

Residence Joint Health and Safety Committee Minutes
July 23, 2026

Attendance: S Smith (Co-chair), S Desveaux, C Furusawa, K Newstead, M Sheldrick (alternate for K Murphy, Cupe 229), J Spencer (alternate for D Wilson, USW 2010)

Regrets: A Laranjeira (Co-chair), K Murphy, D Wilson

Guest: J McKenzie (EH&S Director), P Miller

1) Committee Membership Update

- S. Smith stated that he had requested expanding the committee to 10 members to better reflect workforce diversity.
- It was noted that HR will be consulted to confirm the current employee representation within H&A (e.g., USW, Local 229, and any non-union staff) before any changes are made to the committee membership.

2) Approval of Previous Minutes

- **Motion:** The minutes of January 19, 2026, were approved.

3) General Updates:

a) Campus Optics: A New Centralized EH&S Platform for Queen's

- Jennifer McKenzie provided an update on Campus Optics, a new Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) system being implemented across campus.
- Campus Optics will be used to report safety-related incidents and concerns submitted by employees, students, and the public.
- The system will replace existing inspection processes and will be used for health and safety inspections, laboratory inspections, equipment inspections, and other EH&S inspections.
- Standardized inspection templates are being developed and will be customized based on building type, displaying only the inspection items relevant to each location. Joint Health and Safety Committees will have an opportunity to review the templates and provide feedback before implementation.
- Members discussed the importance of validating space assignments and building responsibility data to ensure inspections are assigned correctly. EH&S will work with Facilities and departmental representatives to review and confirm this information before implementation.
- Jennifer McKenzie also advised that Campus Optics will include an asset management component to track items such as fire extinguishers, hose cabinets, fire alarm systems, fume hoods, AEDs, and other safety equipment.

b) Modernized first aid program

- Jennifer McKenzie provided an update on the modernized First Aid Program.
- The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) has updated Ontario's first aid requirements to align with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standard, creating greater consistency across Canada.
- As part of the update, Emergency First Aid has been renamed Basic First Aid, and Standard First Aid has been renamed Intermediate First Aid.

- Current first aid certificates remain valid until their expiry date. Employees will be certified under the new CSA standard when they renew their certification.
- The committee noted that first aid training will continue to be provided through St. John Ambulance.
- The updated standard will improve recognition of first aid certifications obtained in other provinces.

c) JHSC vacancies – correction for H&A

- The committee continued its discussion regarding committee membership and representation.
- Simon Smith advised that he will provide a breakdown of unionized and non-unionized staff within H&A to support future membership discussions.
- It was noted that while casual employees may be considered for representation, their temporary nature could make it difficult to maintain consistent participation on the committee.
- The committee agreed to continue the discussion once the staffing data has been reviewed.

d) Queen's e-bike/scooter policy

- Re: e-bike and scooter use on campus. Simon Smith stated that charging large capacity lithium batteries indoors has been problematic, especially for devices that were either not CSA or UL approved or have been damaged at some point during their life. It is a risk because when there is a fire, it's very difficult to extinguish. He added:
- You cannot bring e-bikes or scooters into residence buildings.
- This is very difficult to police. We can send out lots of communication, but short of having people guarding doors, I don't have a solution.
- The committee discussed communications provided to students regarding prohibited items in residence, including lithium-ion powered devices. It was noted that this information will be communicated more explicitly in future residence materials.
- Members acknowledged the ongoing challenge of enforcing prohibited items, as students may conceal them if they know inspections are occurring.
- Jennifer McKenzie advised that Environmental Health & Safety is working closely with Kingston Fire & Rescue regarding the risks associated with lithium-ion batteries used in e-bikes, e-scooters, and research equipment.
- Although there are currently no specific regulatory requirements, Kingston Fire & Rescue is pursuing changes to legislation and the Ontario Fire Code to address these risks.
- In the interim, the focus remains on fire prevention through education, awareness, and communication rather than proactive room inspections.
- Jennifer McKenzie noted that future regulations may require designated fire-rated storage or charging areas for lithium-ion battery-powered devices, although no such requirements are currently in place.

e) Battery disposal in H&S

- The committee received an update on the battery disposal program.
- Simon Smith noted that Residence Facilities disposes of a large volume of batteries annually due to wireless locks and carbon monoxide detectors and is currently using an independent disposal process.
- Jennifer McKenzie advised that Environmental Health & Safety is developing a centralized campus battery recycling program, with approximately six to eight monitored battery drop-off locations planned across campus.

- The new program is intended to improve battery disposal practices and reduce contamination issues experienced with previous collection bins.
- It was noted that departments generating large volumes of batteries may be provided with dedicated collection containers and pickup service to support safe and efficient disposal.

4) Inspections:

a) Discuss Inspection Schedule Plan

- Simon Smith presented a proposed inspection schedule with target completion months to support more consistent workplace inspections throughout the year.
- Jennifer McKenzie stated the legislative requirement is that all workplace locations be inspected annually, with at least one inspection completed each month.
- Jennifer McKenzie clarified that inspections must be completed by a worker representative, while a management representative attends to address any issues identified during the inspection. Management representatives are not required to be Joint Health and Safety Committee members.
- Jennifer McKenzie also advised that alternate worker members may participate in inspections and recommended pairing new inspectors with experienced members until they are comfortable conducting inspections independently.

b) Worker Members to Select Their Building Preference for Inspections

- Simon Smith advised that worker members would be asked to select their preferred buildings for inspections to assist with assigning inspection responsibilities for the year.
- The committee discussed ensuring inspection assignments are distributed fairly among worker members while meeting the annual inspection schedule.

5) Incident/accident reports:

- Jennifer Spencer provided an overview of accident/incident reports from January to June 2026.

a) Workplace Strain injuries (WSIB Reportable)

- An employee sustained strains to the back, shoulder, and neck while moving plywood overhead.
- The incident resulted in two days of lost time.
- Corrective action identified that managers and employees should assess tasks in advance to determine whether additional assistance or a two-person lift is required.

b) Motor Vehicle Incident (WSIB Reportable)

- A caretaker was involved in a motor vehicle collision while travelling between buildings to return keys at the end of the workday.
- The employee was using their personal vehicle and sustained impact-related bruising.
- The incident was reviewed as part of the WSIB reporting process.

c) Workplace Injury – Arm and Hand (WSIB Reportable)

- An employee reported an arm and hand injury that developed throughout the workday.

- Medical attention was required.
- Additional details regarding the cause of the injury were reviewed as part of the incident report.

d) Workplace Injury – Slip/Trip/Fall (WSIB Reportable)

- An employee sustained an ankle injury after slipping in mud while returning from a meeting at West Campus during rainy conditions.
- Medical attention was required.
- The employee returned to work on modified duties after approximately 2.5 days of lost time.
- It was noted that the employee had approximately 10 years of experience.

e) Chest Pain and Respiratory Incident (WSIB Reportable)

- A casual employee (cleaner/caretaker) reported experiencing sudden chest pain and shortness of breath while seated during an authorized break.
- Emergency services were contacted, and the employee was transported to hospital.
- Lost time was reported; however, no work-related cause was identified, and the incident was categorized as an illness.
- The employee has not experienced any recurrence, and no contributing factors were identified.
- The committee discussed whether the employee had been engaged in physical activity prior to the incident; however, the available information did not indicate a specific workplace cause.

6) Deferred Business

- The 2025 Injury Statistics will be brought forward to the September 21st meeting.

Meeting Adjourned

Date of Next Meeting – September 21, 2026