. The new laws, which take effect on January 1, 2026, ensure that goods and services that meet the requirements of a province or territory are recognized as meeting comparable federal requirements and that workers licensed or certified by a province or territory may work in a comparable occupation in federal jurisdiction.

New Laws

Dec 5: Ottawa announced significant new measures to protect the domestic steel industry, including tightening the tariff rate quota levels for steel products from non-free trade agreement partners from 50% to 20% of 2024 levels. Canada will also impose a global 25% tariff on targeted imported steel-derivative products such as wind towers, prefabricated buildings, fasteners, and wires. Temporary remission of Canadian tariffs on imports will end on January 31, 2026, for steel used in Canada for manufacturing, food and beverage packaging, and agricultural production.

Action Point: Find out [how tariffs will affect your OHS program](#).

New Laws

Dec 5: The federal government says it plans to work with railway companies to reduce freight rates for transporting Canadian steel and lumber across provinces by 50%. To maximize use of Canadian softwood lumber in housing, Build Canada Homes will prioritize shovel-ready, multi-year projects that use Canadian wood products and can begin within 12 months. The government's new [Buy Canadian Policy](#) also requires that all contracts worth over \$25 million prioritize Canadian materials, including steel and lumber.

Training

Dec 3: The federal government announced that it will earmark over \$100 million over 2 years, starting in 2025-2026, to support eligible employers in all sectors with an active Work-Sharing agreement who commit to training employees who work reduced hours. The measure will increase the income replacement for eligible workers, helping up to 26,000 Canadian workers in various sectors, including steel and lumber.

Training

Dec 1: The federal government announced that it will provide nearly \$20 million in funding to a pair of unions to support skilled training initiatives, including: i. the United Brotherhood of Carpenters & Joiners of America to provide virtual reality training on rigging and hoisting to over 4,000 journeypersons and apprentice Industrial Mechanic (Millwrights); and ii. the Carpenter's Regional Council to provide 10 training hubs across the country to prepare 4,000 journeyperson and apprentice carpenters on new and emerging green technologies including installing, repairing and maintaining the exteriors layers that protect and seal buildings.

New Laws

Nov 28: [Bill C-12](#) proposing a wide range of new legal measures to strengthen

Canadian border security and prevent the flow of illegal drugs, human trafficking, money laundering, and organized crime has passed Second Reading and been referred to Committee.

Accessibility

Dec 3: Accessibility Standards Canada published the world's first national standard for accessible AI. New CAN-ASC-6.2, *Accessible and Equitable Artificial Intelligence Systems*, sets out guidelines to help product designers and operators ensure that AI systems are accessible, inclusive and fair starting with their development and proceeding through the entire product cycle.

Action Point: Find out about [the 11 ways you can use](#) Artificial Intelligence to improve workplace safety and OHS compliance.

Workplace Violence

Dec 2: The Senate tabled [Bill S-242](#) (*Georgina's Law*) requiring the federal government to develop a national action to prevent intimate partner violence and support its victims. The government would have to propose the plan within one year and provide progress reports on its implementation every 2 years.

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

Workplace Violence

Dec 3: [Bill C-225](#), which just passed Second Reading, amends the *Criminal Code* to create new offences for engaging in intimate partner violence and ban peace officers from releasing persons arrested for an intimate partner offence if they've committed such an offence in the last 5 years or are at large on a release order for such an offence.

Action Point: Domestic violence can happen not just at home but in the victim's workplace. Find out how to implement an effective [Workplace Domestic Violence Prevention Plan](#) to protect your own workers.

Environmental

Nov 4: The new federal Budget eliminates 2 controversial parts of the *Competition Act* greenwashing amendments enacted in 2024: i. The requirement that companies substantiate claims about environmental impacts of their "business activity" "in accordance with internationally recognized methodology"; and ii. The right of non-government third parties to bring greenwashing complaints against companies directly to the Competition Tribunal.

Action Point: Find out more about the proposed [changes to the federal greenwashing laws](#).

Environmental

Nov 26: Newly tabled [Bill S-4](#) would extend the *Energy Efficiency Act* to include online sales and digital labels. First enacted in 1995, the Act is designed to cut consumption of energy-using products while enabling consumers to make informed decisions about the energy consumption of the products they purchase.

Environmental

Nov 20: [Bill S-230](#) requiring the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food to develop a national strategy to protect, conserve and enhance the health of soil and furnish regular progress reports on the implementation of the strategy passed Second Reading in the Senate.

CASES

Fall Protection: National Telecom Company Fined \$260,000 for Fatal Tower Fall

A worker installing the final antenna on a telecommunications tower fell approximately 120 metres and suffered fatal injuries. The company that owns the tower and hired the contractor for whom the victim worked was fined \$260,000 after pleading guilty to 3 OHS violations, including failure to: i. provide a fall protection system for elevated work over 3 meters; ii. ensure workers used the required fall protection; and iii. ensure that workers received instruction in the safe use of fall protection equipment [*Rogers Communications Canada Inc., [Govt. Press Release](#)*, November 24, 2025].

Action Point: Don't let this happen to you! Find out how to implement a legally sound [Fall Protection Compliance Game Plan](#) to prevent fall injuries and 6-figure OHS fines at your site.