



March, 2010

**ONTARIO FATALITIES AND CRITICAL INJURIES**

	(January 1 <sup>st</sup> to February 28 <sup>th</sup> )	
	2010	2009
Fatalities	2	0
Critical Injuries	17	15

*Note: these figures represent preliminary data and are not to be considered official statistics from the Ministry of Labour. Official statistics will be issued quarterly by the Occupational Health and Safety Branch of the Ministry of Labour.*

**MINISTRY OF LABOUR**

There was 1 fatality in the month of February, where a worker fell from a 6<sup>th</sup> floor balcony while doing repair work.

February has seen 6 critical injuries, 1 was related to a fall from a scaffold, 1 was caused when a set of stairs collapsed, another was a result of a slip, 2 involved heavy equipment and one final was a result of cutting a steel truss.

Of the 6 “criticals” four occurred in the residential sector (RESS), 1 in commercial building construction (COMM) and 1 occurred in the excavation – grading sector (GRAD).

**MINISTRY OF LABOUR – New Online Tool Targets Pains and Strains**

A new interactive, online tool is now available to help Ontarians find out more about musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs).

MSDs -- or repetitive strain injuries -- occur in the muscles, tendons and nerves as a result of continued exposure to repetitive work, awkward postures and other facts.

In an effort to inform people about - and prevent - these injuries, the online tool lets users click on body parts to get information. For each body part, it highlights tasks that may lead to an MSD. It also recommends ways to reduce potential hazards, such as slouching at your desk.

## **What is FAIR?**

When a worker is fatally injured at a workplace, the manager of the Ministry of Labour (MOL) inspector who is investigating the fatality will contact the family of the deceased by letter within two weeks of the date of the incident.

The manager will follow up with a phone call to the family of the deceased within three weeks of the date of the incident to express their condolences and answer any questions the family may have regarding the MOL's role in the investigation/prosecution process.

The letter will provide the family with general information regarding the MOL's investigation process and prosecution process along with the contact information for the manager and Regional Director who can be contacted at any time if the family has questions or concerns.

The Regional Director will contact the family within six months of the date of the fatality to update the family on the status of the investigation and inform the family if and when charges are laid.

The manager will maintain contact with the family periodically during the course of the investigation, the prosecution (if any) and the Coroner's inquest (if any).

Periodic contact may include scheduling specific dates and times when the manager contacts the family by phone or meets with the family in person.

Managers understand that families cope with and experience grief in different ways and take this into account when determining frequency of contact with the family of the deceased.

Furthermore, managers will provide the family with contact information for other support and assistance services which can help the family cope with their loss. A contact list is provided at the back of this pamphlet.

During the investigation/prosecution process, the MOL manager will be as open and transparent as possible in providing the family of the deceased with appropriate information in a timely fashion without compromising the integrity of the investigation and any potential prosecution.

### **The investigation and possible prosecution: what the family should know**

The MOL investigates all workplace fatalities to try to determine the cause of the incident and to identify preventative actions.

Once the investigation is complete, MOL staff will review the investigation report. If prosecution for violations of the Occupational Health and Safety Act is warranted, charges will be laid within one year of the date of the offence.

The manager will inform the family if and when charges are laid and if charges are laid will provide the family with important court dates and contact information for the MOL lawyer handling the prosecution.

After the investigation/prosecution is complete a Coroner's inquest may take place. The purpose of an inquest is to determine the circumstances of the death and to make recommendations to prevent any future workplace death in similar circumstances.

Note that the Coroner's office is completely separate from the MOL. If a Coroner's inquest takes place, the Coroner's office will contact the family with the date and location of the inquest.

## **Freedom of Information**

The MOL will not provide specific details about its investigation while the investigation is ongoing, or, if charges are laid, until the prosecution is complete.

After the investigation is complete and a determination has been made that no charges will be laid or, if charges are laid, after the prosecution has been completed, the family may obtain details of the investigation by making a Freedom of Information request from the Ministry of Labour's Freedom of Information and Privacy office.

## **FAIR partnership**

The FAIR partnership is a joint project of the Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB), the Ministry of Labour (MOL), Threads of Life, and the Office of the Worker Adviser (OWA). Its goal is to provide timely and comprehensive assistance to survivors following a traumatic workplace fatality. Some of the services provided by the partners include:

- A WSIB Crisis Intervention Counsellor contacts the family within 48 hours of the fatality and will make appropriate referrals to the MOL, OWA, Threads of Life, and other community resources;
- Advice and representation in workplace insurance matters;
- How to access information through the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA);
- Bereavement counselling; and
- Material resources to orient families to administrative processes that follow

a fatality or life-altering injury/illness and assist them in understanding those processes.

## **IHSA – Dates to Remember**

### **Forget Them Not - April 28**

April 28th is National Day of Mourning in Canada. The flag on Parliament Hill will fly at half mast, we will pause, remember those who have lost their lives or been injured in the workplace, and reflect on how to prevent future tragedies.

You can wear your support with a Day of Mourning commemorative pin. Or, you can download and display our free poster in your workplace. Printed posters are also available at a nominal cost. To receive your materials in time, you should place your orders by March 31.

### **Steps for Life Walk - May 2**

On May 2nd, in 28 cities across Canada, the Steps for Life 5 KM Walk will kick off NAOSH Week 2010. The event is not only fun, it also helps spread the message that workplace injuries and illnesses are preventable. Steps for Life is the major fundraising event for Threads of Life, a national charitable organization dedicated to supporting families along their journey of healing who have suffered from a workplace fatality, life-altering illness or occupational disease.

The CCOHS team will once again be walking in the Hamilton event. Find the walk closest to you and put your team together. It will be a Sunday to remember. Learn more about how you can participate on the Steps for Life website at <http://www.stepsforlife.ca/>

## **IHSA – Network News**

To get detailed information on

- MOL revised Construction Regulation
- MOL campaign: fall hazards
- Beware of winter hazards
- CSAO, E&USA, and THSAO merge to become IHSA

Please visit the IHSA website at <http://www.csa.org/t.tools/t16.magazines/index.cfm>

## **IHSA – Workplace Violence Seminar March 4 (half day)**

Ontario employers have until June 15 to comply with new regulations.

Workplace harassment policies are not enough. Bill 168 explicitly indicates new amendments in seven key areas.

If your company or business has more than five employees, these new regulations will apply to you! Ontario workplaces must ready their policies and implementation procedures before June 15, 2010 to remain in compliance with the new provisions to law.

On March 4, learn from key industry practitioners and gain insight and perspective as to how these changes could affect your business.

Speakers include representatives from: Safe Workplace Promotion Services Ontario (SWPSO), Ministry of Labour, and legal firm Heenan Blaikie LLP, among others. For more information please visit the following site <http://www.ohscanada.com/seminar/>

## **Ontario Regional Common Ground Alliance - ORCGA**

### **ORCGA SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: DIG SAFE MONTH IS A TIMELY REMINDER TO CALL BEFORE YOU DIG**

April 1 marks the official start of Dig Safe Month. The Ontario Regional Common Ground Alliance (ORCGA) and its stakeholders have designated April 2010 as the first annual Dig Safe Month in Ontario. This month is dedicated to raising awareness of safe digging practices across the province to improve safety and reduce damages to underground facilities, through local events organized by the ORCGA and its members.

“Dig Safe Month is designed to naturally coincide with the unofficial start of spring digging season and to serve as a reminder to homeowners and contractors that they need to call before they start digging,” said ORCGA President Jim Douglas.

The ORCGA and its members, including Ontario One Call, are encouraging homeowners and contractors to call for locates before they dig to prevent injuries, property damage and inconvenient outages. Throughout April, ORCGA members and geographic councils will be leading local campaigns across the province to spread awareness about safe digging practices and “Call Before You Dig”. Ensuring the safety of those who work or live in the vicinity of underground facilities and protecting vital services is everyone’s responsibility.

The Dig Safe website will go live on March 15. Visit [www.digsafe.ca](http://www.digsafe.ca) for more information on Dig Safe Month, “Call Before You Dig”, safety guidelines and how to get involved.

## **THE BULLETIN - KEEPING MEMBERS INFORMED**

The Bulletin is not a comprehensive document, but the Committee believes you will find value in receiving a monthly update to health and safety related issues that will affect the residential construction industry and your business.

## **E-SCRIPTION LIST**

The Bulletin is automatically distributed to all 29 local associations. Individual members can be added to the e-scription list by request through email to [healthandsafety@ohba.ca](mailto:healthandsafety@ohba.ca) .