

CLR-INFO

Provincial & Federal News

[Budget 2023: A Made-in-Canada Plan](#)

On March 28th, Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and federal Minister of Finance, released [Budget 2023 – “A Made-in-Canada Plan: Strong Middle Class, Affordable Economy, Healthy Future”](#).

The measures announced focus on economic growth, public healthcare, and investments to incentivize businesses to reduce their emissions and become leaders in the global clean economy.

There were a significant number of tax measures included in this budget, as well as items for future review or consultation.



Learn more: <https://www.budget.canada.ca/2023/home-accueil-en.html>

[The minimum wage increases to \\$16.75 per hour on June 1](#)



On June 1, 2023, B.C.'s lowest-paid workers will get a pay raise with the general minimum wage increase from \$15.65 to \$16.75 an hour. The 6.9% increase in minimum wage rates reflects B.C.'s average annual inflation rate in 2022.

Overall, B.C.'s minimum wage has increased from one of the lowest in the country to one of the highest. The minimum wage was \$10.45 per hour in 2015.

Learn More:

For more information about the increase, visit the Employment Standards Branch website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/employment-standards-advice/employment-standards/wages/minimum-wage>

To see minimum wages across Canada as of April 4, 2023, visit: https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/Minimum_Wages_in_Canada_April_4_2023.pdf

People on the coast encouraged to prepare for tsunamis



Get outside for a High Ground Hike during this Tsunami Preparedness Week

Coastal communities in B.C. are at risk of tsunamis and the Province is reminding people about the importance of getting prepared as part of Tsunami Preparedness Week from April 9-15, 2023.

In the event of a tsunami, which is a giant wave caused by earthquakes beneath the ocean, landslides, or volcanic eruptions, people in an affected area will receive a tsunami alert that will be broadcast across television, radio, and compatible mobile devices through B.C.'s emergency alert system.

Learn more:

For information about tsunami risks and how to get prepared, visit: www.PreparedBC.Ca/tsunamis

Pattullo Bridge closed for Easter long weekend

Drivers are reminded that the Pattullo Bridge will be closed in both directions starting on Thursday, April 6, at 10 p.m. and reopening on Tuesday, April 11, at 5 a.m.

The bridge will be closed to vehicle traffic to allow the Pattullo Bridge Replacement Project to complete soil densification activities and relocation of the seismic warning system. TransLink will conduct sign relocation, line painting, concrete patching and routine bridge inspections during this time.

Drivers should take the Port Mann or Alex Fraser bridges as alternate routes.

For updates, visit: www.DriveBC.ca

Proposed Changes to the Motor Vehicle Act



Rob Fleming, B.C. Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, tabled Bill 23, which proposes changes to the act, in the legislature on Wednesday, April 5.

These changes are part of government's Clean Transportation Action Plan to be released later this year, which will put forward a comprehensive plan to enable more modes of transportation to shift people out of cars and reduce vehicle kilometres travelled. The amendments represent additional steps the government is taking to meet CleanBC: Roadmap to 2030 emissions reduction targets, including increasing the share of trips made by active transportation, such as walking and cycling, to 30%, and decreasing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in transportation by 27% to 32%.

Labour and Economy

Minister's Statement on March Labour Force Survey



BC jobs hold steady in March

Brenda Bailey, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation, has issued the statement on the release of Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey for March 2023:

“With the first signs of spring and following steady overall job increases this year, B.C. job numbers in March remained consistent, despite the ripple effects of global economic uncertainty that are being felt around the world.

“B.C continues to remain resilient with the second-lowest unemployment rate among provinces at 4.5%. So far in 2023, B.C. has added 14,300 jobs, 5,300 of those in the private sector.

Learn More:

To find out more about the Stronger BC For Everyone: B.C.'s Economic Recovery Plan, visit: <https://strongerbc.gov.bc.ca/>

To find out more about the StrongerBC Economic Plan, visit: <https://strongerbc.gov.bc.ca/plan/>

Construction employment dips as general employment rises



Despite a patch of weakness in construction employment in January, the overall number of workers employed in Canada rose by 71,100, reports Statistics Canada in its latest Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours. Overall payroll employment has generally trended upwards over the previous five months, resulting in cumulative gains of 275,400, or 1.6%, from September 2022 to January 2023.

Meanwhile, payroll employment in the construction sector dipped almost 1% for the month, losing 7,600 workers, including 2,700 in the non-residential segment and 2,100 building equipment contractors.

Overall, there were 883,200 job vacancies across all sectors in January, an increase of 3.4% from December.

Vacancies held steady in 11 sectors, including three sectors that account for nearly one-third of all job vacancies: accommodation and food services (118,900), retail trade (99,100) and construction (71,100).

There was an average of 1.2 unemployed persons for every job vacancy in January 2023. This ratio has remained unchanged since August 2022. According to the Labour Force Survey, the unemployment rate held steady at 5% in January and February 2023.

Learn more: www.statcan.gc.ca

[Easing of Construction Material Costs in Canada not as Clear Cut as in the U.S.](#)



The article explores the recent dynamics in construction material costs, comparing the situation in Canada and the U.S.

Similar to the States, Canada has seen a moderation in prices for some individual construction inputs. On the whole, though, the Canadian easing has perhaps not been as extensive.

The latest three months have not offered the pricing relief that might have been expected, given the Bank of Canada's efforts to slow the economy through interest rate tightening.

Follow the [link](#) to learn details about trends in construction materials costs in key categories, such as forestry products, steel, cement, ready-mix concrete and blocks and bricks, energy-related products, glass, paints and coatings, and heating and cooling equipment.

[Research Reveals Energy Concerns Impacting Business Competitiveness, the Workforce and Decarbonization](#)



Research shows that businesses around the world remain concerned about the impacts of energy security and prices, which could be a catalyst for a range of environmental, social and economic ripple effects. According to [ABB Electrification's Energy Insights survey](#) of 2,300 leaders from small and large businesses across a range of sectors, 92% of respondents feel that the continuing instability of energy is threatening their profitability and competitiveness.

Energy costs and insecurity are having a significant impact on the workforce with decreased investment in employees. Business leaders are also concerned about the potential impacts of meeting their sustainability targets.

To learn more, [visit](#).

Health and Safety

[Technical Safety BC launched a new and improved certification portal](#)

On March 27, Technical Safety BC launched a new Online Services portal specifically designed for clients who need to apply for and/or renew their technical certification(s).

This marked the first in a series of releases that will improve Online Services to give users more control over the application, exam booking, and certification process.

If you don't yet have an Online Services account, please use the [sign-up](#) link to create one. You will be able to pay online, book exams, choose your exam format, and receive your certificate up to six days sooner - all without having to call in, visit an office, or email the contact centre.

Overview of Bill 41 amendments



Bill 41, Workers Compensation Amendment Act (No. 2), 2022, received royal assent on **November 24, 2022**. The new legislation introduced **seven amendments** relating to a variety of sections of the Workers Compensation Act (the Act).

Three of the amendments took effect on November 24, 2022. These amendments change how workers' compensation benefits are indexed for inflation each year, allow WorkSafeBC to increase the maximum compensation for non-traumatic hearing loss, and expand WorkSafeBC's ability to prohibit employers from engaging in claim suppression.

Two further amendments came into effect on **April 3, 2023**. The first allows workers and employers who have appealed a decision to the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal (WCAT) to request a review by an independent health professional. The second requires WorkSafeBC to pay interest on compensation benefits determined payable by the Review Division or WCAT. Interest will be paid on the amount that remains unpaid for at least 180 days after the date entitlement to the benefit started.

The sixth amendment, creating the position of fair practices commissioner, will come into effect on **May 1, 2023**. The fair practices commissioner will be appointed by WorkSafeBC's Board of Directors.

The seventh and final amendment adds a legal duty for workers and employers to cooperate in the worker's early and safe return to work, along with an obligation for employers to return injured workers to work. This amendment will come into force by regulation of the Lieutenant Governor in council, at a date to be determined.

For updates on Bill 41, please visit worksafebc.com/bill41.

Additional Policy Regarding Interest on Delayed Benefits

On March 29, 2023, WorkSafeBC's Board of Directors approved further changes to policy item #50.00, *Interest*, in the *Rehabilitation Services & Claims Manual*, Volume II.

These changes modified the policy changes previously approved by the Board of Directors on January 25, 2023, to provide further clarity and guidance on the legislative amendments regarding interest made by Bill 41, the *Workers Compensation Amendment Act (No. 2), 2022*.

The amended policy applies to all decisions, including appellate decisions, made on or after April 3, 2023.

Newly revised British Columbia Blasters' Handbook is now available

The handbook will help prepare prospective blasters to become certified for blasting work. It can also be used as a reference guide for certified blasters who already work in the field.

The British Columbia Blasters' Handbook has been updated, to reflect significant changes to Part 21, Blasting Operations, of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation and align with current practices in the blasting industry. With consultation and support from a number of agencies dedicated to the blasting industry, the handbook was expanded to reflect in-depth, industry-accepted blasting procedures and methods.

Industry News

[B.C. Celebrates Construction Month](#)

April is Construction and Skilled Trades Month in B.C. with the aim to raise awareness about job opportunities for people in the building trades. Several events will take place this month for the 6th annual celebration.

Construction Month is an opportunity to celebrate the contributions that BC's construction industry makes across the province, recognize the leaders and show appreciation for the hard-working skilled tradespeople in our industry.

This year again, CLR is proud to be a sponsor of [#BCConstructionMonth](#):



Find out how to get involved at [constructionmonth.ca](https://www.constructionmonth.ca)

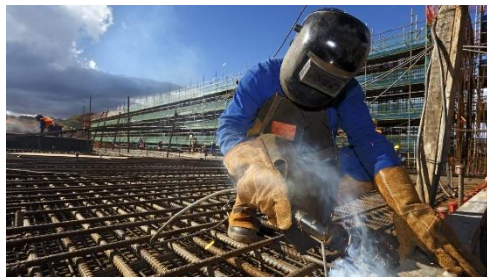
CONSTRUCTION MONTH

APRIL 2023

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BC CONSTRUCTION MONTH 2023

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[Province of B.C. funds further Red Seal training](#)



The Province of British Columbia is increasing access to Red Seal training through new funding.

More people will be able to train for jobs as automotive technicians, millwrights and welders on the Lower Mainland through a new Community and Employer Partnerships (CEP) project funded by B.C.

Ace Trades and Technical Institute (ATTI) is receiving more than \$560,000 to deliver the automotive technicians, millwrights and welders training project on the Lower Mainland.

The first full-time in-class intake began on April 3 with the second intake starting on July 4 and a third on Oct. 16.

Funding for the project is provided through the Project Based Labour Market Training stream of WorkBC's CEP program. Information on the program and other CEP projects is available at local [WorkBC](#) centres.

Infrastructure

Province planning protections to ensure the future of North Shore bridges



The Province is advancing design work for collision barriers to protect the Lions Gate Bridge and Ironworkers Memorial Bridge from damage in the unlikely event of a vessel strike.

A request for qualifications for engineering services to design these protections has been issued.

The collision barriers would be in-water structures designed to protect the bridges' foundations from vessel damage. Following the request for qualifications, the Province will

proceed to a request for proposals this year for the engineering and design of the barriers.

The Lions Gate Bridge and Ironworkers Memorial Bridge serve approximately 60,000 and 125,000 trips a day, respectively, and are crucial to the movement of people, goods and services in the region. These bridges have operated safely since opening in 1938 and 1960.

Highway 1 east of Golden will be closed for five days



With progress made over the winter on the Kicking Horse Canyon Phase 4 project, the full closure of Highway 1 through the Kicking Horse Canyon will be limited to five days in spring 2023.

From noon on Tuesday, April 11 until 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, April 15, 2023, all through traffic on Highway 1 from Golden to Castle Junction will be routed via highways 93S and 95. This will add as much as 1.5 hours of travel time.

Learn More:

For more information about this project, visit: www.kickinghorsecanyon.ca

For job opportunities for the Kicking Horse Canyon four-laning project, visit: <https://www.bcib.ca/>

For the most up-to-date highway travel information, visit: DriveBC.ca



Stay safe,

Ken McCormack | President & CEO



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