MOL Safety Blitz Results Show Many New Businesses Non-Compliant With Basic Requirements



The results of a recent Ontario Ministry of Labour safety blitz shows many new small businesses violate basic legal requirements such as posting a copy of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act.* And non-compliant employers can expect future visits from MOL inspectors.

The MOL says that between April 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014, its inspectors visited new small businesses in the industrial sector that had fewer than 20 workers. The MOL says that it focused on "businesses that had registered with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), but had no prior contact with the ministry."

Some of the most common compliance orders issued by MOL inspectors in the blitz were: post a copy of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*; prepare a health and safety policy and maintain a program; have a worker health and safety representative; have the health and safety representative conduct monthly inspections; provide "information and instruction" on workplace harassment; and maintain a workplace violence prevention program.

The MOL states that inspectors visited workplaces in the industrial sector including retail establishments, restaurants, wood and metal fabrication establishments, industrial services, wholesalers, automotive manufacturers and vehicle sales and service workplaces.

The MOL's enforcement initiative is being repeated in the 2014-2015 fiscal year, with each MOL industrial inspector expected to inspect four to eight small businesses with 50 or fewer workers, which have not been previously registered or inspected by the ministry. The MOL says that this initiative will "increase small business awareness of the workplace parties' roles and responsibilities under OHSA and its regulations", "promote awareness and compliance with new mandatory occupational health and safety training for workers and supervisors that came into effect on July 1, 2014″, and "support vulnerable workers by making them aware of their rights under the OHSA and the resources available to help them".

As we have previously advised, employers should, in particular, ensure that they prepare and post all required postings under the OHSA, since doing so will show the MOL inspector that the employer is aware of its basic obligations and has a safety

program in place.

Article by Adrian Miedema

Dentons (Canada)