

June/July 2011

WORKERS' COMPENSATION NEWS

BWC Board of Directors

On May 27th, the BWC Board of Directors voted unanimously for the BWC proposed 14.45% average increase to Public Employer State Agency base rates for the 2011 Policy Year. The rate increase is projected to collect an additional \$66.8 million in premiums.

The BWC Board of Directors met early on Thursday, June 16th to approve the recommendation by BWC to make no change to the current credibility rate and break-even factor assigned to Public Employers for group rating. The deadline for Public Employers to participate in a group-rating program for Policy Year 2012 is August 31, 2011.

BWC Net Assets

The BWC Chief Fiscal & Planning Officer announced that the net assets had increased a total of \$588 million in April and May resulting in net assets of approximately \$5.9 billion.

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>.

SAFETY NEWS

Safety Council Program

The Safety Council Program allows employers to earn rebates on their workers' comp premiums by participating in their local safety council and reducing workplace injuries.

To be eligible for the 2% Safety Council rebate you must be a public employer that is not participating in a group rating or group retrospective program.

Additional requirements are:

- Join your local safety council by July 31, 2011;
- Attend 10 safety council meetings;
- Send a qualified senior-level manager to a safety council sponsored meeting;
- Submit semiannual workplace accident reports for the 2011 calendar year.

To earn the 2% performance bonus rebate you must reduce either the severity or frequency of injuries in your workplace by 10% or maintain both at zero.

The BWC Board of Directors unanimously approved the BWC Administrators recommendation to allow group rated employers the opportunity to join one of the 81 BWC-sponsored safety councils and earn a 2-percent performance bonus rebate. Employers participating in the rating programs mention above **will not** be eligible for the safety council 2% rebate, but will be required to meet all eligibility requirements.

UNEMPLOYMENT NEWS

Ohio Unemployment Rate – May

Ohio unemployment rate for May 2011 was 8.6%, down from 10.2% in May 2010.

The U.S. rate for May is down to 9.1% from 9.6% in May 2010.

HUMAN RESOURCE NEWS

Client Training Seminars

Sheakley HR Solutions 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!

August Seminar:

17th – Developing Leaders (11 am to 2 pm)

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

House Bill 93 – Prescription Drugs (Burke, D., Johnson, T.)

The House Bill proposed to establish and modify laws regarding the prevention of prescription drug abuse was signed by the Governor on May 20, 2011. The anti-“pill mill” bill will enforce significant licensing mandates and other requirements on pain management clinics and prescription drug distributors. The bill will also implement a drug buy-back program and requires modification to the state’s automated Rx reporting system.

House Bill 96 – Dyslexia (Celeste, T., Brenner, A.)

The House Bill (introduced February 10th) will specify dyslexia as a specific learning disability and to require a pilot project to provide early screening and intervention services for children with dyslexia. The bill passed the House on May 24th and has been referred to the Senate Education Committee on June 2nd.

House Bill 157 – Dyslexia Education (Schuring, K., Letson, T.)

The House Bill (introduced March 15th) will authorize educational service centers to provide teacher professional development on dyslexia. The bill was referred to the House Education Committee on March 16th. The Education Committee approved an amendment last week that changes the definition of dyslexia to comply with HB 93.

Ohio Supreme Court Ruling

The Ohio Supreme Court ruled early in June that an injured worker who was fired after being injured on the job and before the workers’ compensation claim was filed has a common-law right to sue their employer.

House Bill 233 – School Bus Ads (Letson, T., Huffman, M.)

The House Bill (introduced May 17th) would authorize school districts to sell commercial advertising space on school buses. A similar bill in the Senate (Senate Bill 174 – School Advertising) was introduced on May 17th as well.

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.