The Health & Safety Issue

With stories on the impact of Working at Heights training in Ontario, the great work being done by GVCA-member safety coordinators and the National Day of Mourning.
CLAC has partnered with over 100 contractors across Ontario to deliver on-time, on-budget projects, while fostering a positive workplace culture.

Progressive labour relations since 1952
- Wall-to-wall representation
- Cooperative, partnership-based approach
- Managed open sites
- Multiskilling opportunities
- Trained, skilled, and experienced labour force

Cutting-edge skills and safety training
- Courses open to members and the public
- Working at Heights training, including online blended and refresher. CPO approved
- Health and safety courses and skills training
- Pre-apprenticeship programs

Learn more at clac.ca

Sign up at clac.ca/courses
The Tools of Our Success

We are an industry that works with tools. Some we use on site; some in the management of our businesses. I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with both sets, and while I think many of us know and understand the tools we need to work on site, those that help us succeed in the office may be very different. Some are obvious. They earn us money. They create things. They satisfy commitments, and give us a sense of accomplishment. But what of those that are less clear-cut? Those that help us build trust, build relationships and create a sense of security for our employees? They’re harder to wield.

The culture, attitude and productivity of your company are critical tools for success. The problem is that most of us don’t take the time to craft them and hone them. We all know that any tool we use on the jobsite needs a bit of TLC every now and again. It’s no different from those we use in the office.

Think about what your company values, and how you want to define its culture. Set those ideas down on paper, and put them into practice every day. Above all, be truthful and consistent about them. Say what you mean, mean what you say and do what you say you would—in the office and on the jobsite.

If you’re like me, you’re both inspired and terrified by the impacts of change on our industry. I can’t help but think that the next Uber or Airbnb is staring us right in the face. It’s obvious and available, but we’re just not seeing it. Why is that? Is it that we are so consumed with the everyday? Or are we so arrogant as to think that the way we’ve been doing business for the last 40 years is going to serve us just as well for the next 40?

Change is here, ladies and gentlemen. It needs to be foremost in our minds. Remember when you were a kid and you challenged everything? Why don’t you do that anymore? Bring back your curiosity and your imagination. Challenge the status quo. Disruption is the term everyone kicks around these days. The opportunity before each of us now is to lead, not follow. Change is here to stay, and whether you like it or not, it will create opportunities for productivity and profitability.
DTK Condos
32 Duke Street, Kitchener

Project details
From grand heights to sleek lines and an unmarred lower-level podium, DTK Condos is a visually stunning, high-rise tower featuring a progressive design. Standing at an impressive 39 stories, DTK is a modernist sculpture and the tallest ever to grace the Region of Waterloo.

The building will be home to 494 residential condominiums ranging from one bedroom, one bed plus den, and two bedroom suites. Residents will enjoy amenities such as a 5th floor rooftop terrace with a large BBQ area, cabana lounge furniture, community garden, and doggy pad. Above the terrace on the 6th floor, residents will have access to a full fitness centre including yoga studio, billiards, and party room. The building features a 24-hour concierge, car share parking, electric vehicle parking, and 10,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor.

The location of DTK Condos is an ideal place to call home: it boasts a 97 walk score and is just steps to the new ION LRT, shops, bars, restaurants, and farmer’s markets. Construction is expected to be completed in the summer of 2021.

---

Market Snapshot Q1 2019
Waterloo Region & Guelph

Waterloo Region & Guelph is home to one of the fastest growing tech talent markets with growing office and industrial market. There is currently 975,724 SF of office and industrial space under construction in 13 buildings across the 4 cities. There has been an slight increase in the number of buildings under construction, from 10 to 13 buildings, this quarter with additional construction planned to begin in Q2 2019.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDUSTRIAL</th>
<th>OFFICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SF TOTAL</td>
<td>SF TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL BLDGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>32,451,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchener</td>
<td>19,196,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterloo</td>
<td>8,950,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guelph</td>
<td>25,731,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85,723,248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more market statistics and information please contact: Connor Ward, Research Analyst. connor.ward@cushwakewr.com
For men up to age 45, suicide is the second most common cause of death in Canada, after accidents. This means that more men in this age group will commit suicide than pass away from cancer, heart disease or a stroke. According to a report from the American Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the statistics are even worse for those in the construction industry where the rate of suicide is 3 times the national average: 53.2 versus 17.3 per 100,000 workers. The costs per suicide are even more alarming. A study in New Brunswick titled *Chronic Diseases in Canada* found the cost of suicide per death to be $849,877; an American study calculated the number at over $1 million. More than 97 percent of these costs are due to lost productivity; the remaining 3 percent are costs associated with the provision of emergency medical services.

While demographics certainly play a role in the high rates of suicide in construction (women account for only 12 percent of workers in the construction industry and have three–times lower rates of suicide), the nature of the work also factors in.

### Job insecurity

Depending on the type of trade and geographic region, availability of work can fluctuate throughout the year impacting finances, family arrangements and mental health.

### High workplace stress

Working in extreme weather, dangerous working conditions and with hazardous materials can impact physical and mental health.

### Easy access to lethal means

Pesticides, high heights and poisonous fumes are only some of the means of suicide more readily accessible to those in the construction industry.

### Inconsistent work schedule

Rotating shift work or interruptions in work can cause issues with sleep, family routines and interpersonal relationships.

### Workplace culture

Workplace cultures in many construction companies still deal with old-fashioned stereotypes about mental health and wellness such as, “He is just faking it to get out of work,” or “She just needs to learn to deal with her issues.”

---

**JDI Cleaning Systems**

Our superior standards ensure that your building will always look its best, affording a longer life, enhancing the real property value, and creating a comfortable environment for your employees and customers.

**Olgar Radulovic**

Regional Director

Cambridge/Guelph

Office: 519-884-9600

Fax: 519-884-8699

**Dejan (Dan) Radulovic**

Regional Director

Kitchener/Waterloo

Office: 519-884-9600

Fax: 519-884-8699

2A-354 King St. North, Waterlo, ON N2J 2Z2
The good news is that the construction industry has taken note of these disheartening statistics and has begun to act. Over the past year, industry leaders, mental health experts, safety associations and other stakeholders have hosted discussions, conferences and training sessions with the goal of raising awareness, providing practical tools to employers and reducing rates of suicide amongst workers.

When implementing suicide-prevention efforts, employers are encouraged to think holistically about the issue, rather than simply focusing on self-harm warning signs and what to do if you think an employee may be suicidal. The goal should be to reduce the stigma associated with mental health and the provision of services and care to employees before they reach the point of suicide contemplation.

Employers should consider:

- an employee assistance program which offers free, confidential resources for people looking for support with counselling, child and elder care resources, financial and legal services, health and wellness support amongst others,
- a comprehensive benefits package which includes a reasonable amount for psychological and counselling services,
- providing employees with personal or mental health days,
- training for management on suicide prevention awareness and how to foster a culture encouraging self-care and seeking support, and
- corporate policies and programs that aim to eliminate workplace sexual harassment and violence.

This article was written by Christine Holman, CHRP, a human resources generalist with RLB. Christine can be reached at christine.holman@rlb.ca and 519-822-9933 ext. 267.

Strassburger Windows and Doors is the only manufacturer to offer a complete, engineered designed - window and door series including Tilt 'n' Turn, DoubleNature, Craftsman Series, and our premium entrance door systems. All of our products feature superior energy efficiency, unparalleled performance and the best warranty in the industry.

To see our complete line of windows and doors, please visit strassburger.net today.
GVCA SIGHTINGS

Merit Ontario AGM

Sarah Buchanan of Melloul-Blamey Construction receives the 2019 Philip Besseling Leadership Award. This award recognizes an individual from a member company who has not achieved executive status but who is considered to be a future leader. From left to right: Tim Henhueffler, Melloul-Blamey Construction; Sarah Buchanan, Steve Stecho, Harold Stecho Electric.

Joel Melloul and Nadine Heimpel accept the Merit Ontario 2019 Award of Excellence on behalf of Bernie Melloul. Bernie was recognized for his lifelong achievements and contributions to the open shop construction sector in Ontario. Left to right: Joel Melloul and Nadine Heimpel of Melloul-Blamey Construction and Michael Gallardo, Executive Director, Merit Ontario.

From left to right: Jeff Heimpel, Melloul-Blamey Construction, Darrin Gueguen, Dordan Mechanical; Steve Stecho, Harold Stecho Electric; guest speaker Rex Murphy, CBC & the National Post; Martha George, GVCA; Dan Gueguen, Dordan Mechanical; Scott Nelson, Harold Stecho Electric; Nadine Heimpel, Melloul-Blamey Construction.

Congratulations to Nelco Mechanical Limited on Your 113thth Anniversary

Company partners from left to right: Christine Snider, Richard Snider, Michael Hobson, and Valery Hobson.

2019 Daily Try-A-Build Champions

Our LinC team won top honours in Canstruction’s Try-A-Build competition to raise money for the Food Bank of Waterloo Region. Team members from left to right: Thomas Krohl, GVCA; Leahm Martens, C & H Fire Suppression Systems; Christina Shantz, Melloul-Blamey Construction Inc.; Jeff Armstrong, Harold Stecho Electric Limited; and Matt Jamieson, O’Dell Associates.

Sarah Buchanan of Melloul-Blamey Construction receives the 2019 Philip Besseling Leadership Award. This award recognizes an individual from a member company who has not achieved executive status but who is considered to be a future leader. From left to right: Tim Henhueffler, Melloul-Blamey Construction; Sarah Buchanan, Steve Stecho, Harold Stecho Electric.

Joel Melloul and Nadine Heimpel accept the Merit Ontario 2019 Award of Excellence on behalf of Bernie Melloul. Bernie was recognized for his lifelong achievements and contributions to the open shop construction sector in Ontario. Left to right: Joel Melloul and Nadine Heimpel of Melloul-Blamey Construction and Michael Gallardo, Executive Director, Merit Ontario.

From left to right: Jeff Heimpel, Melloul-Blamey Construction, Darrin Gueguen, Dordan Mechanical; Steve Stecho, Harold Stecho Electric; guest speaker Rex Murphy, CBC & the National Post; Martha George, GVCA; Dan Gueguen, Dordan Mechanical; Scott Nelson, Harold Stecho Electric; Nadine Heimpel, Melloul-Blamey Construction.
GVCA SIGHTINGS

KW Titans Central Division Final Series

Jodi Stecho, Jeff Kienapple of Gallagher, and Steve Stecho of Harold Stecho Electric Ltd.

Greg Baker of Liteblock Concrete Canada, Kathy Shaw of Rogers and 570 News, and Joe Gibson of Form & Build Supply Inc.

Call Us Today!
(519) 624-1712

- Municipal
- Road/Ways, Restoration, Pathways, Sport/Play Areas
- Commercial
- Parking Lots, Plazas, Shopping Centers, Condominiums
- Apartment Buildings
- Industrial
- Factories, Roadways, Gas Stations, Loading Docks, Repairs
- Institutional
- Schools, Churches, Hospitals, etc.

5 STAR PAVING

Kevan Thompson
Industry Leader,
Vice President Construction

Phone: 519-650-6363 ext. 41552
Toll free: 1-866-578-6030
kevan.thompson@cowangroup.ca
www.cowangroup.ca

Construction Insurance & Surety Specialists

Industry specific programs
Tailored insurance & surety solutions
Dedicated risk management team

CONSTRUCTION
Ontario’s new chief prevention officer doesn’t just want to make a difference—he wants to measure it.

“Can we measure the correlation between what we’re doing and does that influence a reduction in injuries and illness? It’s one thing to say, ‘I’ve trained 1,000 people,’ but at the end of the day, can we measure whether that really made a difference or not?” says Ron Kelusky, who stepped into the role in March 2018. “[It’s about] creating an environment where you can research it, you can analyze it and you can look at the outcomes.”

Previously, Kelusky had success with this measurement-driven approach as CEO of Ontario’s Public Services Health & Safety Association.

“We used that model for violence in health care where a whole series of activities resulted in a whole series of outputs that we could measure to ultimately determine if we made an impact in reducing violence,” Kelusky says. “If we look at that perspective across the whole continuum, then we will be able to look at our effectiveness a little bit better.”

Kelusky also wants to use data to achieve a “full understanding of the events and circumstances” that surround an injury—and work towards eliminating those. For example, a recent government analysis found that 15 percent of workers who die from falls in Ontario do so within the first month of employment. A potential solution could be better mentorship programs.

Kelusky says his team will be looking at “every piece of data we can find,” including statistics from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, Ministry of Labour inspection reports and coroner’s inquests. To get even more data, Kelusky would like to work with industry to design an investigation form that would provide a detailed analysis for incidents, as well as near misses. This would ensure consistency industry-wide.

“In the continuum of the way things work, so many near misses may result in an injury, so many injuries result in a critical (injury), so many criticals result in a fatality,” he says. “So, working backwards, if we can fix the near misses, we can better understand why people are getting hurt.”

The province is working on a new five-year strategy that will be “bold and innovative,” Kelusky says. “Most importantly, we will be addressing areas where the system will have the greatest impact on injuries or illnesses and fatalities in the workplace,” he says.

The government has completed a risk analysis of the top 20 areas that are causing the majority of critical injuries and fatalities in the province. When broken into sectors, it found that general trucking, residential construction, agriculture and landscaping have high incidents of injury.

“That are the areas that we really need to focus on to be able to make a demonstrable difference and get the curve going in the right direction,” Kelusky says.

Occupational disease has been identified as a key priority and a working group has been established to look into such exposures as diesel particulate, noise, silica, radiation, occupational cancers and irritants.

“There’s a real emphasis on trying to reduce those exposures so that we are not faced with surprises in the future,” Kelusky says.

Prevention will be a major focus of the strategy, as it is the most economical and effective means of intervention, he
explains. Employers are encouraged to invest in prevention systems, including those focused on physical safety and psychological safety.

“Prevention makes good sense. I always say it’s cheaper to keep Humpty on the wall than it is to put him back together again.”

Kelusky wants all stakeholders to embrace the strategy and see themselves in it, whether that be health and safety associations, employers, advocates, labour, even families and friends of people who have been injured. He stresses the importance of everyone working collectively with one voice and starting to think as a system.

“If we can create an improved culture of health and safety and, ultimately, have a cohesive and coordinated system where occupational illness and injury become exceptions, rather than just accepted as unfortunate accidents, we would have made a difference.”

The Ministry of Labour is looking “very strongly” into developing an accreditation program for employers with strong health and safety performance.

“We want to recognize the good employers, celebrate their success…We want to demonstrate that there’s leaders there.”

Kelusky says one of his biggest challenges—similar to those of safety professionals—is being able to successfully transfer knowledge. He says it’s important to speak the language of who you are talking to. This can be achieved by taking the time to understand your audience and working diligently to help them along—regardless of where they stand on the topic of OHS.

“A very high percentage of people just don’t understand the value or role of health and safety in the workplace…These are the people we need to help,” Kelusky says.

“We know there is a significant portion of the system, whether it’s employers or employees, that we’re not reaching. And it’s those people that we need to be able to reach to truly make the difference.”

Kelusky is looking forward to the difference he can make as Ontario’s chief prevention officer, but the “magnitude and expectation” of the job is not lost on him.

“When you think about it, you not only have responsibility over the provincial health and safety system, but you also have responsibility to ensure that 7 million workers are working safe and in half—a–million businesses.”

While Kelusky says he was awestruck when he realized how big, diverse and complex the system is, he is ready to bring as many stakeholders together as he can to help improve OHS outcomes across Ontario.

“Now this is where you really have to perform. You really have to bring every collaborative skill that you have to bring together a diverse group of people,” he says. “Everybody wants to do the same thing; it’s just sometimes some people want to do it differently, so it’s really working at gaining consensus.”

This article was written by Amanda Silliker, and originally appeared in the February/March 2019 issue of Canadian Occupational Safety magazine. © Copyright Thomson Reuters Canada Ltd., Mar 19, 2019; Toronto, Ontario, 1-800-387-5164. www.cos-mag.com
A new study commissioned by the Government of Ontario and performed by the Institute for Work & Health (IWH) looked into the implementation and effectiveness of the province’s now four-year old working at heights (WAH) training standard.

The report, Evaluation of the implementation and effectiveness of the Ontario working-at-heights training standard, spoke to more than 1,000 training providers, construction employers, learners and inspectors from the Ministry of Labour. Among its principal findings:

• Implementation of the standard was effective.

“The construction sector and other affected sectors became aware of and undertook the required training by the deadline of October 1, 2017. Among construction employers with six or more employees, 92 percent were found to be compliant with the requirement to ensure that affected workers were trained. By the transition deadline, about 420,000 Ontario-based learners had successfully completed the training (a number equivalent to 88 percent of the number of construction workers in Ontario).”

• The number of training provider organizations steadily increased over time. About 220 are currently approved.
• Learners reported a large impact on their knowledge of working at heights safety.

“Sizeable impacts on their self-confidence in using WAH safety skills and the intention to change work practices were also seen... Substantial improvements were found in 10 of 12 self-reported WAH safety practices targeted by the training (including checking for fall hazards, maintaining 100% tie-off, and avoiding shortcuts that compromise safety).”

• Changes at the work site were also evidenced in the survey of construction employers, particularly with regards to the purchase of new equipment, the development of fall rescue plans, and the inspection of equipment.

The report authors indicated that, while it was impossible to measure the precise impact of WAH training in the industry, estimates suggest that the training has achieved its desired effect. Some of the conclusions in the report:

• A statistically significant impact of the WAH training intervention on the construction sector’s lost-time claim rates of falls targeted by the intervention was found. This impact was mostly seen among the smallest employers (less than five full-time equivalent employees) and the sectors with the highest claim incidences.

• WAH training may have reduced the number of lost-time claims due to falls by 220. This sum applies the rate of lost-time injuries due to falls for the three-year pre-WAH implementation period (i.e., 2012 to 2014) to the workforce population in 2017. The expected injury rate from falls could have been as high as 1,084. The actual number of lost-time claims attributed to targeted falls in 2017 was 861.

**Government reacts**

The Ontario government has viewed the report’s findings with a high degree of positivity. A release on its website projects that the standard has saved businesses up to $36 million in health, lost productivity and other costs.

“Our mandatory training program is saving lives in Ontario,” said labour minister Laurie Scott. “Our government’s goal is to improve health and safety and prevent injuries and deaths of workers when working at heights.”

The release said that businesses are benefiting due to an almost 20 percent reduction in lost-time injury (LTI) claims to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. The reduction is the greatest among the smallest employers and among six groups of employers with the highest rates of LTI claims.

We’re your health & safety toolkit.

A safe workplace is no accident.

It starts with strong leadership, comprehensive health and safety policies, and ongoing training.

Even then, accidents can happen.

Thankfully, our industry-leading health and safety expertise means our clients are always prepared and never alone.

“Working-at-heights training is improving the falls prevention knowledge of workers and their supervisors,” said Scott. “We are enabling people to work safer on the job and helping businesses to reduce their costs.”

To date, more than 550,000 Ontario workers across all sectors, the vast majority from construction, have completed the working-at-heights training since the program began on April 1, 2015.
Speakers Call for More Action on Labour Safety

National Day of Mourning honours the dead, and calls for better protection for living workers.

Nine hundred and fifty one. That figure came up several times during the ceremonies in Kitchener’s Victoria Park, marking the National Day of Mourning commemorating workers who were injured or killed on the job.

In 2017, the latest year for which stats are available, there were 951 men and women killed at work in Canada, according to the Association of Workers’ Compensation Boards of Canada.

The mixed crowd of people at the ceremony came for a variety of reasons. Some were local political leaders, ranging from members of municipal councils to a federal cabinet minister. Most were workers, mainly union members, who came to acknowledge their fallen comrades, and to lobby for improved worker safety, and for acknowledgement of the many instances of disease and injury that fall through official cracks.

Some were family members of workers injured or killed, including the mother-in-law of a 26-year old worker who died three years ago, accompanying her daughter and young granddaughter, a girl who will never remember her dad. Said the grandmother, “If we can all just learn from this.”

But the speakers of the day stressed a common theme—we haven’t learned enough. We can do more.

Many of the speakers also refused to pull punches, the most direct thrown at the current Ontario government. Kelly Dick, executive director of the Waterloo Region Labour Council, opened the ceremonies by describing some of the advances made in labour laws over the last four decades. She then slammed the current provincial government—who were represented by MPP Mike Harris Jr.—for rolling back important legislation that protects workers.

Kitchener Mayor Berry Vrbanovic underlined the loss of life involved in workplace accidents by noting that it amounted to “2.6 deaths every single day.” He added that Canada recorded 251,508 workplace related injuries or diseases resulted in accepted claims.

Several other speakers emphasized that this is a drastically low number, since many injuries and diseases go unreported or do not result in accepted claims.

Vrbanovic continued that the figures are, “a harsh reminder that we have a long road ahead of us.”
“We are all responsible for the safety of others,” he said. “We all deserve the right to return home safely at the end of every working day.” That sentiment was echoed by several of the day’s speakers, including MP Raj Saini, representing his federal colleagues, who said, “workers are the life blood of our society.”

Greg Bobier, of the Waterloo, Wellington, Dufferin and Grey Building Trades Council, was blunt. He told those in attendance that on the job deaths are a tragedy for all involved. “How do you recover?” he asked. “There’s no win.”

He added that he and all colleagues in the labour movement “must continue to hold our political partners accountable.”

Donald LaFleur, executive vice president of the Canadian Labour Council, said “the numbers are staggering” concerning workplace death and injury. And he drew the agreement of his listeners when he added, “Every work-related death, injury or illness could have been prevented.”

He added, “Investing in prevention is the best thing we can do to keep workers safe,” and turning to the political leaders present, he called for more health and safety officers to be hired.

Marty Warren is district director for the United Steelworkers. Like the other speakers of the day, he did not simply acknowledge the loss of good men and women; he called for that “carnage” to be stopped. Action must be taken “to change the terrible fact that 900 to 1,000 women and men are being killed, every year,” he said, adding that in every death, “for each person, the effect is multiplied.”

He was direct: “Killing a worker is a crime and must be treated that way.”

Warren spoke specifically about the battles being faced by rubber workers who suffer and die from job-related disease long after their jobs are gone. “Occupational disease is a long and silent killer that affects workers and their families,” he said. “Today, we formally rededicate ourselves to the fight. The picture can change. We can make progress.”

**Serving Your Industrial & Door Hardware Needs Since 1906.**

**Knell’s Industrial**
- Electric & Cordless Power Tools
- Hand Tools
- Abrasives
- Safety Equipment & Supplies
- Machinery
- Maintenance Supplies

**Knell’s Door & Hardware**
- Architectural Hardware
- Hollow Metal Doors & Frames
- Toilet Partitions & Lockers
- Electronic Access Control
- Builders Hardware
- Architectural Wood Doors

**William Knell & Company Limited**
2090 Shirley Drive • Kitchener • Ontario • N2B 5A3
CALL 519.578.1000  FAX 519.578.3262  WEB knells.ca
Asbestos in the Workplace

These naturally occurring fibrous minerals are found throughout the world, including Canada.

Because it has heat-resistant and insulating properties, asbestos was used in a wide range of manufactured products such as structural fireproofing and insulation, cement, plaster, and textiles.

Health risks

Workers who inhale asbestos fibres, particularly over long periods of time, are at risk of:

**Asbestosis**
scarring of lung tissue, making it difficult to breathe

**Lung cancer**
smoking can greatly increase the risk

**Mesothelioma**
cancer of the chest lining or abdominal cavity

Asbestos exposure occurs when the fibres are airborne. Asbestos can be encapsulated and, therefore, the risk of exposure becomes low.

Precautions are necessary when renovating, demolishing, removing, sanding, or doing similar activities.

Asbestos in Canada

As of 2018, the federal government prohibits the import of asbestos, and the import and manufacture of asbestos-containing products.

All provinces and territories have regulations regarding the management, handling, and duties of all parties in the workplace.

Past uses of asbestos materials in many workplaces remain in place.

Approximately 152,000 people are exposed to asbestos.
Asbestos are naturally occurring fibrous minerals found throughout the world, including Canada. Because it has heat-resistant and insulating properties, asbestos was used in a wide range of manufactured products such as structural fire-proofing and insulation, cement, plaster, and textiles, and to this day, many older applications still remain in homes, buildings and products.

Asbestos materials are a potentially serious workplace hazard, and people who inhale asbestos fibres are at risk of developing lung cancer, mesothelioma and asbestosis.

This infographic outlines the health risks along with the essentials of a control plan that must be in place when asbestos is present, to protect workers from exposure.
In this issue, we talk to four people intimately involved in health and safety in the construction industry. Their challenges are different—their companies represent different sectors in the industry—but they all share a commitment to safety.

We interviewed Don Heeley, the full-time health and safety director for GA Masonry, and, to his knowledge, the only full-time employee in such a position in the masonry sector in the country. Don, who is a former Ministry of Labour inspector, offers his insights into government enforcement.

Suzanne Johnson, the boisterous safety coordinator for Ball Construction, pulled back the curtains on the particular safety challenges her company faces on all kinds of job sites.

We talked to Jacqueline Aungsoe, from Velocity Mechanical, who told us that her best health and safety resource is the GVCA Health and Safety Group.

And we got the straight goods from Ellaline Davies, facilitator for the GVCA program, who worries that “we don’t have a safety culture in this country,” and is blunt in her assessment of who is responsible.

You’re likely to learn something new from each of these interviews; and you’ll meet four intriguing people who are passionate about safety.

Safety is the Core of Every Job

Ball Construction was one of the first General Contractors to be COR® Certified in Ontario and is a Founding Member of the League of Champions. With a strong safety culture, we promote safety awareness and enforcement on all our projects to ensure we send our workers home safely every day from every site.

Milestone Concrete Pour at Hamilton Waste Water Treatment Plant

Building Canada’s Future Since 1923 519-742-5851 www.ballcon.com
When it comes to health and safety, GA Masonry is prepared to put its money where its mouth is. Not only does the Breslau-based company say it is committed to the safety of its workers, it has invested beyond the norm to make sure that’s true.

The living, breathing example of this is GA’s full-time health and safety director, Don Heeley. Heeley says that to the best of his knowledge, GA is the only masonry company in Canada with a team member devoted to safety, full-time.

The financial commitment goes beyond Heeley’s salary. The safety budget at GA Masonry is “unrestricted”, he says. If safety equipment is needed, “I just get on the phone and order it. They’re serious about what we do.”

Heeley believes that the reason safety records are improving is that safety training—driven by the industry, through key organizations like the Grand Valley Construction Association—is getting better all the time. As an example of this, Heeley points to safety harnesses for working at heights—a key piece of equipment on most masonry jobs. Assessment of that equipment is built right into the training for every worker on a GA job. In the busiest seasons, GA will have about 250 workers on job sites. Heeley says that all workers are trained on how to assess their equipment every time they turn it in. It doesn’t stop there. Harnesses and other safety equipment are evaluated by Heeley and other team members, every time they come back from a job site.

Typically, because of the environment in which GA workers perform their jobs, harnesses last less than a year. The minute one is substandard, says Heeley, it’s tossed in the dumpster, and new equipment is supplied. No questions asked.

He sees his job as multi-faceted: keeping workers safe, of course, but also “to keep the company out of court, and keep the foremen from being fined.”

So government “cash grabs” aside, GA Masonry’s emphasis on health and safety is a win for everyone involved with every GA project.
Keeping Everyone Safe, Even the Neighbours

Ball Construction has a proud track record of health and safety, and is an early adopter of COR and the League of Champions.

Suzanne Johnson is proud that her company is, in her words, “very proactive in health and safety.”

Johnson is environmental health and safety manager for Ball Construction, described on their website as a “single-source construction partner.” This means that Ball is consistently involved in a wide variety of construction projects, each presenting unique challenges to its health and safety manager.

Health and safety is very important at Ball, says Johnson. “I actually do think we are a leader in the field. Jason [Jason Ball, company president] was one of the founding members of the League of Champions,” a safety program intended to promote worker safety and to change the culture of safety in Ontario in all industries, beginning with construction.

Ball was also an early adopter of the Certificate of Recognition program in the province.

The company is committed to continual improvement for the protection of workers; consistent monitoring of the safety performance of an occupational health and safety management system; senior management involvement; and an annual formal auditing protocol.

So what does this mean, day to day, for health and safety manager Suzanne Johnson? Setting gender aside for a moment, she describes herself as “a one-man road show,” adding, “I’m literally on the go, 24-7.”

That’s partly because Ball Construction is usually involved in several significant projects at once, those projects are very different one from the other, and because Ball’s job sites can include 200-plus workers.

Right now, Ball is working on arena projects, “a multitude” of smaller construction projects (with up to 50 workers on site), and two major efforts that involve a lot of water—a reservoir project and a waste water treatment project.

That means that in addition to health and safety concerns on a more typical site, Johnson has to ensure that all water safety protocols are in place and followed to the letter.

Ironically, on some of Ball Construction’s projects, the safety challenges aren’t primarily presented by or to the workers. Says Johnson, “The huge thing for me is the overall safety of non-construction persons within close proximity of our sites.” In other words, the difficulties presented when construction is taking place next to an ongoing workplace.

She says that it is common to discover that the regular employees of the companies in question will pay virtually no attention to safety, although they are doing their jobs right beside a construction site. She says her challenge is “trying to keep them safe, despite themselves.”

Safety is important at Ball. Their “ongoing objective” is “to protect employees, workers and the general public from workplace injury, occupational illness and disease,” according to a company statement.

But there’s an added plus: the stress on safety is also a good sales tool. Johnson says, “Our safety record and our commitment to safety is always out front, when we’re tendering.”
It’s right on their website.

“As an employer, Velocity Mechanical is ultimately responsible for worker health and safety. As owners, we are committed to taking every reasonable precaution to protect workers from harm.”

The Velocity team member who is the key person responsible for health and safety is Jacqueline Aungsoe. And she says her job is made possible because of the comprehensive health and safety information services provided by the Grand Valley Construction Association.

Health and safety, says Aungsoe, is “extremely important to our business and to the employees.” Velocity has about 50 employees. And keeping on top of everything related to health and safety is achievable because, “We are advised of all health and safety information right away, because we are part of the Grand Valley Construction Association health and safety group.

They're on top of it.”

It’s clear that Velocity Mechanical is serious about using all resources available to maintain the company’s strong safety record. The company leaders stress this focus in a detailed statement on their website: “Velocity Mechanical is committed to providing a healthy and safe working environment for all of its employees. It is our belief that all of us must share in Health and Safety responsibilities and share in the commitment to making this happen. Our ongoing commitment is to protect workers from workplace incident, injury, occupational illness and disease. We believe no job is considered to be so urgent that safety can be jeopardized. Health and Safety awareness and responsibility must be integrated into all workplace activities as it is everyone’s responsibility and vital to everyone’s well being. All workplace parties including owners, employees, sub-trades and trades must be dedicated and committed to the objective of reducing the risk of injury and illness in the workplace.”

Aungsoe believes that following proper health and safety practices “is really common sense,” but she takes nothing for granted. She says that she attends all GVCA health and safety monthly meetings, and takes part in the GVCA’s health and safety seminars.

Training is clearly a priority, and not only for Aungsoe. She adds that other Velocity managers also frequently attend the seminars. As well, company policy dictates that “Workers must receive adequate training in their specific work tasks to protect their health and safety.”

And when it comes to health and safety information and training, according to Aungsoe, the Grand Valley Construction Association is the industry’s premier resource.

Rent it here.

From the biggest machines to the smallest tools, all it takes is one call to Battlefield Equipment and it’s done.
Ellaline Davies is willing to talk about all the aspects of health and safety in the construction industry. But the thing she really wants to talk about is accountability. “It’s one of the biggest issues we have,” she says.

Davies, who is president of Safety Works Consulting Inc., is the facilitator for the Grand Valley Construction Association WSIB Safety Groups Program. She also serves other clients in the construction industry. And she’s mad.

Davies conducts health and safety sessions and training, but says that none of these things will make the difference they should unless companies are willing to enforce health and safety rules and regulations.

“You cannot put anything in place without accountability,” she says. “You can have great health and safety manuals, and have workers attend training… but if you don’t have accountability, you don’t get a good ROI.”

She’s blunt, asserting that companies are often afraid to enforce health and safety requirements, but she insists, “We have to start disciplinary actions, correction actions… whatever Kum-baya actions you want to call it today… The time has come, or else all these great health and safety initiatives that employers do are irrelevant.”

Discipline has to be part of the mix, she says. Incentives aren’t enough, without the tougher side. “You can do all sorts of wonderful incentives, but you have got to do the discipline stuff as well.”

She knows that companies will state reasons for not imposing disciplinary actions on workers who break health and safety regulations—she’s heard
every one of them. To her, they’re just excuses.

Davies knows there is a right way and a wrong way to do discipline, and she works with her clients to do things the right way. “Disciplinary actions should never, ever be personal,” she says. “They are about the violation of an established practice or procedure; not the person.”

And she adds, “They may save somebody’s life... but very few employers are getting the connection at this time.”

But overall, Davies insists, “We don’t have a safety culture in this country, in comparison with Great Britain or Australia.”

That’s partly because Canada—Ontario in particular—is a big place, where regulatory enforcement can be a challenge. But she believes it’s also because the construction industry is “reactive”, acting only when confronted with a demand for change, instead of proactively seeking the best practices when it comes to health and safety.

She also suggests that these decisions are bottom-line driven. Employers think that safety can be expensive in terms of dollars, although it may be a bargain in terms of impact to employees and the employer, should things go wrong.

Davies believes that a safety culture germinates from a ‘top down’ approach. If employers are not involved, then employees won’t be. She reminds us that safety is fundamental to high levels of productivity and a good bottom line, let alone good morale and employee retention.

“You see, safety isn’t just about preventing or managing injuries; it’s about all sorts of good things that employers are capable of doing for their employees and vice versa.”
The Ministry of Labour (MOL) has announced its safety-blitz schedule for the remainder of 2019 and into 2020.

Each year, the ministry schedules inspection initiatives in specific sectors to protect workers’ rights under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Employment Standards Act, and enhance employers’ awareness of their responsibilities.

Although the MOL announces the focus of its initiatives ahead of time, it will not identify individual workplaces in advance.

Provincial health and safety initiatives in 2019–20

Initiative focus:
High risk traumatic hazards – slips, trips and falls

Phase 1: March 18 to July 12
Compliance assistance with all health and safety associations

Phase 2: April 15 to July 12
Focused inspections
Falls from heights remain a focus

Falls from heights and same-level falls can happen anywhere, anytime. Every year, falls result in a significant number of worker injuries and deaths, particularly in construction. These injuries and fatalities are preventable.

Across the province in all sectors, slips, trips and falls continue to be a significant problem and are among the leading causes of injuries resulting in workers missing time at work. Preventing such injuries is a critical goal of every safe and healthy workplace.

Construction initiatives

Initiative focus: Suspended access equipment

Phase 1: July 2 to September 27
Compliance assistance with Infrastructure Health and Safety Association

Phase 2: August 6 to September 27
Focused inspections

Initiative focus: Personal protective equipment

Phase 1: January 6 to March 13, 2020
Compliance assistance with Infrastructure Health and Safety Association

Phase 2: February 3 to March 13, 2020
Focused inspections

Safe At Work Ontario: Slips, trips and falls initiative

Due to the impact of falls across all sectors, the MOL will hold an initiative focused on slips, trips and falls hazards from March 18 to July 12.

Phase 1 of the initiative is a compliance support and awareness campaign, which runs the length of the initiative.

Phase 2 is a focused inspections campaign, and runs from April 15 to July 12. To help prevent same level falls, inspectors will focus on slips, trips and fall hazards in all sectors. In workplaces where fall protection is required to prevent falls from heights, inspectors will check that adequate fall protection systems such as a travel restraint, fall restricting system, fall arrest system, safety net or guardrails are being used.
The Safety Groups Program

The Grand Valley Construction Association is an approved sponsor of the WSIB Safety Groups Program. The Safety Groups Program (SGP) is an innovative initiative the WSIB has implemented to help eliminate workplace injuries and illnesses in Ontario. The program is voluntary and rewards firms that implement effective health and safety and return to work measures into their daily business.

Safety Groups is based on the premise that a well-integrated workplace health and safety program is good for business. Firms from similar or different businesses or rate groups volunteer to join a safety group with a collective purpose: to learn from each other's experience in implementing injury and illness prevention programs. Firms that invest and implement effective health and safety programs can benefit from a WSIB financial incentive.

Each safety group has a sponsor. Sponsors are approved by the WSIB to administer the SGP and to facilitate and support workplace self-reliance in health and safety and return to work programs. Current sponsors represent over 40 employer groups which meet throughout Ontario.

The role of the sponsor is to oversee the group and regularly report to the WSIB. They promote the group's interaction and networking by organizing meetings and leadership workshops. They offer guidance on action plan development and track the individual firm's and the group's achievements.
SAFETY GROUPS

Safety Group Program Annual Cycle

Whether you are a small or large business, health and safety is your responsibility. There are many reasons why you should join the GVCA Safety Group.

Here's a brief synopsis of how it works:

Companies select five safety elements from the WSIB’s Safety Groups’ Achievement List to initiate or improve upon by the end of the year. Group members learn how to implement these initiatives by attending meetings, working with our facilitator, sharing ideas and pooling resources.

At the end of the year, the group could earn a rebate of up to 7% of the total premiums paid to WSIB, over and above any rebates or savings already received.

In the following year, you must maintain those elements and choose five new ones. It’s well worth it!

Whether you are a small or large business, health and safety is your responsibility. There are many reasons why you should join the GVCA Safety Group.

Here's a brief synopsis of how it works:

Companies select five safety elements from the WSIB’s Safety Groups’ Achievement List to initiate or improve upon by the end of the year. Group members learn how to implement these initiatives by attending meetings, working with our facilitator, sharing ideas and pooling resources.

At the end of the year, the group could earn a rebate of up to 7% of the total premiums paid to WSIB, over and above any rebates or savings already received.

In the following year, you must maintain those elements and choose five new ones. It’s well worth it!
SAFETY GROUPS

5-Steps to Managing Health and Safety

1. Written Standard
2. Communication
3. Training
4. Evaluate
5. Acknowledge Success and Make Improvements

To manage an effective health and safety program in the workplace, a cycle of continuous improvement must be followed.

The Safety Group Program is a five year program that runs on a calendar year. After five years, successful firms will have a health and safety program with 25 complete elements aligned with their workplace needs and legislation.

GVCA Safety Groups

GVCA's highly successful Safety Group covers the Grand Valley area, along with chapters in London and St. Catharines. Recruiting for the 2019 group begins in October, and our first meeting is planned for December.

We offer the Safety Group Lite program to meet the needs of those firms that may not be able to make the full Safety Group commitment, but want to enhance their company's safety culture. You can join the Safety Group Lite program at any time during the year.

Contact GVCA (staff@gvca.org) for details on any of these exciting programs.

Incentive Criteria

Upon successful completion of the program, members are eligible to earn a rebate of up to 5% of their WSIB premiums. Group scores and rebates are based on validation audits completed in the following year.

ELECTRICAL SERVICES

100 Rankin St Unit #8, Waterloo, ON N2V 1V9

INDUSTRIAL

T 519-746-0047
F 519-746-4315

COMMERCIAL

STECO.CA

INSTITUTIONAL

RESIDENTIAL

STECO IS COMMITTED TO SAFE WORK PRACTICES

STECO

The Power of Experience

Safety Tips from our Expert

May is Safety Month. With that in mind, we asked our GVCA Safety Groups facilitator, Ellaline Davies of Safety Works Consulting, for some helpful reminders about how to work safe and stay safe on the jobsite. You’ll notice these on our Facebook and Twitter pages too!

HARD HATS
Wear your hard hat! Inspect it every day! Get a new one if it has defects!

HEARING PROTECTION
Say what? Protect your hearing. With age loss, it will go naturally (unfortunately!). Use that hearing protection to keep what you have!

SAFETY BOOTS
Tie them up! Are your toes poking through? Get a new pair! Good boots can make a difference between having a foot injury and not having one.

SAFETY GLASSES
If you wear glasses, you know how precious your sight is. Want to keep seeing your children or grandchildren? Protect your eyes by using eye protection!

SAFETY VESTS
Is it a vest or a high-visibility shirt? Whatever it is, it can protect you. Stay visible by wearing something that lets people know you are there.

WHMIS 2015
There’s a new WHMIS in town. Have you done your training yet?

WORKING AT HEIGHTS
Do you need your mandatory certificate? Is it time for re-certification?

FIRST AID
First Aid training is a legal requirement. Are you trained? Is it time for re-certification?

ELEVATED WORK PLATFORMS
No, you can’t work in a lift without training. Get your training at an approved training provider, and remember there must be an ‘in class’ portion.
## EVENTS CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>Women in Construction Spring Dinner</td>
<td>The Pines, Cambridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 31</td>
<td>LinC (Leaders in Construction) Spring Volunteer Day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 20</td>
<td>GVCA Golf Tournament</td>
<td>Conestoga Golf and Conference Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 18</td>
<td>Leaders in Construction (LinC) Golf Tournament</td>
<td>Conestoga Golf and Conference Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 22</td>
<td>Women in Construction (WinC) Golf Tournament</td>
<td>Galt Country Club</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Note:
To view a complete list of upcoming events and to register, please visit [www.gvca.org](http://www.gvca.org).

## EDUCATION CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Course Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>Approved Working at Heights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 17</td>
<td>Approved Working at Heights Refresher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>Adjudication and Prompt Payment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 11</td>
<td>Approved Working at Heights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 12 &amp; 19</td>
<td>Construction 201 (Earn 2 Gold Seal Credits)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 14</td>
<td>Approved Working at Heights Refresher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 9</td>
<td>Approved Working at Heights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 10</td>
<td>Adjudication and Prompt Payment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 12</td>
<td>Working at Heights Refresher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Note:
All education & training will be held at GVCA - 25 Sheldon Drive (unless noted otherwise). To view a complete list of upcoming education and to register, please visit [www.gvca.org](http://www.gvca.org).

## ADVERTISERS’ INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advertiser</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACL Steel</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battlefield</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baywood</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildsafe</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAC</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conestoga Roofing</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowan</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delta Elevator</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dordan</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncan Linton</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Star Paving</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gallagher</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JDI</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knells</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-W Door Installations</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LiUNA</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melloul Blamey</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller Thomson</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelco</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherrard Kuzz</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stecho</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strassburger</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## REGISTRATION REQUIRED

for all courses and events. To register, or request additional information please contact admin@gvca.org or call 519-622-4822 X120 or go to: [www.gvca.org](http://www.gvca.org).
Highly trained, safety-conscious and skilled, LIUNA members are the right people for the job.

Employers know that LIUNA provides more comprehensive, advanced training for its members than any other union in Canada. LIUNA is committed to training and has created partnerships with employers including investments by our pension fund in P3 projects.

Hands-on training through the Construction Craft Worker (CCW) Apprenticeship Program is available for all LIUNA members to ensure a safe, productive workforce. Members are ready to work safely from their first day on the job, making them a valuable asset to employers.

LIUNA represents more than 80,000 members in all sectors of the construction industry in Ontario including; industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI), residential, roads, gas pipeline, sewer and watermain, electrical power systems, demolition, utilities and heavy engineering.

Visit liunaopdc.org/affiliated-local-unions to find a LIUNA local affiliate near you.
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

We designed our new website with ease of use in mind.

Easy navigation and a smart search tool will help you find:

- Bids and Tenders
- GVCA Journal
- Full membership directory
- Industry news and updates
- Education and Events calendar
- CCDC documents and seals
- GVCA special groups
- Career postings

...and much more!

If you still can’t find what you need, use our chat box to contact us for help directly!