

# CANADIAN WORKERS' COMPENSATION DIGEST

Volume 4 Issue 1



**TeksMed**  
*Seeing the **ability** in disability*



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# INTRODUCTION/ABOUT TEKSMED

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TeksMed Services Inc. is the leader in Canadian disability management backed by over 25 years of success. We proactively manage occupational and non-occupational injuries and illnesses with personalized recover-at-work solutions helping hundreds of employers with thousands of employees.

Inspired by a never-ending quest to be the best, TeksMed continues to set the standard and raise the bar for integrity, innovation and exceptional service.

TeksMed seeing the ability in disability.

Thousands of businesses across Canada trust us with their disability management. Call us and start saving money. Our program literally pays for itself! For more information on our services and contact information see the final section of this magazine.

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## ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

This is the thirteenth issue of our Canadian Workers' Compensation Digest. This magazine highlights prominent Canadian Workers' Compensation updates nationally and within each province/territory.

All content within this digest is sourced from third-party websites, which can be accessed by following the provided links.

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# NATIONAL- CANADA



## 5 tips for working around electrical lines

Working around electricity can be deadly and there are many jobs that require taking a calculated risk. Arborists, contractors, scaffolders, crane operators, television news truck operators, and many other professions sometimes involve working around powerlines.

Here are five critical tips that significantly reduce the risk of injury or death while working around live electrical wires.

<https://www.thesafetymag.com/ca/topics/safety-and-ppe/5-tips-for-working-around-electrical-lines/425350>

## Indirect threats are a risk to workplace safety that employers should take seriously

Depending on someone's responsibilities, workload, and interpersonal relationships, there can be several different stressors at work – mainly since many studies have found that workers have been feeling more stressed and burnt out over the past couple of years.

Threats of workplace violence are workplace violence and undermine workplace safety, and employees don't need one more thing to stress about.

<https://www.hrreporter.com/focus-areas/employment-law/why-i-oughta/369820>



# NATIONAL - CANADA

## Mental health claims rise dramatically among younger workers

The number of Canadian employees between ages 18 and 34 seeking support for mental illness and diabetes has risen dramatically in the past couple of years.

The percentage of those on long-term disability for mental illness has increased by 22 percent since 2019, according to Manulife Group Benefits.

Overall, the number of workers in this age group submitting claims for mental health reasons — including therapy, medication, and disability — is up 27 percent in just the past year.

Three in 10 (30 percent) Canadian professionals would consider switching employers for better mental health support and resources, according to a recent study.

<https://www.hrreporter.com/focus-areas/compensation-and-benefits/mental-health-claims-rise-dramatically-among-younger-workers/371629>





# BRITISH COLUMBIA



## B.C. further expands cancer coverage for firefighters

The Province of BC is amending the Firefighters' Occupational Disease Regulation under the Workers Compensation Act (WCA) by adding two cancers – pancreatic and thyroid – to the existing list of cancers and heart diseases firefighters are at increased risk for developing.

These improvements support the government's priority to ensure workers who become ill or injured on the job face fewer barriers to accessing workers' compensation benefits and resources.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022LBR0063-001678>

## WorkSafeBC develops new safety resource for the manufacturing sector

To help prevent injuries in manufacturing, WorkSafeBC has established a multi-year Manufacturing High-Risk Strategy. As part of this strategy, WorkSafeBC develops health and safety resources to help employers better understand and address health and safety issues.

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/news-events/news-releases/2022/October/worksafebc-develops-new-safety-resource-for-manufacturing-sector>



# BRITISH COLUMBIA

## B.C. updating workers' comp law to stamp out claim suppression and re-employ injured workers

British Columbia is amending its Workers Compensation Act to ensure employers accommodate and re-employ injured workers when they are ready to return. It will also require WorkSafeBC to pay interest on benefit payments that are delayed due to a review.

These improvements support the government's priority to ensure workers who become ill or injured on the job face fewer barriers to getting back to work. It also contains provisions to legislation to stamp out "claim suppression" by employers who try and dissuade workers from filing for compensation or punish them for doing so.

Each year, there are more than 100,000 new claims due to workplace injury or fatality.

<https://www.ohscanada.com/features/b-c-updating-workers-comp-law-to-stamp-out-claim-suppression-require-re-employment/>







## Alberta offers employers grant to honour 'fallen workers'

The Alberta government is granting employers up to \$10,000 to establish memorials for employees who died in work-related accidents. These physical memorials may include statues, plaques, gardens, murals, or commissioned piece of art. Any Alberta-based non-profit or public sector organizations can apply for the fund up until December 9, 2022.

It also launched a new search tool that consolidates the Occupational Health and Safety Act, regulation, and code into one interactive and online resource that employers can easily use as a reference.

<https://www.thesafetymag.com/ca/topics/safety-and-ppe/province-offers-employers-grant-to-honour-fallen-workers/421787>





# SASKATCHEWAN

## WCB announces 2023 preliminary average premium rate

The Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) has announced the 2023 preliminary average employer premium rate at \$1.28 per hundred dollars of payroll, compared to the 2022 rate of \$1.23, an increase of 4.1 percent. The announcement was made at the WCB's annual preliminary rate information meeting with Saskatchewan employers, workers and stakeholders.

From 2015 to 2021, serious injuries accounted for 11.0 per cent of injuries and 82.4 per cent of costs in Saskatchewan's workers' compensation system.

<https://www.wcbsask.com/news/wcb-announces-2023-preliminary-average-premium-rate>



## Saskatchewan looks to boost workplace safety



Saskatchewan is hoping to make workplaces safer for young workers with amendments to the Saskatchewan Employment Act. As part of the changes, secondary and post-secondary students are now included in the definition of worker.

The amendments also clarify the employers' duty and responsibility to ensure that incidents of harassment are investigated, and require all workplaces to have a violence policy in place that will also apply to students, volunteers and contract workers.

<https://www.hrreporter.com/focus-areas/legislation/saskatchewan-looks-to-boost-workplace-safety/371239>

# MANITOBA

## Improper machine safeguarding and lockout

In their incident investigations, the Workplace Safety and Health Branch found that machine safeguards were removed to clear jammed material, and clean or maintain machines without putting other protection in place.

Often the machines remained energized because they were not properly locked out and made inoperable. In some cases, safeguards were not replaced immediately after cleaning or maintenance.

Safeguarding is the first line of defence for workers operating powered machinery and equipment.

[https://www.safemanitoba.com/News/Pages/Hazard\\_Alert\\_Machine\\_Safeguarding\\_Lockout.aspx](https://www.safemanitoba.com/News/Pages/Hazard_Alert_Machine_Safeguarding_Lockout.aspx)



## SAFE Tips: Winter Driving

It's getting to be that time of year again when we will be driving for work in the winter weather. Drivers will need to start changing their driving habits to suit the conditions of snow and ice on the roadways.

For employers, now is the time to start the discussion about potential driving hazards your workers may face in winter weather conditions, and how to help control those hazards.

[https://www.safemanitoba.com/News/Pages/News\\_SafeTipsWinterDriving\\_21SWMB.aspx](https://www.safemanitoba.com/News/Pages/News_SafeTipsWinterDriving_21SWMB.aspx)





# ONTARIO

## Ontario manufacturing workers most prone to COVID-19 deaths early in pandemic

Those who worked in manufacturing in Ontario were the ones most at risk of COVID-19 deaths early on in the pandemic, according to a report.

A total of 108 Ontarians died from what the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) determined were work-related COVID-19 infections between April 2020 and the end of 2021, according to data seen by the Toronto Star.

Among them, 34 were in manufacturing-related sectors (26 in manufacturing, eight in food production), far more than the 23 deaths recorded in the healthcare sector (14 in long-term care, four in health-care, three in ambulatory care and two in residential care).

<https://www.thesafetymag.com/ca/topics/leadership-and-culture/ontario-manufacturing-workers-most-prone-to-covid-19-deaths-early-in-pandemic/425708>





# ONTARIO

## Ontario rewards safe employers with financial incentives

Ontario will reward its safest employers with an estimated \$140 million for excellence in occupational health and safety as part of a first-of-its-kind in Canada program.

The program, Supporting Ontario's Safe Employers, will formally recognize employers who successfully implement health and safety programs in their workplaces. The financial rewards will come in the form of WSIB rebates over a three-year period.

<https://awcbc.org/en/ontario-rewards-safe-employers-with-financial-incentives/>

## WSIB slices rates for construction employers in 2023

Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) has announced the average premium rate for construction employers will drop 2.1 per cent in 2023, continuing a trend that has seen average premiums in the sector reduced by over 60 per cent between 2016 and 2022.

The reduction gives constructors a leg up on most other Ontario businesses. The WSIB says the average premium rate across all employers will remain static for 2023 at \$1.30 for every \$100 of insurable payroll.

<https://canada.constructconnect.com/dcn/news/ohs/2022/10/wsib-slices-rates-for-construction-employers-in-2023>

## WSIB announces extension of excellence program benefits

The benefits for smaller businesses through the WSIB's Health and Safety Excellence program were first announced in June 2022. The board is now providing businesses with up to 99 full-time employees more time to take advantage of the added incentives, stated a release.

As a result, businesses can earn double the rebates in both 2022 and 2023 and receive \$1,000 towards their health and safety plan in both 2022 and 2023.

<https://canada.constructconnect.com/dcn/news/ohs/2022/10/wsib-announces-extension-of-excellence-program-benefits>





## **CNESST supports the construction sector in the application of new prevention and participation mechanisms**

Starting January 2, 2023, the new mechanisms for the prevention and participation of workers specific to the construction sector, planned for in the Loi modernisant le régime de santé et de sécurité du travail (LMRSST), must be applied in the targeted construction sites.

More than two months before these measures are implemented, the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) made various user-friendly and interactive information tools available in affected workplaces in order to help and support them in the implementation of these new prevention and participation mechanisms.

<https://www.cnesst.gouv.qc.ca/fr/salle-presse/communiqués/construction-nouveaux-mecanismes-prevention>



## **The Rules for Injured Workers' Temporary Assignment and Workplace Reintegration Have Changed**

On October 6, 2021, the Act to modernize the occupational health and safety regime took effect. The act primarily amended the Act respecting industrial accidents and occupational diseases (ARIAOD) with various changes to take effect gradually between 2021 and 2024.

Employers must now use the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) temporary assignment of work form whenever they wish to invite an injured employee's physician to allow his or her patient's return to work on modified duties until such a time as the employee is capable of returning to regular duties. Before this amendment, there was a proposed form, but its use was not mandatory.

<https://www.natlawreview.com/article/qu-bec-employers-rules-injured-workers-temporary-assignment-and-workplace>



## **A reminder from the CNESST that labour standards are everyone's business: workers and employers**

The labour shortage is reaching a peak and represents a major modern challenge in Quebec. This phenomenon, which affects all sectors of business, leads workplaces to change their ways of doing things and question their application of labour standards.

These questions affect both employers and workers, especially those who are new to entering the labour market.

<https://www.cnesst.gouv.qc.ca/fr/salle-presse/communiqués/normes-travail-affaire-tous>



## **The CNESST deploys a new initiative among young people**

The Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) announced its brand new Youth Prevention Squad, which will be in action in schools this week until the end of the 2022-2023 school year.

The new Youth Prevention Squad will be at the service of young people enrolled in the Employment Training Course (PFAE).

<https://www.cnesst.gouv.qc.ca/fr/salle-presse/communiqués/nouvelle-initiative-jeunes>



# NEW BRUNSWICK

## New Brunswick to mandate PFDs or life jackets on fishing vessels

New Brunswick has introduced amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act to make it mandatory for workers to wear personal flotation devices or life jackets while on fishing vessels.

Under the current legislation there is no requirement for fishers to wear life jackets or PFDs. The Transportation Safety Board of Canada recommended a change given the frequency of drownings in the industry.

<https://www.thesafetymag.com/ca/topics/safety-and-ppe/new-brunswick-to-mandate-pfds-or-life-jackets-on-fishing-vessels/426187>



## WorkSafeNB announces 2023 assessment rate and pursuit of benefit improvements

WorkSafeNB is pleased to announce it has reduced the average assessment rate for 2023 to \$1.31, down 22% from the 2022 rate of \$1.69.

At the same time as assessment rates are decreasing, WorkSafeNB's board of directors is pursuing legislative changes that would improve the benefits provided to injured workers and their families.

<https://www.worksafenb.ca/about-us/news-and-events/news/2022/worksafenb-announces-2023-assessment-rate-and-pursuit-of-benefit-improvements/>

# NOVA SCOTIA

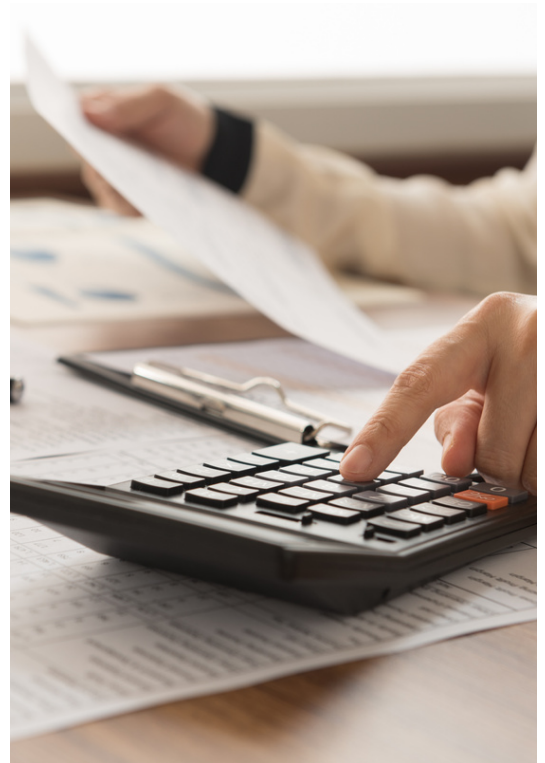
## WCB Continues to build a strong and stable financial system for the future

While market volatility has caused the funded percentage to decrease, WCB Nova Scotia says the system remains on a path toward financial sustainability.

According to the WCB's Q1 Report to the Community, the overall system funded level dipped just below 100 percent during the first three months of 2022 after reaching more than 106 percent at the end of last year.

To support continued system stability, WCB also announced that the average employer rate will remain steady for 2023

<https://awcbc.org/en/wcb-nova-scotia-wcb-continues-to-build-a-strong-and-stable-financial-system-for-the-future-aug-17-22/>



## 2023 employer assessment rates now available on MyAccount

WCB Nova Scotia announced employer assessment rates for 2023 on MyAccount, the online portal for employers.

Employers can access their 2023 rate and full experience rating statement by navigating to the Financials tab on MyAccount.

The average employer assessment rate will remain stable at \$2.65 per \$100 of payroll in 2023.

<https://www.wcb.ns.ca/About-Us/News-Room/News/2023-employer-assessment-rates-now-available-on-MyAccount-Sept-1-22.aspx>





# NOVA SCOTIA

## Government urges safety as southwestern lobster season starts

As the Lobster fishing season begins in Southwestern Nova Scotia, Dumping Day, as it is known in lobster fishing areas 33 and 34, brings excitement and opportunity – but also significant risk.

As lobster harvesters prepare for the start of the fishing season, we want to wish them the best this season and remind them to keep safety top of mind. Working on and around water comes with risks, and through education, training and prevention, captains and their crews can continue to improve the safety of their vessels. By prioritizing safety, we continue to remember those who tragically did not return home and their families who mourn their loss.

<https://www.wcb.ns.ca/About-Us/News-Room/News/Government-urges-safety-as-southwestern-lobster-season-starts-Nov-25-22.aspx>



# PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

## WCB of PEI distributing \$22 million in surplus funds



Employers in Prince Edward Island are set to receive part of the \$22 million surplus fund from the Workers Compensation Board (WCB). The surplus comes as a result of investment returns which fluctuate from year to year, and will be distributed to eligible employers in December 2022.

On top of that, WCB of PEI is also reducing its estimated average assessment rate for Islander employers for 2023 by 4.2 per cent. This brings the 2023 rate to \$1.37, down from \$1.43 in 2022.

<https://www.thesafetymag.com/ca/topics/leadership-and-culture/wcb-of-pe-distributing-22-million-in-surplus-funds/426825>

## Asbestos management requires specific safety measures

As the post-tropical storm Fiona clean up continues, the Workers Compensation Board (WCB) reminds employers and workers that they are required to follow the specific safety measures related to asbestos management. Asbestos is a strong, fire-resistant mineral fibre. While asbestos is no longer used in residential and commercial building construction, it can still be found when renovating, restoring and demolishing older buildings.



<http://www.wcb.pe.ca/Information/NewsItem/583>



# NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

## Then and now: NLCSA panel reflects on evolution of health and safety in construction

It's difficult to imagine a time when health and safety weren't a priority in the industry, but 25 years ago, safety training was a hard sell.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association (NLCSA) is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. In a panel discussion at its recent conference in St. John's, current and former staff looked back on safety training in the industry and how it has evolved.

<https://canada.constructconnect.com/dcn/news/ohs/2022/11/then-and-now-nlcsa-panel-reflects-on-evolution-of-health-and-safety-in-construction>



## Soft-tissue injuries hand province huge bill

Musculoskeletal (MSI) injuries, or soft-tissue injuries, accounted for 69 percent of WorkplaceNL lost-time injury claims and \$103 million in annual claim costs between 2017 and 2021, according to the Newfoundland and Labrador agency. It was also the reason for 75 percent of all lost-time weeks from work.

Employers are feeling the strain. In fact, musculoskeletal conditions have the most impact on employers' overall healthcare costs, according to 53 percent of respondents to a survey in Canada released in 2019.

<https://www.thesafetymag.com/ca/topics/leadership-and-culture/soft-tissue-injuries-hand-province-huge-bill/421290>

# NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

## Sprains and Strains: How does it happen and who is at risk?

Strains and sprains are painful injuries, but they're also very common. They were the most common type of injury among workers in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut in 2021. Almost 18% of the injuries reported to the WSCC involved strains or sprains. Potential causes of strains and sprains are endless, meaning that type of injury should receive special attention when creating a workplace safety plan.

<https://www.wsc.nt.ca/SprainsStrains>



## Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission Release Assessment Rates for 2023



Effective January 1, 2023, The Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut (WSCC) announces that the average employer assessment rate is remaining at \$2.40 per \$100 of assessable payroll, unchanged since 2020.

This is the base rate the WSCC uses as a starting point when setting individual subclass rates.

10 of the 16 subclasses of employers in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut demonstrated improvements in their claims costs, while 6 subclasses showed increases in their claims costs. As a result, those 10 subclasses will see rate decreases, and 6 will see increases in 2023.

<https://www.wsc.nt.ca/node/5144>





## WSCB announces 2023 assessment rates at annual information meeting

Workers' Safety and Compensation Board (WSCB) discussed operational highlights and the financial performance from the previous year, as outlined in the 2021 Annual Report.

The board also announced industry classifications and assessment rates for 2023. The rates are reflective of safety and return to work efforts within Yukon's workplaces, along with the funded position at the end of 2021.

WSCB's Board of Directors is pleased that the adjustments in rates for 2023 are moderate, while permitting the organization to continue delivering on its commitment to reduce the funded position, so that it accurately represents the cost of operating the system.

<https://www.wcb.yk.ca/web-0074/web-0077/wscb-announces-2023-assessment-rates-at-annual-inf>



## How to become a health and safety officer?

COS has decided to take a look at how safety careers compare across provinces. Learn how Yukon stacks up when it comes to factors like salary, education and designations.

As with the previously explored provinces, those wishing to build a career in safety would need to have some form of post-secondary education in a related field. After that, requirements may differ depending on the organization offering the job.

<https://www.thesafetymag.com/ca/topics/leadership-and-culture/yukon-how-to-become-a-health-and-safety-officer/415961>

# MORE ABOUT TEKS**MED**

Thousands of businesses across Canada trust us with their disability management. Call us and start saving money. Our program literally pays for itself! For more information on our services, contact us today:

**TeksMed.com**

**T: 1-844-835-7253 (TEKSALE)**

**E: [info@teksmed.com](mailto:info@teksmed.com)**

## A FEW WORDS FROM OUR HAPPY CLIENTS:

“Most injured workers can do some sort of modified work once we know what's going on with them. We don't have to worry about having a member of our team sitting around for months just waiting for a diagnosis. Knowing that TeksMed can get our workers into an MRI or specialist within days is great.”  
- Alliance Truss | Operations Director

“In less than two years, TeksMed has reduced our claim costs by 67.5%. TeksMed's team of professionals has achieved its objective of reducing our claim costs and our administration. I would highly recommend TeksMed to anyone considering professional claims management services.”  
- Wendy's | Safety & Security Manager

“I am writing to express my high degree of appreciation for the service TeksMed has provided to Silver Hills Bakery in the claims management and return to work planning aspects of our business. In the 12 months of our relationship with TeksMed I have been consistently impressed with the support and flexibility they have been able to provide.”  
- Silver Hills Bakery | Manager, Occupational Health and Safety



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