



WCB update

September 2007

Building a Culture of Injury Prevention: The Manitoba Immigrants' Safety Initiative

With more than 200,000 immigrants moving to Canada each year – 10,000 of whom arrived in Manitoba in 2006 – the province is becoming increasingly dependent on immigration to support its economy.

As large capital works projects like the Manitoba Hydro building, floodway expansion and new airport terminal continue to fuel Manitoba's labour market, the need for proper health and safety training in the workplace is greater than ever.

Fostering workplace safety

The Manitoba Immigrants' Safety Initiative is a two-year project coordinated by Safety Services Manitoba and the International Centre of Winnipeg. Funded through the WCB's Community Initiatives and Research Program, the project's main goal is to prevent injuries, deaths and work-related illnesses among

Manitoba's new and existing immigrant workers.

"Ensuring that new Canadians receive the training and information they need is our priority," says Linda Lalande, Executive Director of the International Centre. "This program will help to ensure greater employment opportunities, fewer injuries and illnesses, and better integration for newcomers and their families."

Identifying immigrants' needs

The first phase of the project, completed in June, consisted of extensive research to identify the challenges, needs and resources available to immigrant workers, employers and community agencies. Discussions with hundreds of stakeholders were held through focus groups and interviews.

Efforts to address workplace health and safety issues – at the local, national and international levels – were also examined. The research findings were



The Manitoba Immigrants' Safety Initiative will help meet the unique needs of employers and immigrant workers like Selam Habtegiorgis and Yixiao Xiong, employees at Indutec Alchemist.

compiled and are available at www.safetyservicesmanitoba.ca.

"Our goal is to develop an educational and preventative module that addresses the workplace health and safety concerns of immigrant workers," says Richard Nordrum, Project Manager, Manitoba Immigrants' Safety Initiative. "Ultimately, it will cater to immigrants of various educational levels, involve a range of employers, and be delivered in a variety of educational settings, both before and during employment."

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A coordinated and collaborative approach

While there are currently several programs in Manitoba to help immigrants integrate into the workforce – such as workshops through settlement agencies, online resources like ‘Settle Manitoba’, and various services offered by the province’s Newcomer Services Branch – the need for a more coordinated and comprehensive approach remains.

Janice Meszaros, Manager of Community Initiatives and Research Programs at the WCB, recognizes the importance of this need.

“A proactive approach to health and safety is critical to the welfare of our workers, especially our immigrant workers,” she says. “This project naturally ties in with the WCB’s goal of prevention and commitment to

collaborate with our partners to make workplaces safe for everyone.”

Looking ahead

The project is currently in its development phase, which looks at defining and prioritizing workshops and resources. Its underlying goal remains: to provide the essential tools, for both employers and employees, to ensure that safety is a workplace priority for all Manitoba workers. And with the number of immigrants arriving in Manitoba expected to increase by 1,000 each year, the sustainability of the program is critical.

“Our labour force depends on immigrant workers, and that will only continue to increase over the next few decades,” says Mike Waite, Executive Director, Safety Services Manitoba. “Keeping immigrant workers safe and healthy will ultimately benefit workers, employers and everyone in the community.”

Free Time-Limited Crane Awareness Course

The Operating Engineers Training Institute of Manitoba Inc. (OETIM) is offering a four-hour Crane Awareness course to educate and increase the awareness of those who work with or around cranes.

The course, funded through the WCB’s Community Initiatives and Research Program, is an injury prevention course which will provide all workers with an increased awareness of working safely with or around cranes. The benefits of the course will

include safer working environments, especially for younger, more inexperienced workers. All attendees will receive a free handbook on crane awareness.

Individuals or organizations anywhere in the province who are interested in this free time-limited course can contact oetim@oetim.com or call 775-7059. For more information, visit www.oetim.com.

Review Office on the Web

To improve access to the Review Office and provide better service to employers and injured workers, the Review Office has expanded its presence on the WCB website located at www.wcb.mb.ca.

The Review Office looks at claims decisions for compensation or other benefits when a worker or employer disagrees with the decision. While the Review Office does not conduct formal oral hearings, the Office does review the complete claim file and when needed, collects additional information.

The Review Office now has forms on the WCB site that employers or injured workers can use for starting the review process. The forms can be filled out online, printed and then faxed or mailed to the WCB. Before asking the Review Office to look at a case, employers and injured workers should speak to their adjudicator or case manager to resolve the issue.

To find out more about the Review Office such as its purpose, when it is appropriate to request a review and the process for file reviews and timelines, please refer to Policy 21.00, Review Office which is now also available on the WCB website. You may also contact the Review Office via e-mail at ReviewOffice@wcb.mb.ca or call (204) 954-4669 or toll free 1 (800) 362-3340 for details.

WCB e-News

Don't forget to visit www.wcb.mb.ca to sign up for WCB and SAFE Work news, delivered straight to your e-mail inbox!

Quality Service an Ongoing Priority at the WCB

The WCB is committed to providing quality service to its customers. Whether you're a small family-run operation or a large 500-person shop, we value your business needs and strive to provide you with efficient and effective service to meet those needs.

"As service providers, we aim for high standards in all areas of our organization," says Dave Scott, Vice-President of Rehabilitation and Compensation Services at the WCB. "Providing quality service is important to us, and over the past several years, we've made great strides in enhancing that service."

From improved business processes like our electronic claims system to progressive training for case managers and adjudicators to ongoing quality assurance through file reviews and audits, we continually aim to improve the way we do business.

Timeliness is a key factor in our model of good customer service. Whether it's deciding on claims, paying wage loss benefits, or getting injured workers back to health and work as fast as possible, performing our jobs with efficiency is essential.

Here are some ways in which we provide timely service:

- Newly registering firms can receive their firm numbers over the phone;
- Injuries can be reported online or by phone; and
- Our online Clearances system offers employers instant information about the WCB standing of subcontractors, an important safeguard for construction contractors in particular.

"Becoming faster and more efficient at adjudicating and paying claims – without sacrificing the quality of decision-making – is one of our highest priorities," says Alice Sayant, Vice-President of Prevention, Assessments & Customer Service. "Timely service benefits everyone – from workers to employers to the community at large."

Equally important as timeliness is the quality of the decisions we make. Those decisions are managed by a well-developed quality assurance program, which includes:

- Continuous review of claim files to ensure quality;
- Our two-stage appeal process, which provides feedback on the quality of claims decisions;
- Progressive staff training which incorporates this feedback;
- Increased face-to-face contact with injured workers; and



WCB staff receive ongoing training to ensure high standards across all business processes.

- Our electronic claims system, which ensures that claims are managed consistently and efficiently.

Being good financial stewards also means we manage expenditures prudently and provide high quality, low cost insurance to employers. With the second lowest average premium rate and the lowest administrative cost per claim in Canada, we are in a very strong financial position, with reserves in excess of \$250 million as of the end of 2006.

"Fostering a stronger service culture is always our goal," says Sayant. "By enhancing our internal processes and implementing quality assurance at each stage, we're ensuring that our customers are at the forefront of all that we do."

Dates to Remember

October 20, 2007 – The Quarterly Remittance for the third quarter of 2007 and payment must be received at the WCB for firms reporting on a quarterly basis.

October 31, 2007 – The third instalment must be received at the WCB for firms reporting on an annual basis and paying in instalments.



SAFETy Through the Seasons

SAFE Work is a program of the WCB and the Workplace Safety and Health Division that draws attention to the need to prevent workplace injuries and deaths. The program has been very active during summer, and will continue to be in the fall as vacations end and everyone resumes their regular work and school routines.

Summertime is well known as the province's construction season. It's also an important time for keeping the injury prevention message in the minds of Manitobans. Each year, there are a number of "near misses" with drivers who fail to slow down for road crews on construction projects. To help improve safety for road crews, the second annual SAFE Roads campaign, part of the SAFE Work initiative, was launched in June to remind Manitoba's motorists to exercise caution when driving through construction zones.

Now that summer's over, the SAFE Work program is gearing up for a fall television ad campaign focusing on the need for training among Manitoba's workers. The campaign is comprised of ads set in three locations: a supermarket, a cabinetry shop and a restaurant kitchen. Each ad features young children doing adult jobs amidst a host of workplace hazards, driving home the campaign's message that job training is necessary since safe workers aren't born that way.

The ads were launched at an event held at the Winnipeg location of Standard Aero Group, a world leader in gas turbine engine maintenance, repair and



SAFE Work's new television ad campaign drives home the message that safe workers aren't born that way; they need training.

overhaul. The organization is also a staunch advocate for training and is well known for its best practices in safety and health.

"We believe there is a safe way to do every job and that workplace injuries and illness can be eliminated," says Bruce Clarke, Standard Aero Group Vice-President of Human Resources. "At Standard Aero, we support these beliefs with a training program that

allows our employees to deal with safety issues in a knowledgeable manner."

Training is a key component of preventing injuries and is especially important for young workers in Manitoba who are the most susceptible to workplace injuries.

For more information about training and injury prevention, visit www.safemanitoba.com.

Update is also available in a large print version.

Return undeliverable copies to:

WCB Communications, 333 Broadway, Winnipeg, MB R3C 4W3

Telephone: (204) 954-4760 Fax: (204) 954-4968

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