Hit the brakes. Not the workers.

Features
Safe Road Work
Skin Cancer
H&S Management
Traffic Control
Heat Stress

Emergency Response
Heavy Equipment
Summer Letdown
Reducing MSDs
And more...
List vehicles & equipment used on site.

Explain the dangers
Getting on and off equipment is not as easy as it sounds. More than one-quarter of all injuries to equipment operators and truck drivers occur during mounting and dismounting.

Identify controls
To climb on and off construction equipment safely, always maintain three points of contact. That means two hands and one foot or two feet and one hand on the equipment at all times.
• Break 3-point contact only when you reach the ground, the cab, or a stable platform.
• Mount and dismount facing the equipment.
• Climb on and off only when the equipment is stationary.
• Use the parts designed by the manufacturer for mounting and dismounting—steps, running boards, traction strips, footholds, handgrips, etc.
• Keep these parts clear of mud, snow, grease, and other hazards that can cause slips, trips, or falls.
• Don’t use wheel hubs, machine tracks, or door handles for mounting and dismounting.

Demonstrate
Demonstrate 3-point contact by mounting and dismounting from a truck, bulldozer, or other piece of heavy equipment on site. Ask your crew to try out 3-point contact as well.
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On the cover...
Safety is a two-way street. In road construction zones, employers need a sound traffic control plan and drivers need to proceed cautiously and obey directions.

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SAFE WORK ON THE ROAD:

Good traffic protection the key to road safety

In June of this year a worker was killed on a jobsite in Milton, Ontario. With this just the start of summer roadwork season, it is time for all drivers to be extra vigilant when travelling near road-based construction sites.

When the weather gets warm, road construction season begins. Whether the work consists of filling potholes, building bridges, directing traffic around construction or utility vehicles, or any of the other tasks required of road workers, safety must always be a priority.

Companies need to make sure they keep their workers safe from traffic hazards during this work as well as protecting the public who travel through the work zone.

Workers are often injured or killed while working on our roads. Last year the Ontario Road Builders’ Association launched a social-media campaign in an effort to raise awareness of the issue with the public. Their Facebook page (www.facebook.com/SafetyATwoWayStreet) provides important facts and information about road safety. In 2009, Thunder Bay Hydro launched its own public safety campaign on the issue. Signs and vehicles were labeled with the slogan “Hit the Brakes...NOT US” in an effort to reduce the number of near misses the utility had seen near its work zone setups.
In June, the Ministry of Labour held an inspection blitz that looked specifically for dangers found in traffic control during roadwork. That means this area of work has been identified as one with hazards that, if left unchecked, could result in serious harm to workers.

Every year, lost-time injuries that take place during work on and around streets and highways number in the hundreds. In the past decade there have been more than 8,200 such injuries in a wide range of categories, including falls, being struck by vehicles or equipment, and overexertion.

What the law says
The Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Regulations for Construction Projects set out responsibilities and requirements for work around traffic. Federally regulated companies will find their responsibilities in the Canada Labour Code Part II.

The Ontario Traffic Manual Book 7—Temporary Conditions (OTM Book 7)—both the office and field editions—outlines the rules that companies must follow for work on or near roadways. The manual provides information on designing a traffic control plan that allows vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians to move safely and efficiently through the work zones.

Traffic protection plans
When you do work that exposes your employees to danger from traffic, you must have a written traffic protection plan. Here are a few things to remember for the plan.

• Make sure you identify the work area clearly. There are a variety of signs and devices available for alerting the public. The signs must be positioned according to the specifications in OTM Book 7, and they must be clean and well-maintained.

• It’s important to keep the public out of your work area by using barriers, barricades, or crash trucks. The best method will depend on the duration of the work, the type of encroachment on the road, and the posted speed limits.

• Since human error is a major cause of traffic collisions, you need to provide drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians with clear directions through the work zone. Make the signs obvious, and locate them so that the public has time to respond safely. If there is good reason, ask the road authority to reduce the speed limit. The road authority may also insist on additional protection, such as hiring police officers to control traffic.

Key considerations in the field
When you are responsible for keeping your workers safe in the field, here are a few other things to consider beyond the creation of a traffic control plan.

• Personal protective equipment (PPE)—Everyone needs to wear the right PPE for the job. It should include a Class E hard hat, CSA-certified Grade 1 safety boots, reflective vest or clothing, and eye and hearing protection when required. Additional reflective clothing is needed at night or when visibility is poor.

• Training—Workers and supervisors dealing with traffic-related hazards need training. Schedule regular safety or tailgate talks to go over the details of the traffic protection and control plans.

• Inspections and documentation—Perform regular inspections, document the results, and correct any deficiencies. Inspect equipment daily or before it is used. You should also inspect the work zone to make sure that signs, cones, barrels, and other equipment are in good condition and placed where they will maximize safety.

How IHSA can help
IHSA provides training in effective traffic control through several courses. To learn more, visit ihsa.ca, or read the article Traffic Control: What you need to know on page 10 and 11.
How to protect yourself
Because UV radiation is usually highest between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., most people should avoid outdoor activities between those hours. If you have to be outside during that time, here are some simple things you can do to protect yourself from radiation.

• Create shade in your work area. Sometimes a pop-up canopy can do the trick.
• If you have to work in direct sunlight, wear light-coloured, loose clothing. That will also help you stay cooler.
• If you wear a hard hat, consider a wide-brimmed style. It helps keep the sun off the face, neck, and ears.
• Use sunscreen. Don’t forget to reapply it throughout the day. One application in the morning is not enough.
• Cover your skin with long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, and wide-brimmed hat. If it’s hot outside, wear clothing made from light, breathable material to keep cool.
• If you drive a lot, remember to use sunscreen on your left arm to prevent a burn. Consider getting the vehicle windows tinted.
• If you have any indoor work to do, plan to do it between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. if possible.
• Wear eye protection that protects you from both UVA and UVB rays.

Although you won’t see the effects right away, the sun’s UV rays can seriously harm you. Make sure you address them in your health and safety policy and program as you would any other workplace hazard.
Choosing and using sunscreen

Using sunscreen is one of the best ways to protect yourself from harmful UV radiation. Here are some tips for choosing and using sunscreen.

• Pay attention to the SPF—sun protection factor. It represents the length of time that sunscreen-protected skin can be exposed to UVB rays before minimal redness occurs, compared to the length of time it takes for minimal redness to appear on unprotected skin. For example, if your skin would normally become red in 20 minutes, a sunscreen with SPF 15 would allow you to be in the sun 15 times as long (20 x 15 = 300 minutes) without your skin reacting.

• Health Canada recommends using a sunscreen with at least SPF 15. The Canadian Dermatology Association recommends SPF 30.

• There are different types of UV rays, so look for a “broad-spectrum” sunscreen. This will provide better protection against both UVA and UVB rays.

• Chemical-free sunscreens (which are called sunblocks) may be more suitable for people with sensitive skin or those who experience an allergic reaction to the chemicals found in most sunscreens.

• Most sunscreens should be applied to your skin 20 to 30 minutes before you go out in the sun. This gives the ingredients enough time to reach their protective levels.

• Apply the sunscreen evenly to all parts of your skin, including your ears, nose, and neck. Use about one palmful for each arm and leg.

• Remember to reapply sunscreen throughout the day. Sweat and water will wash it off. Always follow the instructions on the container.

• Use chapstick with at least SPF 15 to protect your lips, especially the lower lip.

• Never use expired sunscreen. After a certain length of time, the chemicals break down and will no longer protect your skin.

Remember that no sunscreen is 100 per cent effective. That’s why it’s important to use it along with long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, a hat, and sunglasses.
A common feature of all workplaces is the presence of musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) hazards. Those are things that can cause injuries and disorders of the musculoskeletal system. The musculoskeletal system includes muscles, tendons, nerves, bursa, blood vessels, joints, spinal discs, and ligaments. MSDs do not include musculoskeletal injuries or disorders that are the direct result of a fall, being struck by or against something, being caught in or on something, vehicle collisions, or violence.

According to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), more than 40 per cent of all lost-time compensation claims in Ontario are for MSDs.

Just as for other workers throughout the province, MSDs hazards have been identified as a top risk for IHSA employees. Using the OHSCO MSD Prevention Guideline Parts 1, 2, and 3 as a framework, IHSA has developed an MSD Prevention Program. The program has the following goals:

- to increase awareness of MSDs
- to decrease the risk of MSDs
- to adapt the jobs and workplace to the capabilities of the employees
- to identify MSD prevention strategies as a priority in cost containment, productivity, and quality assurance
- to promote and support the health and safety of all employees
- to provide equipment, resources, record keeping, and effective training

Part of IHSA’s commitment to minimizing exposure to MSD hazards is to support the Ergonomic Change Team (ECT), which is a resource for IHSA’s health and safety program. The ECT helps IHSA to recognize, assess, and control MSD hazards and to evaluate preventive measures; makes recommendations (to the JHSC and management) for strengthening efforts at MSD prevention; and informs IHSA staff about its activities. The team consists of workers and members of management who have received four days of Ergonomic Change Team training.

One of the ECT’s recent activities has been to develop and distribute to all staff members a discomfort survey that will allow IHSA to set a baseline and measure future progress in reducing MSDs. The team is also creating short video clips to help employees with proper workstation setup. All employees will be required to complete an assessment of their own workstations. The assessments will also allow the ECT to identify and prioritize workstations that need further assessment.

IHSA employees are encouraged to take regular breaks to reduce exposure to static postures. Sitting or standing for long periods of time reduces blood flow and can cause muscle tension, stiffness, and strain in the neck, arms, wrists, hands, back, and legs.

Everyone should take a five-minute break every hour. People doing data entry should take a five-minute break for every 30 minutes of continuous work at a computer. Frequent, short breaks where a person can relax regularly and stretch their muscles are preferable to longer, fewer breaks, and research has shown that they do not reduce productivity. Employees should do the opposite of what they’ve just been doing. For example, a person who has been sitting should get up and walk around.

At IHSA, all new employees receive a pamphlet outlining proper workstation setup as part of their orientation. Proper workstation setup includes adjusting their chair, keyboard and mouse, monitor, and other things that they use frequently.

It is essential that everyone in the workplace understand that they are a necessary part of the Internal Responsibility System (IRS). The ECT has developed a reporting process for MSD hazards:
Ergonomic Change Team

Following this procedure can contribute to developing a strong internal responsibility system. In order for the system to be successful, all parties need to know what their own responsibilities are and how they will be held accountable for them. Safety leadership is the most important factor in achieving an effective health and safety system.
Follow the manual.

Know how to draw up a traffic protection plan.

Make sure that all staff who require training in traffic control receive it. That includes supervisors of employees responsible for traffic control. This will help to prevent confusion on the worksite.

Know what equipment is needed on the jobsite and whether it meets all legal requirements.

**How IHSA can help**

IHSA has a range of training and products related to traffic control that are designed to ensure workers doing various kinds of work know the hazards they might face.

**Courses**

- **Highway Traffic Act.** Traffic control generally involves working on or around roads, bridges, and highways. This course provides an overview of Ontario’s *Highway Traffic Act* and regulations. It covers key definitions and case law interpretation, as well as offering advice on improving fleet safety for vehicles. This course is intended for any employee whose job has a transportation component.
to know

• **Traffic Control and Backing Vehicles.** Participants will learn to recognize and understand traffic hazards, establish effective procedures, and identify control options. This half-day course is recommended for drivers and equipment operators who back up vehicles.

• **Traffic Control—Temporary Work Zones.** This course teaches participants how to develop an effective traffic control plan. Participants learn how to identify and control hazards related to road construction.

• **Traffic Signal Workers—Safety and Awareness.** We know that contact with powerlines during construction projects is all too common on worksites. This course focuses on the electrical hazards that a traffic signal worker may be exposed to while working close to electrical equipment. It includes a review of electrical circuits and equipment identification, basic hydraulics, safe operation of aerial devices, stability ratings, and general electrical awareness.

To learn more about these courses visit [ihsa.ca/training](http://ihsa.ca/training).

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**IHSA Traffic Control Products**

IHSA has many products related to safe work methods and traffic control. Here are a few that might be valuable as part of your own traffic control policies and procedures.

• **M019—Guidelines for Training Traffic Control Persons.** This booklet can be used by supervisors and trainers to help traffic control staff learn the necessary signals, signs, and traffic designs needed for safe traffic control.

• **B016—Handbook for Construction Traffic Control Persons.** This pocket-sized handbook covers a lot that M019 covers, but it’s great for use in the field. It can also be downloaded as an electronic file. It includes valuable safety tips as well as useful checklists.

• **V006—Traffic Hand Signals Card.** This 3½” x 2½” card comes in packs of 50 and is handy to keep on sites or for workers to carry with them. It shows the basic hand signals used in the field.

• **M029—Construction Health and Safety Manual.** This is IHSA’s most comprehensive construction product, covering a wide range of topics, including traffic control and backing vehicles. The manual is free for IHSA members. It can be obtained in hard copy or as a downloadable electronic file.

To find out more about these and our other products related to traffic control, visit [ihsa.ca/products](http://ihsa.ca/products).
# THE HAZARDS OF Heat stress

Heat and humidity are a normal part of Ontario summers, but how your body reacts to the heat depends on how hard you are working, how much water you have been drinking, how fit you are, whether you have become acclimatized to the higher temperatures, etc.

Heat stress can occur wherever physical work is being done in a hot, humid environment. The body tries to cool itself by increasing the heart rate to move blood—and heat—to the skin and by sweating to help cool the blood and body. But when too much water is lost through sweating, dehydration occurs. This can lead to heat-related illnesses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illness</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Severity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heat Rash</td>
<td>• Red blotches and extreme itchiness in areas persistently damp with sweat&lt;br&gt;• Prickling sensation on the skin where sweating occurs</td>
<td>• Rest in a cool place.&lt;br&gt;• Take a shower or rinse skin with cool water.&lt;br&gt;• Change into dry clothes.</td>
<td>If treated, symptoms usually disappear after a few days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat Cramps</td>
<td>• Painful cramps or spasms in the arms, legs, back, or stomach that occur suddenly at work or later at home&lt;br&gt;• Hard, painful lumps in the muscles as a result of the cramps</td>
<td>• Rest in a cool place.&lt;br&gt;• Remove or loosen clothing.&lt;br&gt;• Drink cool water or a sports drink containing electrolytes.&lt;br&gt;• Stretch and massage muscles.&lt;br&gt;• If the cramps are severe or don’t go away, seek medical aid.</td>
<td>If not treated promptly, heat cramps can lead to more serious heat-related illnesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fainting</td>
<td>• Sudden fainting after at least two hours of work&lt;br&gt;• Cool, moist skin&lt;br&gt;• Weak pulse</td>
<td>• GET MEDICAL ATTENTION.&lt;br&gt;• Assess the need for CPR.&lt;br&gt;• Rest in a cool place.&lt;br&gt;• Remove or loosen clothing.&lt;br&gt;• If conscious, make the person lie down.&lt;br&gt;• If conscious, give the person sips of cool water.</td>
<td>If not treated promptly, fainting can lead to more serious heat-related illnesses. Fainting may also be due to other illnesses.</td>
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**Symptoms of heat stress should never be ignored.** They are your body's way of telling you that something needs to be done to balance your body's heating and cooling system. For more information on heat stress and helpful resources on how to prevent it, visit the Heat Stress topic page on [ihsa.ca](http://ihsa.ca).

### Prevention tips for workers
- **Be aware of the symptoms.** Watch out for heat-stress symptoms in yourself and your co-workers.
- **Drink water.** You need to drink one cup of cool water every 20 minutes, even if you’re not thirsty.
- **Avoid alcohol and caffeinated drinks.** Alcohol and caffeinated beverages such as tea, coffee, and cola are diuretics and will dehydrate your body.
- **Wear light, loose-fitting clothing.** Wear clothes that allow sweat to evaporate. Light-coloured garments absorb less heat from the sun.
- **Know your personal risk factors.** Any of the following conditions could increase your risk for heat-related illness: excessive weight, poor physical condition, previous heat-related illnesses, older age, heart disease, high blood pressure, recent illnesses, and certain medications.

### Prevention tips for managers/supervisors
- **Training.** Make heat stress your next safety talk and remind workers about it periodically throughout the summer. Visit [ihsa.ca](http://ihsa.ca) for free safety talks on heat stress and sun protection.
- **Breaks.** Give workers frequent breaks in cool areas.
- **Scheduling.** Schedule hotter jobs during cooler parts of the day.

### Heat Rash
- Red blotches and extreme itchiness in areas persistently damp with sweat
- Prickling sensation on the skin where sweating occurs

### Heat Cramps
- Painful cramps or spasms in the arms, legs, back, or stomach that occur suddenly at work or later at home
- Hard, painful lumps in the muscles as a result of the cramps

### Fainting
- Sudden fainting after at least two hours of work
- Cool, moist skin
- Weak pulse
- Weakness
- Headache
- Breathlessness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Feeling faint
- Irrational behaviour
- Confusion
- Loss of consciousness (fainting)
- Convulsions
- Hot, dry skin (not sweating)
- Rapid heartbeat
- Rapid and shallow breathing

### Heat Exhaustion
- Weakness
- Headache
- Breathlessness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Feeling faint
- GET MEDICAL ATTENTION.
  - Rest in a cool place.
  - Take a shower or rinse skin with cool water.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeinated drinks. Alcohol and caffeinated beverages such as tea, coffee, and cola are diuretics and will dehydrate your body.

### Heat Stroke
- Irrational behaviour
- Confusion
- Loss of consciousness (fainting)
- Convulsions
- Hot, dry skin (not sweating)
- Rapid heartbeat
- Rapid and shallow breathing
- GET MEDICAL ATTENTION. Call 911 or get the person to hospital immediately.
  - Move the person out of the sun and into a cool place.
  - Cool the person's body by covering with damp sheets, spraying with cool water, or using a fan.
  - If conscious, give the person sips of cool water.
- Can be fatal if medical assistance is not obtained immediately.
In addition to owners, supervisors, and employees, other internal parties to include in the plan are the health and safety representative or committee and all subcontractors and independent operators. Some of the external parties to consider are suppliers (especially those delivering hazardous materials), enforcement agencies (i.e., MOL, MTO, and HRSDC), emergency and disaster services, and community services (e.g., counsellors and health-care professionals).

Once you’ve got the different workplace parties covered, you need to decide who will be responsible for what. Here are some of the key responsibilities that you must assign to someone.

- activating the emergency response plan
- reporting the incident to the proper authorities
- managing communications during the emergency response
- contacting emergency services
- meeting emergency services at an entrance and leading them to the incident area
- ensuring there is a clear and direct route from the entrance to the incident area
- co-ordinating public safety
- documenting the incident and filing the necessary reports.

How you develop your emergency response plan and exactly what it will include depend on the type of work you do and where you do it. You’ll find an Emergency Response Planning Checklist on pages 15 and 16 to guide you in creating your company’s own emergency response plan. The Infrastructure Health & Safety Association also has sample plans and templates at ihsa.ca to help you get started. Look under Tools & Resources.
**Emergency response planning checklist**

Use this checklist as a guide to help you develop the emergency response plan for your workplace. Remember that the plan must be specific to the location where you are working. When the plan is complete, make sure that everyone involved knows their role. For more resources related to emergency response planning, visit [ihsa.ca](https://ihsa.ca).

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Program Administration  
(Who is responsible for implementing the plan?)

- Develop an Emergency Response Standard.

- Develop a Site Emergency Plan.
  - Identify emergency access routes.
  - Indicate location of first aid stations/boxes and fire extinguishers.
  - Indicate job office(s) and storage facilities (storage for blankets and special rescue equipment).
  - Ensure specialized PPE equipment is on site. (Indicate location.)
  - Ensure sufficient medical aid supplies are available on site (splints, stretchers, etc.) and indicate location.
  - Locate other firefighting equipment (standpipes, Siamese connections, and hydrants).
  - Locate main power supply to project.
  - Identify the location of emergency phones. (Post emergency list.)
  - Identify nearest hospital or medical centre.
  - Identify worker evacuation route(s) and assembly area(s).
  - Contact local fire, police, and ambulance and provide them with your site plan and list of potential emergencies.
  - Locate services to the project (both above ground and underground).
  - Develop on-site traffic routes.
  - Locate outside materials storage and fabricating areas.
  - Locate cranes man/material hoists and unloading docks.

Continued on next page...
**Emergency response planning checklist**

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- Locate flammable/combustible materials and cylinder storage.
- Locate garbage dumpsters and recycling bins.
- Complete Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Form*.
- Determine if “high-level” rescue is a possibility.
- Develop Emergency Response procedures for items identified in your hazard assessment.
- Ensure that all trades on site keep daily personnel lists. (In the event of a major emergency, check names against personnel gathered in the assembly area.)
- Include requirements for written notices. (What’s required? When? Completed by whom? Who does it go to?) See legal obligations.
- Identify the emergency response (ER) team and alternates. (Post names.)
- Provide specialized training for ER team members.
- Designate a contact person to call necessary emergency services and MOL, MOEE, etc.
- Select member of ER team to meet and direct emergency services vehicles to incident scene.
- Select team member to deal with media, MOL, MOEE, etc.
- Ensure all required rescue equipment/materials are readily available on site.
- Provide for emergency traffic control person (properly trained).
- Make provisions for cordonning off the accident scene to protect workers.
- Ensure someone on the ER team documents where the injured worker has been taken (hospital, medical centre, etc.).
- Set out method of communicating the plan.

*Form can be downloaded from ihsa.ca (See Tools & Resources/Policy and Program Resources/Hazard Assessment, Analysis and Control).
Improper use of equipment attachments can lead to deaths

Certain heavy-equipment attachments known as quick couplers have led to serious injuries in recent months.

Many jobsites are using these quick couplers instead of traditional pins to connect various attachments (e.g., buckets, ripping teeth, and hammers) to heavy equipment. The problem is that quick couplers may release unexpectedly if they are not properly engaged and locked. If the quick couplers release, whatever was connected to the equipment will become detached and fall. That is exactly what caused the recent injuries on some Ontario construction sites and brought this issue to the attention of the Heavy Civil Construction Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee.

Do a ground test.

The Heavy Civil Construction committee issued an advisory to warn the industry about what can happen if quick couplers are not used and maintained properly. The advisory instructs all heavy-equipment operators to ensure that the quick coupler is locked and secured before use. The best way to do this is to do a ground test (i.e., a bump test).

To perform a ground test,
1. Place the connected attachment on the ground.
2. Using the equipment, apply pressure to the attachment. If the attachment is not securely connected, it should become obvious when you apply pressure.

The advisory also reminds employers to ensure that heavy-equipment operators do the following:

- Comply with the operation manual for the equipment they are using, including quick couplers.
- Be familiar with their assigned equipment and follow the manufacturer’s instructions as outlined in the operation manual.
- Maintain equipment as specified in the maintenance manual and remove equipment from service if it has defects that may pose a hazard to workers.

If you use quick couplers, be cautious. Take a few extra minutes to make sure they are fully engaged and locked. If you don’t, you risk injuring someone.

To read and download the complete advisory, visit ihsa.ca. Give a copy to everyone on your site. It could save someone’s life.
When the weather turns nicer and thoughts turn to summer vacations and time spent with friends and family, it can be hard to keep health and safety at the top of your employees’ priority lists. However, we know that in the industries which IHSA serves, a moment of distraction can end in a disastrous injury. But even if an injury is minor, it may put a damper on an upcoming long weekend or, for an employer, mean higher costs on a job.

Summer conditions can often create an environment we call summer letdown, when our thoughts may wander from the tasks at hand. A great way for owners and managers to keep their employees paying attention to their work is to show them you are really focusing on their well-being. The simplest way of doing this is to create a safe and healthy workplace and make sure it stays that way, even with everyone dreaming of family vacations and fishing trips.

In order to avoid injuries as a result of summer letdown, companies can focus on a few measures that might help their employees maintain their attention on the job.
Make sure workers take regular breaks.
Encourage them to use this time to move away from their work area. A break gives people a chance to reset themselves and go back to their tasks better able to concentrate.

Try to give workers a variety of tasks.
Repeating the same actions, both physically and mentally, is exhausting and stressful. Changing tasks regularly may help keep everyone on track.

Make sure supervisors are aware of summer letdown.
It’s up to the supervisors to keep employees on track and concentrating on their tasks. Remind your supervisors to keep a watchful eye on the worksite and make sure the workers aren’t distracted.

Have people watch out for one another.
Supervisors aren’t the only people who can be on the lookout for summer letdown. All workers can be aware of their fellow employees and remind one another to take breaks or refocus on their tasks.

Refresh workers through training.
A regular safety meeting or a training course may help new employees understand safe work practices. Even a seasoned employee can benefit from a refresher course now and again. This may help reinvigorate workers and re-engage them in safe work practices. Beyond a regular safety meeting, IHSA can provide training either at one of our facilities or at yours. We can even drive onto a worksite in our mobile classroom.

Remove distractions.
If the task at hand requires concentration and attention, make sure workers aren’t distracted by phone calls or texts from friends and family. These can be checked during breaks, so make sure to give everyone an adequate break when they can do errands or return personal calls.

Make sure everyone knows the rules.
Orientation and training for new workers is critical because new workers have a greater chance of injury. “New worker” doesn’t mean only a young worker. It can mean a worker who is new to a particular job or jobsite. Don’t forget that workers who aren’t new still need to know the hazards of the workplace. Workplace-specific training may involve education on specific methods, machinery, tools, or applications related to a person’s work. It is often required for situations such as trenching, working in confined spaces, working at heights, or traffic control, where dangerous circumstances can occur.

These reminders may sound simple, but they can mean all the difference when workers are facing summer letdown.
Reducing MSDs for mechanical and sheetmetal workers

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are injuries that affect our muscles, joints, tendons, or spinal discs. They’re caused mainly by forceful exertion (lifting heavy material, etc.), awkward posture (reaching overhead, twisting, etc.), repetitive movements (hammering, etc.), and vibration.

For Rate Group 707 (Mechanical and Sheet Metal), MSDs accounted for 41 per cent of all lost-time injury claims in 2011; that’s one of the largest percentages of any construction rate group. Recently we interviewed Blair Allin, a trainer with the Boilermakers Union Local 128. He gave us some helpful tips for reducing MSDs.

1. Conduct risk assessments
Whenever you enter a work area or a room, take a few minutes to look around and do a quick 360-degree rotation to take in all the hazards that may be there. Whenever possible, eliminate the hazard completely. If that’s not practical, consider other ways to control it. Remember the acronym RACE. It stands for:
• Recognize the hazard
• Assess the hazard
• Control or Eliminate the hazard

2. Rotate workers through different tasks.
To reduce repetitive stress injuries (i.e., MSDs), have workers do different kinds of work throughout the day. For example, a worker using a jackhammer can only be exposed to vibration for approximately two hours a day. Rotate this worker with a signaller. This will not only help the jackhammer operator but will also help keep the signaller from losing concentration.

For larger firms, this type of work rotation may be relatively easy, but for smaller firms with only a couple of employees who do the same job, it can be more challenging. However, even a small firm can, for example, alternate two bricklayers between laying bricks and mixing mortar.

Don’t forget: For each new task you ask workers to perform, make sure they have the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) and know the proper safe work procedures for the job.

It’s important to make people accountable for their actions. We often punish those who work unsafely, but we don’t often reward those who demonstrate positive health and safety practices. For instance, if a worker does a warm-up and stretch or eats healthy food at work, give him or her a gift card.

Get creative! One mechanical company instituted “Safety Bingo.” Workers were given a card containing safety-related words or phrases instead of numbers. Each day, a word and a safety-related message were sent to the job foreman to pass along to the workers. The first worker to fill out the card won a prize. However, any workers who committed a safety or driving violation lost their card for the rest of the month.
4. Get a spring tune-up—for your body.

Construction is often seasonal work: you can be busy in the spring, summer, and fall but have a lot of downtime during the winter. After being inactive for a few months, you are more prone to injury when you go back to work in the early spring. If you’ve been on the couch for months and suddenly you’re swinging a hammer all day, you’ll feel it. That’s especially true as you get older—your body doesn’t recover as easily. So before you go back to work, tune up your body and get it ready for the work ahead.

5. Warm up and stretch.

Most people would never play hockey, basketball, or golf without warming up and stretching. If they do it for recreational activities, why not before starting work?

Remember that your body is your most important tool. If it’s not functioning properly, you can’t do your job. Three minutes is all you need to limber up and prepare your body for the rigours of physical work you’ll encounter for the day. Do some stretching exercises while you’re waiting for your work permit or at the jobsite when you get out of your truck in the morning.

Consider what part of your body you’ll be using for a particular task and stretch it out. For example, before lifting a ladder off the truck, do some shoulder stretches. If you’re painting, stretch your wrist and shoulders. If you’re lifting cement blocks, stretch your legs and back.

6. Change the safety culture.

Health and safety comes from the top down. If the employer makes it a company-wide safe work practice to stretch at hourly intervals, workers will be more inclined to do it. Employers can set an example by stretching during meetings at the office.

Because construction work can sometimes be transient, health and safety practices can be inconsistent. If you go from a safety-conscious company to one where safety is less of a concern, try to influence your new employer to adopt some of the practices from your previous employer. If your new employer does not work safely, consider finding work with another company.

To help prevent MSDs at your workplace, it is important to involve everyone. Employers should teach their workers about MSD risk factors and provide them with proper materials-handling equipment and tools. Workers need to follow the employer’s safe work practices and apply the ergonomic concepts they learn to their daily activities.

By following these tips and implementing these health and safety initiatives, firms can reduce MSDs in their sector. It begins with management commitment and depends on communication and participation; that’s the key to a successful MSD-prevention plan. IHSA has training courses, safety talks, and other resources that can help. Visit the Musculoskeletal Disorders and Ergonomics topic page on our website at ihsa.ca.

Note: Statistical data was provided by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).
A wonderful thing happened in North Bay on April 12: everyone worked together. It was the day of the 2012 North Bay Construction Health and Safety Conference. More than 175 people gathered at the Best Western Hotel in North Bay to listen, learn, and network with industry leaders and safety professionals from around the province.

The conference was organized by the North Bay Regional Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee with the help and support of more than 32 local sponsors. This was the third health and safety conference that the committee had hosted, but this time there was much more community involvement. In 2008 the event had only seven sponsors, which grew to thirteen in 2010. This year’s industry support gave the committee an opportunity to expand the event and include more workshops. It also allowed them to offer free admission to participants, a decision they believe was key to the event’s success.

North Bay Mayor Al McDonald opened the conference by welcoming the participants. George Gritziotis, Ontario’s Chief Prevention Officer, delivered the first keynote address. His presentation was followed by a roundtable discussion led by him, Al Beattie, President and CEO of the Infrastructure Health & Safety Association (IHSA), and Peter Augruso, Northern Region Director for the Ministry of Labour (MOL). This roundtable gave participants a unique opportunity to ask questions and discuss the things that are affecting their work and their businesses.

Participants spent the afternoon attending sessions on topics that ranged from defensive driving and scaffold safety to MOL enforcement blitzes and the new Certificate of Recognition (COR™) program. Experts from IHSA, the MOL, and industry led these break-out sessions. Between the afternoon and evening schedule, there was definitely something of interest for everyone. This was the first time a labour-management committee had hosted an event showcasing several of the industries that IHSA serves.

Rob Ellis, the evening keynote speaker, spoke to high school students at St Joseph-Scollard Hall in the afternoon before attending the conference in the evening. Mr. Ellis reminded everyone about what can happen when safety is not a priority. David Ellis, Rob’s son, was killed on the job when he was 18 years old because his employer neglected health and safety practices. David had started working to save money for university. Like many young workers, he received minimal training, and his employer had also ignored a mandatory order to install a safety device on the equipment David was using. Since his son’s death, Mr. Ellis has been speaking to high school students and industry leaders across Canada to spread his message about workplace safety.

Not only does this conference demonstrate what we can accomplish when we work together, but it also highlights a focus on the northern region. IHSA is taking steps to serve its northern members better, such as by hiring more health and safety consultants for the region, developing a web page devoted to northern training and events, and partnering with local colleges and other organizations to make safety training more accessible. For more information about IHSA’s activities in the north, visit ihsa.ca/north. For more information about the North Bay Regional Labour-Management Committee, visit ihsa.ca/committees.
IHSA’s Powerline Technician Apprenticeship Training

Did you know powerline technicians are responsible for the construction and maintenance of electrical transmission and distribution lines across the province? IHSA trains the apprentices who go on to work in this field to make sure the electrical infrastructure is built and maintained safely. Our instructors can share valuable industry knowledge during both the hands-on and classroom-based modules of these courses.

When you are planning your 2013 training schedule, consider IHSA as your training partner in your powerline technician apprenticeship program.

For more information, visit ihsa.ca

K-Line completes ZeroQuest program

K-Line Maintenance and Construction Ltd. recently marked an important milestone in the company’s health and safety history. The utility contracting firm achieved all of the different levels of IHSA’s ZeroQuest® program, and is the first to do so. This accomplishment was celebrated at a recent event during which their final award was delivered by IHSA’s Laura Shier and Fatima Luis. All staff were able to attend and share in this achievement.

Pictured here are, from the left in the back, Shereen Meleka, Mike Leslie, Tim Connell, Gord Elson, Brad Blacklopp, Steve Boorman, Dave Hannon, Chris McKay, Harold Dewanden, Fatima Luis (IHSA) and Julian Hogeterp. In the front, from the left are Josie Robinson, Laura Shier (IHSA), Judy Schlussler, Henrikke Bowman and Jim Kellett.

Save the date: September 26, 2012

The Infrastructure Health & Safety Association will hold its Annual General Meeting on September 26, 2012, at the Centre for Health and Safety Innovation in Mississauga. Visit ihsa.ca in the coming months for details.
Are you obeying the law?

The Ontario government requires specific training for specific jobs. If you work from heights, come in contact with dangerous substances, or drive professionally, IHSA can help you and your employees get the training you need to stay compliant with the law.

**Canada Labour Code Part II**
- Member $160 • Non-Member $160

**Defensive Driving**
- Member $85 • Non-Member $85

**Transportation of Dangerous Goods**
- Member $85 • Non-Member $85

**WHMIS**
- Member $80 • Non-Member $160

**Working at Heights**
- Member $100 • Non-Member $320

To register for the next course in your area, visit ihsa.ca or contact your local IHSA consultant.

Do you have the posters you need on your site?

Construction employers must have an Emergency Response poster (P103), a JHSC or H&S Rep poster (P041 or P029), and DANGER signs in hazardous areas (P022, P093). Companies should also post signs to indicate what type of PPE is required on site (P031). These posters and many more are available to order from ihsa.ca.

**P022**—Danger Due to ____
- 17” x 22”—Vinyl

**P031**—Personal Protective Equipment
- 17” x 22”—Vinyl

**P093**—Danger Work Overhead
- 17” x 22”—Vinyl

**P041**—JHSC/Worker Trades or P029—Health and Safety Rep
- 17” x 22”