

# Working at Heights Training



**Falls from heights** are the leading cause of traumatic worker deaths and critical injuries in construction. The underlying causes of falls from heights are often a lack of supervision, missing, poorly maintained and improper fall protection equipment and systems and a lack of safe work procedures. Lack of training, or inadequate training for workers, supervisors, joint health and safety committee members and worker representatives is another significant contributing factor.

To help put a stop to this unacceptable situation, regulation in Ontario requires employers to ensure untrained or inadequately trained construction workers complete a Ministry of Labour (MOL)-approved, working at heights training program before they work at heights and use fall protection equipment and systems. Fall protection includes travel restraint systems, fall restricting systems, fall arrest systems, safety nets and work belts or safety belts. This requirement came into force April 1, 2015. Come April 1, 2017, employers must ensure all workers trained prior to the regulation taking effect are enrolled for retraining in a MOL-approved training course, regardless of whether their training was deemed adequate at the time taken. Workers must then successfully complete this training by October 1, 2017. Approved training is valid for three years from the date of successful completion. Employers must also maintain detailed records of training.

**WHSC can help** with all aspects of these requirements. We are a MOL-approved working at heights training provider. With qualified instructors located throughout the province, we can help you get into compliance fast. Our program is also designed to ensure critical learning takes place. And we maintain training records for you.

According to the MOL, employers will also still be required to meet site-specific working at heights training requirements for workers. Consequently, the WHSC also offers *Working at Heights Awareness* training for employers, supervisors, joint health and safety committee members and worker representatives helping them to ensure this employer duty is met as well as others including development of proper safe work and emergency rescue procedures (see below for program details).

## **Working at Heights — MOL-approved**

Program Duration: 6.5 hours

This comprehensive program has been approved by the MOL as meeting the Working at Heights Training Program Standard. The program is divided into two modules.

In the first module *Basic Theory*, participants will learn about:

- The duties of the workplace parties under the *Occupational Health and*

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# Working at Heights Training *cont'd*

*Safety Act*, including the workers' rights to know, participate and refuse unsafe work;

- The hazards of working at heights and how to identify, assess and control these hazards;
- The regulations addressing fall arrest hazards, fall protection equipment and working at heights projects;
- The setup, use, maintenance and storage of travel restraint and fall arrest systems.

In the second module *Practical Equipment Use*, participants get hands-on training on fall protection equipment and systems. Critical safety issues to be discussed will include:

- Regulatory requirements and procedures for use of bump lines, barriers, guardrails and safety nets;
- Use, inspection, limitations, storage and procedures for travel restraint, fall restricting and fall arrest systems;
- Requirements for guardrails;
- Set up and use of rope grabs for both fall arrest and ladder use;
- Use of vertical, horizontal, and retractable lifelines;
- Use of a harness;
- Maintaining tie-offs and safe use of anchor systems and anchor points;
- Work positioning systems such as scaffolds, elevating and mast-climbing work platforms, vehicle-mounted aerial devices, suspended access equipment (swing stage), boatswain's chair/bosun's chair and ladders; and
- Key components of a fall rescue plan and emergency procedures.

NOTE: Training participants must also complete a written program evaluation as required by the MOL's Working at Heights Training Program Standard.

## Working at Heights Awareness

Program Duration: 3 hours

On construction sites and in workplaces where working at heights has been identified as a potential hazard, workers, supervisors, members of the joint health and safety committee and health and safety representatives will all benefit from this program.

*Working at Heights Awareness* equips participants with an understanding of:

- The physical hazards that contribute to the dangers of working at heights;
- Relevant legislation and methods of controlling related hazards;
- Different types of safety equipment employed for working at heights (e.g., guardrails and fall protection systems), their limitations, and the necessary precautions when using them;
- Other equipment used at heights (e.g., ladders and scaffolds), their selection, requirements, and proper use; and
- Training required for those working at heights and other workplace parties.

WHSC-trained instructors will demonstrate the proper use of a full body harness. However, this demonstration is an awareness building exercise only. Workers working at heights, especially in the construction sector, will also require comprehensive training that meets the Working at Heights Training Program Standard (see above).

