

Health and Safety eNews

Oct 2016



Incidents Recently Reported to the OHS Contact Centre

These are summaries recently reported to Alberta OHS. They may help you prevent similar incidents. The summaries are based on information obtained as soon as possible after the incident. They are preliminary and subject to change. As they are they are currently being investigated, no additional information is available at this time.

- Electricians were re-energizing a lighting system. Due to a previously unnoticed crossed contact in the system, a 3-pole breaker tripped causing a spark to be generated on the 347/600 volt line. The electricians were wearing arc flash protective gear at the time. No workers sustained injuries. *Transportation, Communication and Utilities*
- A contractor erected two tiers of scaffolding on uneven ground. The scaffolding wasn't high enough so an extension ladder was secured to the deck of the scaffold to access the area. The scaffolding began to move away from the building. Worker fell from the ladder sustaining a serious ankle injury. *Construction and Construction Trades*

Contact OHS

1-866-415-8690 (toll-free)
780-415-8690 (Edmonton)
TTY: 780-427-9999 (Edmonton)
TTY: 1-800-232-7215

- A maintenance worker was replacing a motor on an electric hospital bed. The worker removed a cotter pin. The bed folded, crushing the worker's right arm between the base of the frame and upper frame containing the mattress. *Public Administration, Education and Health Services*
- An electric utility crew was installing cable in an underground conduit when it jammed. A worker inserted a metal fishing tape into the conduit pipe to pull the cable through. The metal tape contacted an energized component from the transformer, causing an arc flash. The worker received a minor arc flash thermal burn on their cheek. *Transportation, Communication and Utilities*



Focused Inspections by OHS will ensure that vulnerable workers are safe and treated fairly. [Alberta committed to protecting at-risk workers](#)

For your next H&S meeting

It's not scary to start a conversation. Consider showing this award winning Work Safe Alberta [student video](#). It's one of many you'll find [here](#).



15th Annual Alberta Health & Safety Conference

November 7-8, 2016

Edmonton [Registration Information](#)

Q. **Question:** Do we really need to use hard hats with side impact protection?

A.

Answer: Some employers take the simple approach of requiring that all their workers wear them, regardless of hazard or risk exposure. The employer often feels that doing so offers the “highest” level of protection to workers. It’s also an approach that’s easy to police because everyone must wear the same type of hard hat.

The “extra” protection the Styrofoam liner provides is often unnecessary. Most workers normally aren’t exposed to side impact hazards of any kind. And in a hot environment, the extra weight and heat can become unbearable.

“How do I know if we really need side impact protection?” Look beyond the simple presence of a hazard such as suspended load. If you’re lifting the load no higher than waist level, then hard hats with side impact protection offer no meaningful value. If the lift is at or above head level, but workers are prevented from entering the lift area, impact protection is probably unnecessary. These approaches eliminate or control exposure to the hazard, reducing the risk of worker injury. They offer alternatives to a “one size fits all” approach.

By all means identify, then eliminate or control the hazard as required by Part 2 of the OHS Code. But also assess the risk of worker exposure to the hazard. If you can reduce the risk of injury to near zero AND avoid the extra weight and heat caused by the Styrofoam liner, then everyone wins.



By the Numbers

Alberta OHS prosecutions completed 2006-2014 with associated fines and penalties

Year	Number of Prosecutions Completed	Total Penalties (fines, alternate penalties & victim surcharge)	Range of Court Penalties (fines & alternate penalties)
2014	14	\$1,677,050	\$4,000 - \$325,000
2013	7	\$2,615,750	\$35,750 - \$1,500,000
2012	10	\$3,332,500	\$70,000 - \$1,250,000
2011	20	\$3,457,750	\$10,000 - \$400,000
2010	11	\$1,737,250	\$10,000 - \$400,000
2009	7	\$457,225	\$4,025 - \$100,750
2008	22	\$5,083,000	\$45,750 - \$425,000
2007	12	\$1,720,000	\$70,750 - \$350,000
2006	10	\$1,534,500	\$40,000 - \$500,000

Source: <http://work.alberta.ca/occupational-health-safety/summary-of-prosecutions.html>