

Hazard Alert – Windy Conditions

Hazard Summary

On construction projects in this province workers have been injured and serious incidences have occurred as a result of windy conditions and unanticipated wind gusts. Wind gusts can cause the unexpected movement of materials, and workers can unknowingly be put in danger.

Contributing Factors

Although wind gusts can happen at any time during the year we are most vulnerable during the six month hurricane season which begins on June 1 in the Atlantic. Once developed, these hurricanes can pack winds greater than 120km/h.

Recommended Precautions

Pay attention to forecasts. Pay particular attention to wind speeds and plan construction activities accordingly. Activities involving sheathing materials, aerial lifts and cranes should be properly evaluated. Workplace inspections should be conducted with particular emphasis placed on material storage, hoarded scaffolds, solid fencing, concrete formwork and false work and vertical walls on incomplete buildings. Sheets of building materials should always be properly stored and secured. Particular attention should be paid to lighter materials such as sheets of insulation and vinyl and metal siding because they can easily become airborne and may cause both personal injury and property damage.

Post storm inspections should also be conducted to ensure structural integrity of buildings and scaffolds, falsework and formwork and to ensure any hazard created by the high winds is corrected before work resumes.

