

May 2011

WORKERS' COMPENSATION NEWS

Informed Ohio Business Workers' Comp Forum

The Informed Ohio Business Workers' Comp Forum was formed on LinkedIn for businesses to make sure everyone is up to date on workers' compensation issues facing employers and employees in Ohio. This forum encourages its members to share experiences, expertise and also to ask questions related to workers' compensation rules, regulations and policies for businesses in Ohio. To join the forum click here <http://www.linkedin.com/groups/Informed-Ohio-Business-Workers-Comp-3810852?mostPopular=&gid=3810852>.

BWC Board of Directors

On April 29th, the BWC Board of Directors assembled to discuss 2011 base rate and expected loss rate proposals for Private Employers by the BWC Actuarial Committee. The Board is scheduled to vote, in May, on the proposal of an overall base rate reduction of 4% for the 2011 Policy Year beginning July 01, 2011.

BWC Net Assets

The BWC Chief Fiscal & Planning Officer announced that the net assets had decreased \$34 million in March resulting in net assets of \$5.29 billion.

SAFETY NEWS

Safety Council Program

On March 31st, Administrator Buehrer announced his intention to continue and expand the Safety Council Rebate Incentive Program. The program allows employers to earn rebates on their workers' comp premiums by participating in their local safety council and reducing workplace injuries.

Participating employers can receive a 2 percent rebate for attending a specific number of safety council programs and receive an additional 2 percent rebate for demonstrating a reduction in the frequency and/or severity of workplace incidents. BWC's proposal will continue the program and expand the participation to group-rated employers. The program will allow group-rated employers the opportunity to earn a 2 percent rebate for demonstrating a reduction in their frequency and/or severity of workplace incidents.

The new Safety Council program was announced by Buehrer at the BWC Safety Congress and will soon be proposed to the BWC Board of Directors for their approval.

Green Year Training

Ohio employers that are participating in group rating or group retro for Policy Year 2010 (July 01, 2010 to June 30, 2011) and sustained a claim within the “green year” period, calendar year 2009, or the prior year, calendar year 2008, are required to attend an additional two hours of safety training annually. Completion of this mandatory training to maintain group rating status is June 30, 2011.

Sheakley Health & Safety Services is offering several training sessions that meet the green year training requirement. To register for an upcoming training session please contact the Sheakley Safety Department at 800-877-5055 or 513-326-4675 ext. 2014.

UNEMPLOYMENT NEWS

Ohio Unemployment Rate – March

Ohio unemployment rate for March 2011 was 8.9%, down from 9.2% in February and 10.5% in March 2010.

The U.S. rate for March is down to 8.8% from 8.9% in February and 9.7% in March 2010.

HUMAN RESOURCE NEWS

Client Training Seminars

Sheakley’s Human Resource department will be holding training sessions at our corporate office training room throughout 2011. Please contact Kym Martin at 513-728-6668 or kmartin@sheakley.com for more information or to sign up. Seating is limited, so call today!

June Seminar:

6th – NextLevel’s Sales & Growth Mastery Seminar Series #2 (1 to 2:30pm)

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

House Bill 123 – BWC Budget (Hottinger)

The House Bill (introduced February 24th) will allow the Administrator of Workers’ Compensation to waive criteria certain public employers must satisfy to become self-insuring employers; require bills for medical and vocational rehabilitation services in claims that are ultimately denied to be paid from the Surplus Fund Account under specified circumstances; make other changes to Workers’ Compensation Law; to make appropriations for the Bureau of Workers’ Compensation and for the Workers’ Compensation Council for the biennium beginning July 1, 2011, and ending June 30, 2013; and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of the Bureau’s and the Council’s programs. The House Bill was signed by Governor Kasich on April 25, 2011.

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.