



Federal HRSDC Labour Program

open house



If you've ever wanted to learn more about the inner workings of our government, you'll have your chance on May 9, when Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) opens up its Labour Program to the public. This free open house, which will be held at the Centre for Health and Safety Innovation (CHSI) in Mississauga, will give federally regulated employers an opportunity to speak directly to the people who enforce the law.

This will be the second annual HRSDC Labour Program open house. The favourable comments about last year's event, which drew 160 participants, inspired HRSDC to do it again. HRSDC says the participants praised the event for giving them the opportunity to meet with regulators and discuss common issues in an informal setting. The organizers have decided hold this year's event during North American Occupational Safety and Health (NAOSH) week, which runs from May 5 to 11. Since NAOSH week puts a spotlight on occupational illness and injury prevention, it's a perfect time for a health and safety event.

Also new for this year's open house is HRSDC's partnership with the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (IHSA) and Workplace Safety and Prevention Services (WSPS). Although IHSA took part in last year's event, this year we have been involved at the planning stage. The added resources have allowed for more topics to be covered. "The overall feedback from last year's event was extremely positive, with many requests for additional topics and greater opportunities for interaction. I believe this year's expanded format, and having it at CHSI, will undoubtedly address those requests," says Ken Rayner, Vice President of Business Development and Labour Relations at IHSA.

Though many of IHSA's members are governed by provincial health and safety laws, a significant number—mainly transportation and telecommunications firms—operate under federal laws. The open house will allow those firms to see more clearly just what the Labour Program is all about and will help them learn exactly what they need to do to comply with specific legislation.

Last year, federal Health and Safety Officers and Labour Affairs Officers were available to meet with participants, as were representatives of Transport Canada—Air, Rail, and Road Transportation. Representatives of the same groups are expected to be on hand again this year.

Michelle Roberts, Manager of Regional Operations, East at IHSA, expects a good turnout at this year's event. "I think we'll see health and safety committee members, supervisors, and health and safety managers," she says. The program has been expanded to include several 45-minute sessions on topics that were suggested by last year's attendees. These information sessions will be facilitated by experts from the Labour Program, IHSA, and WSPS. Session topics will include

- workplace violence
- hazard prevention programs
- ergonomics
- intervention model
- employment standards, Part III of the Canada Labour Code
- hazard prevention program
- forklifts, transportation of dangerous goods, and material handling.

For more information on this free event and how to register, visit the News and Events page at ihsa.ca