

## CLR-INFO

### Provincial News

#### British Columbians encouraged to prepare for climate-related hazards



As warmer weather approaches, British Columbians are encouraged to be prepared for the possibility of climate-related hazards, such as floods and wildfires.

Flooding may occur in the spring and early summer when the snowpack melts and water levels rise. According to the River Forecast Centre, the average provincial snowpack is slightly below normal, with some regions experiencing well above normal snowpack levels.

This year, the Province committed an additional \$180 million to the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund, bringing the total investment to \$369 million since its establishment in 2017. The Community Emergency Preparedness Fund helps local governments and First Nations prepare for the risks of natural hazards and lessen the effects before disasters happen.

#### **Learn More:**

To see the Flood Preparedness Guide, visit: [www.preparedbc.ca/floods](http://www.preparedbc.ca/floods)

For information about evacuation alerts and orders, visit: [www.emergencyinfobc.ca](http://www.emergencyinfobc.ca)

To learn about flood conditions and advisories, visit the River Forecast Centre: [www.gov.bc.ca/riverforecast](http://www.gov.bc.ca/riverforecast)

To learn about how to prepare for wildfires, visit [firesmartbc.ca/](http://firesmartbc.ca/)

For more information about ClimateReadyBC, visit [www.ClimateReadyBC.ca](http://www.ClimateReadyBC.ca)

#### B.C. invests in digital permitting to get homes built faster

The Ministry of Housing, with support from the Ministry of Citizens' Services, is working on digitizing the BC Building Code and the building permitting process with pilots in select local governments in 2024.

The BC Building Code is currently only available in print or PDF format. The digitally enhanced code will include features that will make it faster and easier for builders and building inspectors to understand and interpret the information. It will also allow for more automation during building permit reviews.

**Learn More:** [https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Homes\\_For\\_People.pdf](https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Homes_For_People.pdf)

## [Province seeks input from internationally trained professionals](#)

Internationally trained professionals are invited by the provincial government to share their views on the foreign credential recognition process in B.C. and identify barriers that may be preventing them from fully participating in the labour market.

According to government, feedback gathered through an online survey will inform legislation to improve foreign credential recognition. Responses will help steer the Province in removing barriers to create clearer and faster pathways for skilled people who have immigrated to Canada while maintaining excellence in services and safety that people depend on.

Foreign credential recognition refers to the process of having education, skills and work experience from outside of Canada assessed against Canadian standards.

Internationally trained professionals and other interested parties are invited to share their views on possible improvements online: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/engagement/foreign-credential-recognition/>

The survey is available until 4 p.m. on May 26, 2023.

## [Province strengthens cross-border collaboration through an expanded role, new funding](#)

The Province is providing a \$500,000 grant to the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) to help build and deepen cross-border partnerships.

In addition, Premier David Eby has appointed Rick Glumac, MLA for Port Moody-Coquitlam, as the Premier's Liaison for the Pacific Northwest, expanding the focus of the role beyond Washington state.

PWNER will be hosting its annual summit in Idaho over the summer and another one in Whistler next year. The focus of these summits will be to share best practices and investment opportunities in agriculture, housing, disaster resilience, electrification and planning for the FIFA World Cup in 2026.

## **Industry News**

### [Dozens of National Day of Mourning events being held across B.C. and Western Canada](#)

Dozens of events are being held across British Columbia and Western Canada for **the National Day of Mourning on April 28.**

The Day of Mourning was established as a national observance in 1991 to remember workers who either died or were injured in workplace incidents and to recommit to ensuring safety in the workplace remains an essential priority for all Canadians.

In 2022, 181 workers died due to workplace injury or disease in British Columbia, according to WorkSafeBC. Seventy-four fatalities occurred due to traumatic injury and 107 due to occupational disease.

Alberta's Workers' Compensation Board states 161 workers lost their lives in the province in the same year. One-hundred-and-one died from occupational disease, 30 from trauma, 27 from motor vehicle accidents and three from cardiac issues.

There will be 33 in-person events held across British Columbia to commemorate the Day of Mourning with various organizations participating.





New skills training opportunities for people

In Vancouver, people will be gathering at the Jack Poole Plaza at 10:30 a.m. on April 28. The event in Victoria will take place at 11:30 a.m. near the cenotaph at the Legislative Assembly of B.C.

A full list of events across the province can be found at <https://dayofmourning.bc.ca/>.

## [\\$221 billion worth of construction projects planned](#)

### [in B.C.: BCCA](#)



There is currently \$137 billion worth of construction projects underway in British Columbia, with another \$221 billion worth of projects planned for the future, [according to the British Columbia Construction Association's Spring Stat Pack](#).

The industry contributes 9.7% of the province's GDP, or \$25 billion per year, a 30% increase over the past five years.

While the number of workers in the industry has increased, it has actually seen a net loss of skilled trades workers, down 9% to 163,900 since 2020.

Wages are also over a five-year trend, with the average yearly wage of a construction worker at \$70,088.

Construction companies trend towards the smaller side in the province as 92% of the 26,262 companies have less than 20 employees.

To learn more about construction industry stats, visit the [BCCA website](#).

## **Apprenticeship & Skills Training**

### [More people facing barriers will have access to skills training](#)

People who want to get into the workforce but are facing multiple barriers to employment will have greater opportunities as the B.C. government significantly expands skills training for employment programs.

As part of StrongerBC's Future Ready Plan, the Province is investing \$44.5 million over three years to boost the number of people supported to nearly 7,500 people in communities around the province. Launched in 2019, skills training for employment programs provides skills training and wraparound support for people to remove barriers to participating in programming and gaining employment.

#### **Learn More:**

To learn more about jobs and training in the StrongerBC Economic Plan, visit: <https://strongerbc.gov.bc.ca/jobs-and-training/>

Work BC – jobs, education and career information: <https://www.workbc.ca/>

Skills training for employment programs: <https://www.workbc.ca/explore-training-and-education/skills-training-and-supports/skills-training-employment-program>

## [New training opportunities to prepare people for high-demand construction jobs](#)



The Province is providing more than \$540,000 to the BC Construction Training Network Association to deliver the construction-ready training project in partnership with ACE Trades and Technical Institute and Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society.

Participants will receive 10 weeks of essential employment and technical skills training, four weeks of on-the-job experience with local employers, and two weeks of follow-up support to prepare participants for their job search in the construction industry.

**Learn More:** [www.workbc.ca/Employment-Services/Community-and-Employer-Partnerships.aspx](http://www.workbc.ca/Employment-Services/Community-and-Employer-Partnerships.aspx)

BC Construction Training Network Association: <https://trainingnetwork.ca/>

## [BuildForce Canada launches the Construction Career Pathways program to help create entry-level positions in the construction industry](#)



A new program launched by BuildForce Canada aims to connect job seekers and employers across Canada's construction sector.

Construction Career Pathways facilitates 16-week, paid, entry-level work placements on construction sites across the country. No prior industry experience is needed for workers, and employers can take advantage of financial incentives to help offset onboarding costs.

For employers, Construction Career Pathways connects small- and medium-sized companies – those with fewer than 500 employees – to find entry-level workers who are looking to begin a career in Canada's construction industry.

A wage subsidy of up to \$2,400 per employee is available to businesses that complete their 16-week work placements, with funding provided by the Government of Canada.

Construction Career Pathways is now accepting applications. Placements are available for up to 1,000 workers, with 50% of the program intake allocated to people from traditionally underrepresented groups in the construction sector.

This program complements both the [CBTU's In the Trades](#) program as well as the [Canadian Apprenticeship Forum's Red Sealed](#) program.

For more information, visit [www.ccp-pcc.ca](http://www.ccp-pcc.ca) or contact Bill Ferreira, Executive Director, BuildForce Canada, at [ferreira@buildforce.ca](mailto:ferreira@buildforce.ca) or 613-569-5552 ext. 2220.

## **Labour and Economy**

### [Build Beyond Today: The Construction Economy Outlook](#)

On May 9, 2023, ConstructConnect will host an informative webcast on the state of the commercial construction economy.

According to ConstructConnect, economists will deliver timely, authoritative, and actionable insights to inform decision-making and business strategy for the rest of the year and help gain clarity around the state of the industry, recessionary risks, and ongoing changes in labour and inflation.

Registration is free. [Visit](#) for more details.

## Health and Safety

### [New Economic Analysis States The Impact Of Substance Use & Related Mental Health Issues, Costs the Construction Industry \\$847 Million Annually In Lost Time](#)

A new economic analysis of the impact of substance use and related mental health issues in the construction industry has revealed that the annual cost to the BC construction industry from workers missing work and showing up at work hungover or dealing with withdrawal symptoms is \$847 million. The estimated annual loss of revenue to the Government of BC due to substance use and related mental health issues in the construction industry is \$318 million.

Construction Industry Rehabilitation Plan (CIRP) commissioned the survey and analysis, which was conducted by Prioritize Consulting, with 683 construction industry respondents across the province.

CIRP Executive Director Vicky Waldron said that the study was prompted by the fact that approximately half of BC overdose victims were employed in the trades prior to death, a figure significantly higher than in other industries. In 2022, the province recorded 2,272 toxic drug supply deaths.

In response to the survey findings, CIRP has released a White Paper – “Construction Industry-Led Solution to the Overdose Epidemic” – that outlines the extent of the problem and possible solutions for both the industry and government to consider as the epidemic enters its eighth year.

To learn more, [visit](#).

### [Proposed policy amendments regarding asbestos abatement licensing](#)

In March 2022, the British Columbia Legislature passed Bill 5 to introduce certification and licensing requirements in the *Workers Compensation Act* for managing asbestos abatement work. At issue is the addition of a new policy item in the *Prevention Manual* to reflect the implementation of Bill 5, and to support the asbestos licensing model being developed by WorkSafeBC’s Prevention Services.

[Proposed amendments](#) to Part 6 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, relating to asbestos certification and licensing, are currently out for public hearing.

WorkSafeBC’s Policy, Regulation and Research Department is releasing a discussion paper and draft policy for public consultation relating to asbestos abatement licensing. Feedback will be accepted until **4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 10, 2023**.

The discussion paper, draft policy, and information on how to provide feedback can be accessed through the following link:

- [Proposed amendments regarding asbestos abatement licensing](#)

WorkSafeBC’s Board of Directors will consider stakeholder feedback before making a decision on the policy changes.

For more information, please contact **Glen Williams, CLR Director, Health and Safety**, at [glenw@clra-bc.ca](mailto:glenw@clra-bc.ca), or [604-833-2340](tel:604-833-2340).

## [Consultation on proposed amendments to Part 6 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation](#)

WorkSafeBC's Policy, Regulation and Research Department is requesting feedback on proposed amendments to Part 6, Substance Specific Requirements, sections 6.133 to 6.167 — Combustible Dusts, of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.

The consultation phase provides stakeholders an opportunity to provide feedback before the proposed amendments are taken to the public hearing. All stakeholder feedback is considered, analyzed, and provided to WorkSafeBC's Board of Directors as part of their decision-making process. The proposed regulatory amendment package under review relates to:

- **Part 6, Substance Specific Requirements, sections 6.133 to 6.167 — Combustible Dusts**

Feedback will be accepted until **4:30 p.m. on June 8, 2023**.

To learn more, please contact **Glen Williams, CLR Director, Health and Safety**, at [glenw@clra-bc.ca](mailto:glenw@clra-bc.ca), or [604-833-2340](tel:604-833-2340).

## Transportation & Infrastructure

### [Province supports improved access to Steveston Harbour](#)



The Province is helping improve access to Steveston Harbour by supporting dredging that will maintain the Cannery Channel approach to the harbour, the largest commercial fishing harbour in Canada.

A buildup of sediment in the south arm of the Fraser River is beginning to interfere with navigation into Steveston Harbour. The Steveston Harbour Authority has requested funding from all levels of government to undertake the planning, dredging and disposal work to improve safe access to the harbour.

The government has provided a \$2.1-million grant to the Steveston Harbour Authority to support the work. This dredging project will support the economic benefit of Steveston Harbour to Richmond and the Metro Vancouver region.

### [Contract awarded for Highway 17 Keating overpass, major work starts soon](#)

Work will soon start on the Highway 17 Keating Cross Overpass project, which will make travel safer, faster and more reliable for people travelling through the Vancouver Island corridor.

A \$54.5-million contract for the project has been awarded to Flatiron Constructors Canada Limited. Construction of the overpass is expected to begin in the coming weeks and is anticipated to be completed in spring 2025.

The project budget is \$76.8 million, including a provincial contribution of \$57.6 million. The Government of Canada will contribute \$16.7 million through the New Building Canada Fund. Other partners in the project include the District of Central Saanich, which is providing \$2.5 million.

## Learn More:

Learn about the Highway 17 Keating Cross Overpass Project: <https://gov.bc.ca/keatingoverpass>

## [First tunnel-boring machine arrives at Broadway City Hall](#)



Elsie, one of two tunnel-boring machines constructing twin tunnels for the Broadway Subway, broke through to the future Broadway-City Hall Station on the afternoon of Friday, April 14, 2023, reaching what will be the busiest and largest station on the Millennium Line SkyTrain extension.

Broadway-City Hall Station will be the deepest station constructed for the Broadway Subway Project at more than 20 metres underground, allowing the new tunnels to travel underneath the existing Canada Line.

Elsie, the tunnel-boring machine named after B.C.-born aircraft designer Elizabeth (Elsie) MacGill, arrived at Mount Pleasant Station in late January 2023 and began tunnelling toward the future Broadway-City Hall Station on March 4.

## Learn More:

Video of Elsie's arrival at Broadway City Hall can be found [here](#)

For general information about the Broadway Subway Project, visit: <https://www.broadwaysubway.ca>

Job opportunities for the Broadway Subway Project: <https://www.bcib.ca>



Stay safe,

Ken McCormack | President & CEO



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