

## **Occupational Health and Safety Awareness and Training (O. Reg. 297/13) under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)***

A new regulation entitled Occupational Health and Safety Awareness and Training (O. Reg. 297/13) under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)* has been made. Following the advice of the Expert Advisory Panel on occupational health and safety that reviewed the province's occupational health and safety system, the Ontario government has accepted all of their recommendations.

It called for the establishment of mandatory health & safety awareness training for all Ontario workers. To do this, Ontario Regulation 297/13 requires employers to ensure that all workers and supervisors have completed a basic occupational health and safety awareness training, by July 1, 2014, and specifically:

- Sets out the minimum content of both the worker and supervisor awareness training programs including instruction on:
  - the rights and/or duties of workers, supervisors and employers under the OHSA,
  - the role of Joint Health and Safety Committees and Health and Safety Representatives, and
  - common workplace hazards and occupational illnesses;
- Requires that employers ensure that workers complete the training program as soon as practicable and supervisors complete the training within one week of performing work as a supervisor; and
- Requires employers to maintain a record of training, and provide workers and supervisors with proof of completion, on request, for up to six months after the worker or supervisor stops performing work for that employer.

The regulation also contains the following “exemptions”:

- Workers and supervisors who have previously completed an awareness training program, either with their current employer or a previous employer, do not have to retake the training if they have proof of completion and the current employer can verify the program that was completed covers the same content set out in the regulation; and
- Current supervisors who have completed a supervisor awareness training program before the regulation comes into force do not also have to complete the worker awareness training program.

The new regulation also includes existing provisions previously found in O. Reg. 780/94 (Training Programs), which has been revoked.

Consequential amendments have also been made to O. Reg. 414/05 (Farming Operations) in order to make the mandatory awareness training requirements in the new regulation also apply to farming operations.

**Note:** *The basic occupational health and safety awareness training requirement, does not, in any way, replace any other hazard specific, sector specific, or competency specific training that may be required for supervisors or workers elsewhere in the OHSA or its regulations.*

Excerpt from the Ministry of Labour website:

<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/resources/notices.php#nov152013>