

October 2010

WORKERS' COMPENSATION NEWS

BWC Board of Directors Meeting

The Board of Directors unanimously approved BWC's proposal to make rule revisions to several employer programs regarding application deadlines. These revisions will be effective for policy years starting July 1, 2011. The **One Claim Program** deadline to participate will be changed from March 31st to the last business day of April, the **Individual Retrospective Rating Program** participation deadline will be changed from June 1st to the last business day of April, and the **Group Retrospective Rating Program** deadline to participate will be changed from the last Friday of April to the last business day of April. The deadline to participate in a **Group Experience Rating Program** will remain the last business day in February. Also, the participation deadline for **Drug-Free Safety Program** and **Deductible Program** will remain the last business day of April.

During the previous board meeting held in August the Board of Directors approved BWC's proposal to keep the current private employer's maximum group rating discount at 65% for the rating year beginning July 1, 2011. The board also approved the recommendation to maintain the break-even factors that are in place for the July 1, 2011 rating year. These approved recommendations will allow companies who have earned the maximum group discount of 65% to receive an actual discount of 51% when the break-even factor is applied.

The BWC Board of Directors next meeting will be Friday, October 22, 2010 at 8:00 a.m.

BWC Net Assets as of August 31st

BWC reported that as of August 31, 2010 their net assets were at \$4.5 billion, which is a \$1.2 billion increase from August 31, 2009 of \$3.3 billion.

Employer Rate Letters Now Electronic

BWC is transitioning away from mailing rate letters to Ohio employers, and will begin sending electronic notifications regarding employer rates via ohiobwc.com. Employers must have an e-account to view their rate information.

This electronic notification is for rate letters only; all Ohio employers will continue to receive their payroll reports each year via mail.

To set up an e-account

Employers can create an online BWC account by clicking [here](#) and following the instructions.

To view your rate information

Employers with an existing BWC e-account can view your new rates by clicking [here](#).

SAFETY NEWS



Sheakley Gearing Up to Launch On-line Safety Store

Sheakley is all about helping our clients take care of business and is committed to assisting our clients with every aspect of their safety program. We have teamed up with top safety vendors to offer employers the best available source to acquire safety equipment, construction supplies, and personal protective clothing and remediation supplies. Over the next several weeks we'll be rolling out our Sheakley Safety Supply online store. "We've been preparing for this for the last year and we're excited to provide this new service to our clients and help them save money while providing quality safety products," said Angie Wright, Sr. Vice President. Stand by! We'll be adding this new feature soon!

UNEMPLOYMENT NEWS

Ohio Unemployment Rate – August

Ohio unemployment rate for August 2010 is 10.1%, an encouraging decrease from the 10.9% in August 2009. The U.S. rate for August 2010 is at 9.6%.

The number of first-time unemployment claims in Ohio from the first week in September was 11,157, which is a 29 percent drop from last year. Some economists consider last year one of the worst unemployment years in decades which means the 29 percent drop does not give us an accurate picture of our unemployment crisis. Looking back to 1999, the last year when Ohio achieved significant job growth, unemployment claims are currently running at twice that year's rate.

In 2001, Ohio had 5.6 million workers; today we are just over 5 million. The state of Ohio has lost 376,500 jobs since the recession began in December 2007. Solid job growth for Ohio would have us averaging about 6,000 new unemployment claims a week, not the aforementioned 11,157. National economic growth is projected to pick up in 2011, when we may see a slight decrease in unemployment.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Senate Bill 238 – Immigrant Workers' Compensation (Seitz)

The Senate Bill (introduced March 2010) prohibits illegal and unauthorized aliens from receiving compensation and benefits under Ohio's Workers' Compensation Law. The bill was referred to the Insurance Committee on June 1, 2010. No hearings have taken place since the bill was referred.

House Bill 586 – Hiring Decisions (Reece)

The House Bill (introduced September 2010) prohibits employers from using a consumer report or investigative consumer report for employment purposes. The bill is proposing that the report contains information concerning the person's consumer creditworthiness, credit standing, or credit capacity and this information should not be used for any matter directly or indirectly related to employment. The bill will not apply to financial institutions using the report to consider a person for employment in a supervisory, managerial, professional, or executive position. A violation of this bill would result in a misdemeanor of the first degree.

Ohio High Risk Health Insurance Pool

The Ohio Department of Insurance has created a high risk pool and open enrollment programs for people who have been denied health-care coverage due to pre-existing conditions. Ohio is asking health insurance companies to notify people that have had their coverage denied, of these government-run alternative programs. Ohio's high risk pool is being administered by Medical Mutual of Ohio, who began taking applications on August 1st. Ohio Department of Insurance estimates that nearly 5,000 Ohioans could eventually participate, as of this month close to 400 have been enrolled. The federal funded pool will be available through 2013 to high-risk Ohioans that have been uninsured for at least six-months. In 2014 the requirement for all Americans to have health insurance is expected to go into effect.

To learn more about these changes and how they will impact your business, please contact our office at 513-326-4675 x2044 or visit our website at www.sheakley.com.