It’s impossible for employers and supervisors to watch over everyone on the jobsite all the time. Health and safety professionals make use of many strategies to ensure that everyone follows the rules and stays safe. But regardless of the methods they use, their goal is to foster a proactive approach towards injury and illness prevention. For example, while it’s important to have an effective disciplinary system in place, fear of punishment is unlikely to create a positive attitude towards injury and illness prevention. The goal should be not only for employees to follow the health and safety rules, but also to look out for other employees and remove hazards when they can. You want them to tell you about safety concerns before someone gets hurt. Ideally, you want them to integrate safe work habits into everything they do. By doing so, you will create a health and safety work “culture”.

Culture and performance
Culture refers to a set of beliefs, values, and attitudes shared by a group. Some describe it as what people do when no one is looking. Every workplace has a culture, whether it’s positive or negative. For years, companies have been harnessing the power of culture to achieve the results they want. Often, corporate cultures focus on innovation. Any firm can use the same principles to create a culture that has health and safety at its core. When management values safety, so will the employees. Workers will come to understand that sharing the company’s views on safety leads to the next contract or to a promotion. When safety is tied closely to job performance, you foster a safety culture.

Creating culture
Creating a safety culture is not something you can do overnight. As the employer, you have to incorporate health and safety into all of your decisions—and you have to back it up. Often managers talk about health and safety, ensure workers are trained, even hold regular safety meetings. The problem is that they don’t always support their words with their actions. Sometimes they even contradict what they say by what they do.

Consider the following scenario:
A construction company has a great health and safety policy and program. There’s also a health and safety co-ordinator on staff who ensures the company is meeting all its legal obligations. The company owners make sure that all new employees are given proper
One day, the supervisor sees that a project will not be ready for the scheduled concrete pour because of unforeseen delays. When the supervisor informs the company owners, he is told to do whatever it takes to make the job ready. The owners say that they are not prepared to cover the cost of a delay at this stage. So, the supervisor passes this message along to the workers. To get the job done quickly, the workers don’t put up guardrails and they miss some bracing. The supervisor doesn’t do anything about it because he wants them to get the job done.

A situation like this doesn’t just happen in construction. There are many examples in transportation and electrical utilities where time constraints and costs seem to outweigh safety concerns. This is the reason why safety needs to be an integrated part of any work culture.

In this example, one decision by the owners completely undermines their earlier attempts to demonstrate how much they value safety. Their actions send a clear message that safety is something to push aside when a tight deadline is looming.

On the other hand, if the owners had covered the cost of postponing the concrete pour and allowed the workers to finish the job safely, they would have instilled a culture of safety in their employees. They would have helped create the type of environment where workers feel comfortable taking a few extra minutes to do thorough circle checks of their vehicles or making sure their harnesses are attached correctly.

If you act on your principles, the culture of safety in your company will become one where employees want to follow the rules and will look for ways to make things safer for everyone. That’s what we should all work toward.

Now that summer is here, remember to keep cool. If your work involves heavy physical labour in a hot, humid environment, you could be at risk of developing a heat-related illness. For more info and resources, including a heat stress prevention guide and a downloadable poster on the symptoms of heat stress, visit the Heat Stress topic page on our website: hsa.ca/topics_hazards

Product Catalogue

IHSA’s Product Catalogue (IHSA017) contains a comprehensive listing of our health and safety merchandise. Many of our products are available at no charge or as a free download from the IHSA website. Visit hsa.ca to download your copy of the Product Catalogue today.
The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) wants new operators of trucks and buses on Ontario highways to have fewer collisions and high-risk safety violations. That’s why the MTO is introducing the New Entrant Education and Evaluation Program (NEEEP) for new operators in the Commercial Vehicle Operator’s Registration program (CVOR).

The goal of the program is to improve new entrants’ knowledge of their requirements. NEEP will improve the MTO’s ability to risk manage new truck and bus operators by identifying poor safety practices within the first 18 months of operation. This will allow the MTO’s enforcement staff to focus on non-compliant operators instead of on operators who simply do not understand their obligations.

The three elements of NEEP are being implemented in three phases:

1. **Education** A Commercial Vehicle Operators’ Safety Manual (CVOS) is available online, along with an educational practice test. The manual provides the foundational elements of Ontario’s carrier safety laws (what to monitor) and the fundamentals of carrier safety-management best practices (how to monitor). It is available on the MTO’s website under Manuals and Guidelines: [www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/trucks/](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/trucks/)

2. **CVOR Test** The CVOR test will be a one-time requirement. Operators will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of Ontario’s safety laws by completing a test in person at a DriveTest Centre as a prerequisite to obtaining a CVOR certificate.

The ministry has amended Regulation 424/97 of the Highway Traffic Act, “Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators’ Information,” to require Ontario-based CVOR applicants to pass this test before being issued a CVOR certificate and operating on Ontario roadways. This requirement will come into effect on October 1, 2013 and will not apply to operators who are renewing their CVOR certificate or to operators who have held a valid certificate within the previous three years before their application is received.

The CVOR test is to be completed by a person representing the operator applying for the CVOR. For independent operators, this person must be the sole proprietor. For other operators, this person must be a corporate officer, a partner, or a director. The person who represents the operator cannot successfully complete the proficiency test on behalf of any other operator.

3. **Evaluation** The implementation of the evaluation element of NEEP is planned for 2014/2015. It will require Ontario-based operators to undergo a review of their applied safety management and remediation practices by completing an evaluation within the first 18 months of operation.

For more info on reducing collisions in transportation, visit our Motor Vehicle Incidents topic page at [ihsa.ca/topics_hazards](http://ihsa.ca/topics_hazards)