

IMPACT REPORT



'TAILGATE TOOLKIT'

2023 - 2025

VICA
Vancouver Island
Construction Association

NRCA
NORTHERN REGIONAL
CONSTRUCTION
ASSOCIATION

SICA
SOUTHERN INTERIOR
CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

VRCA
Vancouver Regional Construction Association

**bc
ca**
British
Columbia
Construction
Association

GREETINGS FROM THE **TAILGATE TOOLKIT**



Rory Kulmala
CEO, Vancouver Island
Construction Association
(VICA)

A Message from the CEO

When the Vancouver Island Construction Association (VICA) was approached to develop a construction industry-specific program to address the growing drug poisoning crisis in B.C., it was obvious the role our association could play. As the Tailgate Toolkit has developed and expanded, I am pleased to reflect on the work done by our team. As this report will reveal, our work has left a positive impact on the construction industry and would like to thank the companies and individuals who have participated in our program.

Health and safety have always been an industry priority, and through the Tailgate Toolkit, we're providing the tools needed to ensure workers are safe both on and off the job site. Solutions to the toxic drug crisis are complex and a significant social concern that is also affecting our workers, but I can take solace in knowing that the work being done by the Tailgate Toolkit team plays a small part in helping reduce the number of drug poisoning deaths in our province.

We are pleased to provide you with this update on the Tailgate Toolkit. As the program matures, we are continuously looking at ways to improve delivery and accessibility as well as ensuring the content we're providing is relevant and accurate. I welcome your thoughts and feedback as we strive to improve how the Tailgate Toolkit serves our industry.

I'm proud of the impacts outlined in this report and look forward to delivering the Tailgate Toolkit across British Columbia for years to come.



Josie Osborne
Minister of Health of
British Columbia

A Message from the Minister of Health

The Tailgate Toolkit is a valuable and important resource for people working in the construction industry that is designed to meet people where they are and support those who are at risk or facing substance-use challenges.

We are proud to support this program as it strives to break the stigma surrounding mental health, pain and substance use while empowering people to reach out for help and connect with industry-specific support groups and resources.

We remain committed to supporting initiatives that prioritize the wellbeing of construction workers and strengthen the industry from the inside out.



Amie Flint

Director of Operations,
Vancouver Island
Construction Association

As we continue this incredible educational journey, I would like to convey my deep gratitude for the support and collaboration from our various partners. This includes the BC Construction Association, Vancouver Regional Construction Association, Southern Interior Construction Association, and Northern Regional Construction Association, their members, and boards. Additionally, we thank the Ministry of Health, the many health authorities, trades colleges, school districts, and other not-for-profit organizations the Tailgate Toolkit team works with. These groups are recognized for their dedication to improving the well-being of construction workers, both on and off the job site, and for their efforts to positively impact the lives of workers throughout British Columbia.

Finally, I want to recognize the momentous efforts of the dedicated Tailgate toolkit staff who, every day, contribute to making a difference in the lives of thousands of construction workers in British Columbia, championing the message of strength and resilience for our industry.

MEET THE TEAM



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WHERE TO FIND US:



@thetailgatetoolkit



The Tailgate Toolkit



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The Tailgate Toolkit

FREE RESOURCES:

Order free harm reduction
resources for your site or
office at no cost.

For resources, visit:
www.thetailgatetoolkit.ca/products/



ABOUT THE TAILGATE TOOLKIT

Prompted by data revealing a disproportionately high number of toxic drug deaths among individuals in the construction and transportation sectors, VICA launched the Tailgate Toolkit in partnership with Island Health through Phase 1 funding. This pilot phase focused on Vancouver Island and laid the foundation for a tailored harm reduction program rooted in education, stigma reduction, and access to life-saving resources.

Over the past few years, we've received funding from the Ministry of Health and the Tailgate Team has delivered toolbox talks, leadership training, naloxone workshops, and region specific resource guides to construction sites and companies across B.C. The Tailgate Toolkit promotes awareness of mental health, pain management, substance use, and stigma while equipping workers and employers with actionable harm reduction tools.

In 2024 and 2025, VICA also began revamping its leadership training to include a stronger emphasis on mental health awareness, psychological safety, and inclusive jobsite practices, ensuring that safety culture starts at the top.

Together, these initiatives represent VICA's commitment to addressing the toxic drug crisis head-on and fostering a construction industry that's safer, healthier, and more supportive for everyone who works in it.

I wanted to sincerely thank you for taking the time to come over and deliver such an impactful presentation. It sparked a lot of positive discussion among our field staff. Your presentation struck the right balance-bringing both a positive and sobering perspective to a difficult and often heavy topic. You did an exceptional job, not only with the powerful content but also with your delivery. Keep doing what you are doing!

- DON MANN

From January 2023 to June 2025, Tailgate Toolkit staff distributed the following resources across BC:

1,861

Naloxone Kits

Resource Guides

28,135

318

Toolbox Talks

Individuals
at Talks

9,250

104

Hammer Time
Sessions



LEADERSHIP FUNDAMENTALS: SUPPORTING YOUR TEAM IN NAVIGATING MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE USE AND PAIN

Recommended for those in front-line supervisory or engagement positions such as forepeople, superintendents, project managers, and first aid attendants, or anyone looking to gain the skills and confidence to support their team members.

Delivered monthly, we are introducing the completely revamped, more interactive, hybrid training: Leadership Fundamentals Course. This free learning experience will prepare participants to recognize and provide support to those who are experiencing challenges with substance use, managing pain, or mental health. With a variety of topics such as Mental Health First Aid, Physical Pain, Legal Obligations and Indigenous Perspectives, Leadership Fundamentals will contribute to participants knowledge of how to keep crews, teams and workplaces connected, supported and aware.



This course is both recognized by BC Housing as Licensed Residential Builders Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Gold Seal. Participants will receive 13 CPD points and 2 Gold Seal points upon completion.

Register for our Leadership Fundamentals online at www.thetailgtetoolkit.ca



ABOUT TOOLBOX TALKS

Introductory conversations about substance use, mental health, the current toxic drug supply, and what harm reduction services are available in each region of the Province.

TOOLBOX TALKS: SPEAKING DIRECTLY TO INDUSTRY



During a Toolbox Talk in Penticton College with 6 different trade programs, four young girls found a deep sense of solidarity as they shared their personal experiences with mental health, substance use, and the pressures of working in a male-dominated industry. The conversation, meant to raise awareness about coping strategies and available support systems, quickly became an open forum for them to discuss the unique struggles they faced on job sites, including the stress and isolation that often led others in the field to turn to drugs or alcohol. As they opened up, they discovered a common determination not only to support one another but to challenge the culture of silence around these issues. The talk not only equipped them with practical harm reduction tools but also strengthened their bond, as they realized they were each other's greatest allies in navigating both their trade and the challenges it presented.

- PENTICTON COLLEGE TESTIMONIAL

HAMMER TIME: AN INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC SUPPORT

VICA continues its partnership with the Umbrella Society to offer an industry-specific support group for those struggling with substance use and working in the construction industry. The group is not a twelve-step program, is fully anonymous, and participants don't need to be sober to participate.

The group is facilitated virtually by two Umbrella Society staff who have lived experience of substance use and previously/currently work in the construction industry.



— 2024-2025 AWARDS

The Tailgate Toolkit was honoured with the 2025 Humanitarian Award from the BC Association of Broadcasters (BCAB), recognizing its impact across B.C. construction communities.

Our project team was also recognized by the Canadian Construction Association with the 2023 Community Leader Award, presented at the CCA conference in March 2024.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT —

VICA has continued with advertising efforts across various locations such as Victoria, Nanaimo, Surrey, Vancouver, Kelowna, and Prince George. This encompasses print ads, digital promotions, and social media outreach.



The BCAB award provided VICA with over a million dollars of television and radio airtime. Television and radio commercials were created to be broadcast on all BCAB association member stations, which include 82 radio and television stations across the province.

To view our commercial please visit youtube, *The Tailgate Toolkit*.

From January 2023 to June 2025, our project team participated in 82 industry events to raise

awareness and engage stakeholders. At these events, Tailgate Toolkit staff engaged directly with 7,877 individuals and delivered presentations or outreach to representatives from 78 individual companies. The team also collaborated with 31 educational institutions, including high schools and trades colleges, to deliver training and resources, and worked closely with 18 different Community Action Teams across the province.



PROGRAM SUPPORTERS & INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Solutions to the toxic drug crisis requires an all-hands approach, and we are incredibly thankful to our partners, program supporters, Indigenous partners and industry stakeholders who see the value in our programming. We thank you for your continued support of the Tailgate Toolkit and your commitment to building a safer, healthier construction industry in British Columbia.



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Funding for the **Tailgate Toolkit** is provided by:



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