



# Get the message: struck-by and fall hazards

## What you need to know about the Ministry's current education and enforcement initiatives.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development (MLITSD) is currently engaged in two education and enforcement campaigns: one focused on **struck-by hazards**, the other on **falls from heights** on single-family residential construction jobsites. Ongoing through to spring 2024, the campaigns are meant to raise awareness of both types of hazards and their controls while promoting the internal responsibility system.

The IHSA Safety Podcast spoke with Ministry representatives about the campaigns—and how they can help employers, supervisors, and workers improve compliance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and its regulations.

This article is adapted from episodes 56 and 57 of the IHSA Safety Podcast. The participants' responses have been edited for clarity and brevity. Visit [ihsasafetypodcast.ca](https://ihsasafetypodcast.ca) to hear the full episodes.

### Q What are the reasons for these two campaigns?

A Struck-by incidents are among the leading causes of workplace injury. On busy jobsites, there are so many things happening, and workers are at risk of being struck by vehicles or equipment, or being struck while doing material-handling activities. In 2018, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) stated that 28 per cent of lost-time claims were from workers being struck by objects or equipment. Between 2017 and 2020, there were more than 400 critical injuries and 37 fatalities caused by struck-by incidents.

**Guy Taillon** (Provincial Specialist, Construction Health and Safety Program, Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development)

Looking at the data—including the number of critical injuries and fatalities, as well as a review of Ministry field visits, inspector orders, and any tickets that have been issued—we know that there's a high incidence of falls in single-family housing construction, along with residential re-roofing.

**Cindy Abbey** (Provincial Specialist, Construction Health and Safety Program, Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development)

### Q The campaigns involve Ministry inspectors visiting workplaces. What are inspectors looking for and what should employers expect?

A **GT:** Inspectors are visiting workplaces where there is a risk of being struck, including road construction and material-handling projects. They're looking for compliance with minimum regulatory requirements, such as having traffic management plans, dedicated walkways, and prominent signage. They're also considering questions like: Is the employer providing trained traffic-control personnel and signallers? Is proper PPE, like high-visibility safety apparel, being used? Are equipment operators competent and qualified?

**CA:** For the falls campaign, inspectors are looking to verify whether projects are actually planned and organized to eliminate or reduce fall hazards when working at heights. That includes having plans regarding fall-protection equipment as well as emergency response. At a practical level, they also want to see that:

- Fall-protection equipment is actually being used according to the manufacturer's instructions, and that workers have successfully completed working at heights (WAH) training.
- Supervisors of workers who work at heights have also completed WAH training.
- Appropriate fall-protection systems are in place, and anchors are properly located.

There's also a requirement for workers and supervisors to take basic health and safety awareness training, so inspectors are checking for that, too.

## **Q** What legislation are the campaigns enforcing?

**A** **GT:** The main pieces of legislation are the OSHA and the Regulation for Construction Projects (O. Reg. 213/91). Every person who works on the jobsite—constructors, employers, supervisors, workers, and the joint health and safety committee or health and safety representative—must take part in preventing struck-by injuries. Employers and constructors have to ensure there are adequate traffic protection plans, which include traffic control personnel, devices, barriers, and warning signs. There are training requirements for workers with regard to operating equipment and moving the materials safely. And there are regulatory requirements to ensure equipment and materials are moved and stored in a manner that doesn't endanger workers.

**CA:** The OSHA also has very specific responsibilities for all workplace parties when it comes to preventing falls from heights. And O. Reg. 213/91 is an important point of reference for inspectors looking at fall protection requirements—such as the hierarchy of controls, the presence of guardrails, and the types of fall protection equipment being used—as well as general and site-specific working at heights training requirements.

## **Q** How does the Ministry help employers achieve compliance?

**A** **CA:** We have a landing page on the Ministry's website for workplace health and safety that provides guidance on the OSHA, and you can find out more about our five-year prevention strategy. There are also key links and information related to controlling occupational health and safety hazards in the construction sector: falls, struck-bys, heavy equipment operation, ergonomics, and occupational illness.

**GT:** Ministry inspectors often refer workplace parties who are in need of assistance to IHSA. During their field visits, inspectors share QR codes linking to the IHSA website for relevant resources and training services.



## Improve compliance with IHSA



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**PURCHASE** our pocket-size *Working at Heights Quick Reference Guide* (V001) to help you recognize hazards, inspect equipment, and calculate fall clearance distance: [ihsa.ca/products/v001](https://ihsa.ca/products/v001)



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