

The Compensation

REPORTER

July

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Free WorkSafe Saskatchewan Posters

WorkSafe Saskatchewan, the province-wide workplace safety and injury prevention strategy, has developed a series of posters to raise awareness about the prevention of workplace injuries.

There are five posters in the series, featuring ergonomics, safe lifting, fall prevention, and safe driving practices. To date, over 2000 posters have been distributed.

The posters are available free of charge, and can be viewed and ordered from the WCB's website, www.wcbsask.com, at Forms and Publications.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The WCB, **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** and Saskatchewan Labour, Occupational Health and Safety Division want Saskatchewan employers to be aware that individuals may be contacting local businesses claiming that the WCB has authorized purchases of certain safety equipment on the employer's behalf and requesting payment from the employer. The WCB, **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** and Saskatchewan Labour, OH&S Division, do not promote, endorse, or recommend any particular commercial products, processes, or services and will not authorize delivery or payment of goods or services on behalf of employers. Reference to commercial products or trade names within information provided by the WCB, **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** and Saskatchewan Labour, OH&S Division does not constitute an endorsement and does not imply preference over similar products.

Strategy, Focus Credited for 2005 Results: 2006 Annual General Meetings Held in Regina and Saskatoon

The WCB's strategic and operational plans are responsible for the positive financial and operating results the WCB posted in 2005, according to WCB Chairman John Solomon.

Speaking at the WCB's 12th Annual General Meetings in Regina and Saskatoon, Solomon said that strategic focus helped the WCB through the financial downturns of five years ago, and produced the second consecutive operating surplus in 2005.

"The focus we put on excellent service, financial integrity and effective processes brought compensation system costs under control," Solomon said. "Our performance results for the last two years clearly show our strategic plan can steer the WCB through difficult circumstances."

Second Consecutive Surplus

Stakeholders attending the two meetings heard that the WCB posted a \$17 million operating surplus in 2005 – the second consecutive surplus, after three successive years of operating losses. The surplus was used to replenish the Injury Fund, reducing

the accumulated deficit from \$38 million to \$21 million. When combined with reserves, the net result was a \$7.4 million surplus.

Solomon noted that the financial results, combined with a 3.5 per cent reduction in the provincial workplace injury rate, kept employer premiums affordable and competitive.

"Year after year, our average premium has ranged from fourth lowest to second lowest among Canada's compensation boards. Out of the six years beginning in 2001, our average premium has been the third lowest in Canada three times – and the second lowest twice. Many jurisdictions wish their costs and assessable payroll allowed them to set premiums as low as we do here in Saskatchewan."

Other 2005 achievements referenced by the Chairman were:

- There was a reduced reliance on unpredictable investment returns. That reliance contributes to employer premium increases when markets go through a downturn. Investment returns represented 46

per cent of the WCB's revenue in 2000, and only 18 per cent in 2005.

- 2005 administration costs were below 1999 levels.
- In the past five years, the annual number of Board level appeals ranged from a low of 230 in 2002, to a high of 294 in 2003. It took an average of 116 days to issue a decision in 2005; which was 21 days faster than the five year average.
- The WCB's Fair Practices Office (FPO) handles about 400 complaints each year, and the majority, about 70 per cent, takes 7 or fewer days to resolve. The FPO was praised by the Saskatchewan Ombudsman for playing a key role in the 35 per cent decline in WCB-related complaints to the Ombudsman's office in 2004. Complaints dropped again in 2005, to a five-year low of 143.

WCB CEO Stresses Safety and Prevention

Looking ahead, WCB CEO Peter Federko stressed to stakeholders the twin challenges for the WCB of restoring the Injury Fund and influencing public attitudes towards workplace injury prevention.

Federko told stakeholders that each time loss workplace injury costs the compensation system about \$10,000.00, making injury frequency a major driver of compensation cost and employer premiums.

"There were 425 fewer time loss injuries in 2005. In human terms, that's 425 workers and families that did not have to experience the impact of a workplace injury," Federko said, "and about a \$4.25 million savings to the compensation system."

Federko credited Saskatchewan employers, workers, and organiza-

tions like the safety associations for the drop in injury claims, saying they should be proud of their accomplishments. The WCB has supported their efforts through **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** initiatives, like the prevention advertising campaign.

Attention to workplace safety and injury prevention has to be continuing and constant, Federko said, because increases in the workplace injury rate have a direct impact on costs and, ultimately, employer premiums.

As an example, Federko told stakeholders that the workplace injury rate for the first quarter of 2006 was 4.3 per cent, up from the 4.25 per cent posted at the end of 2005. Federko said that if the trend continues through 2006, the increase in the workplace injury rate has the potential to cancel out the savings earned in 2005.

2006 Comp Institute Rated a Success by Participants

The 2006 Comp Institute earned praise from presenters and participants. Held on March 13 and 14 in Regina, the two-day seminar is an educational event offered free to anyone interested in learning more about Saskatchewan's compensation system.

Organizers are pleased with the positive feedback they've received from participants. Some of the more popular sessions were:

Claims Entitlement – covering what qualifies as an injury, how to report an injury, adjudicating an injury, and how to complete forms.

Fair Practices Office – explaining the role played by the FPO, how it works, and the type of issues it deals with.

5 + 5 = 20 – geared at injury prevention, this session presented ten ways to improve workplace safety and return-to-work programs.

Duty to Accommodate in the Workplace – explaining the origin and evolution of the duty to accommodate employees with disabilities, from a human rights perspective.

To accommodate interest in these sessions, they were each offered twice on the Institute program.

Comp Institute participants also had an opportunity to attend a one-day seminar on March 15, titled Why Ergonomics Should Be Part Of Every Safety Program.

The trade show is an important part of Comp Institute. Exhibits and displays provide information about claims and case management, employer services, safety associations, the Saskatchewan Safety Council and **WorkSafe Saskatchewan**.

Comp Institute is offered in March of each year, and will be held next in Saskatoon on March 19 and 20, 2007. Look for information on sessions in future issues of The Compensation Reporter, or at our website, www.wcbask.com.

WorkSafe Saskatchewan Receives International Recognition

Saskatchewan's innovative **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** initiative is receiving international praise.

The initiative was recently profiled in an industry-based scholarly journal, published by the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions (IAIABC).

"It is always good to get confirmation that the program you've established is accepted locally. It is even more motivating to people running the program to have it recognized internationally as a best practice," said Peter Federko, CEO of Saskatchewan's Workers' Compensation Board.



IAIABC represents government agencies responsible for the administration of workers' compensation systems throughout Canada and the United States.

The journal's senior editor, Robert Aurbach said he requested a submission on **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** because he felt a discussion on the strategic focus of the initiative would be of value to IAIABC members.

"When I heard about **WorkSafe Saskatchewan**, one of the things that struck me was that it had achieved some significant successes and was obtaining measurable results on a replicable program."

Aurbach said since the case study was published, he has been



contacted by a number of agencies interested in learning more about the initiative.

Aurbach, who is also a consultant in the workers' compensation field, said he has urged his clients to examine the **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** model. He said he recently profiled

WorkSafe Saskatchewan in a speech he delivered to the American Society of Safety Engineers.

He believes Saskatchewan's approach shifts the paradigm from an emphasis on

worker safety awareness, to an emphasis on broader community awareness of work safety issues.

Because this is a unique approach to workplace injury prevention, he suggests that it is this shift that is impacting the number of workplace injuries in the province.

Federko said WCB developed a social marketing approach to workplace safety after reviewing information from other prevention programs, such as anti-smoking, and anti-drinking and

driving campaigns, which had a significant affect on changing people's behaviours.

Aurbach also believes that this type of an approach has significant impact.

"There is substantial evidence that shows a focus on broader population awareness of work safety issues has a longer term impact on injury prevention on the job. The only real way to change people's behaviour is to change what they think is important," he said.

While Federko is pleased with the success **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** has had in reducing workplace injuries, he cautions workers, employers and people running the program about becoming too comfortable.

"We have seen great progress in injury reduction over the past few years, but we can't take our eye off the ball. There is still much we need to do to ensure people regularly think about being safe everywhere – both at work and at home."

The IAIABC journal is published twice annually to provide workers' compensation administrators with access to data, research and policy analysis.

You can access the IAIABC Journal article through the WCB's website: www.wcbsask.com



HCSAS Continues to Evolve

The name given to the newsletter of the Heavy Construction Safety Association of Saskatchewan – The Badger – perfectly captures the nature of the industry. “Most of our members are small employers, but they work with powerful equipment that you don’t want to mess with,” says Steve Wallace, the association’s Safety Director. “And, they like to dig around in the dirt!”

The association’s origins go back to 1957 when the provincial highways department seconded one of its employees, Ed Amaolo, to become its first safety director. “At that time the focus was on basic things like first aid training and having first aid kits,” Wallace notes. The next step in the association’s evolution was the inception of funding for industry safety associations through WCB assessments on specific rate codes. The non-profit association – now named the HCSAS to better reflect the many different construction activities it represents – was one of the first to take advantage of the funding levy to direct more resources toward safety programming and initiatives.

Promoting Health, Safety and Loss Control

The HCSAS employs four full-time people. The Board of Directors fluctuates between 14 and 16 worker and employer representatives, to ensure that all geographic areas of the province and the major sectors within the industry are represented.

“Our mandate is to promote health, safety and loss control,” states Wallace. “Loss control covers things like productivity losses and materials losses, as well as losses due to injuries. Our approach,” he explains, “is that we don’t want the industry to suffer any losses, and that includes losses involving our people.”

“The association functions as a time-share safety department, particularly for the many smaller companies in the industry,” Wallace says. It also fills a need for the larger companies, he notes, in that safety training has sometimes gone undocumented.

Recognizing and Documenting Safety Pays Off

“In recent years we’ve provided recognition for companies that have taken safety training and then monitored their progress,” Wallace says. “We had adapted an equipment training course that is used by companies bidding on work at mine sites. Working with the Saskatchewan Safety Council and the Highways department we developed a highway traffic audit, with minimum standards for signage at highway construction sites. We developed and offered a hearing test program, and subsidized it for a couple of years, until the industry ran with it,” he continues. “The result is that our workers comp rate has dropped from about eight dollars per \$100 (of insured earnings) in the

mid-1990s to about four dollars today. We’d like to get that down to a base rate of two dollars per 100.”

Reaching Smaller Operators

Wallace says there are about 3,500 companies listed in the WCB’s rate code for the industry, with about 2,000 of those active in any given year. However, the 160 largest companies account for about 45 per cent of the total industry activity, with the small and medium-size operations covering the remainder. The association is currently examining how to deliver safety training to those smaller companies, and how to attract and keep younger people in the industry.

“We’re looking at computer-based training as a way of providing individuals with a basic orientation to the industry. For instance,” Wallace says, “there is a course developed by roadbuilders in Alberta that is very specific to the industry. We’re also looking at a training and certification program for construction safety officers that is tailored to smaller companies. We keep the costs of our courses low, but for many smaller firms, the time commitment is their prime concern.”

Wallace notes that, in common with other industries, not enough young people are entering the construction trades. And while Saskatchewan’s economy is “doing quite nicely, we have this supercharged economy next door. So, we have to be sure we are doing things here that are attractive to people. That’s one of the reasons we’re looking at equipment safety courses, so that people can be assured they can work safely here, and enjoy the quality of life we have here.”





**Check around your
vehicle and buckle up
before you turn the key.**

For more information:

Go to www.wcsask.com or call 1-877-729-0999

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Safety Training Pays Off

Just after midnight on January 29 this year, an accidental fire in the world's largest potash mine trapped 72 miners underground. It was a potentially life-threatening situation, but within a day and a half the fire was extinguished and the trapped miners were rescued.

"The media and some other organizations have described this as a textbook rescue," says Marshall Hamilton, the human resources manager at the Mosaic-owned mine at Esterhazy, and the point man for the news media during the rescue operation.

"That's flattering, and I don't disagree. I would say that it was a successful rescue because everyone did exactly what they had been trained to do."

The Esterhazy potash mine is something like an underground city – geographically as large as Regina, with main "streets" and smaller tunnels branching off into the potash seam almost one kilometre underground. The mine has two shafts – K1 and K2 – located about 10 kilometres apart. K1 vents exhaust air, while K2 feeds fresh air into the mine.

Hard to Ignite; Hard to Put Out

The incident this January began when workers about 1.5 kilometres south of the K2 shaft were cutting



A member of a mine rescue team extinguishes a fire as part of the annual mine rescue competition. The various teams are judged on their performance in various operations.

bolts off a flange on a polyethylene pipe using a cutting torch. The flame from the torch apparently ignited the pipe, although the workers could not see it burning inside.

"Some of our people tried this before the fire and since," says Hamilton, "and the polyethylene pipe is hard to ignite, but once it starts on fire it's hard to put out. It also creates lots of thick, black smoke."

Communications Cut

The burning pipe was discovered about an hour later by a crew of contractors as they headed to the K2 shaft at the end of their shift. The fire had already burned through the power cable and telephone lines, cutting communications in the area.

The crew was unable to put out the fire with their small extinguishers. They were also unable to raise a fire alarm. With only their headlamps for light, the 32 workers put up a brattice to seal off the passageway and retreated to the nearest refuge station (about half a kilometre

away), sealed themselves in and waited. (Refuge stations are underground rooms equipped with telephones, water and emergency rations where workers seal themselves off in the event of fire or smoke in a mine.)

Three other miners near the K2 shaft detected the fire, proceeded to the shaft, reported the fire and took the cage to the surface.

Another 40 miners were working north of the K2 shaft, in areas that had telephones and power. When they were notified of the fire they headed for the nearest refuge stations, which they sealed off.

Command Centre Established

Mine managers, and safety and rescue professionals from Mosaic, set up a command centre on the surface. Mine rescue teams of five members each were soon going down to assess the situation.

"We were dealing with having to put out a fire in dense smoke, in a dark area where the ventilation fans were not working, with nothing but the headlights on your vehicle and the headlamps on your hard hats," recalls Hamilton.



Bits of potash sometimes fall from the walls of the mines, particularly in the first 24 hours after a boring machine has created a new gallery. A rescue team attends to a worker struck by loose potash in an on-site training simulation.

For Miners

"The rescue team members were tied to each other, and they would travel in a vehicle or on foot, but they'd have to go back every once in a while to the nearest telephone to communicate with the surface about what they were finding."

"So, they would do part of the mission, report what they found and then come up to the surface before they ran out of oxygen."

"Some teams were involved in locating the fire and others in putting it out. Some were involved in identifying whether people were in fact in the refuge stations we believed they were in."

In all, 54 people took part in the rescue teams, including 33 from the Esterhazy mine. Others came from the nearby Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan mine at Rocanville and the Mosaic mine at Colonsay.

The fire was extinguished about 17 hours after it started, but the rescue of the miners was slowed because of the lack of communication lines in the area of the fire, and the need to ventilate the mine to remove the thick smoke.

The command centre was in regular contact with the 40 workers in refuge stations with working telephones.

"Later on we actually said, 'Hey, phone your spouses and tell them where we're at,'" Hamilton recalls. "We couldn't do that with the 32 in the refuge station without communication, but we were in regular contact with their spouses."

The first trapped workers reached the surface at 3:00 a.m. on January 30, with the last ones out by 9:00 a.m.

Lessons Learned

The biggest lesson learned, says Hamilton, is to permanently locate power and communication cables away from anything that could burn.



During the annual mine rescue competitions, a rescue team puts a plastic brattice seal in place, as a judge observes. The various teams are judged on their performance in several different operations.

Much of that relocation work has already been completed.

Mine managers are also looking at other ways to safeguard its telephone system, such as doubling the line in places.

"I can't speak highly enough about refuge stations," Hamilton says. "We're asking our employees for input as to what they would like to see us stock in the stations to make their wait more comfortable."

Looking back a few months later, Hamilton says the rescue was a tremendously stressful time, but it was also "a proud moment for us because the miners did exactly what they were trained to do, and our mine rescue people did what they were trained to do."

"We demonstrated to the world that we are a first-class operation, maybe most importantly in our attitude toward safety."

2006 Centralized Training

Prevention, Safety and Return-to-Work are offering information sessions on Return-to-Work (RTW) and Ergonomics. Register for any of the following sessions by August 18, 2006 at prevention@wcbsask.com or (306)-787-6916.

City	Session	Date
Regina	RTW / Ergonomics	September 5, 2006
North Battleford	RTW / Ergonomics	September 7, 2006
Saskatoon	RTW / Ergonomics	September 14, 2006
Prince Albert	RTW / Ergonomics	September 19, 2006
Estevan	RTW / Ergonomics	September 20, 2006
Swift Current	RTW / Ergonomics	September 26, 2006
Yorkton	RTW / Ergonomics	September 27, 2006

Benchmarking for Safety Benefits Saskatoon Manufacturer

Everything about the CNH-Saskatoon manufacturing plant is big. The north end facility has 650,000 square feet under one roof, and 153 acres in total. About 600 people work on assembly lines that wind through the plant, producing large air carts and tillage tools, planters and seeders, sprayers and combine headers for grain and corn farmers under the Flexi-coil, Case and New Holland brands.

The Saskatoon plant is the manufacturing centre of excellence for CNH-Global, the world's largest agricultural equipment manufacturer formed from the merger of Case and New Holland. The company exports to 35 countries around the world.

Focused on Safety

To fulfill its mandate as a centre of excellence, plant workers focus on quality, productivity and safety.

"Once," says Environmental Health and Safety Manager Jack Hardy, "the plant came close to 750,000 person-hours without a lost-time injury."

"We look at 500,000 hours as the benchmark, and we've reached that a couple of times in the past few years," Hardy says. "Right now [mid-March, 2006] we're at about 270,000 hours."

Visible Commitment to Safety

As part of his responsibilities Hardy reports to an 18-member Occupational Health & Safety Committee, comprised of people representing all areas of the plant. A senior-level manager and an employee representative co-chair the committee.

"One of the things we've done recently is broaden out the management representation to include human resources, engineering and production people – the ones who actually set up a production line – so

that the expertise at the table is able to address broader, more complex safety issues," says Hardy. "Also, the lines of accountability are more visible this way."

Robert Hilkewich is the employee co-chair for the committee and one of several safety representatives throughout the plant. The monthly committee meetings, he says, are mainly for reviewing safety initiatives already underway because the emphasis is on "nipping things in the bud before they become a real problem."

"We have stand-up meetings first thing every morning where people can raise any concerns," Hilkewich says. "If Jack sends something out it would be dealt with at the meeting. If something comes up during the day, a person can get hold of me or my supervisor, and we'll deal with it as soon as possible."

Tracking is a Safety Tool

The two main hazards are handling large, heavy pieces of metal, and lacerations to hands and arms. The plant tracks safety-related incidents or injuries using the US-based Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) system.

"The system breaks out incidents requiring first aid from those where sutures are needed, which are recordable injuries," Hardy explains.

"We benchmark for recordables closely, so we pay a lot of attention to those."

"Over the past year we've been working to develop an ergonomics program. We'll be providing ergonomics awareness and training sessions to pretty much the entire plant, especially related to manual and material handling, tooling and fixturing issues."



"Our good safety reputation absolutely helps us with recruiting and retaining employees. We've had people leave us to work for another company, and they're happy to come back because they recognize the significance of our procedures and safety training." – Jack Hardy, CNH

Seeking Out Best Practices

As part of the development process both the Occupational Health & Safety Division of Saskatchewan Labour and the WCB's Return-to-Work unit gave ergonomics training sessions in the plant.

"We try to be very facility-specific in our training, so we'll cherry-pick from the best we see out there, and condense it down to something that reflects us and what we're trying to do," Hardy says.

Hilkewich attended both ergonomics sessions because "a fresh set of eyes always makes a difference; there are things that we accept into our routine, and that can be bad."

"There is a saying out there that if you've always done it that way, it's probably the wrong way."

Hardy says the plant's safety record is reflected in its WCB assessment. Year after year the plant comes close to receiving the maximum rebate from the Workers' Compensation Board.

"In some ways we budget for it. We count on getting it back. I don't know what would happen if we didn't get it back, but we haven't got there, so we'll worry about that later."

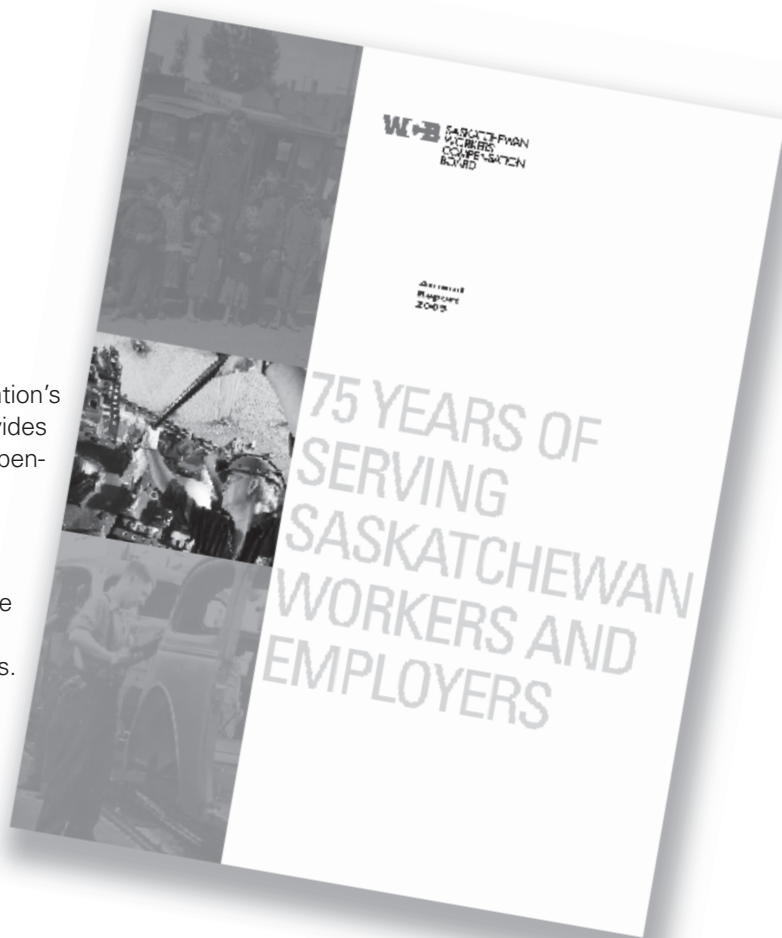
History in the Making

In early April, WCB released a historic annual report.

2005 was the 75th anniversary of the corporation in Saskatchewan. As well as providing details of the corporation's operational and financial progress in 2005, the report provides historic information on the development of workers' compensation legislation and the creation of the WCB.

2005 was a strong year for the WCB. The organization finished the year with an operating surplus of \$17 million. This was the second consecutive operating surplus for the corporation, up from the surplus of \$11.7 million in 2004. The two years of surpluses follow three years of shortfalls.

The corporation attributes the recent surpluses to a number of factors, most notably a decrease in the average claim duration and the province's declining injury rate. In 2005 the provincial injury rate decreased 3.4% from the previous year. The rate has declined nearly 14% from 2002. For more information on the WCB 2005 annual report visit www.wcbsask.com.



2006 Committee of Review

Saskatchewan's 13th Workers' Compensation Act Committee of Review has been struck, and the process of public submissions and hearings is set to begin.

The Committee is tasked with reviewing three key pieces of workers' compensation legislation and their administration: *The Workers' Compensation Act, 1979*, *The Workers' Compensation General Regulations, 1985*, and *The Workers' Compensation Act Exclusion Regulations*.

The review is held every four years, in accordance with Saskatchewan law, and is intended to keep the provincial workers' compensation system fair and responsive.

"Public review of the real life workings of workers' compensation makes a difference in the lives of workers and employers, who tell the independent Committee of Review what needs to change and what changes to recommend," said Committee chair James E. Dorsey. "Since the 1940s, this legislated review process has been the major avenue for changes benefiting both workers and employers in Saskatchewan."

The committee consists of equal representatives from employers and organized employees. Other 2006 Committee members are: Jacquie Griffiths, Susan Buckle, Jane Deters, Ken Dishaw, Marg Romanow, and Lori Sali.

Submissions Invited

The Workers' Compensation Act, 1979, is being examined by a Committee of Review. You are encouraged to submit your opinion, concern or experience with the workers' compensation system to:

The Workers' Compensation Act
Committee of Review
c/o 400 - 1870 Albert Street
Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 4W1

TEL: (Regina) 787-1676
(Western Canada) 1-877-646-9243

FAX: (306) 787-7229
Email: wca-cor@lab.gov.sk.ca

Or visit us on the web at
www.labour.gov.sk.ca/cor/

The submission deadline is
August 31, 2006.

WCB Board Policy Decisions

WCB Board Members amend and introduce policy throughout the year. The following policies and procedures have been amended or introduced since the last issue of Comp Reporter. WCB policies and procedures are available at the WCB's website, www.wcbsask.com, Policies & Legislation.

POL 01/2006 Wage Base – Maximum Assessable

Pursuant to Section 137(2) of *The Workers' Compensation Act, 1979*, this policy sets the maximum assessable wage rate for 2006 and subsequent years at \$55,000.00.

POL 02/2006 Medical Boards – Repeal

This policy repeals POL and PRO 21/94. The current system of secondary and tertiary reviews has made these types of Medical Boards redundant. Claimants may appeal their medical status through the normal appeal process and, if not successful, reconsideration can be requested by way of a Medical Review Panel.

POL 03/2006 Compensation Rate – Maximum, 2006 – Section 38

Beginning in 1975, and annually thereafter, the Act directs the WCB to review the wages and salaries earned by workers who suffered injury and to whom compensation was paid. The review considers the period of one year immediately preceding September 30 of the year of the review. This policy sets out the maximum wage rate for any workers sustaining injury before September 1, 1985 at \$54,000.00, effective January 1, 2006.

POL 04/2006 Coverage – Volunteer Fire Fighters

In accordance with Section 3(bb) of *The Workers' Compensation Exclusion Regulations*, this policy and procedure set out the terms and conditions for coverage of volunteer fire fighters who are registered members of a municipal fire brigade. Coverage is in effect while attending volunteer fire fighting training, and from the time of notification of the fire, including travel to the location of the fire and return, provided there are no deviations in travel for personal reasons.

POL 05/2006 Experience Rating Program

Following discussions with stakeholders, it was determined the parameters of experience rating for 2006 will be held at 2005 levels. The Experience Rating Committee will reconvene in 2006 prior to any further changes in policy.

PRO 43/2005 Medical Fees – Physicians

This procedure establishes fees for services provided by physicians for the term December 7, 2005 to December 31, 2007 inclusive.

PRO 55/2005 Minimum Compensation – 2006

This procedure is updated each year, in accordance with *The Workers' Compensation Act, 1979*. The Act stipulates that minimum compensation cannot be less than 50 per cent of the average weekly wage as of June in the year immediately preceding the year in which the review occurs, or where the worker's average earnings are less than that amount, the amount of those earnings. The provincial average weekly wage is \$675.78 as of June 30, 2005.

PRO 57/2005 Penalty, Default in Assessment Payment

This procedure is updated annually, and provides the calculation for the penalty to employers who default in payment of their annual assessment. In 2006, the annual penalty rate is 9.25 per cent and the monthly rate is .77 per cent.

PRO 58/2005 Minimum Average Weekly Earnings

As per Section 70(5) of *The Workers' Compensation Act, 1979*, the minimum average weekly earnings for any worker injured on or after January 1, 1980 and who is in receipt of compensation for a period of at least 24 consecutive months shall not be less than \$450.47.

PRO 59/2005 Consumer Price Index – 2005 Increase

This annual update sets out the schedule of calculations for application of the Consumer Price Index, which includes the list of applicable percentage increases, lump sum burial amounts, dependent children's allowances, old Act spousal supplements, eye glass frames maximums, clothing allowances and personal care allowances.

PRO 13/2003 (Amended by ADM 01/2006) PFI – General

This procedure was amended to clarify that no Permanent Functional Impairment is payable until it exceeds the minimum percentage applicable based on the WCB Functional Impairment Rating Schedule (currently .5 per cent to 4.8 per cent would receive the minimum payment). The amount payable is based on the law in effect on the date of the decision to pay an award.

Safe Worker Honoured

Saskatchewan's first Safe Worker Award was recently presented to Ken Kostyniuk of Rite Way Manufacturing, located in Imperial.



Steve Wallace, President, Saskatchewan Safety Council; Walter Eberle, Board Member, WCB; Ken Kostyniuk, Rite Way Manufacturing; Glennis Bihun, Acting Executive Director, OH&S, Saskatchewan Labour; John Solomon, Board Chairman, WCB.

"It was kind of cool to know the boss noticed I was doing a good job," said Kostyniuk. Kostyniuk is an engineering technologist with Rite Way Manufacturing. In 2001 he was also tagged with responsibility for the company's safety and return-to-work programs.

The **Safe Worker Award** program, initiated in late 2005, is a joint initiative of the WCB and Saskatchewan Labour under the **WorkSafe**

Saskatchewan umbrella, the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and the Saskatchewan Safety Council. The program's first award was presented in February 2006.

The program is intended to celebrate the commitment of workers to safety in their workplaces, and to raise the profile of workplace safety programs with both Saskatchewan workers and employers.

"We want Saskatchewan to be not only a great place to live, but one of the safest places to live and work in," said Steve Wallace, President of the Saskatchewan Safety Council. "If we can elevate safety as a priority overall we will make this province a much safer place."

The involvement of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour in the award is significant because of its position on workplace safety issues.

"If people start hearing about safety programs, they'll start thinking about safety," said Don Anderson, executive

assistant to the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour. "We're involved because we want to make sure workplaces are safe places."

The award committee reviewed nearly 20 applications for the 2006 award. Committee members expect to receive significantly more entries in 2007. As well, they are considering expanding the program to create three or four categories based on company size. Awards could be given out in each of the categories.

The **Safe Worker Award** is part of a longer term strategy to build awareness of, and support for, work safety initiatives. "We're working on creating an attitude change within the province so that in time safety will be seen as such a priority that accidents in the workplace will not be acceptable," said Wallace.

For more information on the **Safe Worker Award** contact the WCB's Executive Director of Prevention, Phil Germain at (306) 787-4441, or toll free at 1-800-667-7590, ext 4441.



WorkSafe Saskatchewan Expands Reach of Safety Messages

WorkSafe Saskatchewan is taking its workplace safety and injury prevention messages to the streets of Regina and Saskatoon.

A transit bus in each city has been painted in the **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** graphics, and will be in service on transit routes for the next two years.

Interior advertising will promote safe work practices and provide transit

riders with helpful information on preventing injury.

The transit buses were officially launched into service in Regina on

June 7, and in Saskatoon on June 8 by the Minister Responsible for the WCB, the Honourable David Forbes and John Solomon, Chair of the WCB.



By extending the reach of safety messages this way, the **WorkSafe**

Saskatchewan campaign has the potential to influence thousands of transit riders in both cities.

Research conducted by the WCB shows that the **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** prevention campaign is changing public attitudes and workplace behaviour in Saskatchewan. Over 60 per cent of respondents said the campaign is important or very important to their workplace, and more than 40 per cent said the campaign had changed the way they do something at work. More than 90 per cent of respondents support the WCB's investment in the social marketing campaign.

WCB Welcomes New Minister



The Honourable David Forbes was appointed Minister Responsible for the WCB in February. Minister Forbes also serves in Cabinet as the Minister of Labour and the Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Water Corporation.

Sun Safety Tips

There are quick and easy steps that anyone working outside can take to protect themselves from the effects of harmful sun rays.

1. Seek the shade, especially between 10 AM and 4 PM.
2. Do not burn. And remember that a burn can happen, even if the skin doesn't feel hot.
3. Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher, and use it every day, including days when it's cloudy. Apply 30 ml (about 2 tablespoons) to your entire body 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours.
4. Use an SPF 30 sunscreen lip balm for lips.
5. Cover up with clothing, including a broad-brimmed hat or a neck-protector under your hard hat, and UV-blocking sunglasses.

Summer heat poses risks, too. High temperatures break down the body's normal responses, and can cause

fatigue, dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Some of the safety steps that prevent the ill effects of heat are the same as those for protection from the sun, for example wearing a hat and avoiding direct sun exposure. Carrying water is important too, because dehydration is the most common of heat-related dangers.

To prevent dehydration:

1. Carry lots of water with you, and drink at regular intervals. Don't wait until you feel thirsty, because by then you are already dehydrated.
2. Avoid drinks with high sugar content, alcohol, or carbonation because they dehydrate the body and sugar slows fluid absorption.

Compiled from information published by the Canada Safety Council, the Skin Cancer Foundation, the Canadian Cancer Society, the City of Toronto, and hotelfun4kids.com.



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