

Regulatory amendment: A primer on high visibility apparel

In April 2021, WorkSafeBC's Board of Directors approved changes to the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Regulation, which took effect on September 1, 2021. Included in these changes is section 8.24, which regulates high visibility apparel, and has been amended to maintain worker safety when exposed to vehicles or mobile equipment.

Background

Section 8.24 of the OHS Regulation addresses the use of high visibility apparel in various circumstances. The previous version of this section made reference to a WorkSafeBC standard issued in 1997. The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) issued a standard on high visibility apparel in 2002 that then became the accepted alternate standard in B.C.

Objective of the regulatory amendments

The purpose of these amendments is to maintain worker safety by removing the reference to the WorkSafeBC standard and adopting the requirements of [CSA Standard Z96-15, High-Visibility Safety Apparel](#) for workers exposed to vehicles or mobile equipment. This allows for greater consistency in high visibility apparel requirements across the country as the CSA standard is a regulatory requirement in other Canadian jurisdictions.

These amendments also incorporate permitted design modifications for certain emergency response workers — modifications that were previously covered under the WorkSafeBC standard. These design modifications address the concerns of the emergency response

community that the public is able to identify their authority in critical situations. The permitted modifications also take into account the nature of emergency responders' work while maintaining their safety.

Employer responsibilities

Employers are responsible for providing workers with personal protective equipment when it is required for their safety, including high visibility apparel. To ensure compliance with the amended OHS Regulation, employers must confirm that the high visibility apparel they provide to workers meets the requirements of CSA Standard Z96-15. A revised [OHS guideline](#) has been developed to assist employers in meeting these requirements.

For more information

Visit worksafebc.com to read the amended [section 8.24](#) of the OHS Regulation and the corresponding [OHS guideline G8.24](#).