

JOB NOT DONE

WHY ONTARIO WORKERS NEED MANDATORY WORKING AT HEIGHTS TRAINING FOR WORKERS IN ALL SECTORS NOW

THE PROMISE

- Ontario government committed to implementing [46 recommendations](#) made by an Expert Panel's review of the province's occupational health and safety system in 2010.
- Expert Panel Recommendation 17: **The Ministry of Labour and new prevention organization should develop mandatory fall protection training for workers working at heights as a priority and consult with stakeholders to determine additional high-hazard activities that should be subject to mandatory training for workers.**
- Expert Panel recommended this training be implemented as a priority within 12 months.

THE IMPORTANCE

- Working at Heights (WAH) training standard for construction workers finally came into effect in 2015.
- An [independent evaluation](#) of Ontario's WAH training standard found:
 - Training standard was needed and effective
 - High level of compliance among employers (92%)
 - Falls-related lost-time injury (LTI) claim rates dropped 19.6% (For every lost-time injury prevented, the WSIB estimates employers save \$106,500 (2007 data).)
 - Employers reported improvements to work sites (new equipment, guardrails erected, fall rescue plans, more frequent inspection of equipment)
 - WAH safety practices improved (checking for fall hazards, maintaining 100% tie-off)
 - 90% of workers said the training was useful; most said it improved their confidence levels.

PROGRESS STALLED

- Falls from heights remain a leading cause of worker death from traumatic injury.
- Working at heights poses a significant risk of injury to workers regardless of the sector.
- A report [prepared by the Ministry of Labour](#) analyzed information on 92 falls-related worker deaths between 2009 and 2016 and found:
 - One-third were in workplaces covered by the industrial regulations and NOT protected by the WAH training standard
 - Lack of work site instruction and falls-specific training were key factors that led to workers' deaths and could be addressed if proper training were in place.
- Ontario needs to expand mandatory WAH training to include workers in all sectors.
- Instead, the government has [removed WAH training requirements](#) for workers on some construction projects within automobile manufacturing and assembly plants.
- Other significant workplace hazards remain unaddressed with no discussion of other training standards as recommended.

WORKING AT HEIGHTS TRAINING NOW. HOW YOU CAN HELP

WORKERS CAN:

- Think for a minute. Workers in all sectors can work at heights. Do you?
- Look around the workplace. You might not have noticed it before—do you use ladders or go on the roof? Are there railings or barriers at work?
- Report potential hazards and request training for work at heights
- Speak to your Joint Health and Safety Committee and union about height hazards at work and the need for training
- Support efforts at work to seek WAH training—its not just for construction sites
- Refuse to work at heights without training/call a MLTSD inspector
- File or sign on to a group grievance if necessary

COMMITTEE/HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES CAN:

- Identify all actual and potential working at height situations in the workplace
- On every monthly inspection, talk to workers and identify all tasks that include working at heights
- Enlist the support of workers and union reps about the need for WAH training
- Write a recommendation for a formal WAH training program and refreshers. Use your statutory rights to be consulted about training to insert yourself into discussions about workplace training programs
- Ensure that the Health and Safety Policy mandates systemic review of development, maintenance, and review of the WAH training program as well as training records
- Use your rights to stop work if necessary—working at heights kills
- Report to the union and the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development any identified gaps or deficiencies in the workplace WAH training program

UNIONS CAN:

- Build worker support for efforts to get a rigorous WAH training program
- Create strong links, communications, and interactions between workers, union, and health and safety reps
- Post flyers on union boards/share at local meetings/newsletters, write articles on the value of formal training standards
- Negotiate with employer and provide rationale for a workplace WAH training standard
- File union and group grievances if necessary
- Join with other unions at area council/labour councils to call for mandatory WAH training standards

**JOIN THE
MOVEMENT:
JOB NOT DONE**

Do you work at heights in your sector?

Do you have a story to tell?

Why is working at heights training important for you?

