

WSIB Workplace Safety & Insurance Board
ONTARIO
CSPAAT Commission de la sécurité professionnelle et de l'assurance contre les accidents du travail

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There really are no accidents

WSIB kicks off provocative social marketing campaign

prevent-it.ca

The WSIB has launched a new, interactive website to provide visitors with the opportunity to “Learn-it” – learn more about prevention through a series of interactive educational games; and to “Get-it” – get prevention information in the form of downloadable materials, video clips and a resource library. The site also provides visitors with the opportunity to “Share-it” by providing their own personal stories about how they have helped make their workplace safer, and to “Spread-it” – spread the prevention message to friends, family and co-workers. Visit prevent-it.ca to find out what you can do to help keep your co-workers, friends, and family safe at work. @



The prevent-it.ca website interface.

Accidents happen. It’s a phrase we’ve heard all our lives. In 2005, just over 277,000 Ontarians were involved in workplace “accidents” and a total of 84 workers were killed on the job. These numbers are staggering. Some sustained immediate injuries as the result of a fall or other traumatic event. Others developed injuries over time due to repetitive strain. Some became ill following a toxic exposure.

All of these injuries, illnesses, and fatalities were preventable. **There really are no accidents.**

On October 3, 2006 the WSIB launched a hard-hitting campaign to raise awareness about occupational health and safety. The campaign includes provocative television ads that depict “accidents” and talk about how they could have been prevented. The ads are graphic and disturbing but the message is simple. The ads are designed to get people talking about the importance of workplace safety and to help change the mindset that says workplace injuries and illnesses are inevitable and acceptable. The only acceptable number of workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities is zero.

Kick-off events for the campaign were held in Hamilton, Ottawa, London, Thunder Bay, and Toronto. At a press conference in Toronto’s Union Station, WSIB Chair Steven Mahoney acknowledged

that the television ads are shocking and difficult to watch. “We’re not afraid to be controversial. This is not a feel-good campaign. We’ll feel good when the number of injuries and fatalities go down.”

A key message of the campaign is the idea that creating a safe workplace is everyone’s responsibility. “We’re not pointing a finger at the employer or the worker,” says Mahoney. “We need to bring them together to solve this problem.”

In 1998, the WSIB adopted “the elimination of all workplace illnesses and injuries” as its vision statement. In 2006, we’re taking that vision beyond words in a call to action for all Ontarians. There are potential hazards in every workplace; each one of us needs to take some responsibility for eliminating those hazards and keeping ourselves and each other healthy and safe at work.

The WSIB, along with its health and safety partners, is working toward achieving a fundamental change in attitude and behaviour towards occupational health and safety in Ontario – a change from a society which accepts workplace injuries and fatalities, to one which embraces health and safety. We want Ontario to have the safest workplaces in the world. If we believe it we can do it. @



Above: WSIB Chair, Steven Mahoney and workplace safety advocate Rob Ellis discuss the marketing campaign. A wrecked delivery car, similar to the one used in one of the print ads was placed outside Union Station to draw attention to the campaign.



Above: The four prevent-it.ca campaign posters.

Prevention: By the Numbers

The average lost-time injury costs approximately \$98,000. Direct costs to the WSIB account for about 20% of that figure. Indirect costs to the company make up the rest of the total costs, including property damage, lost production, manager and supervisor time, and compliance costs associated with Ministry of Labour orders.

A business operating on a 6% profit margin in 2006 would need over **1.5 million dollars in sales** to recover the costs of a single injury. The human cost of workplace injuries cannot be measured. By protecting workers, Ontario businesses can protect their bottom line from the high cost of injuries.

Visit the WSIB website for more information on the [Business Case for Prevention](#). @

Tooling up to improve Prevention and Return to Work outcomes

Our work doesn't start or stop with the "There really are no accidents" advertising campaign.

Our vision is to eliminate all workplace injuries and illnesses. Reaching that goal is going to take aggressive and collective work from everyone involved in Ontario's workplace safety and insurance system. Employers, workers, health and safety associations, the Ministry of Labour, and the WSIB need to continue to work together to enhance prevention efforts and improve return to work outcomes.

The WSIB has developed a "toolbox" to assist and support these efforts. Examples of some of the tools the WSIB is currently using include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying breakthroughs with a prevention "deep dive" and improving our [Safety Groups](#) program.
- Developing a workplace health and safety accreditation program.
- [Funding centres of research expertise](#) and developing a new strategy to [prevent musculoskeletal disorders](#).
- Supporting [Ministry of Labour](#) and [Health and Safety Associations'](#) initiatives to reach out to workplaces.
- Developing new strategies to integrate Return to Work (RTW) and workplace health and safety by clarifying key RTW concepts and obligations while working to improve the sustainability of RTW outcomes.

While we're using these tools, employers can help by taking action to build health and safety into their workplaces and making a "top down" commitment to make prevention a priority. A safe workplace is every worker's right. It's the employer's responsibility to provide appropriate training and everyone's responsibility to take it seriously.

Find out more at [prevent-it.ca](#)

Young Worker campaign gets results

Following the launch of the 2006 Young Worker Awareness "Think Again" campaign, WSIB sponsored a survey of Ontario youth to determine the effectiveness of the campaign. The survey results show that 51% of respondents were aware of the WSIB ads, up from 40% in 2005. Two-thirds of Ontario youth said that workplace injuries and illnesses are unacceptable. This is a significant improvement over the 2005 survey results in which 41% of respondents felt that workplace injuries and illnesses were an inevitable outcome of certain types of jobs.

For more about the WSIB's young worker awareness initiatives, visit the [Young Worker Health and Safety](#) page. @

