



# BC MUNICIPAL SAFETY Association

NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 2023



2023  
BCMSA  
AWARD  
WINNERS  
[P.3-5](#)

CITY OF  
SURREY  
BCMSA COR  
CERTIFIED  
[P.8-9](#)

COLLABORATION  
ANNOUNCEMENTS  
[P.14](#)

#JAC2023  
IN REVIEW  
[P.15-16](#)

CITY OF LANGLEY  
BCMSA SAFETY  
INITIATIVE  
PROGRAM  
[P.17-18](#)

# DISCUSSION FORUMS

JOIN THE CONVERSATION!



## MUNICIPAL SAFETY FORUM

This group is for Occupational Health and Safety Committee members and anyone with an interest in Health and Safety in the Local Government sector.

## DISABILITY MANAGEMENT COORDINATORS

This group is for Disability Management Coordinators employed in Local Government.

## MUNICIPAL SAFETY MANAGERS/ADVISORS

This group is for Safety Managers/Advisors that are employed in Local Government.

[MORE INFO](#)

# 2023 WEBINARS

Several times a year, the BCMSA host free one-hour lunch and learn webinars. Upon reviewing the recorded 2023 sessions, you can find them accessible on our website.

April 2023 . . . . . **MSI Prevention in the World of Work.**  
 September 2023 . . . . **Asbestos Certification and Licensing.**  
 November 2023 . . . . **Best Practices for Return to Work.**



[WATCH](#)

# SAFETY TALKS

Since 2011 we've been developing monthly crew talks that we believe are relevant to you and your workplace health and safety. Print them, and share them within your workplace. Consider this your shortcut to getting the crew talk done.

[2023 SAFETY TALKS](#)

Be on the lookout for the publication of our 2024 monthly crew talks calendar in the approaching year.



## 2023 HOLIDAY GREETING

MIKE ROBERTS

CEO, BC MUNICIPAL SAFETY ASSOCIATION

As we approach the festive season, I want to extend my warmest wishes to each and every one of you. This time of year is not only an opportunity for celebration but also a moment to reflect on our well-being; particularly our mental health.

Amid the busy holiday hustle and bustle, it's essential to make our physical health and mental well-being a priority. The holidays can bring happiness but also stress for numerous people, so it's crucial to focus on taking care of ourselves during this time. This year let us focus on creating a holiday season that is not only safe but also promotes mental health and resilience.

Here are a few recommendations I've pledged to explore, aiming to guide me through the holiday season while prioritizing mental well-being. I'd like to share them with all of you, as they might prove beneficial in enhancing your holiday experience.

**Take Time for Yourself:** Amidst the festivities, carve out moments for self-care. Whether it is a quiet walk, time with a good book, or a few minutes of mindfulness, prioritize activities that bring you peace.

**Set Realistic Expectations:** The holiday season often comes with expectations. Set realistic goals for yourself, both personally and professionally. Understand that it is okay not to do everything and prioritize what truly matters.

**Connect with Loved Ones:** Reach out to friends and family, even if it is virtually. Connection is a powerful antidote to stress, and sharing your experiences can provide support during the holiday season.

**Unplug and Recharge:** Take breaks from technology to focus on the present moment. Unplugging can help reduce stress and create a healthier balance between work and personal life.

**Express Gratitude:** Take a moment to reflect on the positive aspects of your life. Expressing gratitude has been shown to improve overall well-being and can be a powerful tool for mental health.

Remember, your well-being should be your top priority. As we celebrate the holiday season, let us create an environment that fosters both safety and mental health. I appreciate every one of you and the amazing work you do for your organization, staff, colleagues, and families. I look forward to seeing you in the new year, recharged, and ready for the opportunities that await.

Wishing you a safe, healthy, and mentally rejuvenating holiday season.

Sincerely,

Mike Roberts



# 2023 BCMSA ANNUAL AWARDS

*Celebrating the best in BC Local Government !*

## CITY OF EXCELLENCE AWARD GOLD STANDARD

The 2023 winners of the City of Excellence, Gold Standard Award: City of Abbotsford and Capital Regional District.

This award is for a municipality showing exemplary practices in all aspects of ground disturbance practices.



Congratulations to the City of Abbotsford and Capital Regional District!

## CITY OF EXCELLENCE EDUCATION AWARD

The 2023 winners of the City of Excellence, Education Award: City of Surrey and District of Port Hardy.

This award is for a municipality showing exemplary education to promote safe excavation practices.



Congratulations to the City of Surrey and District of Port Hardy!

## THE HEALTH & SAFETY STEWARDSHIP AWARD

The 2023 winners of the Health and Safety Stewardship Award: City of West Kelowna, Lisa Hoult, and the City of Surrey, Ross Temperton.

The Health and Safety Stewardship of the Year Award is presented annually to any Local Government Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) or an individual who has made significant contributions towards improving the health and safety of the work group in which they support.



Congratulations to the City of Surrey and City of West Kelowna!

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY LEADERSHIP AWARD

The 2023 winner of the Occupational Health and Safety Leadership Award: Sam Chauhan from the City of Surrey.

The Occupational Health and Safety Leadership Award is presented annually to any Local Government individual who has demonstrated an outstanding achievement in the occupational health and safety field.



Congratulations to Sam!



# 2023 BCMSA ANNUAL AWARDS

*Celebrating the best in BC Local Government !*

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY EMPLOYEE AWARD

The 2023 winner of the Occupational Health and Safety Employee Award: Jason Stevens from the City of Penticton.

The Occupational Health and Safety Employee of the Year Award is presented annually to any Local Government Health and Safety Specialist, Advisor, Coordinator, or any position (non-manager) that takes a proactive lead in organizational health and safety and has made significant contributions towards improving, innovating, and driving positive change within health and safety of their organizations in which they support.

Congratulations to Jason!



## JUNIOR HEALTH & SAFETY LEADER AWARD

The 2023 winner of the Junior Health and Safety Award: Lee Chandler from the City of Burnaby.

This award is given to the junior up and coming safety individual involved and passionate about health and safety who has developed a Health & Safety initiative or solution to assist in achieving compliance.

- Demonstrated leadership.
- Leadership in a safety initiative, including measurable results.
- Engagement of their peers around safety culture.
- Demonstrated personal belief in safety with respect to business operations.

Congratulations to Lee!



## SAFETY IMPROVEMENT AWARD

The 2023 winners of the Safety Improvement Award: City of Port Moody, Regional District of Kootenay Boundary, City of Campbell River, and District of Oak Bay.

This award is based on the employer's experience rating. A discount or surcharge, called your experience rating adjustment, allows WorkSafeBC to ensure the costs of compensation for people injured at work are distributed fairly.

- Determine claim costs for the past four years.
- Take into account the size of your business, based on your payroll.
- Compare your claim costs per dollar of payroll, to the industry average.

Reducing the costs of claims by creating a safer and healthier workplace and helping injured workers recover can improve your experience rating and reduce the amount you pay for insurance.

This award is to recognize Local Governments for activities that improve experience rating, and ultimately reducing injuries, illness, disease, and fatalities.

Congratulations to the City of Port Moody, Regional District of Kootenay Boundary, City of Campbell River, and District of Oak Bay!





# 2023 BCMSA ANNUAL AWARDS

*Celebrating the best in BC Local Government !*

## INNOVATIVE SAFETY SOLUTION AWARD

The 2023 winners of the Innovative Safety Solution Award:

City of Abbotsford and Comox Valley Regional District.

This award is given to the individuals or an organization that has achieved success addressing challenges in health and safety with a new or novel approach. The purpose of this award is to encourage the sharing of forward-thinking ideas which have been implemented to create a safer, healthier work environment, and practices which go beyond what is considered routine in the industry.

Congratulations!



## ORGANIZATIONAL SAFETY EXCELLENCE AWARD

The 2023 winners of the Organizational Safety Excellence Award:

City of Abbotsford, Metro Vancouver, City of Coquitlam, District of Lake Country, The Capital Regional District, City of Penticton, City of West Kelowna, City of Langley, City of Dawson Creek, and the Cowichan Valley Regional District. Congratulations!

This award is based on employer's experience rating similar to the Safety Improvement Award previously announced.

How experience rating works:

The award recognizes Local Governments for activities that improve experience rating, and ultimately reduce injuries, illness, disease, and fatalities.

Any BC Local Government (in classification unit 753004) - including City, Village, Township, District, Municipality and Regional District - that demonstrates and meets the criteria of this award.

To be eligible, an organization must meet one of the two following criteria:

- The current experience rating is in a discount position with a consistent experience rating discount of -20% or more over a three-year period; or
- A reduction of 20 percentage points in the past 4 years and has to be in a discount by the end of the most recent three-year period.



# SAFETY DASHBOARD

## FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACROSS BC



BCMSA and EHS Analytics have designed an interactive Safety Dashboard. The dashboard allows employers to analyze and compare statistics to identify health and safety priorities. The dashboard is free for those in Local Government classification unit 753004. If you were not able to join us for the webinar, view the [webinar recording](#). For any further information and access to the dashboard contact **Rasleen Hans**, Senior Occupational Health, and Safety Advisor at [rhans@bcmsa.ca](mailto:rhans@bcmsa.ca)

[MORE INFO](#)

## SUPPLEMENTAL SAFETY PROGRAMS

BCMSA developed Supplemental Safety Programs that are available on our webpage. The safety programs vary from biological agents, ergonomics, cold stress, prevention of violence in the workplace and more. BCMSA does their best to keep the programs up to date with regulation changes. It is the employers' responsibility to ensure compliance with current WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.

[MORE INFO](#)

## SAFETY CULTURE SURVEY

BCMSA has worked with the W Group to develop a Safety Culture Survey. The survey is designed to assess the attitudes of individuals within an organization towards health and safety issues. Workers have a right to work in a safe and healthy work environment. The survey can help an organization better understand what they can do to improve worker safety.

The survey consists of 48 questions and takes between 15-20 minutes to complete. As a part of this service an executive summary will be provided. The summary will identify positive and negative findings and benchmarking for local government. BCMSA will provide recommendations on next steps.

The survey is available to all organizations at a small cost.

For more information, contact **Rasleen Hans**, Senior Occupational Health, and Safety Advisor at [rhans@bcmsa.ca](mailto:rhans@bcmsa.ca)

[MORE INFO](#)



# CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION (COR) PROGRAM

## ABOUT COR

The Certificate of Recognition (COR) program rewards employers who have developed and implemented safety management systems against industry based standards. It provides an opportunity for employers and safety associations to take a proactive role in promoting health and safety. Employers can reduce injuries and accidents in the workplace, reducing worker suffering and improving the workplace safety culture. Achieving and maintaining a valid COR is required for earning an annual incentive payment from WorkSafeBC.



Certificates are issued by WorkSafeBC and are co-signed by the Certifying Partner. The BCMSA is the Certifying Partner for employers in the Local Government Classification Unit and is responsible for the creation of the Local Government Audit Tools, Training and Certifying External and Internal Auditors, and overall quality assurance of the program.

## SMS TRAINING

Prerequisite for Internal Auditor Training: Safety Management Systems

A Health and Safety Management System is a comprehensive in-depth approach that addresses all aspects of an organization's operations from a health and safety viewpoint and involves management and workers in a meaningful way. An organization wishing to pursue COR must have had the CAO or another manager participate in a Safety Management Systems course.

[MORE INFO](#)

## GAP ANALYSIS TOOL

Check out our **free** interactive online self assessment for organizations to receive feedback on their readiness for a COR review. This tool can also be used as a way to assess their current Safety Management System as measured by WorkSafeBC COR Standards and Guidelines.

Have questions or want more information?

### Liz Kim

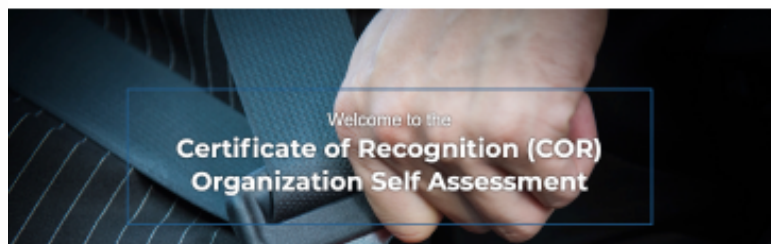
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## BCMSA COR CERTIFIED

# AN INTERVIEW ON ACHIEVING COR WITH CITY OF SURREY

**SAM CHAUHAN, MANAGER OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY**

### Why was the City of Surrey interested in achieving COR certification?

Why Not?? COR will support our OH&S Policy and enhance our occupational health and safety systems. Having COR will also have the potential for significant cost savings to the City. Being COR-certified sends a strong message to staff that OH&S is important. COR Certification places the City of Surrey amongst the leaders in OH&S. COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of investing in safety. The City of Surrey has a good workplace safety culture with healthy union (CUPE 498, IAFF 1271) management relationships and a mature safety management system in place. The next evolution of our system was to assess it. The BCMSA COR audit was a way to assess our system against a respected industry standard. This assessment would allow us to identify how we are doing and identify gaps and areas of improvement so that we can continue our path to improve workplace health and safety.

### What was the process like in achieving COR?

OHS created a corporate strategic initiative, that required the City of Surrey to design a comprehensive action plan to attain the WSBC COR designation. We engaged our senior leaders within the organization to explain that COR was a WorkSafe BC initiative that encourages employers to create an OH&S management system that goes beyond the current legal requirements. They were advised that it's a voluntary program that recognizes employers that are proactive about improving workplace safety and dedicated to continuous improvement.

The OHS Team discussed the Benefits of obtaining COR with our Senior Management Team, which were:

- Demonstrates that the City has an active and robust health and safety management system.
- Can earn an annual incentive payment from WorkSafe BC. Calculation for the incentive amount is  $\text{CoS reported Assessable payroll}^* \times (\text{CU base rate}/100) \times 10\%^*$ . This fluctuates annually, We expect that the incentive payment would be at least \$600K.
- Requires moderate initial internal resources and annual resources to make sure that the CoS can achieve and maintain COR.

The OHS Team developed a three year (6 phases) Audit Strategy. We would conduct research and develop a detailed plan. We would then hold internal engagement to provide input on the action plan. We would then complete a gap analysis and develop an action plan. Each Department was provided an action plan specific to their department. We updated our programs and developed communication plans which raised COR OHS Audit awareness and modified existing documents, processes and practises. OHS coached and assisted all departments to actively engage in structured safety discussions.

We hired an auditor to complete our COR audit over a 4-5-week period.

## In what ways did BCMSA support you in achieving this?

The BCMSA staff were great supporters of our initiative. **Justin Chouhan** and his team were super helpful, they were able to answer questions quickly, whether it was around the process or for specific questions. They helped us connect with other COR-certified organizations (Burnaby, Coquitlam, Abbotsford, Kamloops, District of North Vancouver, Dawson Creek, Metro Vancouver, and Surrey School District.) were so kind in sharing their knowledge, experience, and documents. We thank them all for supporting our journey to successfully achieve COR status.



## What changes have you seen in your organization as a result of the process of achieving COR certification?

Everyone is currently talking about the COR audit, and all are proud that we have achieved that status. Achieving COR has allowed for a structured focus on how we manage health and safety is in place. Having a third-party assessor brings credibility to our safety management system. There have been a lot of process changes and figuring out ways to be more consistent throughout the organization.

## What advice would you give other organizations that are considering this for their own organizations?

I encourage all workplaces to strive to continuously improve workplace health and safety. I recommend all to conduct research and learn from others who have gone through the process, why reinvent the wheel? Buy-in and support from senior leadership are vital, resources and commitment are required to put a structured management system in place that can be scrutinized by a third party, this was the key to having everyone else excited to go through the process. Reach out to other organizations and municipalities that have COR and be open to sharing. We had a lot of great advice from other municipalities.

## THE CITY OF SURREY OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY LEADERSHIP TEAM:

From left to right:

**Judith Trottier** (OHS Specialist), **Charlotte Fetterly** (Occupational Hygienist), **Sam Chauhan** (Manager, OHS), **Meghan MacLean** (OHS Specialist), **Laura Tymoschuk** (Health & Safety Coordinator).



# VIRTUAL TRAINING SCHEDULE

Open Enrollment: Get your Supervisor Safety or Municipal Worker Safety Certificate Online!

## UPCOMING 2024 TRAINING

Utility Locator Specialist	January 9, 2024
JOHSC Fundamentals	January 17, 2024
JOHSC Fundamentals	January 23, 2024
JOHSC Fundamentals	February 7, 2024
Hazard Identification & Risk Assessments	February 13, 2024
Worksite Safety Inspections	February 13, 2024
Due Diligence for Supervisors	February 14, 2024
Incident Investigations	February 14, 2024
Presentation Skills, Communication & Crew Talks	February 15, 2024
JOHSC Fundamentals	March 7, 2024
JOHSC Fundamentals	April 16, 2024
Hazard Identification & Risk Assessments	April 30, 2024
Worksite Safety Inspections	April 30, 2024
Due Diligence for Supervisors	May 1, 2024
Incident Investigations	May 1, 2024
Presentation Skills, Communication & Crew Talks	May 2, 2024
JOHSC Fundamentals	May 14, 2024
Utility Locator Specialist	May 14, 2024
JOHSC Fundamentals	June 4, 2024

**REGISTER NOW!**

## NEW! SAFETY LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE TRAINING

Sonar Safety Leadership	February 28, 2024
Safety Essential for Leaders	February 29, 2024

## PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY CERTIFICATE TRAINING (PH&S)

PH&S - Employee Level 1	April 9, 2024
PH&S - Employee Level 2	April 16, 2024
PH&S - Employee Level 3	April 23, 2024
PH&S - Employee Level 4	April 30, 2024
PH&S - People Leader Level 1	June 6, 2024
PH&S - People Leader Level 2	June 13, 2024
PH&S - People Leader Level 3	June 20, 2024
PH&S - People Leader Level 4	June 27, 2024

## INTERNAL AUDITOR TRAINING

This two day course is for staff from Local Governments or naturally-aligned organizations who wish to learn more about how the COR audit is conducted.

COR Internal Auditor Training	February 13 & 14, 2024
COR Internal Auditor Training	June 5 & 6, 2024
COR Internal Auditor Training	September 24 & 25, 2024
COR Internal Auditor Training	November 19 & 20, 2024

**REGISTER NOW!**

# CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

BCMSA recognizes that a number of municipal employees have extensive training in the field of health and safety and deserve recognition. We also know that employees and municipalities need guidance in selecting the appropriate training for staff depending on their role within the municipal health and safety program.

## NEW! Leadership Safety Certificate Program

The BCMSA is very excited to introduce its 4th Certificate Program for the Association: **The Leadership Safety Certificate Program**. The BCMSA conducted a pilot for both the City of Vancouver and the City of Surrey in September and November of 2023 and received overwhelmingly positive feedback. The 2-day (16-hour) certificate is made up of 2 courses: **Sonar Safety Leadership** (1) and **Safety Essentials for Leaders** (2). BCMSA will be running two open enrollment Leadership Safety Certificate Programs in 2024 taking place on February 28 and 29 and October 23 and 24, 2024.

For more information contact **Justin Chouhan**, Director of Programs and Initiatives, at [jchouhan@bcmsa.ca](mailto:jchouhan@bcmsa.ca).

## Supervisors Safety Certificate Program

The Supervisors Safety Certificate Program (SSCP) will recognize those who have invested time and energy into learning the key elements of occupational health and safety from a supervisor's perspective.

[MORE INFO](#)



## Municipal Worker Safety Certificate Program

This certificate program provides municipal workers with training on key elements of OH&S in a public works environment. The program is offered in a convenient three-day format that can be scheduled consecutively, if desired. Students could receive up to 2.4 EOCP CEU's upon program completion.

[MORE INFO](#)



## Psychological Health & Safety Certificate Program

The courses align to facilitate the awareness and adoption of psychological health and safety (PH&S) in the workplace. They increase mental health literacy and build emotional intelligence and resilience skills competencies that enable participants to practice PH&S at work and at home. Includes practical resources.



[MORE INFO](#)

## E-LEARNING - AVAILABLE NOW !

### People Leader Module 1: Champion Psychological Health and Safety

We are thrilled to announce the launch of the first Module of the People Leaders' Psychological Health and Safety Certificate Program, now accessible in a self-paced, e-learning format. In this course, participants learn how to enhance their psychological health, wellness, and resilience given the myriad of demands they face. They break down stress and how to manage it, learn how to create a behavioural change plan, and explore the four components of emotional intelligence.

Participants gain a better understanding of the characteristics and benefits of a psychologically healthy and safe workplace; the imperatives for championing mental health; the 13 psychosocial factors; and their role as people leaders.



[MORE INFO](#)

# COLLABORATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Canadian Society of Professionals in Disability Management (CSPDM)

The BCMSA is thrilled to announce our collaboration with the Canadian Society of Professionals in Disability Management (CSPDM). This collaboration marks a significant milestone in our commitment to enhancing professional development opportunities for all.

Canadian Society of Professionals in Disability Management (CSPDM) is a founding member of the International Association of Professionals in Disability Management (IAPDM). Professionals maintaining their CDMP can now use the below BCMSA training courses to maintain their credits. Our BCMSA-offered courses recognized by CSPDM for CEC credits include:

- Change Management – Thriving through Workplace Change (1 CEC)
- BCMSA Fatigue Awareness and Lifestyle Training (1.5 CEC)
- BCMSA Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD) Training for Supervisors (1.5 CEC)
- BCMSA Prevention of Workplace Violence (1 CEC)
- Dealing with Difficult Conversations (1 CEC)
- Time Management (0.75 CEC)
- BCMSA Fatigue Management: Workers (4 CEC)
- BCMSA Office Ergonomics (4 CEC)
- BCMSA MSD Reduction Strategies for Supervisors (8 CEC)

Canadian Society  
of Professionals in  
Disability Management

## Pre-Emptive Mental Wellness Program for Municipal Employees

The BC Municipal Safety Association (BCMSA) and the BC Association of Clinical Counsellors (BCACC) will partner to deliver a pre-emptive mental wellness program to BC Municipal employees.

The BC Municipal Safety Association (BCMSA) and the BC Association of Clinical Counsellors (BCACC) will partner to deliver a pre-emptive mental wellness program to BC Municipal employees.

The Pre-emptive Mental Wellness Program's primary goal is to overcome existing challenges in mental health support by facilitating enhanced accessibility for employees of BC Local Government. This service, offered free of charge to employers and employees within BC's Local Government, ensures anonymity to reduce stigma and remove barriers for employees seeking mental health support.

Emphasizing an upstream care model, the program's primary objective is to prevent the escalation of mental health concerns, thereby curbing their exacerbation.

**Pre-Emptive Mental Wellness Program**

Cultivating Well-being, One Workplace at a Time

A phone service providing free, anonymous and confidential support to local government workers in BC

PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN:

BC MUNICIPAL SAFETY Association

BC ASSOCIATION of CLINICAL COUNSELLORS

# 20 23



## THE 5TH JOINT ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADESHOW

SEPTEMBER 26 & 27, 2023 | PENTICTON, BC

From September 26 to 27, 2023, the 5th Joint Annual Conference and Tradeshow organized by BCMSA and PWABC took place in Penticton, British Columbia. This collaborative effort between the BC Municipal Safety Association and the Public Works Association of BC boasts a rich conference history spanning over a century, garnering positive feedback from attending delegates.

Each day of the conference commenced with engaging keynote addresses delivered by Eric Termuende and Jody Urquhart, followed by over 15 technical sessions per day.

The conference was structured into three streams:

Occupational Health & Safety, Leadership and Public Works. Our primary goal was to offer a broad spectrum of topics to enhance the learning experience for every participant. The attendees represented a diverse mix, ranging from students to health and safety professionals, engineers, and committee members.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to our sponsors, exhibitors, and the array of speakers who contributed to the vibrancy of this conference. A special acknowledgment is extended to every presenter who generously shared their expertise, along with the dedicated efforts of the staff and volunteers who played pivotal roles in ensuring the success of the event.

“

*"The networking opportunities were plentiful, and the sessions were well thought out, but not too many that you were torn between sessions."*

*"Both keynote speakers were great, very funny and engaging!"*

Watch the #JAC2023 Highlight Video



”

BCMSA  
NEWS  
12.23



514

Attendees  


2

Keynote Sessions

44

Speakers

32

Concurrent Technical Sessions

75

Tradeshow Booths

32

Sponsors

# THANK YOU #JAC2023 SPONSORS





## AN INTERVIEW ON THE BCMSA SAFETY INITIATIVE PROGRAM WITH THE CITY OF LANGLEY

*JODY HLADY, CRSP, B.KIN, HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVISOR*

### What was your experience working with BCMSA on this?

We began working with BCMSA in the spring of 2022 on our safety initiative when they provided an audit of our OHS management system and a safety culture survey, which included a detailed report and a roadmap to address identified action items. We received meaningful information to help us target specific areas for improvement and BCMSA was there to provide further assistance as needed to understand the findings. BCMSA made the process very easy, they were very patient and supportive, and provided guidance we needed the entire way. They were open and flexible to adapt to our specific needs.

### Can you share a memorable moment or success story from your experience with the program?

Since the completion of the safety initiative, we have been working through our actions items in roadmap, and this fall, we were a recipient of the 2023 Organizational Safety Excellence Award. BCMSA have been our cheerleaders throughout our journey by being positive, encouraging and providing the guidance, support and resources we have needed to rise to a new level of safety in our City.

### How has the collaboration with BCMSA improved workers' awareness towards OHS in your organization?

Through collaboration with BCMSA, we have been able to make many improvements in our City, including a more robust training program where we have received a great deal of positive feedback from workers regarding the quality and overall benefits of the training sessions received through BCMSA.

### Anecdotally, in what ways has the safety initiative program positively impacted the workplace culture and employee morale within your organization?

I believe that taking the time to participate in a thorough assessment of your health and safety management system and safety culture demonstrates the City's commitment towards worker safety wellbeing and value on its people. Keeping workers involved and updated through the process further enhances the relationship and trust in the organization.



### Were there any surprising insights or learnings that came out of the safety culture survey, and how did your organization respond to these findings?

Through the safety culture survey, we learned that we have a relatively healthy safety culture but would benefit by directing our attention to improving the usability of procedures for workers to feel safer at work. Our roadmap includes efforts towards improving procedures and processes that make sense for workers and which includes workers in the development of such processes.

## How did the senior leadership demonstrate their commitment to the initiative, and what impact did their involvement have on the overall success of the program?

Senior management confirmed their commitment to the safety initiative from the beginning and received updates throughout the process. They continue to place value on safety in our City and commitment to ongoing support. We provide regular updates to the Senior Management team so that they are aware of the progress made, and any further support we may need.

## What advice would you give other organizations that are considering this for their own organizations?

If you have the opportunity to participate in a safety initiative with BCMSA, I strongly recommend that you do! Ensure that you have commitment and support from senior management from the start, as well as the resources to implement action items identified through the audit process. BCMSA does provide many of the resources and makes the process quite seamless, and they have been committed and available to provide ongoing help through our journey of improving our City's health and safety and our success. Do not hesitate to reach out to BCMSA for help, they respond quickly, are very friendly, have such a wide range of resources, as well as knowledgeable and experienced staff! I also recommend spending time on their website, which is full of resources – I am a frequent visitor. And if you cannot find what you are looking for, reach out to one of their staff who will do their best to help you find it



# SAFE WORK PRACTICES FOR ARBORISTS

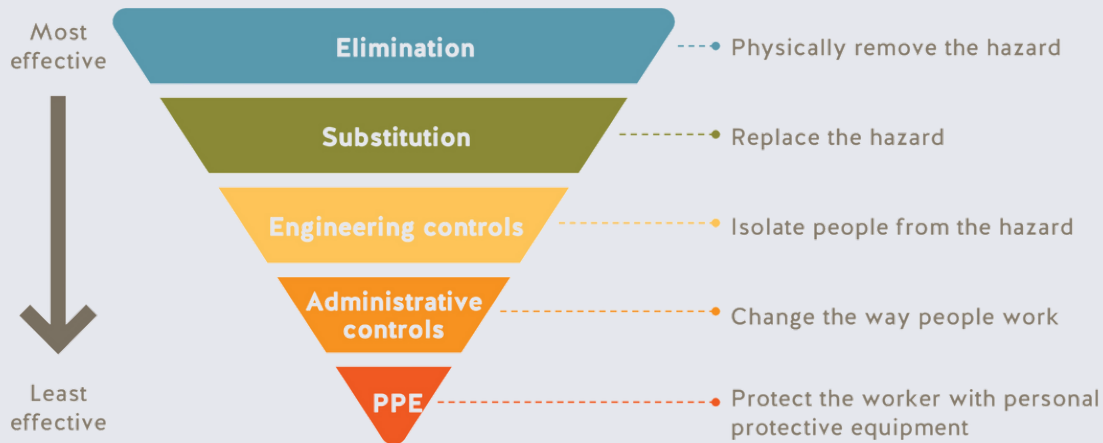
Caring, maintaining, and removing trees in any situation is inherently high-risk work. In past incidents in B.C., arborists have been injured or even killed from contact with electrical lines, falls from elevation, and being struck by tree tops or limbs.

Employers have a duty to manage workplace risks to prevent incidents and harm to workers. Managing risk involves identifying hazards, assessing the risks, and determining whether you are taking reasonable steps to control those risks.

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR ROLE IN MANAGING RISKS

Effectively managing risk in your workplace involves four steps:

- 1. Understand the Risks.** Identify the hazards (anything that could cause harm) and assess the risk these hazards pose to workers. The arborist must first assess the hazards and particular risks posed by the work environment, equipment, and the work being done.
- 2. Control the Risks.** The greatest risks should be addressed first. For arborist work, such as climbing a tree, a safe work plan is required. A tree-climbing plan (described in the next section) identifies a combination of approaches to control risks.



**3. Communicate.** Make sure all affected workers know what controls are in place, why they are in place, how to use them, and how they are to be communicated.

**4. Monitor and Update.** Assess how your control measures are working and adjust as required.

Visit [Managing risk on worksafebc.com](http://Managing risk on worksafebc.com) to learn more.

#### The Tree-Climbing Plan.

The tree-climbing plan must document how risks will be eliminated or minimized, the tree-climbing system being used, and the type and location of the initial anchor point. It also must list the names and duties of each worker involved, the PPE (personal protective equipment) being used, how the arborist will communicate with ground-level workers, and emergency response and rescue. Make sure the plan is communicated to everyone involved in the work.

Climbing equipment must be suitable for the specific tree-climbing system, compatible with other components, able to support the loads likely to be imposed, and kept clean and in good condition. It's important to always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

#### Safe Work Practices.

It's an employer's responsibility to ensure that an arborist is qualified for the work being done. Qualified means being knowledgeable of the work — including the hazards and how to control them — from education, training, and/or experience. Arborists must also be certified to the BC Faller Training Standard if they are taking down whole trees with a diameter more than 15 cm (6 in.) measured 30 cm (12 in.) from the base. For arborists, this means getting a falling and bucking endorsement through HortEducation.ca.

#### Regulatory Requirements.

Specific requirements that apply to arborist work are included in part 26 of the OHS Regulation.

#### For more information:

Keeping arborists safe during tree removal in residential and recreational settings outlines how to help keep workers safe by identifying the risks, using appropriate control measures, developing a tree-climbing plan, and checking that workers are qualified to do the work.



Contact the WorkSafeBC Prevention Line:  
 Phone: 604.276.3100 (Lower Mainland)  
 Toll-free: 1.888.621.7233 (1.888.621.SAFE) (Canada)

# winter ready

Seasonal Safety Initiative



## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WINTER READY?

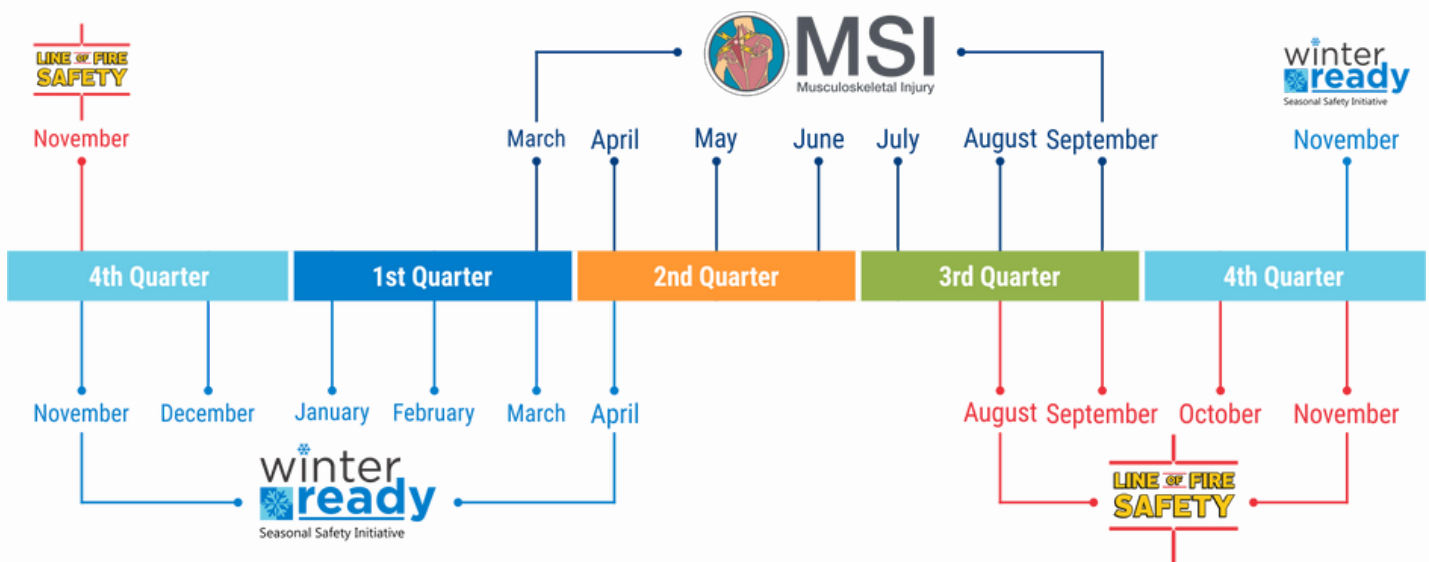
Winter in British Columbia introduces new hazards in our day to day life in and outside of work. The Winter Ready initiative discusses these critical things to teach and reinforce these potential dangerous situations.

Check our our website for:

- Safety Talks,
- Safety Meeting tips and tricks ,
- Safety initiative resources,
- Safety initiative Media kits and PowerPoint presentations,
- Online store where you can purchase visual aids.

[MORE INFO](#)

## START YOUR WINTER READY INITIATIVE NOW!



# BC FIRE FIGHTER OCCUPATIONAL AWARENESS TRAINING

The BC Fire Fighter Occupational Awareness Training was launched on April 1, 2023, and is a program designed to enhance frontline knowledge of mental health injuries and reduce the emotional and behavioral impact of a career in public safety. The curriculum combines the lived experience of those serving on the frontline with recognized subject matter experts in the field of public safety and mental health. To date, over 6200 out of a possible 11,000 firefighters in British Columbia have been registered in this program. The BCMSA is also currently in discussion with other partner Associations on the possibility of moving forward with the development of this program for year 2.

Additionally, this program is currently being modified to include at-risk frontline workers separate from Fire Fighter that regularly interface with the public (i.e., bylaw inspectors, lifeguards, etc.) and has an anticipated launch date of Q2, 2024.

For more information contact **Justin Chouhan**, Director of Programs and Initiatives, at [jchouhan@bcmsa.ca](mailto:jchouhan@bcmsa.ca).

We also extend our congratulations to **Mike Roberts**, CEO of BCMSA, for receiving an appreciation award acknowledging his significant contributions and continuous support of the BC Occupational Awareness Training series for Fire Fighters.



[MORE INFO](#)

## RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY FUND

The BCMSA has a Research, Development and Opportunity Fund (RDO). This special operating fund allows the organization to be responsive to emerging industry issues not allocated in their annual budget.

Money allocated to the fund comes from surplus revenue from BCMSA safety training and products sales. There is no application funding limit, however the annual balance of the account is dependent on current approved projects and the surplus of revenue at year end.

This fund is managed by the CEO and the Board of Directors. It supports new partnerships, research projects and activities relevant to the municipal industry with a focus on occupational health and safety and wellness.

**The BCMSA Grant for 2024 is \$20,000.**

[MORE INFO](#)

# BCMSA UPDATE



## DREW RASSERS

CLIENT SERVICES, PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

We welcome Ms. Rassers who recently joined the BCMSA team!

Ms. Rassers is an accomplished professional with a proven track record in client services. With a rich background in customer services and a strong educational foundation including a Legal Administrative Assistant Certificate and her Bachelors of Criminal Justice. Drew brings a unique perspective to every interaction. Drew's approach to work is defined by a commitment to continuous learning and personal growth. This mindset fuels her drive to deliver exceptional work product and cultivate meaningful relationships with clients and colleagues alike. Beyond Drew's professional pursuits, she is passionate about animals and enjoys delving into the world of true crime documentaries.



## AMANDA WELOY

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT

We welcome Ms. Weloy who recently re-joined the BCMSA team as our Marketing Communications Assistant.



## SYDNEY CARTER

OPERATIONS SPECIALIST

Congratulations to Ms. Carter for her recent promotion to Operations Specialist starting in 2024.

## STAY IN TOUCH

BC MUNICIPAL SAFETY ASSOCIATION

215 - 5385 216 Street  
Langley, B.C. V2Y 2N3  
(778) 278-3435 | bcmsa.ca



## 2024 MEETING DATES

