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Revised Executive Directors Report

I am writing a revised E/D Report to retract and clarify statements made about the Assessment Rate for the Local Government Classification Unit, which is increasing 20% to \$2.00/\$100 in 2015.

At our general meeting two months ago, our members were advised that on average in BC, assessment rates were expected to remain at least the same in 2015; we were not told that this would be the case for the Local Government CU, nor were we told to anticipate a decrease in assessment rates in our CU.

Representatives from BCMSA will be attending a rate meeting at WorkSafe on September 3rd to learn more.

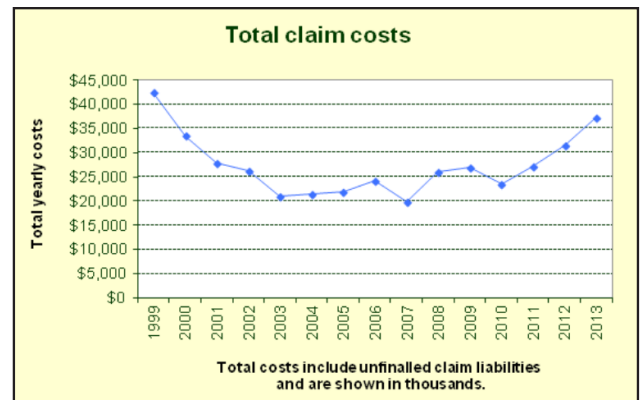
I apologize to anyone at WorkSafeBC affected by my earlier statements.

Our injury rates have been dropping. Our claims duration has been dropping. But our claims costs have skyrocketed. Long term disability, survivor benefits and vocational rehabilitation costs have jumped significantly. In recent years, we were able to attribute jumps like this to clearing backlogs caused by the Claims Management System; that is no longer the case.

Cost history (in thousands)	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Change 2009-2013	Change 2012-2013
Short term disability	\$10,341	\$9,224	\$9,956	\$10,562	\$11,016	6.5%	4.3%
Long term disability	\$7,164	\$6,085	\$8,366	\$8,124	\$10,049	40.3%	23.7%
Survivor benefits	\$542	\$537	\$614	\$969	\$3,210	492.3%	231.3%
Health care	\$8,270	\$7,018	\$7,334	\$10,384	\$10,290	24.4%	-0.9%
Vocational rehabilitation	\$596	\$729	\$951	\$1,495	\$2,754	362.1%	84.2%
Total costs	\$26,913	\$23,593	\$27,221	\$31,534	\$37,319	38.7%	18.3%

While our trends are moving in the right direction (injury rate dropped 4.7% from 2012 to 2013, duration dropped 2.8% over the same time period), the Local Government and Related Operations Classification Unit is still faced with a drastic increase in total claim costs and the resulting increase in WorkSafeBC Assessment premiums.

How can your organization deal with this type of increase? By improving your safety performance. Is your Experience Rating Assessment (ERA) in a merit or demerit status? Organizations who have effective safety management systems and stay at work/return to work programs, pay less to WorkSafeBC. Check out the story on page 7 about the City of Kamloops, who, over a five year period, saved nearly \$737,000 because of their Merit Rating of more than 22%. In addition, they receive incentives from successfully achieving the Certificate of Recognition (COR) for both their Health and Safety Management and Return to Work Systems totaling nearly \$330,000 over three years.



Cathy Cook, Executive Director

COMING EVENTS

NEWS FROM THE BC MUNICIPAL SAFETY ASSOCIATION

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Save the date!

BC Municipal Occupational Health & Safety Conference



Crystal Lodge & Suites

Whistler Conference Centre

Sharing the Knowledge in Whistler, BC

June 14 - 16, 2015

CSSE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

"Health & Safety Leadership - Linking Safety Culture to Business Outcomes"

September 14-17, 2014 in Calgary, Alberta



We have partnered with the Alberta Municipal Health & Safety Association to present a municipal stream at the CSSE Conference.

The municipal stream sessions are : Stop the Madness! Preventing MSDs for Outside and Mobile Shop Municipal Workers • A \$1200 Chair Won't Save Your Back! Preventing MSDs in the Office Environment • When Crazy Stuff Happens • Work Disability Prevention • City of Edmonton, a Pioneer in Assessing and Addressing Silica Exposure • Impact of Automated Waste Collection

www.csse.org/annual_conference

**New
this
year!**

“Please shower before entering the pool”

By Garry Wilson, WorkSafeBC Industry Specialist

As the summer draws to a close, British Columbians will soon be moving indoors to continue their enjoyment of water activities.

Swimming, playing, and relaxing in our aquatic facilities are considered healthy activities, but chemicals in swimming pools and hot tubs may cause health problems for visitors and workers alike.

To protect our health, pool water needs to be disinfected. A frequently used disinfectant is chlorine. Chlorine combines with nitrogen compounds in the water to form chloramines, which also help disinfect pools and hot tubs.

Unfortunately, too much chloramine can cause negative health effects. Excess chloramine may form if extra sources of nitrogen are present. The most likely sources of extra nitrogen in a pool or hot tub is urination; however, sweat, body lotions, and ammonia based cleaning products are also sources.

Some chloramines can evaporate from the water and are responsible for the distinctive “chlorine smell” in aquatic facilities. Once in the air, chloramines can have a strong irritating effect on a person’s eyes, nose, throat, and bronchial tubes. With sufficient and long term exposure, workers and pool users may develop permanent sensitivities and other long term health issues such as asthma.

To reduce the formation of chloramines, pool operators should first minimize the introduction of nitrogen into the pool water. Educate your pool users and encourage pre-swim hygiene, such as using the toilet and showering thoroughly before entering the pool or hot tub.



WorkSafeBC has produced a video and safe work practices manual to help aquatic facility managers control the production of chloramines in their facilities. Employers will find information in the manual to help them comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, and help ensure a safe environment for workers and pool users. Workers will find information to help them recognize the health effects of exposure and learn how to protect themselves.

View the video and manual [here](#), or visit worksafebc.com and type “chloramines” in the searchbar at the top right-hand corner of the page.

Please let me know your thoughts on this or any other municipal safety issue. I can be reached at garry.wilson@worksafebc.com.



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Meetings

September 26, 2014 — Regular General Meeting, Delta
December 5, 2014 — Regular General Meeting, Delta

Cross-Boring – Hazard to Workers

Workers need to be careful when clearing sewer lines because of the possibility of a “cross bore”, that could be contributing to a blockage.

A cross bore is a gas or other service line that has been drilled through an existing underground utility. This can be a serious hazard to workers and the public if a gas line in a cross bore is damaged, causing an explosion, or causing gas to leak into homes or other buildings. This hazard is not limited to one area of the Province – we know it has been discovered on the Island, the Lower Mainland, and in the Okanagan (so far).

What can be done? Through your normal maintenance program, you may encounter cross bores when inspecting the lines. That's the best-case scenario – you know it's there and can contact FortisBC to correct the conflict, before a sewer back-up happens.

If your crews are going to be clearing lines where there is any potential for a conflict with FortisBC lines, WorkSafeBC requires your crews to follow established written safe work procedures, prior to drain clearing taking place. Call BC One Call, tell the agent you are calling about a sewer service line blockage. This is very important and is the only way that BC One Call will notify the utility company immediately; no work can take place until they identify if a cross bore could exist.

We met with FortisBC on August 7th to discuss the issue. They are committed to working with municipalities to establish a mapping system to identify where cross-bore conflict may have happened. They are able to say there are no conflicts:

- If pipe depths are different
- If municipality has confirmed that cross-boring doesn't exist
- Where Municipal installation date post-dates any work by FortisBC contractors
- If there are confirmed locations of FortisBC lines and municipal lines
- In areas where either underground utility was installed using open trench



First priority for the mapping overlay project is being given to municipalities in the Lower Mainland and Capital Regional District. An email has been sent to all municipalities in these areas, outlining the process to follow to get this project started.

WorkSafeBC Safety Officers may be writing orders on your organization if no safe work procedure exists. References used in the Inspection Reports include OHS Regulation 3.3 c) requiring appropriate written instructions; OHS Regulation 4.1 protecting from danger any person working at the workplace; and OHS Regulation 3.5, ensuring regular inspections are made of all workplaces.

Sharing the knowledge!



ConeZoneBC.com

Behind every work zone cone is a worker in a vulnerable position. Each cone stands for someone's father, mother, son, or daughter. Slow down and drive with care when approaching a “Cone Zone.”



We are moving!

Beginning October 1st, BCMSA will be located at 20430 Fraser Highway, in the City of Langley.

The danger of explosions when clearing sanitary or storm sewers

Workers need to be careful when clearing sewer lines because of the possibility of a “cross bore” that could be contributing to a blockage. A cross bore is a gas or other service line that has been inadvertently drilled through an existing underground utility, such as a sanitary or storm sewer. Cross bores can be a serious threat to the safety of workers and the public if a gas line in a cross bore is damaged, causing gas to leak into homes or other buildings.

How do cross bores happen?

Sometimes utility services use horizontal directional drilling when installing lines so they don't have to excavate to install the service. When drilling, it's possible for a service line to accidentally intersect a sanitary or storm sewer, creating a cross bore.

What are the dangers?

If a gas line intersects a sanitary or storm sewer, the cross bore may go undetected until debris builds up around the gas line, causing a blockage. Clearing the sanitary or storm sewer (for example, by flushing it or using a power auger) could damage the gas line and cause gas to leak into homes or other buildings.

The gas concentration in the air can quickly reach the explosive range. Sparks from electric motors and switches or pilot lights can ignite the gas-air mixture, possibly causing an explosion that could destroy an entire building and result in serious injury or death.



How to proceed safely

Before clearing a sewer line, call the local gas utility company to locate any gas lines in the area. FortisBC has instituted a “Call Before You Clear” program with BC One Call. You can contact BC One Call at 1.800.474.6886 or *6886 on Telus and Rogers cell phones.

Be sure to tell the agent that you are calling about a “sewer service line blockage.” BC One Call will notify Fortis immediately so Fortis can follow up by locating any gas lines in the area and determining whether a cross bore may exist.

TRAINING UPDATES

NEWS FROM THE BC MUNICIPAL SAFETY ASSOCIATION

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It's time to start thinking!

It's no secret - training has been extremely busy for the BCMSA in 2014 and, in fact, is on pace to be the busiest year to date. Thank you to all the organizations that have made us their "resource for safety training"!

We are now starting to book training sessions for 2015 and strongly encourage organizations to submit their training calendar or course selections and dates as soon as possible.



If you have any questions please contact [Mike Roberts](#), Manager of Audit and Training Services, and he will gladly help you with your training requests.

Safety Talk Ideas?

Within the next few months we'll begin the design of our 6th annual calendar. Currently there are 60 past calendar crew talks posted on our [website](#). Take a few minutes to review the list and let us know if there is a topic you'd like to see in 2015.

Please submit your ideas to [Cathy Cook](#).



On the Web

[Course Catalogue](#)

A listing of the courses we offer, including details like course length, price, class minimum/maximum, EOCP CEU's (if applicable), and course description and outline.

In July, training costs were reviewed for all of our courses and a number of courses have had price adjustments. The current pricing has recently been updated in the Course Catalogue.

[Training Request Form](#)

Created to provide you and your organization with the best scheduling experience. Once you "submit" the information, your request will be reviewed by our staff. We strive to answer all training requests within 24 hours, Monday – Friday. A copy of the submitted form will be sent to the email address you provide. Let us know what courses you'd like to schedule within your organization by completing the form.

If you would like to schedule 4 or more courses, contact us directly with all the details and we'll help you plan your training calendar!

[Instructor Bios](#)

We've posted pics and bios for many of our trainers.

Discussion Group



Occupational Health and Safety Committee members, and anyone with an interest in Health and Safety in the local government sector, are encouraged to join our Municipal Safety Forum Yahoo Group. [Click here](#) for more information.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK



[BC Municipal Safety Association](#)

First 100 likes will be entered into our prize draw for a **\$50 iTunes Gift Card!**

Status of Return to Work (RTW) COR

At the present time, RTW COR is still frozen for new participants. Organizations who are currently RTW COR Certified may continue to use the existing audit tool, at least until the end of 2014. WorkSafeBC has drafted a Work Disability Prevention Standard, which will eventually

form the backbone of a new program. Once it is approved by WorkSafeBC's Board of Governors for release, we will begin the process of revising our RTW Audit Tool, Program and Training, as well as training all our auditors in the new Standard.

Celebrating COR Success!

Congratulations to the City of Kamloops, one of the organizations who recently recertified in the Certificate of Recognition Program.

Caleb made a presentation to the Kamloops City Council on July 29th, outlining how the City of Kamloops successfully achieved COR, the financial incentives they will receive over a three-year period, and the savings in WorkSafe Assessments as a result of their nearly 23% merit rating. In addition, Caleb pointed to additional savings through their Return to Work Program and improved productivity with employees staying at work.

At the present time, 35 organizations are COR-certified through the BC Municipal Safety Association. Congratulations to all these organizations and their staff, for recognizing the value of establishing and supporting effective Health and Safety Management and Return to Work Systems. Benefits include reduced injuries, improved morale, improved productivity, and, of course, incentive cheques from WorkSafe and often, reduced assessment rates.



Pictured here: Kamloops Mayor Peter Milobar, BCMSA Executive Director Cathy Cook, Kamloops Safety Manager (and current BCMSA Board of Directors President), Caleb Mierau.



COR Hall of Fame

Congratulations to the organizations who have become COR Certified through the BCMSA!

Visit <http://www.bcmsa.ca/certificate-of-recognition-program/certified-organizations/> for a complete list.

Certified External Auditors

We have 9 external auditors!
Check them out on our [website](#).

HAZARD ALERT

Forestry Operations and Similar Activities

INCIDENT: A worker was struck in the chest and face by the 25 cm diameter hazard tree that he was felling. This worker was not a certified faller and was felling trees in excess of 6 inches (15 cm) in diameter.

CAUSE: The worker was in the process of felling a 25 cm diameter hazard tree when the injury occurred. The chain saw blade became stuck in the cut due to an insufficient undercut. A second worker



brought a backup saw to the worker and remained at the tree until the stuck saw was freed from the cut. The tree was felled with the second saw. The felled tree struck another tree located in the fall direction causing the tree to shoot backwards 10 feet behind the stump. The worker was struck by the tree and knocked unconscious. The employee struck was wearing protective eyewear, safety boots, hardhat, earmuffs and chaps. He was transported to hospital by ambulance and kept overnight for observation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Ensure that only certified fallers are permitted to fall trees greater than 6 inches (15 cm) in diameter and that they follow proper techniques at all times.
- Provide written procedures which describe:
 - The minimum and maximum distance between fallers and other workers (minimum 2 tree length radius)
 - Planning and constructing escape routes (identify exit route - are there any obstacles?)
 - Controlling the fall of trees (are there any obstacles, standing vegetation that will affect the safe drop of the trees?)
 - Minimizing unnecessary brushing
 - Safe felling of hazard trees
 - Bucking trees and logs
 - Using mechanical assistance to fall trees

- Summon and render assistance to a falling difficulty or to deal with an emergency (stuck saws, injury)
- Conducting special or innovative harvesting techniques
- Ensuring the well-being of each faller and buckler at least every half hour and at the end of the work shift (radio/phone/on-site checks)
- Ensure that only workers trained in the safe use of chainsaws (demonstrated competency training) are permitted to operate chainsaws for cutting of trees smaller than 6 inches in diameter; for bucking trees or for any other purpose. Ensure that refresher training is provided on a regular basis.
- Supervisors must routinely check the workers performance to assess competency including observing the saw cuts, the accuracy of the hazard assessments, identification of proper escape routes, equipment condition and site preparation.
- Provide supervisory support to monitor and assess safe operation of chainsaws.
- Ensure tool box meetings are held regularly and discuss safe work procedures, roles and responsibilities related to the tasks to be performed.
- Ensure the use of proper PPE and inspect the condition of protective clothing (chaps and chainsaw pants etc.) and ensure the protective gear is appropriate to the task being performed.
- Ensure that assistance can be summoned to the work site quickly and efficiently. Identify cell phone coverage zones, radio coverage and plan alternative communication methods as necessary.
- Regularly review practices to ensure compliance and best practices are still effective and meet regulatory requirements.



The central purpose of the BCMSA is to improve worker health and safety through the sharing of knowledge and resources within local government.

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*Sharing
Knowledge*