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Releases

Crane licensing and permitting announcement welcomed by BC unions

New crane safety measures announced today by BC Labour Minister Jennifer Whiteside will save lives and make construction sites safer across the province, say the BC Federation of Labour, [BC Building Trades](#) and [International Union of Operating Engineers \(IUOE\) Local 115](#).

“This is the culmination of years of work by the labour movement, and especially by construction unions,” said BCFED President Sussanne Skidmore. “The urgency of that work has been sadly underlined by tragedies like the Kelowna crane collapse.”

Crane-related safety failures have killed seven workers in the past five years, including five workers killed in the 2021 collapse of a tower crane at a downtown Kelowna construction site. Whiteside established a Tower Crane Safety Table in June 2025 to develop recommendations for improving safety, including representatives from labour.

“Nothing is more important than the health and safety of workers. We have seen how devastating crane-related accidents can be in BC,” said BC Building Trades Executive Director Brynn Bourke. “The BC Building Trades was honoured the government announced they will introduce legislation mandating crane licensing and permitting at our convention. This is an important victory for workers.”

“Licensing and permitting are proven tools for reducing risks in high-hazard industries,” said IUOE 115 Business Manager Bryan Railton. “By ensuring that only qualified employers oversee crane work and operations, and requiring high-risk work to be approved beforehand through a permit process, we can continue to reduce the risk of catastrophic failures before they happen.”

Today’s announcement builds on the province’s previous progress, including stronger regulations, more enforcement and BC’s historic investment in trades training announced in December.

“Licensing and permitting are critical for the safety of workers on construction sites as well as the public. We’re glad the government has listened and acted now,” Skidmore said. “And we’re looking forward to working with them to make sure the new rules do everything possible to protect the lives of workers and the public.”