



Workplace
Safety North



Annual Report 2024-2025

From Recognition to Action: Advancing Health and Safety

WSN Health and Safety Training Centre
and Ontario headquarters in North Bay



WSN Health and Safety Training Centre
and Ontario Mine Rescue headquarters in Sudbury



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About Workplace Safety North

An independent not-for-profit, Workplace Safety North (WSN) is one of four sector-based health and safety associations in Ontario. Headquartered in northern Ontario, WSN administers the Ontario Mine Rescue program, and provides government-approved workplace health and safety training and services for the Ontario mining and forest products industries.

Vision

Every worker, home safe and healthy.

Mission

We are a force for positive action – anticipating and responding to the greatest needs of our clients, and bringing together our partners, members, and diverse communities to build safer, healthier, stronger workplaces.

Values

Compassion, integrity, respect, and team spirit shape who we are and how we work.





Sectors served



Forestry

Structural Wood Logging - Conventional and Mechanical

Milled Wood Products includes wood container, pallet manufacturing, and products

Sawmills

Silviculture

Veneer, Plywood, and Wood Preservation



Paper, Printing, and Converting

Corrugated and Solid Fibre Boxes

Folding Cartons

Paper Products

Printing, Platemaking, and Binding

Pulp, Newsprint, and Specialty Paper



Surface and Underground Mines

Mine Rescue

Nickel and Copper Mines

Gold and Silver Mines

Salt and Gypsum Mines

Mine Drilling

Mining Support Activities

Other Mines



Message from the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer



From Recognition to Action: Advancing Health and Safety

In 2024, Workplace Safety North and Ontario Mine Rescue took meaningful action to strengthen health, safety, and emergency response in workplaces across Ontario. With the dedication of our staff, members, funders, and partners, we made strong progress in innovation, sector impact, and operational excellence.

Receiving the Canada Award for Excellence in Mental Health at Work as well as Great Place to Work Certification shows we don't just talk about leadership and culture - we live it. And recognition is only the beginning.

Over the fiscal year, we introduced new ways to support learning and workplace well-being. Hybrid training offered greater flexibility and access, while our expanded role in the updated WSIB Health and Safety Excellence program made it easier for small businesses to strengthen safety and receive rewards. We also advanced psychological health and safety by releasing new tools to help employers identify risks and build mentally healthy workplaces.

Our new strategic plan sets an inspiring vision for the years ahead, with clear goals to ensure every worker returns home safe and healthy. It guides our decisions, drives our actions, and inspires the best in our staff, Board, Advisory Committees, members, volunteers, and partners.

Please explore this annual report to discover how, together, we're building safer, healthier workplaces.



Derek Budge
WSN Board Chair



Mike Parent
WSN President and Chief Executive Officer

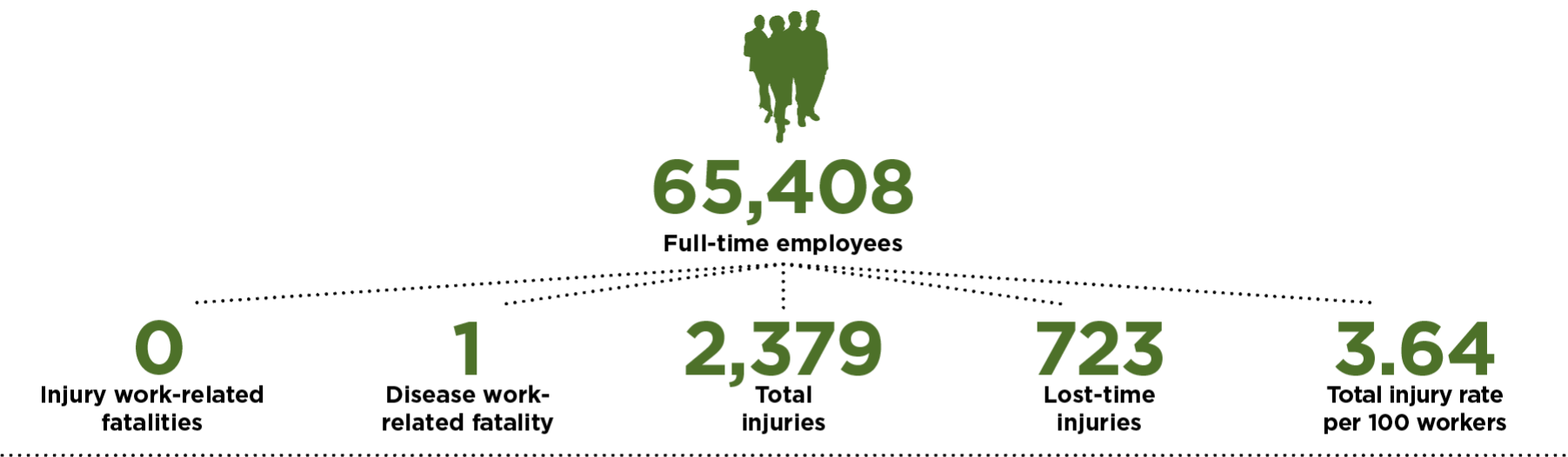


Statistical Overview and Industry Trends



Workplace Health and Safety Snapshot for Ontario Forestry, Paper, Printing, and Converting Sector in 2024

[Click to view full infographic](#)



Events resulting in lost-time injury or illness

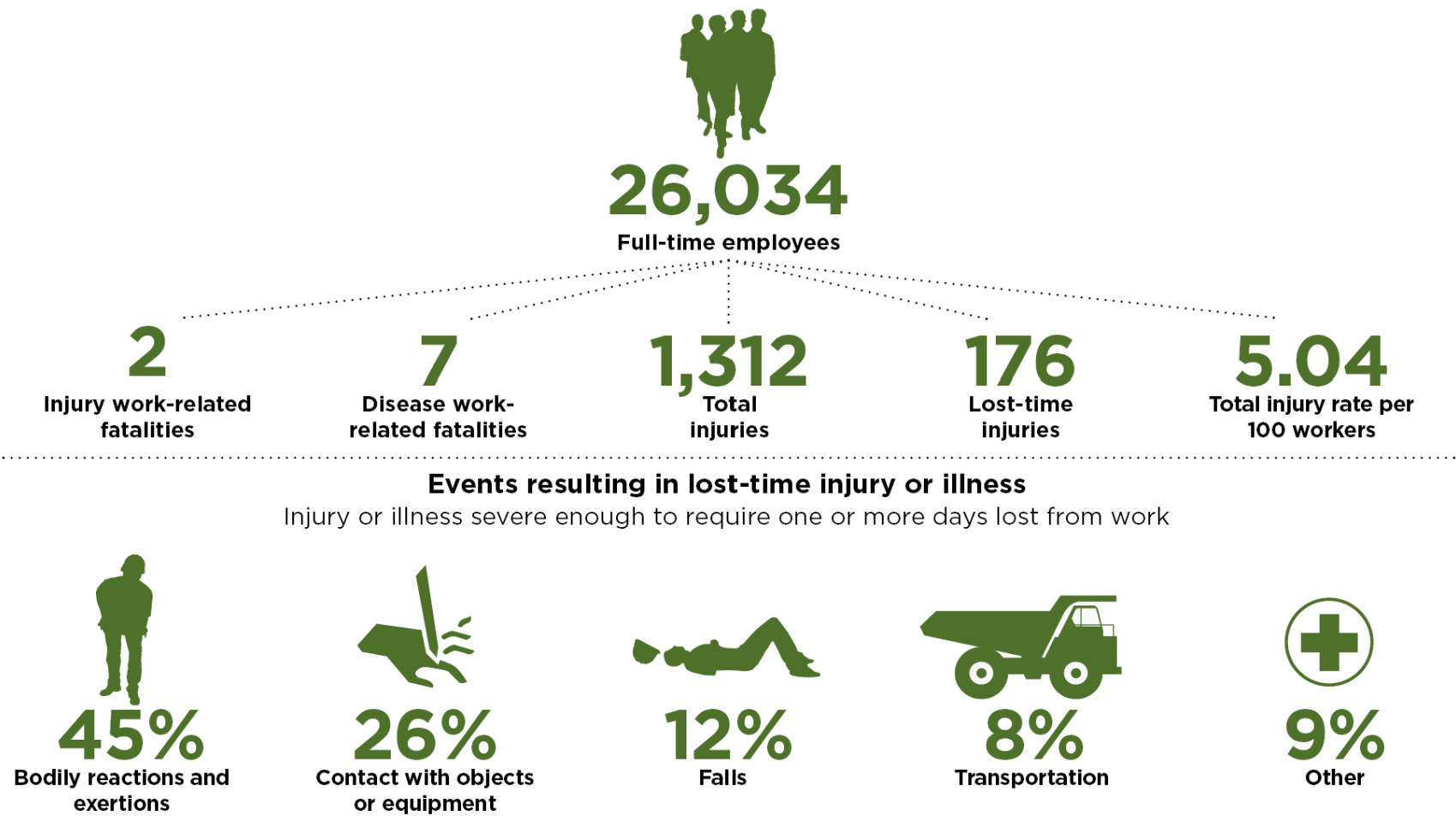
Injury or illness severe enough to require one or more days lost from work





Workplace Health and Safety Snapshot for Ontario Mining Sector in 2024

[Click to view full infographic](#)





Forest Products Sector Statistics

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Forestry				
Full-time equivalent workers	22,704	26,884	23,735	22,933
Lost-time injury rate	2.47	2.1	1.77	1.92
Total injury rate	7.08	6.47	5.89	6.21
Paper, Printing, and Converting				
Full-time equivalent workers	46,689	42,943	45,845	42,475
Lost-time injury rate	0.79	0.70	0.61	0.66
Total injury rate	2.58	2.24	2.14	2.24



Mining Sector Statistics

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Mining – All Sectors				
Full-time equivalent workers	24,971	23,894	26,391	26,034
Lost-time injury rate	1.25	1.25	0.70	0.68
Total injury rate	5.07	5.51	4.53	5.04
Source: Workplace Safety and Insurance Board Enterprise Information Warehouse				
Lost-time injury (LTI) and total injury (TI) frequency rates are a ratio of the injuries reported per 100 full-time equivalent employees (FTE) for the injury year specified.				



The Year in Numbers: Ontario Forest Products and Mining Sectors

Making connections: sharing knowledge and resources

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Activities				
Client consultations	751	889	794	670
Total consulting hours	5,709	4,315	4,278	4,474
Participant training days - Health and Safety Services	6,803	8,782	9,039	7,476
Participant training days - Mine Rescue	5,546	7,304	8,162	7,849
Information products distributed	1,351,797	2,038,369	1,187,935	1,519,311

A photograph of three people in an industrial setting, likely a factory or warehouse. In the foreground, a man with a beard, wearing a grey polo shirt and a high-visibility yellow safety vest, is shaking hands with a woman. The woman is wearing a dark blue button-down shirt and an orange safety vest with reflective white stripes. She is holding a brown clipboard. In the background, another man in a white shirt and yellow safety vest is smiling. The background is filled with industrial equipment, including conveyor belts and overhead lights. The entire image has a green color overlay.

Achievement Highlights



Consulting

670

Client consultations

4,474

Total consultation hours

Training

7,476

Participant training days
Health and Safety Prevention
Services

7,849

Participant training days
Mine Rescue

6

Industry Advisory Committees

40

Firms participating in the Health and Safety
Excellence program

374

Firms participating in Safe Workplace Ontario program

1,519,311

Information products and resources distributed via newsletter, email,
website, and YouTube videos





Demonstrated Excellence in Workplace Culture

Award-winning mental health initiatives and Great Place to Work® certification

- In October 2024, WSN received the prestigious Canada Award for Excellence in the Mental Health at Work category from Excellence Canada.
- In January 2025, WSN was recognized with Great Place to Work® Certification, reflecting its commitment to being an employer of choice.

Building a Culture of Safety at Work

Companies with strong safety cultures are statistically safer

- In 2017, the Institute for Work and Health validated the WSN Climate Assessment and Audit Tool (CAAT) and found that companies with strong safety cultures had fewer cases of injured worker compensation claims.
- With workplace culture integral to its mission, vision, and values, over the past fiscal year, WSN facilitated 13 Climate Assessment and Audit Tool consultations with 13 firms (and 2,997 participants) throughout the province.

[Read more](#)





Workplace Culture Maturity Awards program

The Workplace Culture Maturity Awards program for Ontario mining and forest products companies was introduced in 2024. Congratulations to the top performers:

Vermillion Forest Management Company
CAAT Essentials

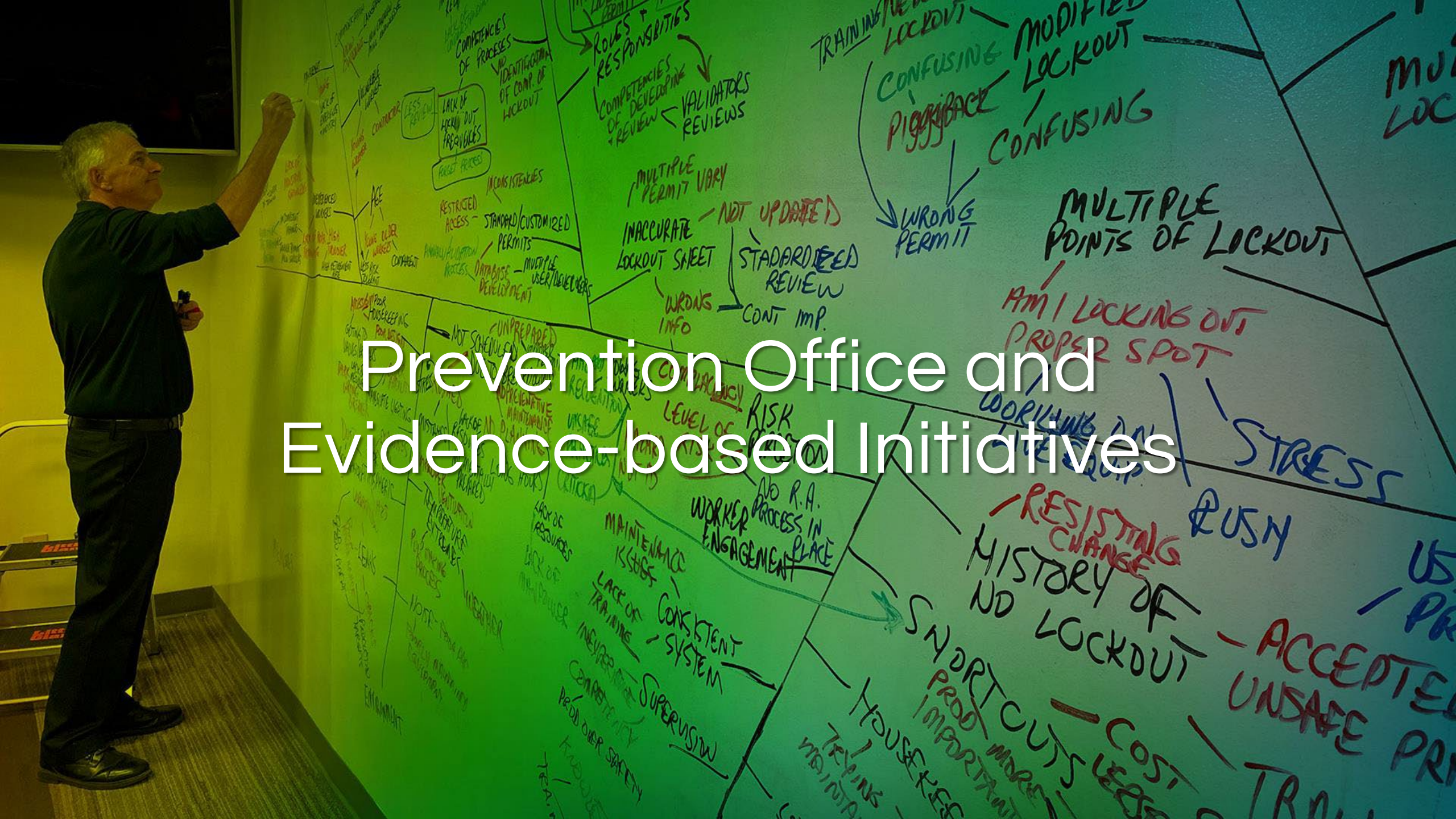
ORIX Geoscience Inc.
IRS CAAT

Consulting Initiatives

WSN had 670 [client consultations](#) and spent 4,474 consultation hours throughout the year to assist firms with the following services:

- WSIB Health and Safety Excellence program
- Auditing
- Common core skills assessment and coaching
- Custom training
- Emergency preparedness and response audits
- Ground control audits and assessments
- Industrial hygiene assistance: dust, noise, designated substances, hazard products, etc.
- Leadership development
- Psychological health and safety
- Safe Work Ontario
- Occupational exposure monitoring programs
- Occupational health and safety program development and improvement
- Risk management and root cause analysis
- Signing authority audit coaching
- Site risk assessments
- Workplace culture assessments (CAAT) and improvement action plans
- Workplace violence risk assessments and programs





Prevention Office and Evidence-based Initiatives

Outcomes of training and consulting activities

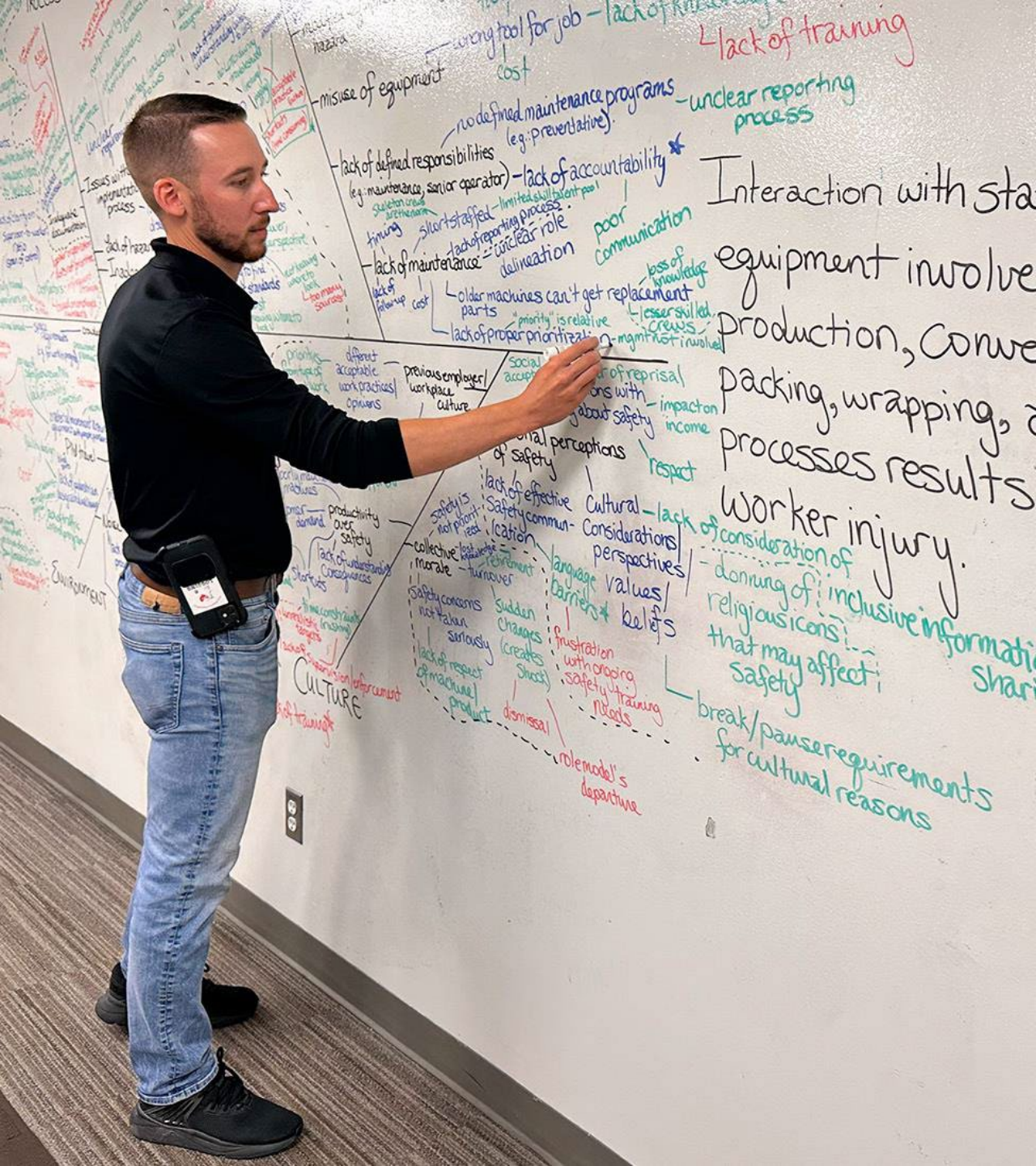
73%

Changed their practice or behaviour

90%

Increased their prevention knowledge





Industry risk assessments and analyses

WSN has embraced the evidence-based approach since its introduction to the Ontario occupational health and safety system.

Two root cause analysis workshops took place in 2024: one supporting the paper products sector, and another looking more into occupational illness in the mining sector.

After more than 10 years of data compilation, WSN developed a series of tools and training courses addressing high-profile hazards and contributing factors with the goal of incident prevention. Notable product releases include:

1. [Lockout/tagout assessment tool](#)
2. [Mining First Line Supervisor Refresher course](#)
3. [The Competent Supervisor Refresher course \(with e-learning option\)](#)

WSN intends to continue its focus on solutions development throughout the next fiscal year to better support industry needs and make workplaces safer.

Help for small businesses with 1-50 employees

4

Educational webinars on prevention

132

New small business occupational health and safety
materials developed

206

Small businesses receiving consultation

1,326

Small business consultation hours

14,263

Small business participant training hours





Health and Safety Excellence program

Workplace Safety North is an approved provider of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) [Health and Safety Excellence program](#).

Through the Excellence program, WSN helps small businesses develop health and safety program material to meet WSIB program requirements and achieve a successful valuation.

Successful firms not only improve workplace safety but also receive a financial reward in the form of a WSIB premium rebate.

40

WSN-sponsored firms advanced their health and safety programs

Ontario Partners in Prevention

WSN regularly works with Ontario health and safety system partners to share information and resources and offer expertise. Many industry and academic partnerships are also formed from ongoing risk-based research and measurement of outcomes.

Centre of Research Expertise for the Prevention of Musculoskeletal Disorders

Centre for Research Expertise in Occupational Disease

Centre for Research in Occupational Safety and Health

Infrastructure Health and Safety Association

Institute for Work and Health

Lakehead University, Thunder Bay

Laurentian University, Sudbury

NORCAT

Occupational Cancer Research Centre

Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers

Ontario Forest Industries Association

Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development

Public Services Health and Safety Association

Sustainable Forestry Initiative

WSN Advisory Committees and Member Firms

Workers Health and Safety Centre

Workplace Safety and Prevention Services

Workplace Safety and Insurance Board



Education Programs and Information Resources





Programs developed because of research

Throughout 2024-2025, WSN developed and enhanced course materials and audit tools that support the results of risk-based workshops.

- [Mining First Line Supervisor Refresher training course](#) was developed from recommendations to address the need for enhanced supervisory due diligence in mining root cause analysis exercises in 2022 and 2023.
- [Supervisor Common Core re-development](#) enhanced outreach through virtual attendance options, supporting more mining firms across the province toward supervisory awareness of emergency preparedness and health and safety legislation

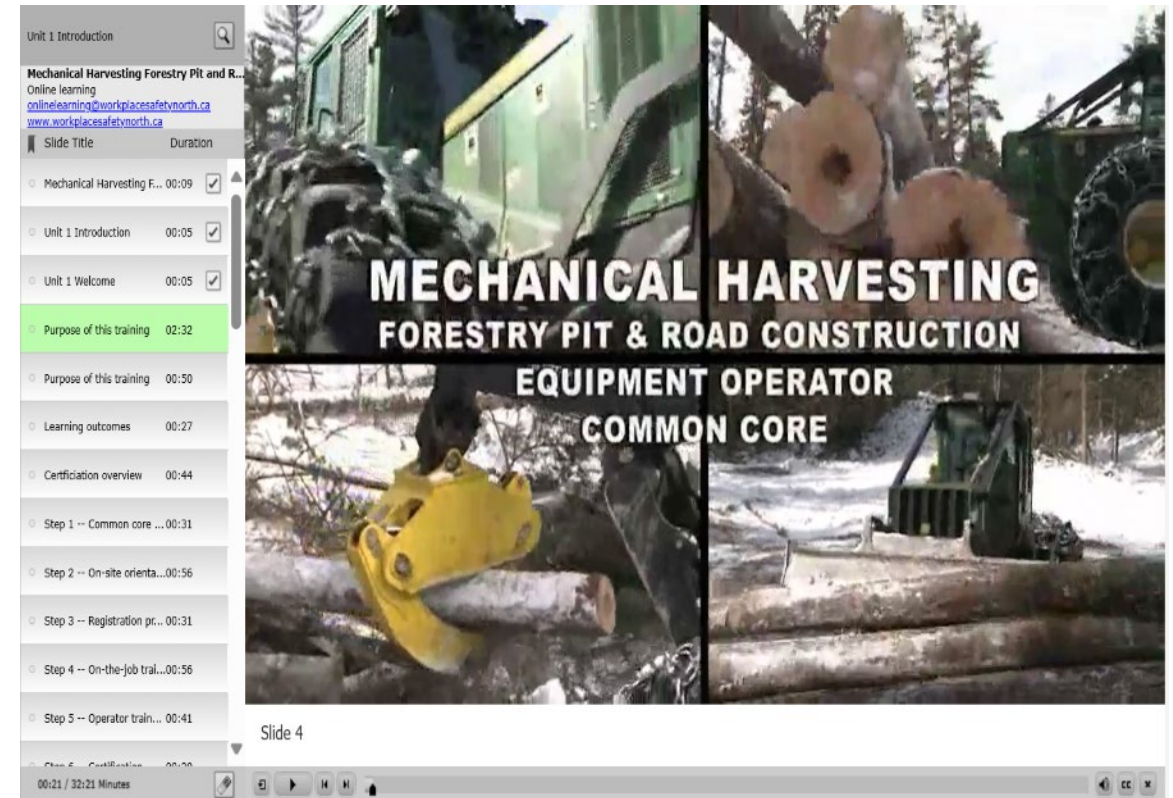
WSN continues to build leading-edge resource and training material using an evidence-based approach, focused on leading indicators to ensure the best results for injury prevention.



Enhancing outreach with innovative e-learning options

New SmarterU learning management system launched December 2024

- Course offerings provided in both French and English
- Simplified navigation and quick links
- Immediate technical troubleshooting and client service
- Training options for joint health and safety committees, health and safety representatives, forestry workers, front line supervisors





New hybrid safety training for Ontario companies

WSN received approval from the Chief Prevention Office to offer [all French-language JHSC Certification courses](#) in an instructor-led virtual training format.

This has enabled WSN to increase access to these legislated courses for committee members across Ontario.

Updated psychological health and safety training offerings

Given ongoing dialogue and focus on mental health at work, WSN released two updated courses with the most current information on this critical topic:

- [Mental Health 101](#)
- [Workplace Mental Health: A Framework for Leaders](#)

In addition, WSN developed a [Mental Health Train-the-Trainer course](#) to introduce those who want to train others within their workplaces to the fundamentals of mental health.





Safe Workplace Ontario

The Safe Workplace Ontario (SWO) designation program provides the essential components required to create and implement an effective health and safety program. Once the program is complete, participating firms continue to receive WSN support toward ongoing monitoring and improvement of their health and safety programs and procedures.

Updated in 2024 to meet new legislative requirements and current industry best practices, this program includes an easy-to-use digital manual and resource library to help employers maintain health and safety information.

[Read more](#)



New resource information

Mental health guide for small businesses: Supporting small business owners toward improvement of workplace mental health, developed by CMHA-certified Psychological Health and Safety Advisors

Spotlight videos: New video series focusing on safety principles and course offerings:

- Safety Spotlight: What is a supervisor?
- Course Spotlight: Working at Heights
- Safety Spotlight: Slips, trips and falls

Lockout/tagout assessment tool: Designed to address evidence-informed source of risk in Ontario workplaces





Raising awareness about important health and safety information

168

New occupational health and safety materials developed

1,519,311

Occupational health and safety materials distributed via email, newsletter,
video, social media, and media

529

Top download: "Handbook of Training in Mine Rescue
and Recovery Operations"

3,321

Top landing page:
"Ontario introduces new workforce law"

21,747

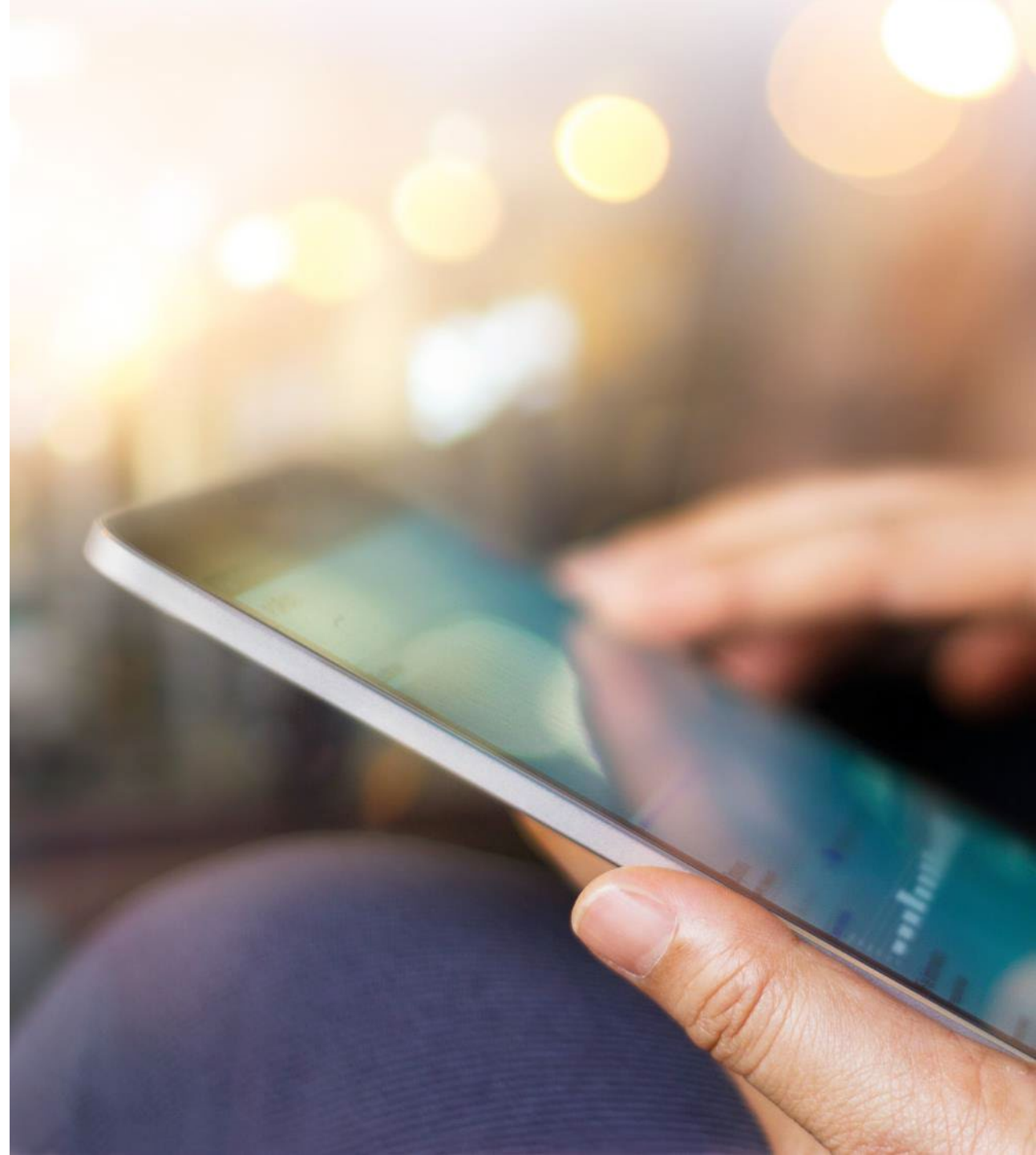
Downloads

485,912

Website visits

659,952

Total page views





30

New videos

502

Participants attending 14 online and in-person events

4,642

Total YouTube watch time hours

14,372

Combined social media audience on LinkedIn, YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram

50,088

YouTube video views

Mining health and safety conference

From April 16 to 18, 2024, WSN hosted the 26th annual mining conference in Sudbury.

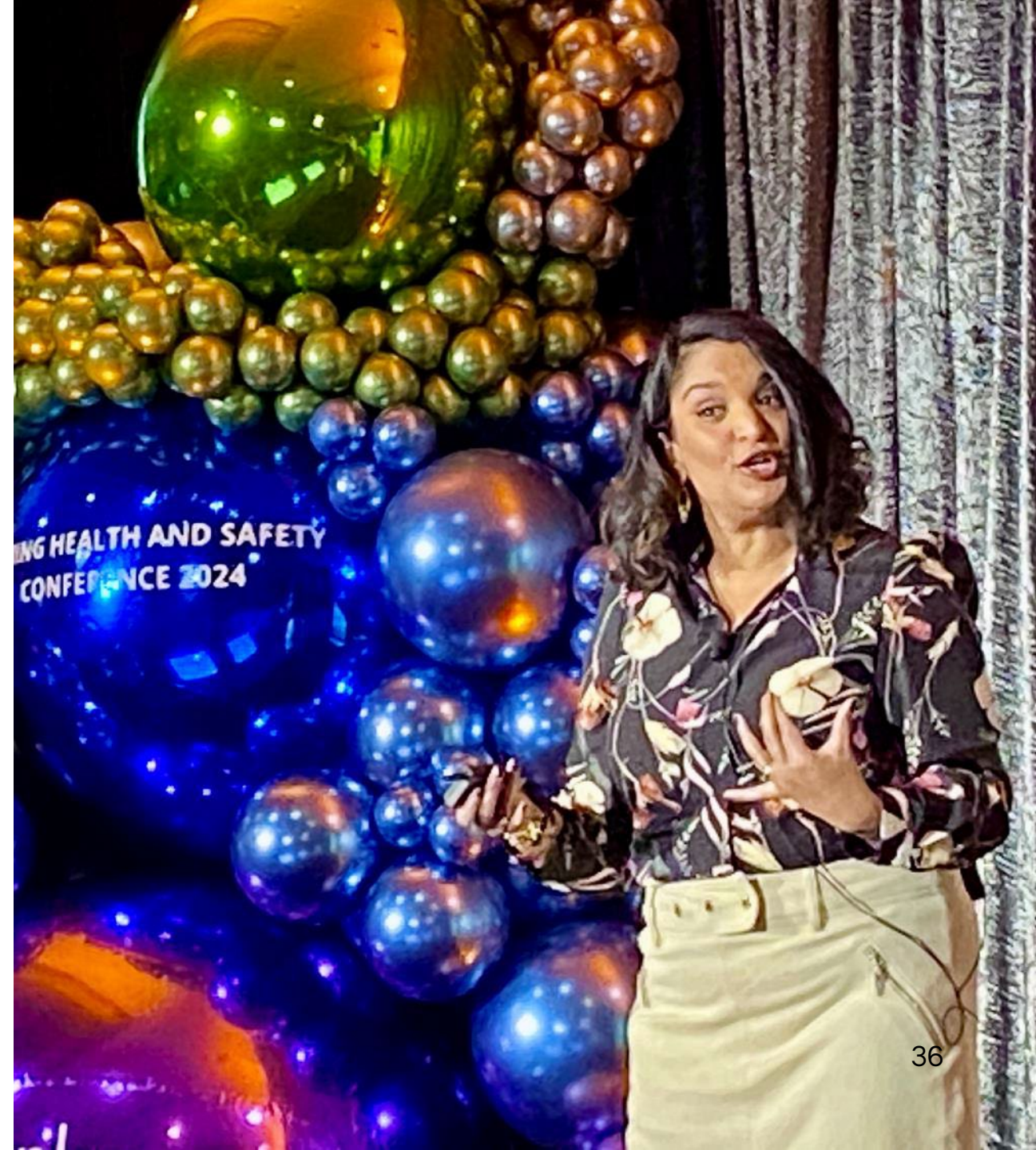
The event gives professionals the opportunity to network and learn about the latest advancements in mining health and safety.

The theme, “Inclusive mines, a safer future,” focused on diversity, equity, and technological advancements to help ensure safer work environments.

Key areas of focus

- High-risk hazards specific to underground work
- Diversity and inclusion
- Workplace well-being and mental health
- Safety culture and management systems
- Research and innovation
- Emergency preparedness and mine rescue

[Read more](#)



A group of five mine rescue workers in orange protective suits and helmets with bright lights are walking through a dark, rocky tunnel. The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source being the workers' headlamps. The tunnel walls are rough and uneven, and the floor appears wet and reflective. The workers are equipped with various gear, including oxygen tanks and communication devices. The overall atmosphere is one of a serious, high-stakes environment.

Ontario Mine Rescue



924

Ontario Mine Rescue volunteer responders

1,086

Mine rescue training sessions

6,160

Hours spent training under oxygen

62,792

Participant training hours

587,950

Kilometres travelled to deliver legislated programs

Ontario Mine Rescue is responsible for a staff of District Mine Rescue Officers, a province-wide inventory of mine rescue response equipment, and the assurance of emergency response capability at all operating mines.

Mine Emergency Incidents

28

Mine rescue operations conducted

1,605

Mine workers forced to take refuge





Mine rescue skills put to the test at annual competition

From June 4 to 7, 2024, Ontario Mine Rescue hosted the provincial competition at an arena in Thunder Bay that was designed to replicate a mine site. The winners were announced at a banquet on the final evening.

[Read more](#)

Agnico Eagle Macassa Mine Rescue Team from the Kirkland Lake District took first place at this year's provincial competition. *Back row (left to right):* Mine Rescue Officer Nick Schwehr, Carlie Dewar, Coach Jonathan Boutin, Denis Dion, Nick Perrier, Hubert Gour, Colin Price, Mine Rescue Officer Shawn Shail; *Front row:* Jason Dicaire, Jean-Francois Racine, April Belecque, Jackson Lafrance, Alamos Gold Technician Garry Bennett

Advancing International Standards in Mine Rescue

This year, Ontario Mine Rescue (OMR) demonstrated international leadership by spearheading the International Mines Rescue Body (IMRB) Rules Subcommittee, working to establish a standardized set of rules and guidelines for future host nations of the International Mines Rescue Competition (IMRC).

As part of this initiative, Chief Mine Rescue Officer Shawn Rideout attended the committee meeting in Poland to contribute to the development of these foundational standards.

In addition, OMR hosted delegates from Zambia, providing guidance and support as they prepare to host IMRC 2026. These efforts reflect OMR's ongoing commitment to advancing mine rescue excellence and fostering global collaboration.



In March 2025, Chief Mine Rescue Officer, Shawn Rideout, attended the International Mines Rescue Body (IMRB) Rules Subcommittee meeting in Bytom, Poland.

A photograph of a desk setup with a laptop, papers, and glasses, overlaid with a green and yellow gradient. The text "Governance and Industry Advisors" is centered in white.

Governance and Industry Advisors



WSN announces Derek Budge as new Board Chair

WSN is pleased to welcome Derek Budge as the new Chair of the Board of Directors. With nearly 40 years of mining industry experience, he brings a strong background in safety and leadership to the role.

Derek is Director of Health, Safety and Environment at Redpath Mining Inc., where he has worked for more than 20 years. His career began underground with Noranda Minerals before progressing into safety leadership roles at operations across Ontario and internationally with Redpath.

He has also served on numerous industry committees, including as Chair of the Ontario Mining Association Mining Rules Committee. Derek brings extensive experience and a strong commitment to workplace health and safety.

[Read more](#)



Board of Directors

Thank you to the WSN Board of Directors for helping ensure accountability, transparency, and excellence in all that Workplace Safety North does.

Derek Budge (Chair)

Health, Safety and Environment Director
The Redpath Group, North Bay

Eric Haapamaki (Vice Chair)

Project Manager
HATCH, Sudbury

Lydia Renton (Past Chair)

Executive Vice President, Health & Safety and Corporate Security Officer
BluMetric Environmental, Ottawa

Andrew Tempelman

Process Technician, Technical Services
Resolute Forest Products, Thunder Bay

Chris Price

General Manager, Health & Safety and Emergency services
Algoma Steel Inc., Sault Ste. Marie

David Kelly

Underground Heavy Equipment Mechanic and Mine Rescue Volunteer
Compass Minerals, Goderich

Jason Bubba

Chief Operating Officer
NORCAT, Sudbury

Louise Caicco Tett

President
Health and Safety Professionals, Sault Ste. Marie

Marilyn Findlay

Health, Safety, Security, Environment Manager
Dryden Fibre Canada, Dryden

Marshall Greensides

Plant Manager
MAX Solutions, Pickering

Sandra Haddad

President
JDB Haddad Legal Services, Sudbury

April 2024-March 2025

Industry Advisory Committees

Helping make Ontario workplaces safer

WSN Advisory Committees are made of up industry volunteers who meet quarterly to discuss industry issues and provide guidance on WSN programming and resource material.

Board and committee volunteers help WSN fulfill its safety mandate and maintain closeness and familiarity with the day-to-day realities of Ontario resource industries.

Companies participate in WSN-sponsored research, planning, and events – all of which have helped to build solid working relationships with the industry.

This collaborative approach helps increase awareness, knowledge, and consistency with regards to the occupational health and safety needs of Ontario workplaces.





Forest Products Advisory Committee

Jesse Kydd (Chair)

Superintendent, Production
GreenFirst Forest Products, Cochrane

Stewart Taylor (Vice Chair)

Health, Safety and Environmental Manager
Graphic Packaging International, Cobourg

Christina Merrett

Environmental, Health and Safety Coordinator
Interfor, Timmins

Dana Greenly

Senior Director, Health and Safety
Atlantic Packaging, Scarborough

Jenanne Graham

Senior Manager, Health, Safety and Environment
Jones Healthcare Group, London

Robin McCullough

Occupational Health and Safety Manager
Brinkman Reforestation, British Columbia and Ontario

Scotia Biloski

Forestry Advisor - Metis Nation of Ontario/Lands, Resources and
Consultations Branch, Thunder Bay

Victor McKee

Safety Superintendent
Domtar, Thunder Bay

Ad-hoc hazard-focused subcommittees:

WSN also initiates and participates in numerous ad-hoc committees, gathering feedback on priority hazards from risk assessment and root cause analysis workshops. Collaboration has led to resource development supporting lockout/tagout hazard management.



Mining Advisory Committee

Michael Ferguson (Chair)

Engineering Manager - Capital Equipment
Boart Longyear, North Bay

Steve Wrixon (Vice Chair)

Vice President - HSE
Cementation Americas, North Bay

Chris Bamberger

Consultant
Mining Health and Safety Training and Operations, Sudbury

Darren Toner

Senior Manager of HSER, Global Exploration, and Geoscience
Vale Base Metals, Sudbury

Don Langlois

Manager, Total Health and Wellness
Alamos Gold, Sudbury

Louise Lowe

Executive Director
Canadian Diamond Drillers Association, North Bay

Robert McVeigh

Product Manager Industrial Minerals
Komatsu Mining/Joy Global Canada, Goderich

Tyler Neeley

Health and Safety Coordinator
McEwen Mining, Timmins

Tom Rannelli

Director of Canadian Operations
GMS Mining Canada, Burlington

Technical Advisory Committees

The WSN Mining Advisory Committee also oversees three Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) made up of volunteers from the mining industry: ground control, mobile equipment, and workplace environment. Thank you to the many volunteers and your sponsoring organizations – your contributions are critical to advancing health and safety.



Ontario Mine Rescue Advisory Committee

Iain McKillip (Chair)

Glencore Kidd Operations

Andre Lefebvre (Vice Chair)

Glencore, Sudbury INO, Fraser Mine

Active Mine Rescue Volunteers' Representative

Brad Bastien

Glencore Sudbury INO, Fraser Mine

Onaping District Industry Representative

Dana Backer

Pan American Silver

Timmins District Industry Representative

Dennis Hogan

Compass Minerals, Goderich Mine

Southern District Industry Representative

Devin Jackson

Impala Canada, Lac des Iles Mine

Thunder Bay District Industry Representative

Greg MacMillan

Vale Canada, Creighton Mine

Sudbury District Industry Representative

Jamie Mortson

McIntyre and Associates

Ontario Mine Contractors Safety Association Industry Representative

Jason Leger

Ontario Mine Rescue Officer Representative

Workplace Safety North

Jason St. Onge

New Gold, Rainy River Mine

Red Lake District Industry Representative

Justin Arsenault

Agnico Eagle, Detour Lake Mine

Kirkland Lake District Industry Representative

Kyle Luce

Barrick, Hemlo Mine

Algoma District Industry Representative

Shaun Carter

Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development

Government MLITSD Representative

Shawn Rideout

Chief Mine Rescue Officer

Workplace Safety North



Workplace
Safety North

Staff Highlights



WSN announces Mike Parent as new President and CEO

The Board of Directors of Workplace Safety North officially appointed Mike Parent, CRSP, CSP, as its President and Chief Executive Officer.

With a background as a paramedic, miner, mine rescue volunteer, and mining health and safety manager, Parent brings a wealth of experience to his new role.

He has been a pivotal figure at WSN since 2015, serving as Vice President of Health and Safety Services, and interim President and CEO. Parent's extensive tenure within Ontario's prevention system has cemented his reputation as a collaborative leader dedicated to health and safety advocacy.

[Read more](#)





Staff Service Loyalty Milestones

5 Years

Christa Joseph
Judith Nelson

10 Years

Brandi Cramer
Mario Langevin
Penny Ratuszniak
Philip Dirige

Retirements

Cindy Trnka
Jerry Traer
Jo-Anne Rousseau
Meg Parker
Tom Welton



Employer-supported volunteer hours in 2024

WSN employees are encouraged to volunteer their time and energy to community causes that are important to them. WSN offers one paid volunteer day per calendar year. In 2024, WSN staff contributed 217.5 employer-supported hours towards community causes important to them.



In January 2025, Ontario Mine Rescue and Positive Inception presented \$8000 donation to the 2025 Miners For Cancer Memorial Hockey Challenge.



Mental Health at Work

In 2024, WSN achieved the Canada Award for Excellence Platinum Certification in Mental Health at Work®.

Excellence Canada's framework aligns with the requirements of the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. The standard ensures success through a focus on policies, practices and programs to achieve measurable results and create a healthier and more productive environment.

[Read more](#)



Great Place to Work

Workplace Safety North is proud to be Great Place to Work® certified. This certification recognizes organizations that are committed to fostering a workplace culture rich in trust, respect, and shared values.

This achievement highlights the strength of the culture at WSN and reinforces its reputation as an employer of choice, attracting and retaining top talent to better serve Ontario workplaces.

[Read more](#)





Strategic Directions

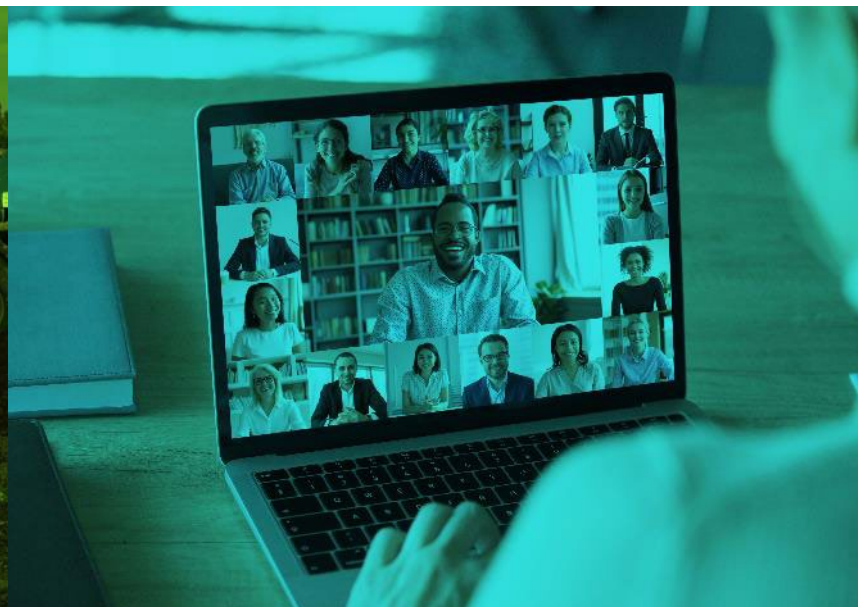


The strategic plan builds on WSN strengths in three intersecting themes for impact: sector impact, digital transformation, and operational excellence.

[View Workplace Safety North Strategic Plan](#)



Sector Impact



Digital Transformation



Operational Excellence



Workplace
Safety North



workplacesafetynorth.ca

[Download financials](#)