



INFRASTRUCTURE HEALTH AND SAFETY ASSOCIATION

Safety association tackles fall hazards in construction

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The Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (IHSA) is combating fall hazards in Ontario construction by increasing access to safety training in the industry.

Last Thursday, the provincial Minister of Labour, Peter Fonseca, announced the results of a three-month enforcement blitz of over 2,800 construction sites in Ontario. The blitz uncovered widespread neglect of safety rules. The most common violations related to fall protection.

“With the government’s current emphasis on fall-protection violations, this could provide more employers with the opportunity to better understand their responsibility to get their workers trained,” said Michael Delisle, President and CEO of IHSA.

“In addition, due to this enhanced attention, companies could consider this an opportune time to avail themselves of proper procedures, and we’re ready to help them. We’ve taken some bold steps to make sure construction workers and employers have easy access to the training and resources they need to protect themselves.”

In an ambitious move to help train workers at risk of falls, IHSA will add an extra 200 sessions of its *Basics of Fall Protection* classroom training to its course offerings this summer. IHSA will host the expert-led sessions in locations across Ontario. The course covers the basic knowledge workers need to do their jobs safely when working at heights.

IHSA is also involved in other initiatives to help protect construction workers from falls, including:

- ◆ Spearheading the development of a standard for fall-protection training in Ontario. The draft standard is currently being shared with stakeholders in both labour and employer groups. IHSA is pushing for a rigorous standard to become mandatory in Ontario.
- ◆ Hosting workshops for managers of construction companies that operate suspended access equipment, commonly referred to as “swingstages”. These workshops provide key decision-makers with a forum to identify solutions to swingstage problems.
- ◆ Supporting Ontario construction’s Provincial Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee as it advises the Minister of Labour about enforcement and mandatory training on fall protection and other high-hazard construction activities. IHSA provides technical and administrative support to the Committee, which has official status as an advisor to the Minister.



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“In the past five years, 42 construction workers have died from falls. Nine died from falls last year alone,” said Michael Delisle.

“Safety is a shared responsibility, and making sure workers are trained in fall protection is a good first step.”

To register for a training course, contact IHSA at 1-800-781-2726 or www.ihsa.ca.

The Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (IHSA) was founded in January 2010 by amalgamating the Construction Safety Association of Ontario, the Electrical & Utilities Safety Association of Ontario, and the Transportation Health and Safety Association of Ontario. It works with employers and workers in Ontario to prevent occupational injury and illness. IHSA serves workers and employers in aggregates, construction, electrical, natural gas pipelines, ready-mix concrete, transportation, and utilities.

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