

Ministry of Labour Blitzes for the Industrial and Construction Sectors

IS YOUR WORKPLACE OR JOBSITE READY?



Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)

Focused inspections by the Ministry of Labour will take place from October 1 to December 27, 2019.

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are the top lost time injury at work reported to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) in Ontario.

Initiative focus

On Construction sites and in Industrial workplaces Inspectors will check that:

- employers have provided training to workers on safe manual materials handling practices
- items are being manually handled in a safe manner
- items are being stored in a manner that does not endanger a worker when manually handling those items
- work areas and routes to and from work areas are kept free of obstructions so extra demands are not placed on workers when manually handling items
- access to and egress from a work area is appropriate so that physical demands are not increased
- adequate housekeeping is taking place so that a worker can use assistive devices (for example, carts) and there are not increased demands when manually handling items
- handling items while the worker is on a ladder is being performed in a safe manner
- obstructions and/or hazards on the floor are not interfering with manual materials handling activities



Respiratory Hazards

Focused inspections by the Ministry of Labour will take place from October 1 to December 27, 2019.

70% of allowed long latency illness claims over the past 10 years come from: lung cancer, pleural plaques, mesothelioma, asbestosis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, which are all associated with respiratory exposures.

Cancer Care Ontario and the Occupational Cancer Research Centre estimate that exposure to asbestos, diesel engine exhaust, crystalline silica and welding fumes cause approximately 1,300 cancer cases a year in Ontario.

Initiative focus

Gases, dusts, vapours, and fumes may be present at construction projects. They are referred to as 'respiratory hazards' when they can make a worker sick or die from being breathed in.

Examples of respiratory hazards include:

- lead dust and fumes from grinding, welding, cutting or brazing surfaces coated with lead-based paint
- silica dust from cutting and breaking concrete, sandblasting or removing refractory ceramic fibers
- solvent vapours from adhesives, paints, strippers, cleaning solvents, and spray coatings
- isocyanate vapours from spray foam insulation and certain spray paints, sealants and coatings
- carbon monoxide from operating gas-powered equipment in poorly ventilated work environments
- fumes and vapours from heated asphalt used in roofing and road paving
- dust and vapours associated with hardwood floor installation and finishing

In Construction Inspectors will check that:

- proper controls and work practices are in place
- respirators are well maintained
- workers have been trained on how to use the respirators properly
- respirators are fitted to ensure an effective seal between the respirator and the worker's face
- worker exposure to airborne concentrations of hazardous biological or chemical agents listed in Ontario Regulation 833 are under the occupational exposure limits set out in that regulation

In industrial establishment workplaces, inspectors will focus on activities that may pose respiratory hazards including:

- vapours (for example, from solvents)
- fumes (for example, welding fumes)
- particulate (for example, from diesel emissions)

