

# Falls Blitz

## February - March 2013

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*Industrial Health & Safety Program*

**Safe At Work Ontario**  
Enforcement > Compliance > Partnership >

**Ministry of Labour**

## Note:

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This presentation has been prepared to assist the workplace parties in understanding their obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and the regulations. This document does not constitute legal advice. To determine your rights and responsibilities under OHSA, please contact your legal counsel or refer to the legislation.

## Objectives

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- To provide an overview of the Ministry of Labour Falls Blitz, February through March, 2013
- To outline the Ministry of Labour's (MOL) expectations and the focus of MOL inspectors
- To provide information about resources to assist workplace parties

## Safe At Work – Compliance Strategy

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- *Safe At Work Ontario* (SAWO) is the Ministry of Labour's compliance strategy which is designed to:
  - improve the health and safety culture of workplaces,
  - reduce workplace injuries and illness,
  - lessen the burden on the health care system,
  - avoid costs for employers as a result of work related WSIB claims, and
  - provide a level playing field for compliant employers
- *Safe At Work Ontario* is risk based, and focuses on sector hazards and on building and sustaining a health and safety culture in the workplace.
- For additional information, see the Ministry of Labour SAWO website:  
<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/sawo/index.php>

## Safe at Work Ontario - Principles

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### 1. Enforcement

- The MOL has the responsibility and mandate to enforce the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and its regulations.

### 2. Compliance

- Through enforcement, cooperation, partnership and education of workplace parties to create a culture of prevention.

### 3. Partnership

- Enhanced partnerships will lead to fewer injuries.
- The key to workplace health and safety in Ontario is the Internal Responsibility System (IRS). Employers, supervisors, workers, their health and safety associations and the government all have key roles to play in taking responsibility for health and safety in the workplace, leading to the elimination of workplace injuries and deaths. A strong IRS can lead to a strong culture of health and safety.

## Falls Blitz

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Why focus on falls?

~20 per cent of workplace injuries are related to slips, trips and falls.

~27 per cent of fatalities reported to the Industrial Program are the result of workplace falls.

According to the WSIB, falls continue to represent over 17 per cent of the lost time claims by event type since 2002 (WSIB Statistical 2010)

As a result, falls have been identified in the Safe at Work Ontario strategy as one of the hazards that should be focussed on in order to reduce injuries and create safer workplaces.

## Highlights and Summary of Blitz

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### Timing

- Beginning February 1, 2013 and ending March 30, 2013

### Major Focus Workplaces/Sectors

- Restaurants
- Tourism, Recreation and Hospitality
- Food, Beverage and Tobacco
- Vehicle Sales and Service
- The “Broader” Education sector

**Note:** Additional sub-sectors may be visited

## Sector Focus

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**Restaurants:** The restaurant sub-sector is made up of restaurants, take-out food establishments, caterers, taverns, bars and nightclubs

**Tourism, Recreational and Hospitality:** The tourism, recreational and hospitality sub-sector is made up of lodging houses, laundries, golf courses, clubs, hotels, motels, amusement and recreation camp grounds, trip and wilderness guides, theme parks, casinos, marinas, trailer parks, ski resorts, personal and household services

## Sector Focus...cont'd

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**Food, Beverage, and Tobacco:** This sub-sector includes workplaces that produce and/or manufacture food products, beverages, distillery, brewery products, wine products, and tobacco products. It also includes slaughter houses and meat, fish and poultry processing plants

**The broader education sector:** is made up of early education centres, elementary, secondary, and post-secondary schools, colleges, universities, driving schools, and other educational services such as libraries and museums

**Vehicle Sales and Service:** The vehicle sales and services sub-sector is made up of automobile and truck sales (new and used), auto body repair shops, tow trucks, general garage repairs, muffler repair shops, vehicle glass repair and gas stations

## Hazards Focus

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Ministry of Labour Industrial Health and Safety Program inspectors will look for hazards that can cause workers to slip, trip or fall.

There will be a three-pronged approach including:

- **Same-level falls (trips and slips),**
- **Falls from ladders and mobile ladder stands and platforms, and**
- **Falls from heights.**

Under Safe at Work Ontario, inspectors will also take the appropriate enforcement action should other contraventions of the OHSA be identified in the course of their inspection

## Same level falls – slips and trips

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Employers should:

- Advise and train workers about risks in their job and in the workplace
- Encourage workers to participate in the health and safety program through reporting of slip, trip and fall hazards
- Identify and assess job-related hazards
- Establish controls to reduce workers' exposure to slip, trip and fall hazards
- Make sure that preventive measures are working by providing adequate supervision

## Controlling hazards

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Under the OHSA, the employer must take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of workers. Employers must also provide information, instruction and supervision to workers to protect their health and safety.

When establishing safe work practices for your workplace, consider:

- Characteristics of physical work area
- Weather conditions (snow, ice, rain)
- Tasks performed
- Workers' work practices
- Equipment

## Common slip, trip hazards.....

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When looking for slip, trip and fall hazards in your workplace, identify:

- Slippery surfaces (oily, wet, or greasy)
- Unsecured mats
- Seasonal trip hazards (snow and ice)
- Unsuitable footwear
- Spills of wet or dry substances
- Poor lighting
- Trailing cables in pedestrian walkways
- Smoke, steam or dust obscuring view
- Changes of level and slopes of walkways
- Debris and items stored in pedestrian walkways

This list presents some common hazards there are many others

## Engineering **controls** that may reduce/eliminate the hazard

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- Type of flooring
- Slope of surface (ramps, handrails)
- Surface free of obstructions/holes
- Drainage
- Lighting levels, non-glare, contrast
- Signage
- Sufficient space
- Minimizing environmental influences, e.g. blocking wind to prevent wet surfaces icing at entranceways

## Administrative controls that may reduce/eliminate the hazard

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- Training workers
- Safe practices, e.g., procedure for cleaning spills, requirement for two workers to transport a cart that a worker cannot see around
- Reporting hazards
- Prompt maintenance
- Job design (identifying tasks requiring excessive pushing/pulling, line-of-sight obstruction)
- Equipment readily available, e.g., shovels, mops, buckets
- Addressing poor work practices
- Joint Health and Safety Committee monthly inspections
- Review slips, trips and same-level fall hazards

## Housekeeping and personal protective equipment that may reduce/eliminate the hazard

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- Clean spills
- Remove debris, snow and ice
- Routinely clean floors thoroughly
- Clean castors on wheeled carts
- Provide mats
- Appropriate footwear for task, e.g., heel characteristics, sole (anti-slip, boots)

We all have the right to work in a safe and healthy environment. A strong health and safety culture requires all workplace parties to adhere to occupational health and safety requirements and to pay constant, appropriate attention to workplace health and safety.

## Ladders

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Some elements that an employer's program requires by legislation\* or should generally include are:

- Using the correct and properly rated ladder for the job
- Ensuring workers are properly trained on the use of ladders\*
- Ensuring ladders are properly maintained\*
- Ensuring ladders are properly used for the job

## Ladders con't....

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- Using wooden or fibreglass ladder when working around possible electrical contacts
- Using ladders as per manufacturers' instructions
- Ensuring ladders are properly secured and protected from surrounding activity
- Ensuring other hazards are properly identified when using ladders such as electrical contact

Musculoskeletal Disorders / Ergonomics | Ontario Ministry of Labour – Ladder Guidance Materials <http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/topics/pains.php>

## Mobile ladder stands and ladder stand platforms

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### Climbing/Descending - *Best practices*

- Use handrails, if specified by manufacturer (e.g., for a grade over 50°, manufacturer may recommend holding handrails)
- Face proper direction for climb/descent according to manufacturer (e.g., for a grade over 50°, manufacturer may specify facing the ladder when descending)
- Carry only objects (if allowable, as per manufacturer) that do not impair ability to climb/descend and maintain balance, and do not block field of view

## Mobile ladder stands and ladder stand platforms

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### Receiving/Placing/Removing Objects: Range of movement best practices

- Keep hands above knee level when reaching down to grasp objects
- Keep belt buckle (i.e., navel) within centre of ladder when reaching sideways (belt buckle stays within outer edges of side rails)
- Avoid leaning backward while moving objects (i.e., when size of object interferes with its movement across the ladder)
- Avoiding rising up on toes when reaching above to place object

# Mobile ladder stands and ladder stand platforms best practices

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## Standing posture

- Keep both feet on the ladder

## Characteristics of object

- Lift object with one hand (less than 9 kg, male; 6 kg, female)
- Lift object with two hands:

	Male lifting object lighter than:	Female lifting object lighter than:
Below shoulder height	21 kg	12 kg
Above shoulder height	16 kg	8 kg

# Mobile ladder stands and ladder stand platforms best practices

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## Working

- (Mobile ladder stand) Be readily able to achieve three-point contact (two feet and one hand in contact with the ladder)
- (Mobile ladder stand and platform) Do not overreach beyond ladder rail (i.e., with noticeable back flexion and arms fully extended)
- (Mobile ladder stand and platform) Avoid forceful or jerky pushing/pulling movements where there is the potential for an unexpected reaction

## Working at heights

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There have been far too many instances of preventable critical injuries and death where workers have fallen from heights **less than 3 metres** above a working surface.

Other potential hazards some of which are required to be addressed by the employer by legislation for working safely may include:

- Falling into operating machinery
- Falling into water or another liquid
- Falling into or onto a hazardous substance or object
- Falling through an opening on a work surface

## Working at heights

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Where it is not reasonably possible to protect the workers from falls by guardrails or by travel restraint systems:

- A fall restricting system designed to limit a worker's free fall to 0.6 metres (2 feet),
- A safety net (designed, tested and installed as per ANSI standard 10.11-1989)
- A fall arrest system (at heights above 3m or 10ft) as required by section 85 of the Industrial Regulations

## Working at heights

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Precautions for fall arrest systems/equipment:

- Include CSA (or equivalent) approved equipment
- Include a lanyard equipped with a shock absorber (unless using the shock absorber could cause a falling worker to hit the ground or an object or level below the work),
- Be attached by a lifeline or by the lanyard to an adequate, independent fixed support, and
- Limit a falling worker to a peak fall-arrest force not greater than 8 kilonewtons (1800 pounds force).
- For Industrial Establishments, the requirements of section 85 O. Reg. 1990 must be met

## Fall protection systems: other general precautions

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- In the event of a fall, these systems must keep a worker from hitting the ground, the next level below, or any other objects below the work. (s85 of the Industrial Regulations 851 1990)
- Workers must be adequately trained and given instruction about the proper use of the fall protection system by a “competent person.”
- A competent person is qualified – through knowledge, training and experience – to organize the work and its performance, to be familiar with the OHSA and the regulations that apply to the work being performed, and to know about any actual or potential danger to health and safety in the workplace.

## Other Considerations.....

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Injuries that occur from falls from any height continue to be one of the leading causes of injuries in any workplace.

Workers may be exposed to the hazard of falling when they are climbing on to the trailer, standing on the flatbed / trailer or the load, mounting or dismounting, while loading or unloading material, and while covering the load with tarp.

Section 52 of the Industrial Regulation sets out requirements that must be complied with when workers are being raised or lowered using mobile equipment such as a crane, lift truck or similar equipment.

## Summary/Questions?

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In all workplaces where workers are working at heights, employers must take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of workers, which may include developing safe work procedures for working at heights and ensuring that workers are properly trained.

Thank You!.....any questions?

## MOL Resources

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Musculoskeletal Disorders / Ergonomics | Ontario Ministry of Labour – Ladder Guidance Materials <http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/topics/pains.php>

Portable Ladders (Mobile Ladder Stand, Mobile Ladder Platform) | Ontario Ministry of Labour [http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/ladder\\_mobile.php](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/ladder_mobile.php)

Publications | Ontario Ministry of Labour  
<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/publications.php>

View CSA Standards Cited in OHSA Regulations | Ontario Ministry of Labour  
<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/csa/index.php>

Hazard Alerts | Ontario Ministry of Labour  
<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/alerts/index.php#industrial>

## Resources

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Health and Safety Partners | Ontario Ministry of Labour

<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/websites.php>

HSO - Slips, Trips and Falls

<http://www.healthandsafetyontario.ca/Resources/Topics/Slips,-Trips-and-Falls.aspx>

WSIB- Slips, trips and falls

<http://www.wsib.on.ca/en/community/WSIB/230/ArticleDetail/24338?vgnextoid=e9dbe35c819d7210VgnVCM100000449c710aRCRD>

WHSC: Products & Services: Training Catalogue

[http://www.whsc.on.ca/products/train\\_cat.cfm](http://www.whsc.on.ca/products/train_cat.cfm)

OHCOW – Resources

<http://www.ohcow.on.ca/resources>

Prevention of Slips, Trips and Falls: OSH Answers

[http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/safety\\_haz/falls.html](http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/safety_haz/falls.html)