

40B Burns Avenue, PO Box 2000, Charlottetown, PE C1A 7N8  
Tel: (902) 368-6132 Fax: (902) 368-4382 Email: [employeradvisor@gov.pe.ca](mailto:employeradvisor@gov.pe.ca)

*An electronic newsletter for Island Employers on Workers Compensation and Occupational Health and Safety Matters*

[princeedwardisland.ca](http://princeedwardisland.ca)  
search: Office of the Employer Advisor

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## Department Name Change

On May 9<sup>th</sup> 2019, Dennis King was sworn in as Prince Edward Island's 33<sup>rd</sup> Premier in Georgetown, PEI. Also welcomed, was the new members of the Executive Council.

"I am honoured to serve as Premier of Prince Edward Island, and I look forward to working with the new members of cabinet," said Premier King. "We have been presented with a unique privilege to serve the people of Prince Edward Island each and every day. As we move forward, together, we will fulfill our commitment to working hard for, and with, Islanders to strengthen our province."

With these new changes, comes some new departments including a change to our division. We are still Labour and Industrial Relations but will now be under the new Department of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture.

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/news/prince-edward-island-premier-and-new-cabinet-sworn-today>

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## POLICIES REVIEW DEADLINE

The Workers Compensation Board of Prince Edward Island has approved, in principle, the following policies:

- **POL-09**, Hearing Loss
- **POL-90**, Time Frame Limitations for Claims Filing and Invoicing
- **POL-73**, Vehicle Modifications

The policies have been placed on our website for viewing and comment. They will remain on our website **until June 13, 2019** under the heading of "Policy Consultation-Draft Policies". Persons wishing to access these policies and provide comment online may do so at <http://www.wcb.pe.ca/Information/PolicyConsultation>

Should you have any questions or comments about these policies or any other policies of the Workers Compensation Board, you may contact Barbara Groome Wynne, Senior Policy and Planning Coordinator, at [blgwynne@wcb.pe.ca](mailto:blgwynne@wcb.pe.ca) or [902-368-5562](tel:902-368-5562).

## NOISE...a common workplace hazard

Noise is one of the most common workplace health hazards. In heavy industrial and manufacturing environments, as well as in farms, cafeterias, permanent hearing loss is the main health concern. Summer time is a busy time for construction, maintenance and workers in various outdoor/indoor environments.

Noise exposure can cause two kinds of health effects. These effects are non-auditory effects and auditory effects. **Non-auditory effects** include stress, related physiological and behavioural effects, and safety concerns. **Auditory effects** include hearing impairment resulting from excessive noise exposure. Noise-induced permanent hearing loss is the main concern related to occupational noise exposure.

Main auditory effects include:

- **Acoustic Trauma**
  - Sudden hearing damage caused by short burst of extremely loud noise such as a gunshot.
- **Tinnitus**
  - Ringing or buzzing in the ear.
- **Temporary Hearing Loss**
  - Also known as temporary threshold shift (TTS) which occurs immediately after exposure to a high level of noise. There is gradual recovery when the affected person spends time in a quiet place. Complete recovery may take several hours or days (up to 48 hours).
- **Permanent Hearing Loss**
  - At this stage, permanent and irreversible hearing damage has occurred. Noise-induced hearing damage cannot be cured by medical treatment and worsens as the noise exposure continues. As the employee ages, hearing may worsen as "age-related hearing loss" adds to the existing noise-induced hearing loss. Permanent hearing loss can also occur from a single traumatic event.

### *How can I tell if my workplace is too loud?*

If you answer yes to any of the following questions, the workplace may have a noise problem.

- Do people have to raise their voices?
- Do people who work in noisy environments have ringing in their ears at the end of a shift?
- Do they find when they return home from work that they have to increase the volume on their car radio higher than they did when they went to work?
- Does a person who has worked in a noisy workplace for years have problems understanding conversations at parties, or restaurants, or in crowds where there are many voices and "competing" noises?

### **TAKE AWAY...**

- *Have managers & supervisors set an example by wearing protection devices whenever required.*
- *Be proactive & look for ways to eliminate or reduce noise exposure for the safety of your employees.*
- *Encourage workers to report noise hazards*

**TAKEN FROM THE FOLLOWING WEBSITE:**

<https://www.ccohs.ca/topics/hazards/physical/noise/>

Please contact your local office of the occupational health and safety agency for your jurisdiction if you have specific questions that apply to your workplace.

**Occupational Health and Safety Act  
Occupational Health and Safety Act General Regulations (E.C.180/87)  
Part 8, Section 8.3**