Are you **GETTING THE MOST** from your training?

Falling from heights continues to be a leading cause of injuries and fatalities in Ontario construction. That’s why working at heights training is mandatory for all Ontario workers on a construction project who may use a method of fall protection. Since 2015, this training must meet a provincial standard (i.e., it must be approved by the Chief Prevention Officer [CPO]).

IHSA’s *Working at Heights—Fundamentals of Fall Prevention* (WAH) was one of the first courses to be approved by the CPO. With the help of our training partners, our approved course has been delivered to more than 140,090 participants in the province.

You may know one of these participants. You may even be one of them.

Protecting workers and their families from the devastation caused by a fall injury is a duty that we take seriously. We want to do as much as we can for participants in our one-day training course.

As part of IHSA’s commitment to continually improving our health and safety training, we’ve been collecting information from WAH course participants. We wanted to find out how much they’re learning from the course, how long they’re retaining the information, and if their training is reinforced when they return to work.

Knowledge gained

If you’ve taken IHSA’s WAH program, you’ll know that it begins with a pre-test to determine what participants already know and identify where they need to improve. At the end of the day, participants are re-tested to find out what they’ve learned from the course.

The chart below shows the percentage of correct answers to three questions on a random selection of pre- and post-tests. Using this data, we can measure the overall increase in participants’ knowledge at the end of the program. This knowledge will help them work safer and lessen the chances that they will be injured or cause damage on the job. Typically, participants will increase their knowledge by 20% after taking IHSA’s WAH course.

**Increase in Knowledge**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Post-test</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>Recognizing applicable regulations</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>Referencing section 26 of Construction Reg.</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>Recognizing standard-setting organization</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall 20%

NOTE: These results are based on a random selection of 293 participants between July and December 2017.
Vulnerable workers

IHSA offers WAH training in 11 other languages that are commonly spoken in the construction industry. We do this to reach more of our “vulnerable workers”, which includes new Canadians who may not speak the language or know the health and safety legislation.

The learning data we gathered from some of these participants in 2016 showed that less than half knew the proper angle for setting up a portable extension ladder. However, after taking IHSA’s WAH training, more than 90% of them answered that question correctly. This same group increased their knowledge about calculating free fall distance by 62%.

One of the first WAH courses in another language was delivered in Russian in 2015

Knowledge retained

Increasing knowledge by the end of the course is only part of the equation. If participants don’t put this knowledge into action, they may forget it. Also, they may go back to their old habits or try to cut corners to save time.

To combat forgetfulness and complacency, the Ontario Ministry of Labour requires workers to take a half-day refresher course on working at heights every three years. IHSA used some of the data we collected during our one-day WAH course when we developed our half-day WAH Refresher course.

Knowledge retention factors

Three factors are critical to ensuring that the information given to participants is not only remembered but also used on the jobsite:

1. **Dynamic instruction**—IHSA uses highly skilled instructors who can give the participants sector-specific information. From the comments collected at the end of the WAH program, we know that our instructors make a difference.

A random selection of 602 participants, 99.7% said they would recommend this training to others. Some of their comments about the instructors are included on the following page.

2. **Supporting materials**—IHSA provides WAH participants with supplementary products to complement what they’ve learned in training. Aside from their course material, they take home a pocket reference guide, which condenses the course information and makes it easily accessible. Other items such as our Tie Off and WAH posters and stickers can reinforce learned information when participants go back to work.

Earlier this year, IHSA put together a **Falls Kit** that can be ordered for free by emailing doyourpart@ihsa.ca. Visit the **Fall Prevention & Working at Heights** topic page on our website for more information.

3. **Site-specific training**—The most important factor, and one that is often overlooked, is the requirement for employers to provide site-specific WAH training. According to the Construction Projects regulation (213/91):

   26.2 (1) An employer shall ensure that a worker who may use a fall protection system is adequately trained in its use and given adequate oral and written instructions by a competent person.

Adequate oral and written instructions given to a worker should include:

- Informing them about the actual fall hazards they may be exposed to on the jobsite
- Reviewing the procedures for protecting themselves against these fall hazards
- Training them on the particular equipment they will be using on the site.

For more information, download the health and safety advisory on **Working at Heights—Site-Specific Training** (W254) from the Free Products section from the [ihsa.ca](http://ihsa.ca) website.
Commitment to quality

IHSA will continue to collect information about knowledge improvement so that we can keep improving our training programs. This commitment to quality also extends to our products and other services.

These are some of the ways that we maintain the quality of our deliverables and ensure that they comply with health and safety legislation and industry best practices:

- Our health and safety resources are created with input from IHSA subject-matter experts who consult with industry stakeholders and regulatory agencies to ensure the information is accurate and relevant to the industries we serve.
- We have carried out more than 185 audits of our training programs since 2015 to ensure the teaching is consistent and that participants are meeting the learning objectives.
- We analyze test results and the learning experiences of our students to ensure our training is providing the knowledge and skills needed to work safely on the job.

To learn more about IHSA training programs, visit ihsa.ca/training to see what courses are coming up in your area. We also offer courses at the customer’s location and our new state-of-the-art Mobile Classroom can travel to any location.

Comments from participants about IHSA trainers

...was great. He relates it to jobsites.
...was excellent. He made it interesting.
...is good at what he does.

In early 2017, IHSA reached a milestone of 100,000 participants trained in WAH

Senior students from Beaver Brae Secondary and St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Kenora, who are enrolled in a specialist construction program, completed IHSA’s WAH course in March 2017

Products such as the pocket reference guide, posters, and stickers can reinforce WAH training on site.