

Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development

Healthy worker healthy workplace initiatives

October 27, 2022

November 15, 2022

Disclaimer:

This information is provided as general guidance only. It is not legal advice. It is not intended to replace the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), or the regulations and reference should always be made to the official version of the legislation.

While this information is made available to assist MLITSD inspectors, they will apply and enforce the OHSA, and its regulations based on the facts as they may find them.

When will the initiatives occur?

Phase 1: Compliance Assistance

Dates: October 3, 2022 – December 30, 2022

This phase consists of compliance assistance and awareness with some of our health and safety partners.

Phase 2: Focused Inspections

Dates: October 31, 2022 - December 30, 2022

Inspectors will check that employers are taking appropriate action to assess and address the occupational hazards as required by the [Occupational Health and Safety Act \(OHSA\)](#) and regulations.

OHSA Act and Regulations

The following are some common areas of focus for the MLITSD initiatives.

- Are employers, supervisors and workers complying with their OHSA [general duties](#)?
 - An employer's duties include the requirements for a JHSC at any workplace (other than specified construction projects) to which a designated substances regulation **applies**, even if there are fewer than 20 workers regularly employed in the workplace [OHSA 9(2)(c)].
- Are employers meeting their occupational illness [reporting obligations under the OHSA](#) and are they reviewing incidents to take steps to prevent recurrence?
- Have supervisors and workers completed basic occupational health and safety awareness training? ([O. Reg. 297/13](#))
- Is the employer complying with their duties respecting [Reg. 860 - WHMIS](#) (label, safety data sheets and worker education programs)?
- The next few slides provide a high level overview of the focus for the program specific initiatives.

Industrial Program – Crystalline silica initiative

- **Crystalline silica** is found in nature most commonly as quartz. It is found in granite, sandstone, quartzite, various other rocks and sand.
- Silica dust particles can become trapped in the lungs resulting in permanent damage (silicosis). Workers exposed to silica may also be at increased risk for other diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and kidney disease.
- [Cancer Care Ontario](#) reports that each year approximately **200 cases of lung cancer in Ontario** are caused by exposure to crystalline silica in workplaces. It is the **second leading cause** of occupational lung cancer after asbestos.
- [CAREX Canada](#) has reported that approximately **570 lung cancers** are due to occupational exposure to crystalline silica each year in Canada, based on past exposures (1961-2001). This amounts to 2.4% of lung cancer cases diagnosed annually.

Industrial Program - Locations

Inspectors will focus on **workplaces** such as:

- factories that manufacture quartz and granite countertops, concrete, porcelain, ceramic and stone products (e.g., tiles, stone monuments etc.)
- foundries where exposure may occur if cleaning castings made from silica sand molds
- primary metal manufacturing
- other industrial workplaces where workers may be exposed to crystalline silica dust (e.g., transportation, warehousing)

Many of these workplaces could be **small businesses** and/or employ **vulnerable workers**.

Inspectors will also focus on **job tasks** in industrial workplaces that put workers at risk of inhaling crystalline silica including but not limited to:

- grinding, cutting, sandblasting, crushing, chipping, and mixing materials containing crystalline silica
- housekeeping (dry sweeping), improper handling of HEPA filters and HEPA vacuums, and other dust collecting equipment during the set-up, use, and clean-up activities

Industrial Program – some key areas of focus*

[O. Reg. 490/09: Designated Substances](#) applies with respect to silica, to every employer and worker at a workplace, other than a construction project, where silica is present, produced, processed, used, handled, or stored **and** at which a worker is likely to be exposed to silica.

- employers have completed assessments of the exposure or likelihood of exposure to silica
- the assessments are conducted in consultation with the joint health and safety committee (JHSC)
- where required, silica control programs have been implemented including but not limited to engineering controls, safe work practices, hygiene facilities and practices
- training programs for supervisors and workers include the health effects of silica and the measures and procedures to follow under the control program
- the measures and procedures in the control program have been developed in consultation with the JHSC
- employers are taking all necessary measures and procedures to ensure a worker's airborne exposure to silica is reduced to the lowest practical level and in any event does not exceed the occupational exposure limits
- employers are conducting sampling to monitor airborne concentrations of silica and worker exposure and are maintaining records

* In addition to the OHS and regulations in the introductory slides.

Industrial Program – some key areas of focus*

- where required, [medical surveillance](#) for exposed workers is provided
- workers who are required to wear tight fitting respirators are fit-tested and have received information and instruction for their safe use, care, and limitations

Where [Regulation 851 – Industrial Establishments](#) applies, some relevant provisions may include:

- s. 11 – keep work surfaces clean, free of debris
- s. 45 and s. 46 - safe material handling (e.g., Quartz/Stone slabs)
- s. 124 – providing for eye wash stations, safety showers
- s. 127 and s. 128 – mechanical ventilation
- s. 130 - training (handling, use and storage, PPE and emergency procedures)
- s. 137 – cleaning personal protective equipment (PPE)

For more information on this initiative refer to the [Industrial-sector-compliance-plan-2022-2023](#)

[Free MLITSD WSPS Silica webinar and information](#)

[A guide to designated substances in the workplace | Ontario.ca](#)

[Code for Medical Surveillance for Designated Substances](#)

Health Care Program: Occupational Dermatitis

Healthy workers in healthy workplaces is an initiative to focus attention on issues related to occupational diseases.

In the health care sector, the focus of the initiative will be on awareness and prevention of occupational dermatitis.

Inspections will focus on exposures and work practices that may result in occupational dermatitis.



Why is there a focus on Occupational Dermatitis?

- Occupational contact dermatitis is associated with considerable morbidity, time lost from work or need for change in occupation and can have negative long-term impacts on quality of work and home life.
- Occupational contact dermatitis among health care workers is a common condition, with a reported one-year prevalence varying between 11% and 24%. The true prevalence and incidence are unknown due to significant under-reporting.
- Wet work, such as frequent handwashing, makes health care workers susceptible to occupational dermatitis.



Inspection Focus & Locations

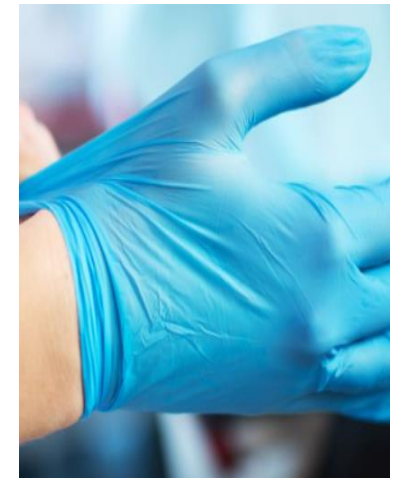
- All health care workplaces are covered by this initiative.
- Inspections may focus on areas where there is potential exposure to agents that may result in occupational dermatitis for instance:
 - Work with skin irritants
 - Work with skin allergens/sensitizers
- Workers who work with patients/residents/clients may be affected as well as those working in environmental services and dietary services.



Enforcement and Compliance: O. Reg 67/93

For workplaces that fall under the [Health Care and Residential Facilities \(HCRF\) Regulation](#), O. Reg. 67/93, some relevant provisions include:

- specific measures and procedures and training on the measures and procedures - sections 8 and 9
- where PPE is required, training on the care, use and limitations of PPE before wearing or using it for the first time and at regular intervals - subsection 10(1)
- where PPE is required, PPE must be properly used and maintained, must be a proper fit, must be inspected for damage/deterioration and must be stored in a convenient, clean and sanitary location - subsection 10(2)



To Prepare for this Initiative, Employers should:



Source: [Health care sector compliance plan 2022–2023 | ontario.ca](#)

- identify and assess the risks from skin hazards
- implement controls to reduce workers' exposure to agents
- provide education and training, information and resources
- encourage workers to participate in their workplace health and safety program
- follow up to ensure preventive measures are working

Mining Program- Why is the MLITSD Conducting an Occupational Health Initiative?

- 87% of all fatalities within the Ontario mining sector are caused by fatal occupational diseases.
- Between 2011 and 2021, 179 workers were reported as having died as a result of an occupational disease in the mining sector.
- The Mining Health, Safety, and Prevention Review, completed in 2015, identified occupational disease, particularly those related to airborne hazards, as one of the five key issues that posed the greatest risk to worker health and safety.
- [Mining Occupational Health Initiative Webinar](#)
- [Mining Sector Compliance Plan 2022-2023](#)

Mining Program- Initiative Focus

Ventilation Systems - Inspectors will check to ensure employers meet the ventilation requirements in Reg. 854, including but not limited to: ventilation where diesel equipment is operating underground, auxiliary ventilation in work headings, dilution or removal of contaminants to prevent worker exposure above the prescribed limits, accurate plans and records of ventilation system.

Diesel Exhaust - Inspectors will check that diesel equipment is being properly maintained; they will also check to see that the required diesel emission testing is performed as per Reg. 854.

Mine Exposures - Inspectors will check that Occupational Exposure Monitoring, including personal sampling, is completed in areas of known or expected exposures. They will also check to ensure that assessments and control programs are in place where required and have been developed in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee or Worker Health and Safety Representative, if any.

Assessments for designated substances - Inspectors will check designated substances control programs including arsenic, asbestos, isocyanates lead and silica, reagents etc.

WHMIS - Inspectors will check for employee training and hazardous materials storage and handling practices.

Compliance and Legislative Focus

Regulation 854 (Mines and Mining Plants)

Section 12 sets out the requirements for the use of personal protective equipment.

Section 182 sets out that diesel powered equipment shall not be used in an U/G mine unless a form from the Ministry has been completed and an employer shall ensure that the undiluted exhaust emissions contains less than 600 ppm of CO.

Section 183 requires employers to maintain records/a chart of procedures relating to ventilation where diesel equipment is operating.

Section 183.1 sets out the minimum airflow requirements where diesel equipment is operating, and goes further to say that the flow of air must reduce the concentration of toxic substances to prevent exposure of a worker to a level in excess of the limits prescribed under section 4 of Regulation 833.

Subsection 183.1(5) prescribes limits of total carbon and elemental carbon.

Section 183.2 sets out requirements for the testing for the volume of air flowing and quality of air in mines and testing of undiluted exhaust from diesel-powered equipment.

Compliance and Legislative Focus

Regulation 854 (Mines and Mining Plants)

Section 252 sets out the requirements for ventilation for mining plant buildings.

Section 253 sets out the underground ventilation system requirements.

Section 254 & 255 sets out the requirements for auxiliary ventilation and non-ventilated areas.

Section 257 and 258 sets out the requirements for using water for dust control in an underground mine.

Section 266 requires that dust or other material that is likely to cause a hazard by becoming airborne shall be removed with a minimum of delay.

Sections 267, 268, & 269 include requirements for: annual surveys; assessments and monitoring of hazardous elements and compounds; and chemical records and records of injury.

Section 286 sets out requirements for make up air supply and recirculated air.

Sections 287-293 includes requirements to monitor and manage radon emissions.

Healthy Workers in Healthy Workplaces Initiative Construction Program - Asbestos.

[MLITSD IHSA Joint Webinar - HWHW initiative asbestos](#)

In support of the Healthy workers in healthy workplaces – occupational disease compliance initiative, this on-demand webinar was recorded in partnership with the MLITSD and reviews the initiative focus, rationale, location, key focus for inspectors, and how IHSA can help construction companies working with asbestos.

Ministry of Labour, Immigrations, Training & Skills Development “Asbestos -What you need to know full Video” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=maO_MwfwmfY

[Construction sector compliance plan 2022–2023 | ontario.ca](#)

Thank You!