



# Advancing a Strong Safety Culture in Newfoundland and Labrador

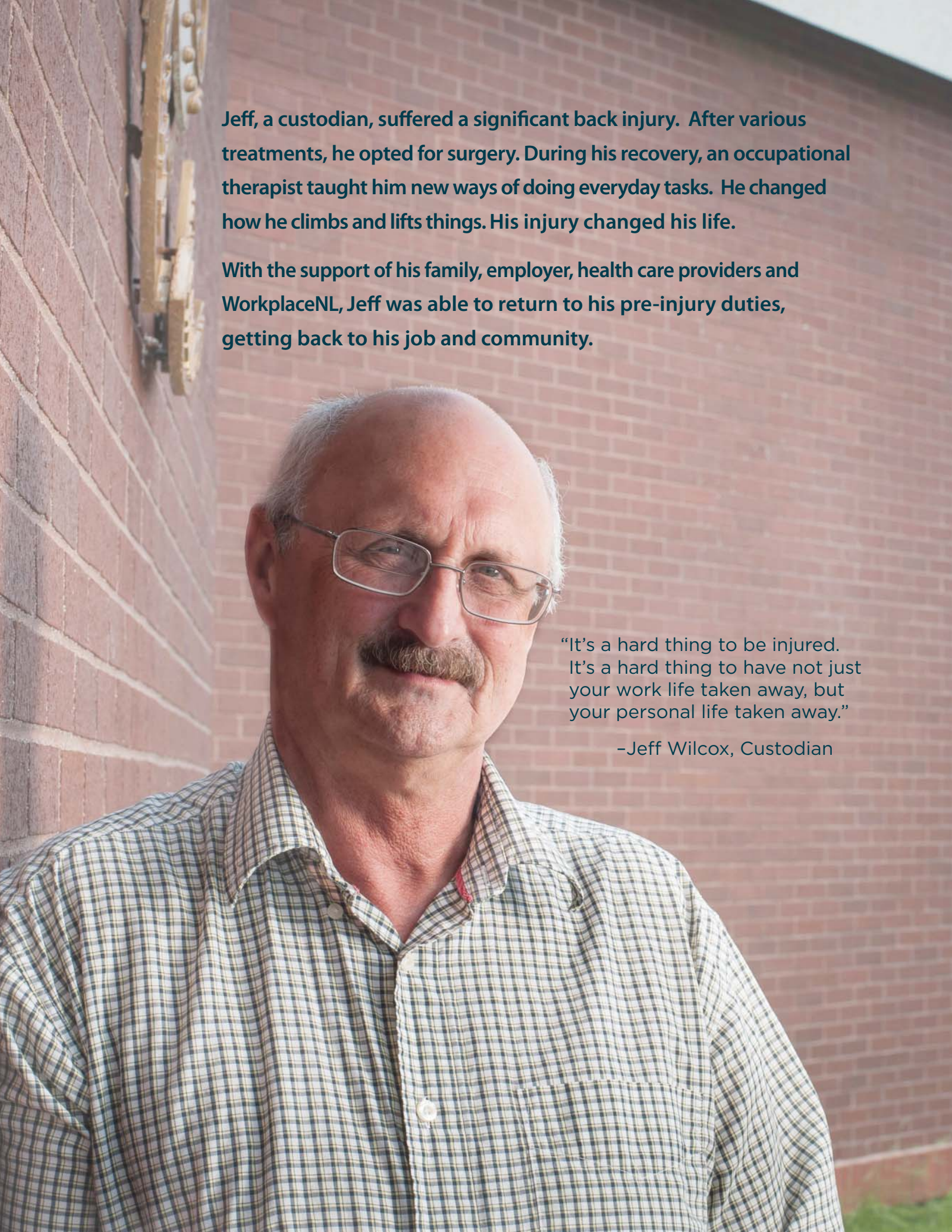
A Workplace Injury Prevention Strategy 2018-2022

**WorkplaceNL**

Health | Safety | Compensation







**Jeff, a custodian, suffered a significant back injury. After various treatments, he opted for surgery. During his recovery, an occupational therapist taught him new ways of doing everyday tasks. He changed how he climbs and lifts things. His injury changed his life.**

**With the support of his family, employer, health care providers and WorkplaceNL, Jeff was able to return to his pre-injury duties, getting back to his job and community.**

**“It’s a hard thing to be injured. It’s a hard thing to have not just your work life taken away, but your personal life taken away.”**

**-Jeff Wilcox, Custodian**

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# WorkplaceNL

Health | Safety | Compensation

## Foreword

### **A Workplace Injury Prevention Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador**

I present to you a five-year workplace injury prevention strategy: Advancing a Strong Safety Culture in Newfoundland and Labrador.

This prevention strategy, developed in consultation with our injury prevention partners and stakeholders, represents an opportunity for everyone to help protect workers from hazards in the workplace. WorkplaceNL and the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Division, Service NL, value the relationships formed with stakeholders during this process, and we appreciate their contributions to improving occupational health and safety in workplaces throughout the province.

WorkplaceNL and the OHS Division share the common philosophy that all workplace injuries and illnesses can be prevented—and that every worker has the right to go home safely at the end of the day. We also believe that Newfoundland and Labrador is one of the safest jurisdictions in which to work. But we must do better.

Using a balanced approach between education, enforcement and well-engineered OHS programs, we can continue toward our goal of zero harm to workers. Our aim is to build a strong safety culture in our province, a culture guided by a shared vision and constructed using evidence-based approaches.

I invite you to join us in implementing this Workplace Injury Prevention Strategy. Together, we can create safe, healthy and productive workplaces in Newfoundland and Labrador.



Hon. Sherry Gambin-Walsh  
Minister Responsible for WorkplaceNL  
Minister of Service NL



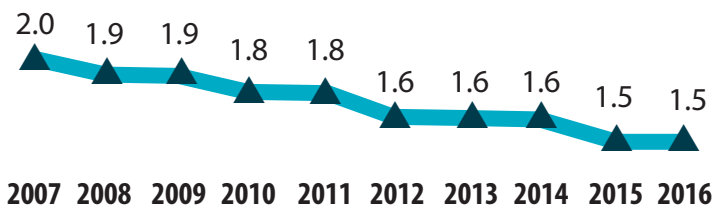
# Occupational Health and Safety System Partners in Newfoundland and Labrador



# Safe and Healthy Workplaces

## Lost-time Incidence Rate (LTI)

PER 100 WORKERS



Last ten years

**25%**

decrease in LTI  
2007-2016

Injury and illness are never acceptable outcomes from work. Every Newfoundlander and Labradorian has the right to a safe and healthy workplace—the right to complete each day of employment free from harm. The effects of a workplace injury or illness can reach beyond an individual, often resulting in a loss to workers, colleagues, employers, families and the community. Every workplace injury and illness should be recognized as preventable. When attitudes shift, and the control of safety and health risks in every work task is prioritized,

a strong safety culture will further develop in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Newfoundland and Labrador is a safer place to work today than at any point in our history. In 2016, the lost-time injury rate of 1.5 injuries per 100 workers represented the lowest rate in the 65-year history of WorkplaceNL, and was among the lowest lost-time injury rates in Canada for that year. We should celebrate the decades of collaboration and partnership it has taken to realize this gain.



**92%**

of workplaces are  
injury-free  
2016



**14**

workers injured every  
day (on average)  
2016



**50%**

decline in workplace  
fatality rate  
2007-2016



21%

**increase in serious injury  
2007-2016**

• • • • •  
**A serious injury includes an injury that:**

- places life in jeopardy
- produces unconsciousness
- results in a substantial loss of blood
- fractures of an arm or leg
- results in amputation
- burns to a major portion of the body or
- causes loss of sight



However, we must continue to strive to prevent serious injury and fatalities in our workplaces. Serious injuries have increased 21 per cent over the last decade, and the workplace fatality rate for workers in Newfoundland and Labrador is among the highest in Canada.

The nature of work in our province continues to change. New mining and oil and gas developments, the resurgence of the groundfish industry,

changing demographics, and new technologies bring both unique challenges and new opportunities in the management of workplace health and safety.

Leadership is fundamental to improving safety performance. The provincial government is the policy-maker, regulator and enforcer; all stakeholders, however, must work within the regulatory framework to model health and safety, and to reach beyond basic legislative compliance.

This five-year Workplace Injury Prevention Strategy builds on previous strategies. It also focuses on new initiatives in areas that were identified as priorities during stakeholder consultations. Extensive research, including an examination of best practices elsewhere, informed the development of this strategy.

The success of this prevention strategy depends on all partners—workers, employers, industry and labour leaders, government and others—coming together to strengthen the culture of safety in Newfoundland and Labrador workplaces. No person or organization can do it alone. Collective effort and strong safety leadership will better protect workers from workplace hazards, to everyone’s benefit.



38%

**decline in young worker  
injury rate (historic low)  
2007-2016**



33%

**fewer soft-tissue  
injuries  
2007-2016**



14%

**decline in  
occupational illness  
2007-2016**



# Current and Emerging Issues

Workplaces are shaped by internal and external factors, including innovation, technology, research and economic conditions. As the nature of work changes, new safety and health risks emerge which may require broader control strategies or even legislative changes.

## INJURY RATE

**The workplace injury rate in Newfoundland and Labrador has declined 29 per cent over the last decade.** This reduction can be attributed to better health and safety education, improved OHS legislation, increased enforcement and a greater development of OHS management programs and systems. Improvements in equipment design, training standards and awareness of workplace hazards have also contributed. The magnitude of annual injury-rate decreases has plateaued over the past five years, however, and a concerted

effort is required to reduce the current rate even further.

## SERIOUS INJURY

**The serious injury rate has increased 21 per cent in Newfoundland and Labrador over the last decade.** Systemic health and safety risks are not being sufficiently controlled, and immediate dangers to life and health exist in some workplaces. The number of stop work orders (523 in 2016) issued by the OHS Division is further evidence that dangerous and unsafe work is still occurring.







## OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE AND ILLNESS

Preventing occupational disease and illness is a significant challenge for health and safety educators, practitioners and regulators. **In many cases, a disease is only first detected many years after a worker is exposed to a health hazard.** Advances in science, health surveillance, personal protection equipment, health-hazard awareness and understanding exposure limits are helping to protect workers.

## MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURY

**Musculoskeletal injuries represent 68 per cent of all workplace injuries and \$85 million in claim costs annually in Newfoundland and Labrador.** Repetitive work, awkward postures, static positions and overexertion must be addressed within workplaces.

Risk assessments to evaluate ergonomic hazards must be the focus of education and enforcement efforts. Through proper risk assessment, more effective controls can be implemented. Integrating technology and ergonomic best practices into the workplace will also help mitigate ergonomic risks.

## ECONOMIC CLIMATE

**Changes in economic activity can influence workplace injury rates.** After a period of sustained economic growth, the provincial

unemployment rate has recently increased to 13.4 per cent (December 2016), brought on, in part, by lower natural resource commodity prices and the completion of large industrial projects. During periods of slower economic activity, workplaces may need support to ensure safety and health hazards continue to be controlled to reduce risk, and investments in preventative maintenance and health and safety training remain high.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

**Newfoundland and Labrador has an aging population.** As the baby-boom generation enters retirement, the demand for “new” workers is increasing. To fill this gap, more young people may be hired, and the use of temporary foreign workers may increase. New or inexperienced workers may be exposed to greater risk of injury. While the injury rate for young workers has declined to a historic low, they still face a high risk of injury in the workplace.

**Older workers comprise an increasing proportion of the labour force in Newfoundland and Labrador.** Many may delay retirement due to uncertain economic conditions or a shortage of labour. Traditionally, the rate of workplace injury in older workers was lower than all other age groups.

Over the past 20 years, however, older workers are being injured at the same rate as the 25-44 age group, and young workers are leading the decline in workplace injury and illness in Newfoundland and Labrador. This shift in injury rates is concerning; injuries to older workers are generally more serious in nature with longer recovery periods. Some older workers also bring the potential complication of additional health issues such as diabetes or circulatory disorders.

### OHS COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS

**Only 51 per cent of OHS committees are meeting and reporting as per their legislative responsibility.** OHS committees serve a vital function in the workplace and are responsible for monitoring and supporting workplace health and safety programs. OHS committees need to be engaged to fulfill their legislative mandate and supported to perform their role.

### FALLS

Working at height or walking on an elevated surface carries a high risk of injury. Certification training is required for any worker working at 3 metres or more above the ground.

**The rate of falls from height has declined 31 per cent since specific training requirements were instituted in OHS legislation in 2009.** Continued education about fall hazards and enforcement of standards are required to protect workers.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Mental Health Commission of Canada has estimated that **one in five Canadians suffer from a mental illness.** Psychological injuries, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and workplace violence pose significant challenges for workplace injury prevention. Prevention strategies for work-related PTSD include creating supportive work environments, systematic employee training and proper follow-up with employees after a critical event.

Over the past decade, the rate of workplace violence has increased from 5.2 injuries per 10,000 workers to 8.9—an increase of 71 per cent. Occupational health and safety legislation requires risk assessments to be completed for workplace violence and working alone. Unfortunately, these risk assessments are not widely employed in workplaces and more education and enforcement is required.



# 31%

decline in the  
rate of falls  
since mandatory  
training began



## TECHNOLOGY

**Technological change is influencing the nature of work, and the tools and equipment used to complete it.** Mobile workforces, temporary labour and cloud computing are affecting traditional work patterns, and changing who may or may not be a worker. Workplaces need to manage and adapt to these changes.

For some health and safety training courses, online and mobile technologies can provide an opportunity to train workers and employers in their own space, reduce time away from work and lower course costs. Mobile application development and online programs and services

are cost-effective ways to reach more employers and workers.

## ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

**The mindset that all work-related injuries and illnesses are preventable is necessary** to create a stronger safety culture. While societal attitudes and behaviours toward occupational health and safety are changing in this regard, the view that injuries and illnesses are simply inevitable “accidents” still exists in some workplaces.

## HIGH-RISK HAZARDS

**Significant levels of uncontrolled risk still exist for workers** who engage in traffic control, work at height, enter confined spaces or work around energized sources and power lines. While, overall, employers are providing more effective controls for more frequent, less severe hazards, more attention needs to be placed on hazards with higher risk ratings.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

**The traditional ways health and safety hazards are communicated to workers has changed** drastically over the past decade. The reliance on social media to stay informed on issues impacting health and safety, and the immediate demand for information and action, is shaping how we communicate and engage on common issues. Workplace injury prevention efforts must adapt to these new tools and implement effective strategies to engage and educate workers.



# Strategy Development

This Workplace Injury Prevention Strategy is the culmination of a 15-month process led by WorkplaceNL and the OHS Division, in consultation with safety partners and stakeholders.

The development process included a jurisdictional review of workplace injury prevention initiatives in other provinces and territories in Canada, as well as international perspectives from the United Kingdom, Australia, Sweden and New Zealand. Findings were compiled into a discussion paper, *Advancing a Strong Safety Culture in Newfoundland and Labrador: Developing a Workplace Injury Prevention Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador 2018-2022*, and shared with stakeholders and the public. Stakeholders and partners were invited to take part in consultation sessions to discuss the state of occupational health and safety, and provide written feedback to WorkplaceNL and the OHS Division.

This prevention strategy provides guidance toward creating a stronger safety culture in Newfoundland and Labrador. It should be used as a blueprint to impact attitudes and behaviours in the prevention of workplace injury and illness, and serve as a catalyst for change that advances a higher level of worker protection from workplace hazards.

## Vision, Values and Strategic Priorities

<b>Vision</b>	<b>Healthy workers in safe and productive workplaces.</b>
<b>Values</b>	
<b>Leadership</b> 	Every individual will perform his or her health and safety role. Everyone will work to promote workplace safety, and improve how they protect themselves and their co-workers from workplace hazards.
<b>Transparency</b>	Collaborations and partnerships to implement the Workplace Injury Prevention Strategy will be transparent to employers, workers and the community through annual reports and information exchange.
<b>Accountability</b>	Employers, workers, government, contractors and safety partners will share the responsibility for managing safety and health risks in every workplace.
<b>Teamwork and Collaboration</b>	A strong safety culture will be achieved by having all stakeholders working toward a shared vision of health and safety. Through effective collaboration, workers and employers will be supported in implementing effective safety programs to mitigate risk.
<b>Innovation</b>	Continuous safety improvements will be enhanced by challenging complacency and delivering service through technology.

<p><b>Principles</b></p>	<p><b>The following principles will guide the implementation of this strategy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All workplace injuries and illnesses are preventable.</li> <li>• Employers have the core responsibility to create a safe and healthy workplace.</li> <li>• Safety partnerships will be developed to encourage collaboration and build on existing initiatives and activities to avoid duplication and maximize use of resources.</li> <li>• Workplace injury prevention will be evidence-based and incorporate best practices.</li> <li>• The safety and health needs of employers and workers will be placed at the forefront of the service delivery and policy framework.</li> <li>• A shared and inclusive vision will achieve the strategic goals.</li> <li>• The standards of health and safety in all industry sectors of the province will be elevated.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategic Goals</b></p>	<p><b>Employers, workers, government and safety partners will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the risk of workplace injury, illness and disease by protecting workers from workplace hazards.</li> <li>• Reduce the human and financial costs of workplace injury, illness and disease on workers, workplaces and the community.</li> <li>• Raise awareness of safety and health risks to help change safety attitudes and behaviour, and advance a strong safety culture.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategic Objectives</b></p>	<p><b>This strategy identifies five strategic outcomes and objectives that support its vision:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Safety leadership</li> <li>2. Industry collaboration</li> <li>3. Education and training</li> <li>4. OHS programs and systems</li> <li>5. Enforcement and regulatory practices</li> </ol>

## 8 Injury and Illness Priorities

1. Musculoskeletal injuries
2. Occupational disease and illness
3. Falls
4. Serious injuries
5. Young workers
6. Workplace violence
7. Traffic control
8. Psychological health and safety





SAFETY LEADERSHIP



**5-year** Strategy

## Basic Structure of the Internal Responsibility System

Authority, Responsibility, Accountability



# 1. Safety Leadership

**Empowering safety advocates in the workplace**

## Shared Leadership and the Internal Responsibility System

A strong safety culture requires that everyone take responsibility—and be accountable—for workplace health and safety. Workers, employers and supervisors must all be leaders, and competently apply the practices outlined in their OHS management system.

The Internal Responsibility System (IRS) is the underlying philosophy of all occupational health and safety legislation in Canadian jurisdictions. Its foundation is that every person in the workplace—workers and employers—is responsible for his or her own safety and for the safety of co-workers. IRS promotes participatory leadership throughout an organization, and

outlines tangible ways all parties can improve workplace health and safety. It also recognizes that workers are the best positioned to identify and address hazards, when properly supported by other system partners.

A properly functioning IRS helps create a strong safety culture and provides the capacity to prevent workplace injury and illness. It must be complemented by:

- Robust OHS policies and programs, in full compliance with legislation;
- A safe environment in which anyone can raise safety concerns; and
- A competent workforce with safety knowledge, training and experience.

## OHS Committees and Worker Health and Safety Representatives/Designates

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (the Act) outlines the specific responsibilities of employers, workers, supervisors, OHS committees and Worker Health and Safety (WHS) representatives/designates. These workplace parties can demonstrate effective use of the IRS by developing, monitoring and supporting the OHS management system implemented in the workplace.

### Supervisors

Supervisors and senior management need to foster an environment in which health and safety is integrated into all aspects of work: tasks, processes and systems. WorkplaceNL's new voluntary Supervisor Health and Safety Certification Training Standard, developed in 2016, can be used to educate supervisors about their legislative role in health and safety, and develop competence in leading, directing and guiding the completion of work.

Supervisors who complete standardized, regulated health and safety training will have greater knowledge of core safety principles and practices. Ultimately, this will lead to a safer work environment for workers.



# 51%

**OHS committees active in 2016.**

**An engaged OHS committee helps keep you safe at work.**

## Objective 1

By 2022, WorkplaceNL will continue to promote and help develop safety leadership within workplaces and industry.

### STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

1. Support the growth and development of safety sector councils to lead industry-based certification standards and training programs.
2. Recognize safety leadership through an annual awards program for employers and workers.
3. Promote the voluntary Supervisor Health and Safety Certification Training Standard, and develop an online recertification program.
4. Use technology to actively promote health and safety, including mobile application development and other innovative online tools.



5. Enhance the Prevention and Return-to-Work Insurance Management for Employers and Employees (PRIME) Program to ensure senior leaders are engaged in implementing leading safety practices in workplaces, and to develop web services and online tools to improve data availability and decision making.
6. Strengthen social media channels to ensure relevant health and safety information is available to workplaces to make informed decisions.
7. Develop resources for employers to aid in the recognition and prevention of mental stress conditions, such as PTSD, in the workplace, including promoting the implementation of the CSA Psychological Health and Safety Standard.
8. Develop a web portal that contains learning resources and tools to engage workers and employers in safety culture development and safety leadership training.
9. Strengthen supports and learning resources for new businesses to ensure an understanding of workplace injury prevention and OHS legislation.

# INDUSTRY COLLABORATION



## 8 Injury and Illness Priorities

1. Musculoskeletal injuries
2. Occupational disease and illness
3. Falls
4. Serious injuries
5. Young workers
6. Workplace violence
7. Traffic control
8. Psychological health and safety



## 2. Industry Collaboration

**Advancing worker protection through innovative partnerships and integrated service delivery**

Workplace injury and illness prevention relies on many stakeholders working together to support employers and workers in reducing safety and health risks.

### Employer and Worker Stakeholder Organizations

The interests of employers and workers are represented by many industry and labour organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador. In particular, the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour and the Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council are stakeholders that influence and shape occupational health and safety legislation and policy, and play a key role in creating healthy, safe, productive workplaces.

### Safety Sector Councils/ Safety Partners

In Newfoundland and Labrador, four safety sector councils currently promote occupational health and safety within industry: 1) Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association; 2) Forestry Safety Association of Newfoundland and Labrador; 3) Municipal Safety Council of

Newfoundland and Labrador; and 4) Fish Harvesting Safety Association of Newfoundland and Labrador.

These organizations work with employers and workers to share best practices and educate industry about workplace hazards.

Other safety partners, including SafetyNL, Newfoundland and Labrador Occupational Safety and Health Association, and Canadian Society of Safety Engineers–Avalon Chapter, advocate for health and safety at work, at home and in the community. Each of these organizations influences health and safety legislation and controls risk by advancing health and safety practices.

### Occupational Health and Safety Council

The Occupational Health and Safety Council is established pursuant to Section 12 of the Act. The duties of the council include providing advice to the Minister of Service NL on any matter relating to occupational health and safety, but especially in the administration of the Act and its regulations.



## Educational Institutions, Training Providers and Community Organizations

Engaging more workers and employers in OHS requires reaching beyond the traditional OHS system. We need to develop innovative relationships with educators, municipal governments, the federal government and the private sector to increase the capacity of the

system to deliver effective injury prevention programs.

Community groups, such as the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, contribute to a stronger safety culture through their work on preventing eye injury and hearing loss. In addition, many industry associations impact and shape policy, and influence the development of viable, productive workplaces.

## Objective 2

By 2022, WorkplaceNL and its partners will provide the supports necessary to advance industry sector councils and industry-led safety programs and initiatives.

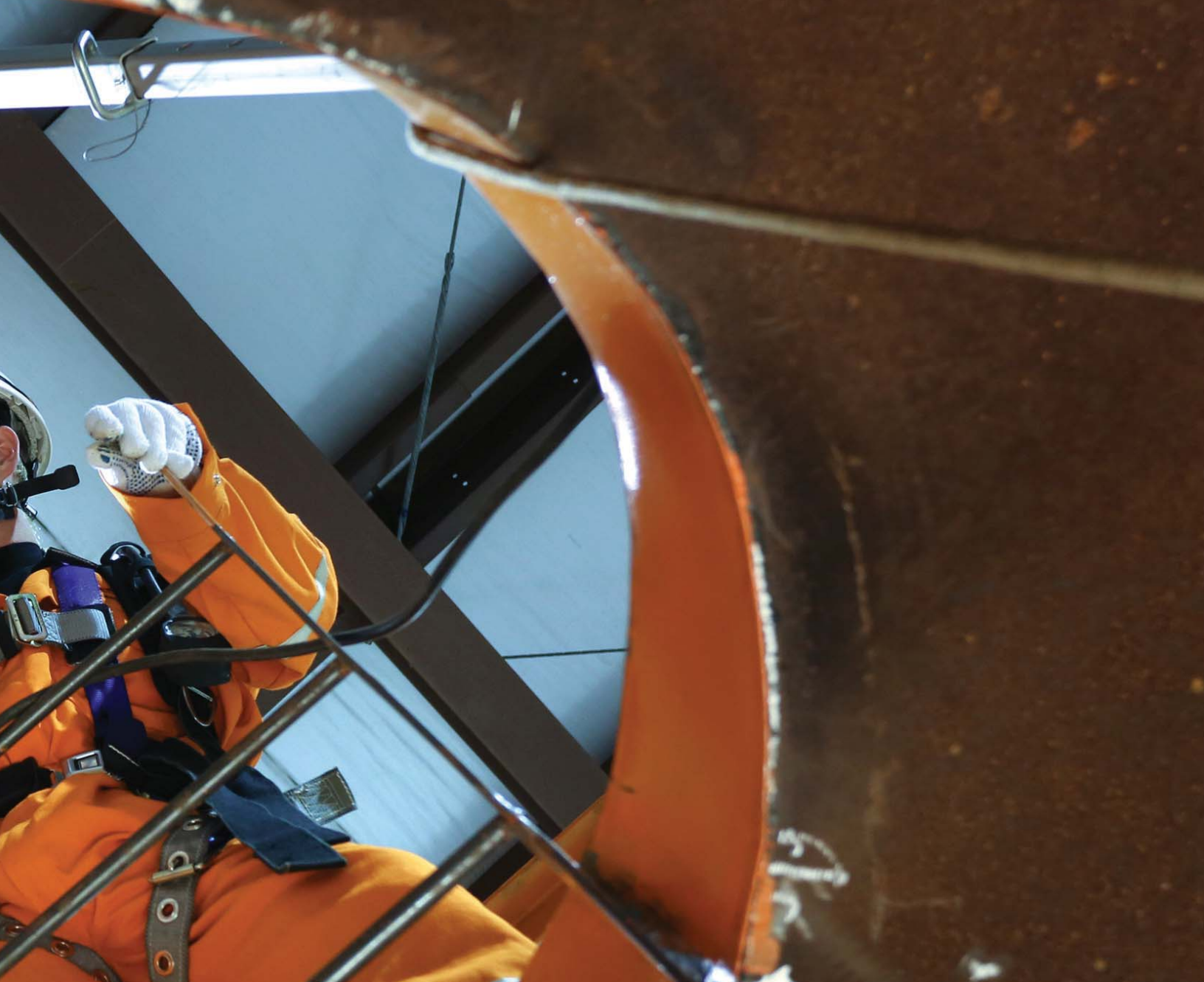
### STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

1. Work with safety sector councils to promote certification training standards adoption in all industries.
2. Enhance the Sector Council Program to provide accountability, transparency and clear guidance for safety leadership at the industry level.
3. Promote the development of safety sector councils in high-risk areas such as manufacturing, fish processing and health care.
4. Promote the creation of safe-work practices for high-risk activities within industry, and the development and delivery of industry-based safety training and injury prevention initiatives.
5. Integrate services delivered to mutual clients, especially vulnerable workers and small businesses.
6. Use existing and evolving communication channels and resources to maximize the reach of safety campaigns, and leverage online technology to deliver OHS education and provide hazard information.
7. Work with industry partners to enhance health and safety education for young workers in secondary and post-secondary institutions.
8. Create web-based tools to help employers develop safety programs and promote health and safety audit and inspection tools to assess safety practices implemented in workplaces.
9. Support injury prevention research that has practical application in workplaces.
10. Promote the Health and Safety Awareness Survey as a tool to understanding gaps in health and safety education and training, and share key health and safety performance metrics with employers, workers and industry partners to support strong decision-making and action.





# EDUCATION AND TRAINING



## 8 Injury and Illness Priorities

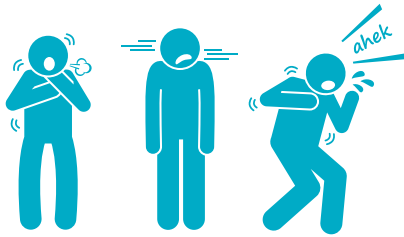
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## 3. Education and Training

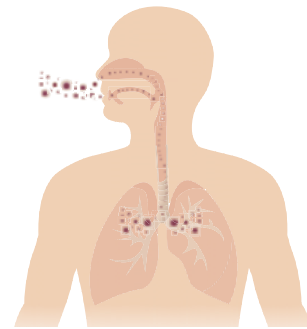
Increasing the competency of all workers to manage risks in the workplace



An occupational disease or illness is a health problem caused by exposure to a workplace health hazard. Workplace health hazards include chemical agents (such as solvent vapours), biological agents (such as mould) and physical agents (such as noise and radiation).

### Preventing Occupational Illness

Exposure to workplace health hazards can cause immediate, gradual or delayed reactions or illnesses in the body. Symptoms of some occupational illnesses caused by long-term exposure, including cancers, may not be noticed for 10 or even 40 years after the job has concluded. These illnesses can be devastating physically, emotionally and financially to workers, their families and their communities.



Preventing occupational illness is critical to avoiding these tragedies. Education and training in occupational health is important in controlling exposures, mitigating risks and improving health outcomes.



## Improving the Health and Safety of Vulnerable Workers

Vulnerable workers include, but are not limited to, young workers, new Canadians, temporary foreign workers, workers involved in temporary employment and older workers. These workers have a greater risk of exposure to hazards than the rest of the workforce. In many cases, they may not know their rights under the *Act*, and may lack proper training and the experience required to identify hazards. They may also fear losing their jobs or face repercussions for speaking up. Some inexperienced workers may take risks that impact their safety and the safety of others.

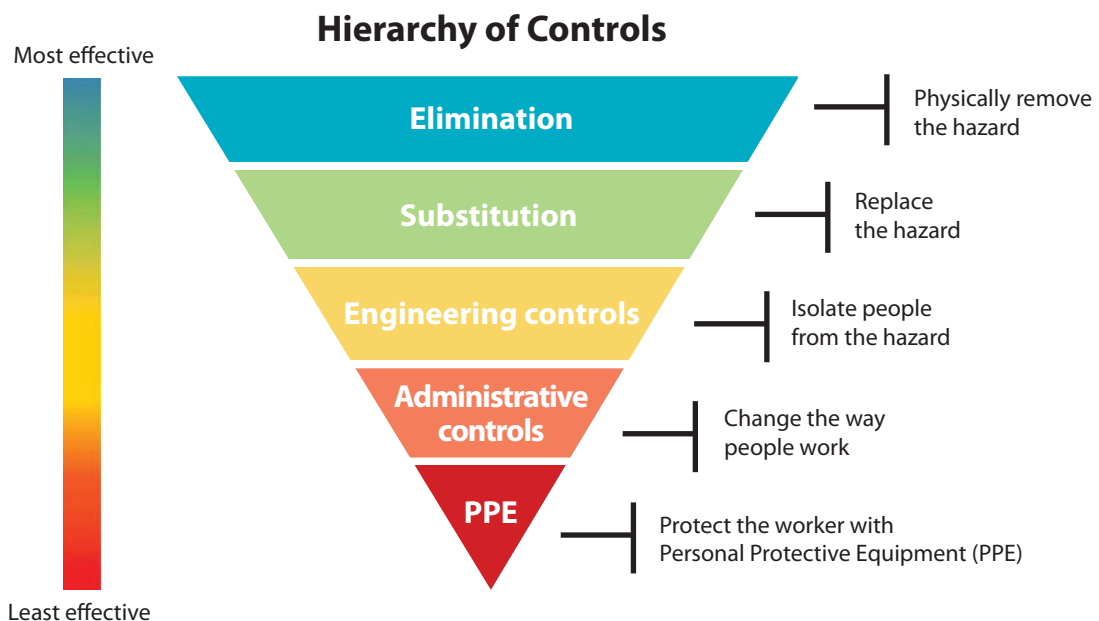
It can be difficult to reach vulnerable workers through traditional means. Many may not be members of industry associations, labour organizations, community groups or safety associations and are thus not engaged in regular safety discussions. Young workers access and consume information differently than their older counterparts.

Some older workers are staying in high-risk or physically demanding jobs longer than they have in the past. Innovative approaches and solutions are required to deliver services and training that meet their needs.

When vulnerable workers sustain an injury at work, providing effective, flexible accommodations should be considered through the early and safe return-to-work process. A supportive, inclusive work environment that is helpful in finding solutions is required.

## Certification Training and Supports

Standardized, regulated health and safety training provides workers with the knowledge, skills and competency to perform hazardous tasks. When a workplace hazard cannot be eliminated, certification training is an effective administrative control to help protect workers.



## Objective 3

By 2022, WorkplaceNL and its partners will develop and deliver educational and training programs to better protect workers from safety and health risks.

### STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

1. Develop awareness campaigns to educate workers and employers on injury and illness priorities, including:
  - Musculoskeletal injuries
  - Occupational disease and illness
  - Falls
  - Serious injuries
  - Young workers
  - Workplace violence
  - Traffic control
  - Psychological health and safety
2. Work with industry to target high-risk activities that increase the probability and severity of injury in workers.
3. Focus on educating and protecting young workers, new workers and temporary foreign workers.
4. Develop new online training for Early and Safe Return to Work (ESRTW), and develop new training standards for Confined Space Rescue and Traffic Control for Supervisors.
5. Work with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to:
  - Implement an online health and safety course for all young workers, and integrate it in the Career Development 2201 high school course;
  - Develop a distance learning version of the OHS 3203 high school course;
  - Professionally train teachers for OHS 3203; and
  - Explore the development of a required occupational health and safety course for all post-secondary education students.
6. Enhance health and safety surveillance data collection to enable more informed decisions about education and awareness programs.
7. Implement an online recertification course for OHS committee members, Worker Health and Safety representatives/designates, and supervisors.
8. Promote the Certification Training Registry as an effective tool to monitor required health and safety training in workplaces.
9. Ensure the health and safety certification standards implemented in Newfoundland and Labrador meet or exceed that of other Canadian jurisdictions and are reviewed every five years.
10. Develop an enhanced accreditation process for approved training providers delivering health and safety certification training.
11. Promote more accessible, innovative and flexible training options, while ensuring the highest standards of training, including the use of podcasts, interactive web-based tools and mobile applications.



# OHS PROGRAMS AND SYSTEMS



## 8 Injury and Illness Priorities

1. Musculoskeletal injuries 2. Occupational disease and illness 3. Falls 4. Serious injuries  
5. Young workers 6. Workplace violence 7. Traffic control 8. Psychological health and safety



## 4. OHS Programs and Systems

### Designing leading systems to manage safety and health risks

#### Safety Standards

The adoption of health and safety standards to manage and control risks should be encouraged and promoted within the workplace. To achieve excellence in health and safety management, organizations will need support to implement standards, such as CSA Z1000, OHSAS 18001, or ISO 45001.<sup>1</sup>

#### Integrated Planning and Service Delivery Model

OHS programs and systems need to become a core component of work design, integrated into all work tasks. Many organizations have an interest in, and are responsible for, OHS-related initiatives, programs or services. Planning and delivering services for injury prevention, compliance and enforcement must be aligned so that workplace parties

are consistently supported as they engineer effective OHS programs and systems.

#### Measuring Health and Safety Performance

Organizations track safety performance to ensure they are meeting their strategic goals, and that interventions are leading to desired outcomes. Tracking also helps identify opportunities for improvement. However, workplaces and system partners differ in what they measure and consider important.

The OHS system in Newfoundland and Labrador relies on the measurements of lagging indicators (e.g., number of fatalities, lost-time incidents) and leading indicators (e.g., workplace inspections completed) to identify trends and to focus on interventions required for safe and healthy workplaces.

<sup>1</sup>Canadian Standards Association Z1000-Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems; Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series 18001-Occupational Health and Safety Management Certification; International Standards Organization 45001-Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems.



The provincial OHS system will benefit from a common vision of safety success, and a common approach to measuring it, which requires consistent tracking and reporting supplemented with new OHS performance metrics from all system partners.

Access to reliable data will allow all stakeholders to identify and address gaps by monitoring, supporting and guiding program and service delivery.

Sharing more data with system partners will help develop OHS programs that better protect workers and focus attention on hazards with elevated risks. A better understanding of best practices, key performance indicators and the root causes of workplace injury and illness will follow.

## Objective 4

By 2022, WorkplaceNL will evaluate OHS programs and systems implemented in workplaces to ensure compliance with the *OHS Act and Regulations*.

### STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

1. Promote the adoption of Safety Climate Surveys in workplaces and provide web-based tools to aid in the development of leading indicators in workplaces.
2. Provide employers and workers with timely and accurate information on health and safety performance.
3. Develop new industry and provincial indicators to measure attitudes and awareness of workplace injury and illness prevention.
4. Provide employers and workers with education and guidance in implementing effective OHS programs, and the benefits of effective, productive OHS committees.
5. In consultation with safety partners, develop a new online reporting system for all OHS committees that assesses the effectiveness of OHS committees to identify and control safety and health risks in a timely manner.
6. Provide OHS committees/WHS representatives/designates with support, resources and practical tools.
7. Enhance the auditing of OHS programs, particularly for employers with increased risk of injury.
8. Improve data analysis and surveillance so workers and employers make informed decisions when designing OHS management systems. Use national and provincial data to help identify leading safety practices and emerging trends.
9. Develop online learning resources and tools to measure safety culture and the effectiveness of OHS management systems.





# REGULATORY AND ENFORCEMENT PRACTICES



## 8 Injury and Illness Priorities

1. Musculoskeletal injuries
2. Occupational disease and illness
3. Falls
4. Serious injuries
5. Young workers
6. Workplace violence
7. Traffic control
8. Psychological health and safety





## 5. Regulatory and Enforcement Practices

**Promoting a fair and balanced enforcement framework that protects workers from workplace hazards**

### Regulatory Leadership

Regulatory leadership involves implementing good enforcement management practices. These practices are demonstrated through the principles of proportionality in applying the law, consistency in approach, openness to the provision of information internally and externally, standards that communicate the desired course of action and a system of monitoring that provides accountability. Each of these factors contributes to maintaining compliance.

The OHS Division is dedicated to ensuring that regulatory and enforcement functions are carried out in an equitable, practical and consistent manner. The effectiveness of legislation in protecting workers depends on the ongoing compliance of those regulated. As well, as work environments change, legislative changes may also be required.

### Effective Supports in Completing High Hazard Activities

Some work activities are hazardous by nature, such as working at height, working below ground or working with certain chemicals or other dangerous substances. When a worker enters a hazardous situation without adequate training, supervision or safety equipment, he or she risks serious injury, illness or death.

### Effective Compliance Measures

By committing to continuously improving and enhancing the enforcement management process, the OHS Division will maintain consistency in enforcement activity, and in turn, increase legislative compliance within the province.

The OHS Division recognizes that most employers want to comply with the legislation, and that it is important to clearly communicate with



individuals and organizations what is required to do so. The OHS Division strives to assist employers in meeting their legal obligations, without unnecessary expense. The aim is to provide information in an open and transparent

manner; where warranted, firm action, including prosecution, will be taken against those individuals and businesses that fail to co-operate and contravene legislative requirements.

## Objective 5

By 2022, the OHS Division will enhance its enforcement management process and operational efficiency through the implementation of new strategies that use risk management approaches and by continuing to foster stakeholder collaboration and communication.

### STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of the Radiation Health and Safety Act and Regulations.
2. Implement approved changes to the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) Regulations.
3. Review regulatory training standards for confined space entry, traffic control, and supervisor training to identify opportunities for enhancement.
4. Strategically inspect employers with higher risk of injury.
5. Promote the requirement that every new worker receive a safety orientation in the workplace.
6. Develop and implement enforcement strategies that are representative of the risks in each sector and that highlight identified areas of focus.
7. Strengthen the proactive approach to the inspection program by determining an inspection list for each industry sector.
8. Continue to improve data collection and information exchange with WorkplaceNL, and share relevant enforcement data with sector safety councils, safety organizations and key industry and labour stakeholders.
9. Develop content for hazard alerts and communications on a timely basis. Ensure stakeholders are aware of the risks and have current knowledge and information to reduce accidents and incidents.
10. The OHS Division will work to develop an online inspection reporting system.
11. The OHS Division will continue to develop and implement targeted enforcement strategies for the prevention of known occupational disease.
12. Enhance the planning, monitoring and reporting of enforcement activity.
13. Promote a broader understanding of the Act and Regulations and develop easy-to-understand learning resources for employers and workers.

# Moving Forward

WorkplaceNL and the OHS Division look forward to working with safety partners and stakeholders over the next five years to implement this Workplace Injury Prevention Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador.

Maximizing worker protection and nurturing a strong safety culture are the core tenets of the new strategy. As many stakeholders have indicated, accomplishing these goals will be challenging. It will require dedicated effort, focus and integrated service delivery. Quality education and training that advances worker competency and enables workers to control safety and health risks, combined with a fair and balanced regulatory framework, will enable further reductions in workplace injury rates. The adoption of leading safety OHS management system standards by employers and workers will also systematically control risk and better prevent injury and illness at work.

The core ingredients for success are contained in existing injury prevention programs and legislative framework. However, workers and employers in Newfoundland and Labrador need appropriate supports from government, safety partners and safety sector councils to achieve greater reductions in workplace injury and illness. Reaching our target level of protection will require a balance of education,

enforcement and well-engineered health and safety systems.

A stronger safety culture can be developed using leading health and safety principles and practices. It will guide service delivery, formation of innovative partnerships and the management of change. Integrating health and safety into every decision and work task will help shape attitudes and behaviours, and instill the central value that worker protection guides every decision, practice and program.

Our aim is to keep workers safe and to control hazards in the workplace. While the safety performance in our province has improved significantly over the past decade, we can do better with increased commitment, continued investment and best practice programming.

There are no simple solutions and many challenges lie ahead. All stakeholders must seriously consider the future direction of OHS in our province. Our goal is to achieve a balance between reasonable levels of education and enforcement, and to offer adequate supports for workers and employers to sustain impact and positive outcomes.

# WorkplaceNL

Health | Safety | Compensation

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