****

**Safe Workplace Ontario**

**Program - Guide**

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* requires all companies to prepare and review at least annually a written occupational health and safety policy, and develop and maintain a program to implement the policy. Many larger employers now require all contractors working within their operation to have their Health and Safety programs verified by a competent third party within six months of the start of operations.

Workplace Safety North (WSN) provides the following to support this initiative and describes timelines associated with participation in the *Safe Workplace Ontario* (SWO) program. Companies obtain and maintain full SWO designation as follows:

# Registration in Safe Workplace Ontario Program

* If your company was previously SWO-certified:

* + Companies with six or more workers must [submit a completed SWO Registration form and the registration fee to WSN](https://www.workplacesafetynorth.ca/products/safe-workplace-ontario-swo-program-new-members-package).
  + Companies receive a *SWO Resource Manual* with pertinent information on updated legislation, standards, and resource material that may be used to develop or update health and safety policies and procedures relevant to their operations.
* If your company has not been previously SWO-certified (i.e. new entrant):
  + [Contact your WSN Health and Safety Specialist](https://www.workplacesafetynorth.ca/consulting/find-your-specialist) for assistance at the start of your company health and safety program development and review process
  + Advise WSN when you feel your company health and safety program is up-to-date and fully implemented to meet SWO requirements.
  + A WSN Health and Safety Specialist will contact your company and arrange to conduct an SWO audit of the H&S program *and* complete a field evaluation of the company’s workplaces using the WSN *Physical Conditions Safe Work Practices Checklist* form.

* + Within two months of being advised by the firm that their program meets SWO requirements, an audit will be scheduled and WSN will ensure that the initial program evaluation and physical conditions inspection is carried out in order to help new applicants achieve program designation.

# Recognition of Your Effort

* When the company meets WSN program standards, SWO designation will be granted. *The WSN Health and Safety Specialist will leave a detailed report of their findings after each consultation and provide assistance as needed to meet the program standards. Note: In those cases where deficiencies are identified, the applicant must address them before the WSN Health and Safety Specialist conducts a follow-up consultation.*
* Once the WSN Health and Safety Specialist is satisfied that the company meets standards, they will submit a *Notice of SWO Recognition* to WSN head office to confirm achievement for that year.
* Once *SWO Program* standards have been met and confirmed by the WSN Health and Safety Specialist, participants receive a wall plaque with current year plate for workplace display and to demonstration successful completion of the SWO program for that year.

## Program Timeline

Once you’ve successfully obtained Safe Workplace Ontario (SWO) recognition, ongoing maintenance of the program includes a combination of WSN and industry self-evaluation audits. WSN self-evaluations are completed by the firm annual once achieving recognition.

**SWO Audit Process**

**For firms not completing certification in the previous year through full audit or self-evaluation, the following timelines must be met by program participants:**

* April 30: Confirm scheduling of SWO audit with your WSN Health and Safety Specialist
* Sept. 30: Completion of all SWO audits and related verification of successful completion by WSN

**SWO Self-Evaluation Audit Process**

**On an annual basis firms completing certification in the previous year must complete a Self-Evaluation Audit.**

* April 30: Deadline to submit 2020 self-evaluation to your WSN Health and Safety Specialist
* June 30: Deadline to complete all 2020 self-evaluations and related SWO recognition by WSN

**SWO Self-Evaluation Report Completion Process**

* The *Self-Evaluation Form* is specific to your program and used to conduct an internal evaluation
* Inspections on each of the company’s workplaces must be completed; these worksites are specified in your company health and safety program.
* Deficiencies are either dealt with or an action plan to address concerns must be established before the June 30 audit submission.
* In those cases where deficiencies are noted during the Self Evaluation Audit the local WSN Health and Safety Specialist will follow up with company to ensure it meets the WSN program standards before June 30.

**SWO Recognition Process**

Upon successful completion of the SWO audit or and self-evaluations audits, WSN will:

1. Recognize programs for the next fiscal year. (Note: Companies must have been fully engaged and completed requirements of the evaluation process including addressing deficiencies noted during audit process)
2. Forward the year plate to be affixed to the wall plaque for SWO program participants
3. Advise participating company of any new SWO program requirements and applicable fees for upcoming fiscal year

# Ongoing Recognition Program Requirements

* Participating companies recognized as meeting SWO standards must make information available as part of ongoing program maintenance.
* As part of both the ongoing and annual review, participating companies voluntarily take remedial action when necessary and appropriate.
* Participating companies will revise programs in the event of significant changes in program levels such as a substantial increase in the number of employees or fundamental changes to operating equipment or practices.
* WSN Health and Safety Specialists will conduct spot checks of participating company’s field operations and audit industry health and safety programs, when and where appropriate, to ensure submitted reports are accurate and the company continues to meet program health and safety standards.

January 2020