Resource

Workplace Safety North

ONTARIO MINE RESCUE



Compliance Pulse Check

Ontario Mining Sector Compliance Resource

Based on compliance findings from:
April 1 to June 30, 2026

Contact: info@workplacesafetynorth.ca

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Compliance Pulse Check Compliance Resource, April 1 to June 30, 2026

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About this resource

The Workplace Safety North Compliance Pulse Check resource summarizes the most common Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD) findings (orders and requirements) in Ontario's mining sector for a set period. The most recent data is used to provide quarterly compliance guidance and tools to drive action by focusing efforts on the highest-risk areas that were discovered throughout the sector.

This information has been prepared to assist workplace parties in understanding their rights and duties under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its regulations, including Regulation 854: Mines and Mining Plants (Reg. 854). This information is not exhaustive and does not constitute legal advice. To determine your rights and duties under OHSA, please contact your legal counsel or refer to the legislation.

Using this resource

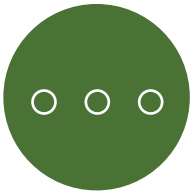
This guide provides an overview of the top hazard areas and themes from the most recent quarter. Symbols throughout the guide indicate additional resources, links, or other information that may assist workplace parties in understanding the hazards and controls available.



Calls to Action
Provide insight on what good *could* look like.



Supporting Tools
Tools to support compliance verification.



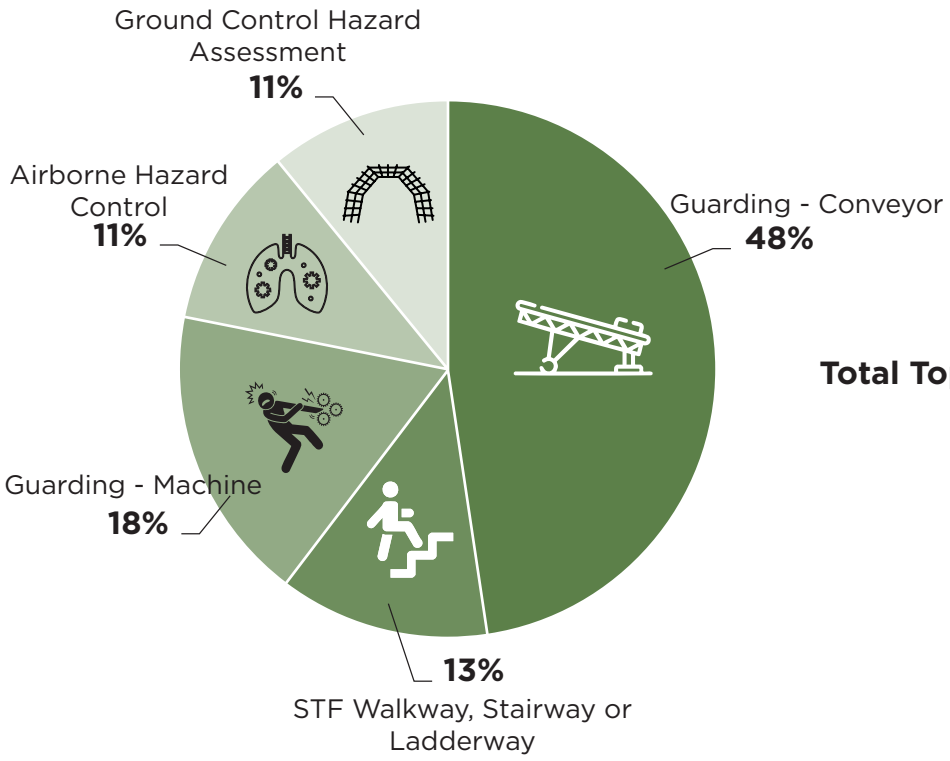
Hazard References
Icons reflective of the associated hazards.



Helpful Links
Websites that may provide additional insight.

Top Orders and Requirements (Reg. 854)

April 1 to June 30, 2026



Total Top Orders: 188

Hazard 1: Guarding Conveyors

Legislative Requirement: Mechanical – Reg. 854, s. 196 (3.1)

*Pinch points referred to in s. 196(3) shall be **guarded by a guard** that, unless it would render the pinch point inaccessible, **extends at least 0.9 m from the pinch point**. (O. Reg. 167/16, s. 12(1))*

Common gaps

- Short "flap" guards that don't reach 0.9 m.
- Missing guards at return rollers near walkways.
- No documented verification after maintenance.
- Appropriate training for workers.

Hazard 2: Machine Guarding

Legislative Requirement: Mechanical – Reg. 854, s. 185(2)

*A machine with an exposed moving part that may endanger any person **shall be fenced or guarded**, unless its position, construction or attachment provides **equivalent protection.** (O. Reg. 31/04, s. 10)*

Common gaps

- Removable guards for quick fix or clear jams without interlocks.
- No documentation supporting "equivalent protection."

Hazard 3: Slip, Trip and Fall – Walkways, Stairways and Ladderways

Legislative Requirement: Access to Workplaces – Reg. 854, s. 54(1),(2)

Walkways, stairways or ladderways shall ***be maintained in a safe condition, free from obstructions, sized to prevent crowding, and cleared of hazardous accumulations without undue delay****.*

Openings in floors and surfaces that may be a hazard must be ***guard-railed*** *or* ***securely covered*** *(capable of the load). (R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 854, s. 54)*

Common gaps

- "Temporary" plywood covers not fastened/graded.
- Hoses and cables across aisles; buildup on treads.
- Blocked walkways and improper housekeeping impacting working surfaces.

Hazard 4: Ground Control Hazard Assessment

Legislative Requirement: Protection of Workers – Reg. 854, s. 66(1)

Before work is begun in a workplace in an underground mine, the ***ground conditions of the workplace shall be examined*** *for dangers and hazards and, if required, made safe. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 854, s. 66 (1).*

Common gaps

- Incomplete ground support inspections.
- Inadequate quality control program for inspections.

Hazard 5: Airborne Hazard Control

Legislative Requirement: Working Environment – Reg. 854, s. 266

Where dust or other material is likely to cause a hazard by becoming airborne, ***the dust, or other material, shall be removed*** *with a minimum of delay by,*

(a) vacuuming;
(b) wet sweeping;
(c) wet shovelling; or
(d) other suitable means. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 854, s. 266.

Common gaps

- Inadequate practices (including frequency, assignment) of airborne hazard removal practices.
- Limited use of dust suppression systems or appropriate equipment to remove airborne hazards where needed.



Call to Action & Supporting Tools

This section contains insight and supporting tools (verification checklists) that can be used during inspections for each of the top hazards identified during compliance initiatives. Use each checklist to help determine your current degree of compliance with legal requirements to ensure the health and safety your workforce.

Note: These checklists are tools to **support** compliance verification.

Employers are responsible for ensuring full compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and O. Reg. 854.

Conveyor Guarding

What Good Could Look Like

- Fixed (not makeshift) guards installed at all in-running nips and pinch points on belts, tail and head pulleys, snub and idler rollers, take-ups.
- Guard **length** ≥ **0.9 m** along the approach to the pinch point (unless the pinch point is already inaccessible).
- Guards secured with tool-required fasteners; interlocks where frequent access is required.
- Safe work procedure for inspection and cleaning (no hands or tools near running belts).

Key Compliance Actions

Verify Hazard Controls

- Measure guard extension; Test: “Does it move?”, “Can I touch it?”, “Can it hurt me?” test (no reach path to nip).
- Verify no removed or bypassed guards after maintenance.
- Check line-of-fire and pull-cord e-stops at access points.
- Verify LOTO points, training workers in relevant procedures and processes.
- Train workers in applicable SOPs including those associated with maintenance and cleaning.
- Supervise workers and ensure proper supervisor training.

Prove it!

- Guarding inventory with photos, measurements, and risk ranking.
- Supervisor field inspections and observation of safe work practices.
- Pre-shift conveyor inspection checklist; corrective work orders and close-out.
- Lockout tagout and other appropriate training and records.
- Safe operating procedures for working around conveyors and belt tracking and cleaning.

Helpful Resources

Conveyor Guarding in Mines – MLITSD Guideline

Guidance published by the MLITSD to assist in complying with legal requirements for guarding conveyors in mining.

Lockout and Guarding Resources – Workplace Safety North

Several resources developed by industry experts to assist organizations in understanding conveyor hazards and determining appropriate controls.

Conveyor Guarding Compliance Verification Checklist (Reg. 854 Section 196 for Mines and Mining Plants)

This checklist is designed to help Ontario mining workplaces assess compliance with conveyor guarding requirements under Section 196 of Reg. 854 (Mines and Mining Plants). Supervisors and joint health and safety committees can use this tool to verify guarding, documentation, and safe work practices are in place.

	Inspection Item	Requirement (O.Reg.854)	Compliant (Yes/No)	Notes/Corrective Actions
1	All conveyor pinch points are guarded with a fixed guard extending at least 0.9 m from the pinch point.	s.196(3.1) – Guarding of pinch points	Select	
2	Guards are securely fastened and not easily removed without tools.	s.196(3) – Guard must prevent access to moving parts	Select	
3	Where guards cannot be used, the pinch point is otherwise rendered inaccessible.	s.196(3.2) – Exemption if point is inaccessible	Select	
4	Pull-cord emergency stop devices are installed and tested at accessible locations along conveyors.	s.196(4) – Emergency stopping devices required	Select	
5	Guards are in place after maintenance or cleaning (not bypassed or left off).	General duty – Safe condition maintained	Select	
6	Safe work procedures (LOTO) are in place for inspection, cleaning, or maintenance near conveyors.	OHSA s.25(2)(h) – Take every precaution reasonable	Select	
7	Workers have been trained and instructed in conveyor hazards, guarding, and emergency stop use.	OHSA s.25(2)(a) – Provide instruction to workers	Select	



Machine Guarding

What Good Could Look Like

- Physical guards or engineered safeguarding (fixed, interlocked, presence-sensing) on shears, presses, drill or mill spindles, crushers, mixers, agitators, fans.
- "Equivalent protection" documented via risk assessment and engineering sign-off.

Key Compliance Actions

Verify Hazard Controls

- Try to reach the hazard zone with a probe or hand — if yes, guard is inadequate.
- Interlocks stop motion **and** prevent restart on opening.
- Conduct pre-work inspections to ensure guards are not defective.
- Training workers in working safety around machinery and prime movers.
- Supervise workers and ensure proper supervisor training.

Prove it!

- CSA Z432 aligned risk assessments.
- Guarding design drawings, interlock validation, change log.
- Operator training, supervisor job safe observation and skills verification for operator, and JHSC inspection notes.
- Supervise workers and ensure proper supervisor training.

Helpful Resources

Conveyor Guarding in Mines – MLITSD Guideline

Guidance published by the MLITSD to assist in complying with legal requirements for guarding conveyors in mining.

Lockout and Guarding Resources – Workplace Safety North

Several resources developed by industry experts to assist organizations in understanding conveyor hazards and determining appropriate controls.

Machine Guarding Compliance Verification Checklist (Reg. 854 – Section 185, Mines and Mining Plants)

This checklist is designed to help Ontario mining workplaces verify compliance with machine guarding requirements under Section 185 of Reg. 854 (Mines and Mining Plants). Supervisors, safety representatives, and joint health and safety committees can use this tool to assess guarding and ensure safe operation of machinery.

	Inspection Item	Requirement	Compliant (Yes/No)	Notes/Corrective Actions
1	All machines with exposed moving parts that may endanger a worker are fenced or guarded.	s.185(2) – Must be fenced or guarded unless equivalent protection provided	Select	
2	Guards prevent worker contact with nip points, shear points, rotating parts, and other hazardous motions.	s.185(2) – Guarding against endangerment	Select	
3	If guarding is not practicable, machine construction, position, or attachment provides equivalent protection.	s.185(2) – Equivalent protection permitted	Select	
4	Interlocked guards stop machine motion when opened or removed, and prevent restart until safe.	Best practice aligned with s.185 – Safe design of guards	Select	
5	All fixed guards are securely fastened and cannot be easily removed without tools.	General duty – Prevent worker exposure to moving parts	Select	
6	Safeguards do not create additional hazards (sharp edges, pinch points, poor visibility).	General duty – Guard must protect without adding risk	Select	

	Inspection Item	Requirement	Compliant (Yes/No)	Notes/Corrective Actions
7	Safe work procedures (lockout/tagout) are in place for inspection, cleaning, maintenance, and repair.	OHSA s.25(2)(h) – Employer duty to take every precaution reasonable	Select	
8	Workers are trained in machine-specific hazards, safe use of guarding, and emergency stop procedures.	OHSA s.25(2)(a) – Employer duty to provide information, instruction, supervision	Select	

Walkway, Stairway and Ladderway

What Good Could Look Like

- 3-point contact access routes.
- Clean walking and working surfaces that allow for proper balance, traction or grip.
- Floor openings either guard-railed or covered and fastened; covers labelled with safe load.
- Aisle widths sized for traffic and work (people + tools and materials) while respecting fire code requirements for means of egress.

Key Compliance Actions

Verify Hazard Controls

- Establish and enforce housekeeping standards.
- Walk every access at shift start; remove trip hazards; verify anti-slip treads.
- Try to lift any cover — if it moves, it's non-compliant.
- Check lighting and hand clearance at ladders.
- Train workers in proper housekeeping, hazard and defect equipment reporting.
- Supervise workers and ensure proper supervisor training.

Prove it!

- Housekeeping routes and response times; winter plan.
- Inspections with photos and timestamps; work orders for repairs or maintenance.
- Safe operating procedures and training records for maintaining safe walking and working surfaces and creating and removing floor openings.

Helpful Resources

Preventing Slips, Trips, and Falls in the Workplace – MLITSD Guideline

Guidance published by the MLITSD to assist organizations in minimizing risk and preventing slips, trips and falls.

Fall Prevention Resources – Workplace Safety North

Several resources developed by industry experts to assist organizations in understanding fall hazards and determining appropriate controls.

Walkway, Stairway, and Ladderway Compliance Verification Checklist (Reg. 854 – Section 54, Mines and Mining Plants)

This checklist is designed to help Ontario mining workplaces verify compliance with walkway, stairway, and ladderway requirements under Section 54 of Reg. 854 (Mines and Mining Plants). Supervisors, safety representatives, and joint health and safety committees can use this tool to identify hazards and document corrective actions.

	Inspection Item	Requirement	Compliant (Yes/No)	Notes/Corrective Actions
1	Walkways, stairways, and ladderways are maintained in a safe condition.	s.54(1)(a) – Must be maintained in a safe condition	Select	
2	All access ways are free from obstructions and tripping hazards.	s.54(1)(b) – Must be free from obstructions	Select	
3	Access ways are of sufficient size to prevent crowding during normal use.	s.54(1)(c) – Must be of sufficient size to ensure no crowding	Select	
4	Hazardous accumulations of material (ice, water, muck, slurry, etc.) are cleared without undue delay.	s.54(1)(d) – Must be cleared of hazardous accumulations	Select	
5	Any floor or surface opening that may be a hazard to a worker is protected by a guardrail.	s.54(2)(a) – Openings must have guardrail protection	Select	
6	Any floor or surface opening that may be a hazard is covered with securely fastened planks or material capable of supporting expected loads.	s.54(2)(b) – Openings must be securely covered	Select	

	Inspection Item	Requirement	Compliant (Yes/No)	Notes/Corrective Actions
7	Covers for openings are secured so they cannot be easily displaced and are clearly identified.	Best practice – Derived from s.54(2) requirements	Select	
8	Workers using walkways, stairways, and ladderways are trained in safe access practices.	OHSA s.25(2)(a) – Provide instruction to workers	Select	

Ground Control Hazard Assessment

What Good Could Look Like

- Include ground control hazards in larger hazard or risk register.
- Quality control program, including job observations of ground support installation and check scaling practices, and frequency of control inspections, evaluations, and acceptance criteria.
- Inspection practices, including scaling assessments, ensuring ground support systems are installed per ground support standards, proper storage and availablity of ground support products, drilling and blasting control practices, examining housekeeping, and ensuring adequate ventilation.
- Recording unusual ground conditions on a Ground Condition Report.

Key Compliance Actions

Verify Hazard Controls

- Identification of ground control and ground support installation hazards in risk register and hazard/risk reports.
- Training and instruction on ongoing monitoring and recognition of ground control and ground support installation hazards.

Prove it!

- Ground condition reports.
- Job observation forms and hazard analyses.
- Completed field level risk assessment and safety system cards.
- Routine inspection reports completed for ongoing monitoring.
- Training records and standards.

Helpful Resources

Ground Control in Underground Mines – MLITSD Guideline

Guidance published by the MLITSD describing legal requirements for ground control programs in underground mines.

Ground Control Resources – Workplace Safety North

Several resources developed by industry experts to assist organizations in understanding ground control hazards and determining appropriate controls.

Ground Control Hazard Assessment Compliance Verification Checklist (Reg. 854 – Section 66(1), Mines and Mining Plants)

This checklist is designed to help Ontario mining workplaces verify compliance with ground control hazard assessment requirements under Section 66 of R.R.O Reg. 854 (Mines and Mining Plants). Supervisors, safety representatives, and joint health and safety committees can use this tool to assess safe condition, operation, and inspection of ground conditions.

Inspection Item		Requirement	Compliant (Yes/No)	Notes/Corrective Actions
1	Employer conducts risk assessment	s.5.1(1) – Identifies hazards, assesses risk, notes how to manage hazards	Select	
2	Maintained mine design documentation	s.6(2) – Consists of drawings, plans, specifications, and procedures	Select	
3	Pillars are applied to provide ground support	s.19(4) – Pillar dimensions and mining methods provide support to control failures	Select	
4	Written communication program in place and applied	s.65(1)(2) – Plan has mechanisms for timely communication of ground control hazards	Select	
5	Ground condition identification	s.66(1) – Ground conditions are assessed before work takes place	Select	
6	Quality control program is in effect	s.73(1) – Plan is applied to ensure support system in mine design are properly installed and effective	Select	



Airborne Hazard Control

What Good Could Look Like

- Dust control equipment is readily available, properly maintained, and ready for immediate use whenever dust-generating activities occur.
- Workers demonstrate a strong understanding of dust control practices, procedures, and site-specific standards.
- Field-level risk assessments consistently identify dust hazards and include appropriate control measures.
- A rapid response process is in place to assess, control, and mitigate unusual or excessive dust generation at worksites.
- Dedicated personnel with responsibility for dust control are available on every shift to support implementation and compliance.
- Dust control measures are routinely monitored and adjusted to ensure they remain effective throughout the work activity.
- Occupational Expoure monitoring plan is developed and followed to identify.
- An occupational exposure monitoring plan is developed, documented, and consistently followed to assess worker exposure to dust and other airborne hazards.

Key Compliance Actions

Verify Hazard Controls

- Joint Health and Safety Committee inspections include verification of the effectiveness of dust control measures and identification of opportunities for improvement.
- Job observations are conducted regularly to assess the implementation of dust control measures and compliance with established procedures and standards.
- Field-Level Risk Assessment cards are reviewed with workers to confirm that dust hazards have been identified and appropriate controls are in place.
- Site inspections verify that dust control equipment is available, functioning properly, and maintained in good condition.
- Refresher training on airborne hazards, dust exposure risks, and control measures is provided to all employees at regular intervals.
- Corrective actions identified during inspections, observations, or monitoring activities are documented, tracked, and completed in a timely manner.
- Supervisors routinely verify that workers are applying required dust control practices and using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Occupational exposure monitoring results are reviewed to confirm that existing controls are effective in maintaining exposures below applicable limits.
- Lessons learned from incidents, audits, inspections, and monitoring activities are communicated and incorporated into continuous improvement efforts.

Airborne Hazard Control

Key Compliance Actions

Prove it!

- An airborne hazard management program has been developed in consultation with the JHSC and is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current hazards, regulatory requirements, and controls.
- An occupational exposure monitoring plan is reviewed and updated at least annually, with sampling completed according to the established schedule and recognized sampling practices.
- Airborne hazard risk assessments are completed and reviewed annually, or whenever workplace conditions change, with consideration given to previous exposure monitoring results.
- Records of dust control equipment inspections, field visits, audits, and corrective actions are maintained and readily available.
- Inspection and preventive maintenance records demonstrate that dust control equipment and ventilation systems are functioning as intended.
- Training records verify that workers and supervisors have received initial and refresher training on airborne hazards, dust control measures, and applicable standards.
- Respiratory protection fit-testing records are maintained where protective equipment is required.
- Procurement and inventory records demonstrate the availability of critical dust control equipment, supplies, and replacement parts.
- Where applicable, records show that designated substance control programs have been reviewed and updated to meet current requirements.
- Ventilation system assessments, testing reports, and maintenance records demonstrate compliance with applicable standards and verify system effectiveness.
- Occupational exposure monitoring reports demonstrate that exposure levels are being tracked and that controls are effective in maintaining worker exposures as low as reasonably achievable.
- Records of incident investigations, worker concerns, and corrective actions related to dust or airborne hazards are documented and tracked to completion.
- Internal audits and management reviews verify ongoing compliance with airborne hazard management requirements and identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

Helpful Resources

Airborne Hazard Management Program – MLITSD Guideline

Information about legislated requirements and best practices for workplaces to develop an airborne hazard management program.

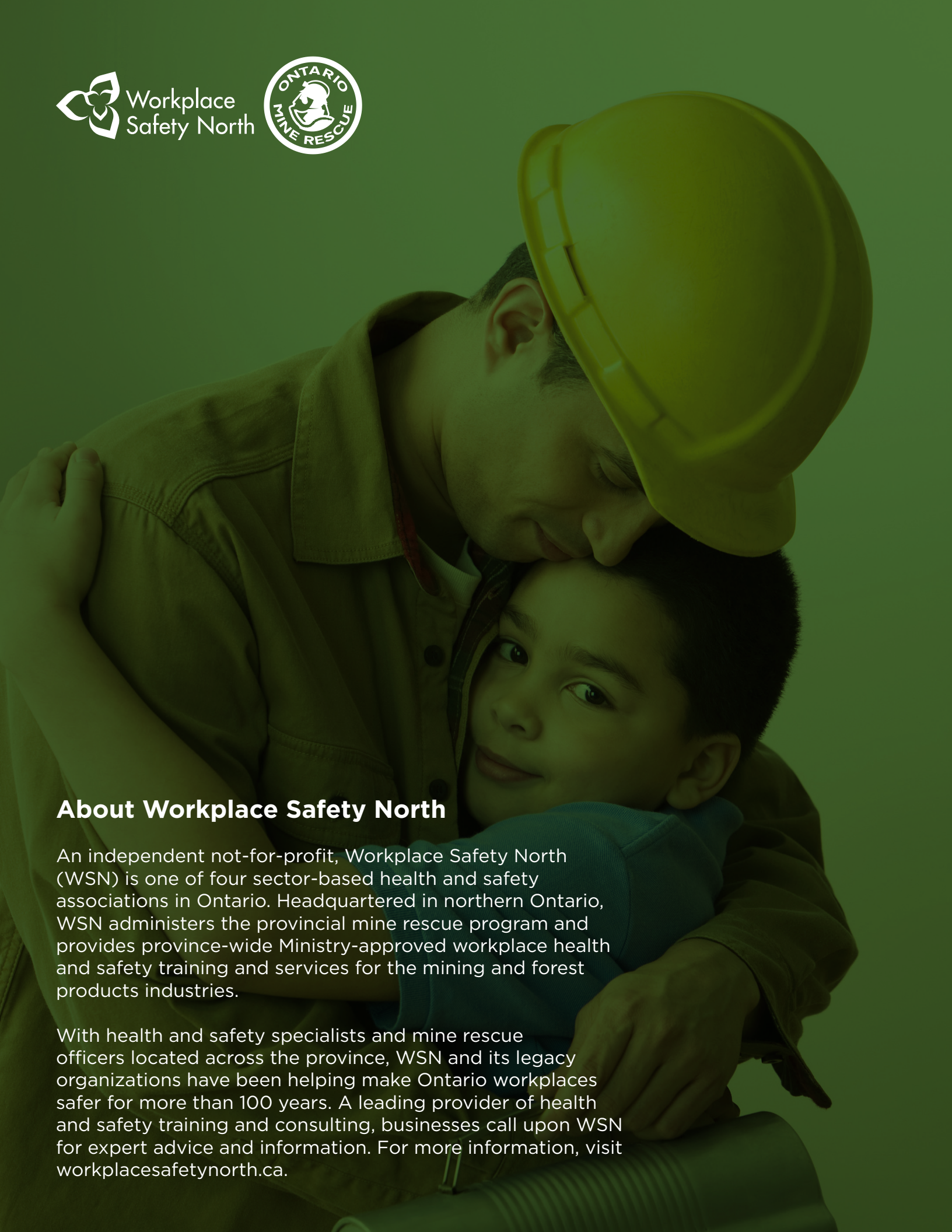
Reference Document and Suggested Elements for Preparing an Airborne Hazard Management Program – Workplace Safety North

Recommendations designed to assist Ontario mining firms in developing a written program required under Section 182 of the Mines and Mining Plants Regulation.

Airborne Hazard Control Compliance Verification Checklist (Reg. 854 – Section 266, Mines and Mining Plants)

This checklist is designed to help Ontario mining workplaces verify compliance with airborne hazard control requirements under Section 266 of R.R.O Reg. 854 (Mines and Mining Plants). Supervisors, safety representatives, and joint health and safety committees can use this tool to assess safe condition, operation, and inspection of practices supporting airborne hazard management.

Inspection Item		Requirement (O. Reg. 854, s.46)	Compliant (Yes/No)	Notes/Corrective Actions
1	Timely removal of airborne hazards	s.266 – Removal of materials with a minimum of delay	Select	
2	Appropriate practices in place for removal of airborne materials	s.266 – Vacuuming, wet sweeping, wet shovelling, or other means are applied as appropriate	Select	
3	Airborne hazard management program is in place	s.182(1) – Plan is developed in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee	Select	
4	Airborne hazard management program addresses all requirements	s.182(2) – Plan includes identified hazards and measures for their control (what, who, and how)	Select	
5	Ventilation systems are installed and functioning as required	s.252(1) – Ventilation system removes contaminants and cycles clean air	Select	
6	Ongoing monitoring of airborne hazards and associated cleanup measures	General duty – Routine collection and disposal of airborne agents as appropriate during a workshift	Select	



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 provincial mine rescue program and provides province-wide Ministry-approved workplace health and safety training and services for the mining and forest products industries.

With health and safety specialists and mine rescue officers located across the province, WSN and its legacy organizations have been helping make Ontario workplaces safer for more than 100 years. A leading provider of health and safety training and consulting, businesses call upon WSN for expert advice and information. For more information, visit workplacesafetynorth.ca.