

OHS training scams and high-pressure sales tactics

OHS information for employers, prime contractors and workers

This publication is intended to help employers, prime contractors and workers avoid scams and high-pressure sales tactics by dishonest occupational health and safety (OHS) service providers.

KEY INFORMATION

- Some commercial providers may use high-pressure sales tactics or deceptive methods to sell their OHS products or services.
- Make sure you know any relevant requirements for training, equipment or tests in order to avoid unnecessary purchases and inadvertent non-compliance with legislation.
- Call the OHS Contact Centre if:
 - You want to notify Alberta OHS about a company you believe is dishonestly soliciting OHS services or equipment.
 - You have concerns about a service provider not meeting its legislated obligations.

Unscrupulous OHS service providers

Alberta OHS sometimes receives complaints about aggressive, high-pressure sales phone calls and door-to-door visits by commercial providers of OHS training, equipment and test services. The salesperson may misrepresent themselves as a government representative or may falsely claim that their services or equipment are required or endorsed by the Alberta government. (Alberta OHS is not affiliated with, and does not endorse, any commercial provider of OHS training, equipment or tests.) In other cases, the courses, equipment or tests being sold aren't government-approved or don't meet legislated requirements.

This type of misleading solicitation often happens when Alberta's OHS legislation changes. At such times, some commercial providers try to take advantage of organizations that are unfamiliar with the newly updated requirements.

To avoid unnecessary purchases and inadvertent non-compliance with OHS legislation, it's important to know which relevant training, equipment or tests are required by law. Discussed below are some common targets for misinformation by dishonest OHS service providers.

First aid training

First aid courses, and the agencies that deliver them, must be approved by Alberta OHS. The [list of government-approved first aid training agencies](#) and the courses they offer is updated quarterly.

The agencies on the list sometimes authorize consultants or service providers to deliver first aid courses on their behalf. Although these affiliated providers deliver approved courses, they might not appear on the approved training agencies list. To verify that a provider not included on the list is delivering an approved first aid course:

- Ask the affiliate for the name of its partner agency, then contact the partner agency to verify that the affiliate is authorized to deliver training on their behalf; or
- Ask the affiliate to see their partner agency's signed government approval letter, which authorizes the partner agency to provide first aid training (the affiliate should have a copy of this letter).

Online courses

Although some approved first aid courses feature a mix of online and in-person learning, none of them are online-only courses. Anyone selling a first aid course that is exclusively online is not legitimate.

For more information, visit alberta.ca/first-aid-training.

First aid equipment

Work site first aid kits must contain the supplies specified in CSA Standard Z1220-17, *First aid kits for the workplace*. To meet this requirement, prime contractors and employers can either buy first aid kits that meet the CSA standard, assemble their own CSA-compliant first aid kits by gathering all the required items, or add any required items that are missing from their current first aid kits.

To find out which items are required to be in first aid kits, refer to the CSA standard or Schedule 2 in the OHS Code.

Audiometric testing

Audiometric technicians who conduct audiometric testing required by Section 223 of the OHS Code must have a valid (i.e. not expired) certificate from an [approved training provider](#). (This can be verified by either asking to see a copy of the certificate or by contacting the training provider listed

on the certificate.) Employers can either perform audiometric testing in-house or hire a third-party service provider.

Spirometry

Pulmonary function technicians who perform spirometry required by Section 40 of the OHS Code must hold a valid certificate from an [approved training provider](#). (This can be verified by either asking to see a copy of the certificate or by contacting the training provider listed on the certificate.) For health assessments (including spirometry) of workers exposed to asbestos, silica, or coal dust, employers can either perform the assessments in-house or hire a third-party service provider.

Crane operator training

OHS legislation requires workers who operate a crane or other lifting device to be suitably trained. This training can be developed by the employer and delivered in-house or can be provided by a third party. Note that in some cases workers may already be suitably trained as a result of training they received prior to their current job.

Third-party crane operator training courses aren't approved or endorsed by the government and the content and quality of these courses can vary significantly. Employers who receive solicitations for such courses must make sure they will provide suitable training for their workers.

Asbestos worker training

Workers must successfully complete a government-approved course before they enter an asbestos restricted area. A list of [approved training agencies](#) that provide the course is available online. The course is two days long and involves hands-on practical exercises. After successfully completing the course, participants are issued an Asbestos Worker Card (certificate of completion). For more information, see [Course guidelines: occupational health and safety for the asbestos worker](#) on the OHS Resource Portal.

For asbestos work that is not in an asbestos restricted area, the government-approved training course is not needed. Employers are allowed to develop and conduct their own training, or have a third party provide training, as long as the training lets workers perform their work safely.

More information about asbestos worker training requirements is available at alberta.ca/asbestos-worker-training.aspx.

Fit testing for hearing protection devices and respiratory protective equipment

Fit testing of hearing protection devices is a new requirement for employers as of March 31, 2023. This fit testing must be performed in accordance with CSA Standard Z94.2-14 (R2019), *Hearing protection devices – Performance*,

selection, care and use, which currently stipulates that a fit testing method specified by the device manufacturer is to be used. Although employers may need to take action to ensure they are complying with this new requirement, the OHS Code doesn't require any other special fit testing certification or training.

Respiratory protective equipment that depends on an effective facial seal is required to be fit tested in accordance with CSA Standard Z94.4-02, *Selection, use and care of respirators*. However, as with hearing protection devices, the OHS Code doesn't require any special fit testing certification or training other than what is required in the standard.

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training

Employers must ensure workers receive WHMIS training if they:

- Work with or near a hazardous product regulated under WHMIS.
- Perform work involving the manufacture of a WHMIS-regulated product.

Employers conducting WHMIS training aren't required to use a commercial training provider or materials created by a commercial company. Employers have the option to develop their own materials and conduct the training in-house, as long as it includes site-specific information about any WHMIS-regulated products and health and safety procedures used at the work site. Using a combination of in-house and third-party WHMIS training is also acceptable.

Questions or concerns

Call the OHS Contact Centre if:

- You want to notify Alberta OHS about a company you believe is dishonestly soliciting OHS services or equipment.
- You have concerns about a service provider not meeting its legislated obligations.

Phone numbers for the OHS Contact Centre are listed on the next page.

Contact us

OHS Contact Centre

Alberta toll-free

- 1-866-415-8690

Edmonton region

- 780-415-8690

Deaf or hard of hearing (TTY)

- 1-800-232-7215 (Alberta toll-free)
- 780-427-9999 (Edmonton region)

Notify OHS of health and safety concerns

alberta.ca/file-complaint-online.aspx

Call the OHS Contact Centre if you have concerns that involve immediate danger to a person on a work site.

Report a workplace incident to OHS

alberta.ca/ohs-complaints-incidents.aspx

Website

alberta.ca/ohs

Get copies of the OHS Act, Regulation and Code

Alberta King's Printer

alberta.ca/alberta-kings-printer.aspx

OHS

alberta.ca/ohs-act-regulation-code.aspx

For more information

Approved first aid training agencies (FA018)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/fa018

Approved asbestos training agencies (ASB002)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/asb002

Change highlights: First aid – Part 11 in the OHS Code (LH001)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/lh001

Course guidelines: occupational health and safety for the asbestos worker (CG001)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/cg001

CSA standards (free account required)

community.csagroup.org/login.jspa

OHS approved training (follow the links on this page for information specific to different worker types, including lists of approved training agencies and courses)

alberta.ca/ohs-approved-training

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