

February 2011

WORKERS' COMPENSATION NEWS

BWC Administration

On January 10th Steve Buehrer was sworn in as Administrator/CEO of the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation. During Administrator Buehrer's speech he stated to Ohio workers' compensation representatives and various others that "your voice will be heard, input will be expected and important in making workers' compensation a compliment to Ohio's overall business climate."

Administrator Buehrer is behind the Kasich administration to reverse the trend of businesses and people fleeing Ohio and believes that "BWC is a key component in helping turn that around."

Ohio workers' compensation rate reform initiative will be a primary focus for the new administration to offer the lowest possible premium rate for all employers. It is anticipated that the level of benefits that BWC awards injured workers will be reviewed as BWC has been criticized for the "overly generous and expensive" benefits offered to injured workers.

BWC Payroll Premiums

The premium for the payroll reporting period of July 1, 2010 to December 31, 2010 is due by February 28, 2011. Please note this is the first premium payment that reflects the BWC reduction in the maximum group discount to 51%. Although employers may not have had any change in payroll or claims cost, they may experience a premium increase due to these changes.

BWC 50/50 Payment Plan

To participate in the 50/50 Payment Plan you must use the BWC website application. You must submit your payroll information and pay 50% of your premium by February 28, 2011; the remaining premium balance is due by June 1, 2011.

BWC Board of Directors

On January 13th the BWC Board of Directors meeting was cancelled for the 21st, due to four seats being currently vacant. The BWC Board of Directors Nominating Committee is expected to meet before the February scheduled meetings to provide member recommendations to Governor Kasich. Governor Kasich will also appoint a Board chairman before the next scheduled Board of Directors meeting on February 24th.

SAFETY NEWS

Sheakley Safety Supply ... Just a Click Away



We are excited to keep you updated on the progress of our NEW ON-LINE safety equipment store.

This new product launch, SHEAKLEY SAFETY SUPPLY, is being developed with you in mind and is guaranteed to be your best source to acquire quality, safety equipment for your workplace. You will have *over 5,000 safety items available to you with the best pricing available*. If you're unable to find a specific product that you have been accustomed to using, please let us know and we will be sure to have that item placed on our site.

We are dedicated to making sure that our safety store will be *your #1 safety equipment resource* to assist you in maintaining an accident free environment and reducing your safety budget for 2011.

One Claim Program

BWC's One Claim Program was created to assist employers with their premiums who are ineligible for a group rating program due to one significant claim coming into their experience. All participants are required to attend a one-day, classroom style class through BWC's Division of Safety & Hygiene by June 30th to maintain eligibility.

For additional information regarding the OCP eligibility requirements please contact Safety Consultant Jillian Hacker @ 800-877-5055 ext. 1150 or jhacker@sheakley.com.

OSHA Recordkeeping

Private employers must post the OSHA 300A summary report starting February 1, 2011 to April 30, 2011.

UNEMPLOYMENT NEWS

Ohio Unemployment Rate – November

Ohio unemployment rate for December 2010 was 9.6%, down from 9.8% in November and 10.8% in December 2009.

The U.S. rate for December 2010 is down to 9.4% from 9.8% in November.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

House Bill 36 – Calamity Days (Kozlowski, Carey)

The House Bill (introduced January 19th) is requesting to excuse up to five, instead of three, calamity days for the 2010-2011 school years and to broaden schools authority to make up calamity days by lengthening remaining days in the school year.

House Bill 44 – Small Business Loans (Goyal, Garland)

The House Bill (introduced January 20th) is proposing the creation of the Small Business Working Capital Loan Program. The program would be created to "provide a statewide availability of funds for lending purposes that will inject needed capital into the business community in order to create or preserve jobs in the state."

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.