

# NHBA H&S TIMES

THE OFFICIAL HEALTH & SAFETY NEWSLETTER OF THE NIAGARA HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION

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## WOMEN IN THE TRADES: CLOSING THE GENDER GAP

On any given day, you can pull up to a job site within the Region of Niagara and count the number of females on that site most likely with one hand. In fact, the under representation of women stretches far beyond our community and the statistics don't lie; only five per cent of skilled trades workers in Canada are women.

This month marked what is known as International Women's Day. A time to recognize and embrace all of the accomplishments and progressive strides that females have and continue to make.

Women have come a long way historically, now comprising nearly half of the entire Canadian workforce, but the perception still exists that certain jobs - particularly those in the skilled trades - should only be done by men.

It is no secret that there is a looming shortage of skilled trades workers, and many industries have started to embrace and employ a more diverse workforce that includes women in sectors like construction where the demand for skilled workers is highest.

According to a recently published labour market report, by the end of 2023, an estimated 67,000 new journeypersons will be required to sustain workforce certification levels across the 10 largest Red Seal trades in Canada, excluding Quebec and the Territories. In order to keep up with the demand for skills and workforce certification, we will require attracting 167,739 new apprentices. The current job pool is not sustainable without concrete efforts to bring in populations that are severely underrepresented: namely women, Indigenous peoples and people with disabilities.

The COVID19 pandemic brought light to the fact that a majority of women have added obstacles regarding their careers, which includes their children and accessible childcare solutions. Add this onto existing barriers to entry for women in the skilled trades, and it is no wonder their representation in the industry is so low.

However, the future is evolving, and the NHBA is paving the way for equality in the trades. This past month, the NHBA/Niagara College Skills Development (SDF) partnership saw 80 individuals, including females, graduate from the program and successfully obtain meaningful employment within the trades. The NHBA has also developed partnerships with the District School Board of Niagara and the Niagara Catholic District School Board, participating in events such as "Trades have no Gender", which educates and encourages young women to learn and become further interested in a skilled trade.

While females have made some progress in the industry, there are still significant barriers that we, as an industry need to continue to breakdown. The trades continue to be a male dominated career, however many companies are looking to increase the presence of under-represented groups within their work-force.

A job within the trades starts at home. As parents, guardians, and teachers, let's continue to advocate that the trades are a viable and obtainable path, no matter what gender. Let's continue to rally around the young females in our lives and build them up to be the best version of themselves



# SELF RETRACTING LANYARDS SAFETY CONCERNS

Self Retracting Lanyards (SRL) are being used more and more in the construction industry as the preferred choice for fall protection.

In many circumstances, SRL lanyards are used in conditions that can result in the lanyard mechanism becoming fouled with debris or ice such that the components do not operate properly and freeze in place. This results in a very dangerous situation in that the lanyard components may become frozen in a release position that allows the lifeline to freely discharge from the lanyard without stopping. Should a user be attached to a lanyard in this condition and fall, relying upon the lanyard to stop the fall, the lifeline will instead continue to discharge to its full length and can thereby cause serious injury or even death to the user.



## CAUSES:

- Improper maintenance (cleaning of mud & debris)
- Improper storage (Wet freezing conditions)
- Lack of or inadequate inspections prior to use

## PREVENTATIVE MEASURES:

- Review manufacturers manual for use and storage
- Before each use, inspect the SRL to assure it is in good working condition and check for proper locking and retraction. If there is any hesitation in retraction the unit should be removed from service and destroyed.
- Store the SRL in a clean dry environment protected from the elements (Heat/ Freezing/ out of direct sunlight)

## THE LUNCHBOX SHUFFLE! EATING HEALTHY ON THE JOB

Manual labour jobs are physically taxing, and often employees are working against the elements, have it be the bitter winter winds, or scorching summer heat. In order to keep your body properly fuelled for the day, look to your lunchbox for the power packed nutrition you are going to need to sustain working through an 8-10 hour day.

Poor diets and underwhelming nutritional choices can have a negative impact on workers morale, safety, productivity and long term health.

Workers who perform physical work on a regular basis are directly affected by what they eat, that is why a balanced meal plan can allow your body the proper nutrition it needs to fuel the day.

Eating healthy does typically take a bit of planning, but a little bit of effort will deliver optimal results!

- In the cooler months, pack your thermos with hearty, protein packed soups or stews
- Balance your meal with the proper amount of carbohydrates, grains, protein, fruits and veggies
- Ensure you include plenty of easy to grab snacks like almonds, fruit, or whole grain crackers
- Eat whole grains for sustained energy
- Drink plenty of water
- Try to pack your lunch the night before to ensure it is ready to just grab and go in the AM



Sources:  
[https://www.thestar.com/sponsored\\_sections/building-tomorrow/](https://www.thestar.com/sponsored_sections/building-tomorrow/)  
OHS Canada  
[healthyeating.sfgate.com](http://healthyeating.sfgate.com)



## WHAT'S NEW IN H&S?

### Proposed Amendments remove safety obstacles faced by women

The Ontario government is proposing amendments to the Construction Projects Regulation which would require PPE and clothing to be properly fitted to women and workers with diverse body types. In addition, this legislation would require all jobsites to have at least one women's only washroom

### Health Canada Launches new National toll-free number to reach poison centres

Health Canada has launched a new toll-free number: 1-844-POISON-X or 1-844-764-7669 in collaboration with four Canadian poison centres to make it easier for people in Canada to access critical medical advice regarding poisonings

