

Nova Scotia

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Industry Challenges

Jan 22: Nova Scotia is cracking down on illegal fisheries activities using new *Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act* summary offences carrying higher fines, including buying or processing illegally caught fish (\$25,000 for first offence and \$50,000 for subsequent offences). Last November, the province launched a new compliance unit of inspectors focusing on wharves and seafood facilities.

New Laws

Jan 30: The Nova Scotia Department of Energy is urging the Energy Board to reject Nova Scotia Power's proposed 2026–2027 residential rate increase, which it claims is “tone-deaf” to ongoing cost pressures faced by the province's households, businesses, and municipalities. “Nova Scotians are already stretched, and electricity is not optional,” it argues.

Emergency Response

Jan 29: The Nova Scotia Department of Emergency Management is investing nearly \$2.6 million to purchase two mobile burn units and four propane-fueled training props to expand firefighter training capacity across the province. A mobile burn unit is a portable, self-contained training trailer that enables firefighters to practice live-fire scenarios in a controlled setting. Training props are modular simulators that recreate different types of fires, as well as fires with multiple ignition points.

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

Jan 27: Nova Scotia [reports](#) that it made improvements to nearly 300 permits as part of its Fewer Permits. Faster project launched in early 2025 to simplify permitting and cut red tape. Key improvements include elimination of permits for low-risk activities, lengthening of time frames for renewal, and streamlining of application processes and restructuring fees.

New Laws

Dec 1: The Nova Scotia Labour Board updated its [Rules of Procedures](#) for handling applications, complaints and appeals under various workplace laws including the *OHS Act*, *Labour Standards Code* and *Trade Union Act*.

Training

Jan 21: Nova Scotia's new Skills Bridge initiative will provide support to Canadian Armed Forces veterans, reservists and family members seeking to transition to construction careers with training to be provided by the non-profit organization Helmets to Hardhats. The program runs until October 1, 2028.

New Laws

Jan 19: Nova Scotia published an [updated version](#) of its list of foreign worker recruiters who are licensed to practice in the province. Foreign worker recruiters need a valid Foreign Worker Recruiter Licence from the Labour Standards Division unless an [exemption](#) applies.

Workers' Compensation

Mar 31: March 31 is the deadline for Nova Scotia employers to submit their workers' compensation payroll reports to the WCB listing their actual numbers from 2025 and projected numbers for 2026 to avoid potential late fees, interest, and penalties.

Action Point: Find out how much each province and territory is charging for [workers' compensation premiums in 2026](#).

CASES

Workers' Compensation: Injured Worker's Finances Don't Justify Delaying Contested Benefit Payment

The Nova Scotia Workers' Compensation Tribunal (WCAT) awarded \$77,344 in earnings replacement benefits to a worker for what it determined to be a work-related knee injury. After paying the first \$11,601, the WCB asked the province's highest court for an order "staying" its obligation to pay the balance pending the outcome of its appeal. The Court refused, finding that the risk of the worker's being unable to repay the full award if she lost the appeal wasn't enough to justify issuing the stay to protect the WCB from "irreparable harm." The workers' comp public purpose of providing immediate benefits to injured workers outweighed the money the WCB stood to lose if it won the appeal but couldn't collect because the worker was broke [[Nova Scotia \(Workers' Compensation Board\) v. O'Brien](#), 2026 NSCA 5 (CanLII), January 20, 2026].