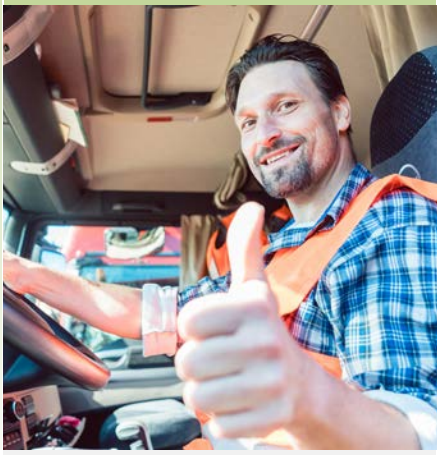
OH&S Safety Matters

September Issue 2019



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Labour Day Long Weekend

Labour Day in Canada is a federal statutory holiday and you already know this year it was celebrated on Monday September 2nd. In the United States Labor Day is also observed on the same day. It's a straightforward holiday, unlike other holidays when some people are off and some aren't. This holiday is considered by most to be the unofficial end of summer and *it is the day that officially celebrates workers and the labour union movement*.

The origins of the Labour Day Long Weekend can be traced back to 1872, when the Toronto Trades Assembly organized Canada's first significant demonstration for worker's rights. The aim was to secure the release of 24 leaders of the Toronto Typographical Union who were imprisoned for striking to campaign for a nine-hour working day. At this time, trade unions were still illegal and striking was seen as a criminal conspiracy to disrupt trade. In spite of this, the Toronto Trades Assembly was a significant organization and encouraged workers to form trade unions.

There was enormous public support for the parade and the authorities could no longer deny the important role that the trade unions had to play in the emerging Canadian society. A few months later, a similar parade was organized in Ottawa and passed the house of Canada's first prime minister, Sir John Macdonald. Later that day, he appeared before the gathering and promised to repeal all Canadian laws against trade unions. This happened in the same year and eventually led to the founding of the Canadian Labour Congress in 1883.

Canadian trade unions are proud that this holiday was inspired by their efforts to improve workers' rights however, with the passing of time so many of us only think of Labour Day as the last long weekend of the summer, a perfect occasion for one more BBQ. We hope that this Labour Day long weekend you managed to hop off the treadmill of life and were able to take a moment to reflect. In the words of Arnold H Glasow "Happy is the person who knows what to remember of the past, what to enjoy in the present, and what to plan for in the future". *We hope you did enjoy your long weekend Safely*

OHSMS Standards

There are steps that can be taken to improve any companies health and safety performance, beyond just meeting the basic requirements. An active OH&S management approach is an essential first step towards the development and implementation of initiatives that will improve your workplace safety performance. An active OH&S management approach encompasses the health and safety program that is required by legislation and builds upon it.

Standards for active health & safety management

The aspects of actively managing health and safety are combined in a framework of **occupational health and safety management system standards (OHSMS)** such as CSA Z1000-14 published by the CSA Group.

CSA Group develops standards used around the world including Canada. Occupational Health and Safety regulations often site the need for compliance with standards published by the CSA Group.

OHSMS standards outline the principles and processes to follow for continual health and safety improvement and can be applied to any industry. They do not make reference to specific hazards, but they indicate the need for specific health and safety processes and proactive management processes.

Within the OHSMS standards are components of an effective health and safety program, but they also provide guidance for active OH&S management processes, which must include these components:

- Leadership and commitment
- Robust annual health and safety planning
- Measurement and tracking of goals and objectives
- Ongoing organization-wide self evaluations

Adopting an OHSMS standard for use by your company is very beneficial. Using these standards can steer your company towards best practice. Actively managing health and safety is a key step to improving your organization's health and safety culture and safety performance.

As a fundamental concept, and to identify the inclusiveness of an occupational health and safety management system, the CSA Group management standard defines "occupational health and safety" as: the promotion in the workplace of the physical, mental, and social well-being of workers and the protection of workers from, and the prevention of, workplace conditions and factors adverse to their health and safety.

Many organizations do have a system in which the workplace parties are accountable for health and safety within their respective control or authority. When used in this context, CSA Z1000 provides a model for the establishment, implementing, and maintaining of an occupational health and safety management system.

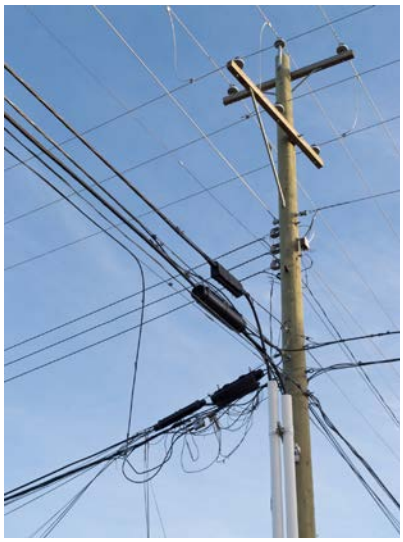
Such a system encourages a more systematic approach to meeting defined occupational health and safety objectives and increases awareness of health and safety in the workplace. It can also assist companies that are seeking certification under federal, provincial, and sector based certification programs such as COR - Certificate of Recognition.

Planning for health & safety

Health and safety performance and culture improvement needs a plan. Ideally, you should have an annual plan and a longer-term three-to five-year vision.

A sound health and safety plan should focus on specific goals and objectives that will help you minimize key risks and improve your Occupational Health and Safety processes.

Can You Identify Wires on a Utility Pole



Utility poles are seen alongside city streets and have various wires strung between them. Typically these wires are the responsibility of telephone, cable television and power companies.

Utility poles consist of three distinct layers or spaces.
The top layer is the supply space. The middle layer is the neutral space and the bottom layer is the communications space.

• Static Wire
The utmost top line of the utility pole is the static wire who's purpose is to bleed off lightning surges when lightening strikes during a thunder storm.

• Transmission Lines
Below the static line are three power lines called transmission lines. They conduct high voltage electricity from power plants to substations. Substations reduce the amount of voltage and then send the power out on feeder lines connected to buildings and homes.

• Grounding Conductor
Directly beneath the transmission lines is the multi-grounded neutral line. The transmission lines connect to a grounded neutral conductor that gives a return path for electricity. The grounding conductor runs the entire length of the pole and it is connected to the ground rod.

• Primary and Secondary Line
Located under the (MGN) multi-grounded neutral line are the primary and secondary lines. The primary line carries the electricity to substations at 5 to 30 kilovolts. Supported by crossbars on older types of utility poles, the secondary line is also called the secondary service drop. The service drop leads from the utility pole lines to a home. It is made up of three conductor wires. Two of the wires are wrapped in a black weather protective coating and carry electricity from the transformer; the third is a bare neutral wire that connects to the grounding wire. These lines carry between 120 to 240 volts.

• Neutral Space
The neutral space is a safety zone to keep workers clear of any lines. Found between the secondary supply line and the highest communication cable, this zone provides room for linemen and communication workers who need to climb up on utility poles to do maintenance on the lines.

• Communications Lines
Beneath the neutral space are cable television and broadband lines. The lowest line is reserved

for telephone lines. Telephone lines attach to a steel strand found on the lower part of this spot on the utility pole.

• Grounding Rod
The grounding rod is located in the ground near the base of the utility pole. The grounding conductor line connects to this rod and when lightning hits a static wire or the pole, the electricity travels from the static wire to the grounding wire and then is fed down into the rod, where it dissipates safely into the earth. This prevents electricity made by lightning from getting onto power lines and causing immense surges which can result in property damage and fires.

The Instructor-Led Classroom

When workers need to learn a safety skill, instructor-led training is the superior option. The benefit to workers participating in Instructor-led training is that it facilitates in-depth discussions of complicated safety issues allowing for direct response from a skilled, practiced and certified instructor. Workers also benefit from their interactions with their fellow co-workers as questions and comments made about the safety training are discussed.

One aspect of instructor-led safety training that management teams profit from is having a partner in the classroom to hold workers accountable. The in class instructor ensures that workers not only participate in training but that they really learn the subject matter.

The classroom instructor can answer questions, manage and

correct errors in real time, provide experienced based safety tips which enhances understanding and better prepares workers to deal with safety challenges while performing their job tasks.

Classroom training experiences can strengthen friendships and work relationships that last well into the future. When a specific safety skill set must be learned, instructor-led training and hands-on practice fulfills the need better than other continuing education options.

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