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# BAYLOR BULLETIN

*Baylor Associates, Inc.*

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## **BWC DECREASING DISCOUNTS**

The BWC's Board of Directors has approved cutting discounts for group rated employers for the 2008 policy year. The discounts, which stand at 90%, could fall to as low as 80%.

The Board intends to make a more comprehensively review of the Group Rating Program. The BWC has indicated that as a result, base rates may be reduced by approximately 4% overall.

We expect information from the BWC important to all group rating analyses will not be available until late October at the earliest. Therefore, we may not be sending out our estimates for next year's group rates until November.

## **CLAIM SETTLEMENTS CAN SAVE PREMIUM**

One of the most effective cost control techniques is closure of a workers' compensation claim in exchange for a final payment to the injured worker by the Bureau of Workers' Compensation ("BWC").

We review claims to determine a favorable settlement range considering its impact on your premium. We then discuss with you our recommendation. Once you provide authorization to settle, the injured worker or his representative is contacted. Upon agreement of the parties, a settlement application is

filed with the BWC. The BWC, in part, will use the values they place on your claims on December 31, 2007, to set your rates for the policy year beginning July 1, 2008. They will be looking at claims for injuries sustained from January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2006. In many instances, the claims' values include reserves for anticipated future benefits.

It may be difficult to accept that you can save premium by permitting additional dollars to be paid in a claim. However, once a claim is fully and finally settled, although

the settlement amount is used in the calculation of your rates, the reserve cost is reduced to zero, thus creating premium savings. Additionally, you eliminate the chance of incurring additional expenses under the claim.

Settlement agreements must be filed with the BWC by November 15 of the year, in order to affect next year's rates. For this reason, you may have been contacted recently by our claims administrators concerning claims where we are hopeful favorable settlements may be concluded

## **DIRECT PAY MEDICAL ONLY CLAIM LIMIT INCREASED**

Since 1995, The BWC has permitted employers to pay medical bills associated with medical only claims directly. You must contact the BWC's Employer Service Center at 1-800-OHIOBWC and register in order to take advantage of this program. The option does not apply to claims for injuries sustained prior to your registration. The medical expenses paid by an employer are excluded

from their experience. The program began with a limit of \$1,000 for the medical cost an employer could pay directly. In 2006, the limit was raised to \$5,000. For injuries sustained on or after September 10, 2007, an employer may pay up to \$15,000. If you were in the \$5,000 Medical-Only Program and have not opted out, you were automatically registered for the \$15,000 Program.

Space limits us from providing all the requirements and benefits here. If you are already in the program, please let us know. If you are interested in more information, please go to our website at [www.baylorwc.com](http://www.baylorwc.com). Click on the BWC icon and go to Ohio Employers/Employer Services/Programs/\$15,000 Medical-Only Program, or just call us.

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**We're on the Web!**

*See us at:*

**www.baylorwc.com**

Ohio Division of Safety & Hygiene Training Center

**Safety & Health**  
Classes for Ohio Workers

**NEW**

### **ONLINE COURSE Preventing Cuts and Lacerations**

You will learn about the different types of cuts, lacerations, and prevention measures to avoid and eliminate the cutting hazard. For more information on all the courses provided by the Ohio Division of Safety & Hygiene, go to [www.bwclearningcenter.com](http://www.bwclearningcenter.com)

## **BWC OFFERS RELIEF TO FLOOD-AFFECTED EMPLOYERS**

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) announced that employers located in Allen, Crawford, Hancock, Hardin, Putnam, Richland, Seneca, Van Wert and Wyandot counties may be eligible for relief in paying the first half of their 2007 workers' compensation premiums. Employers in the affected counties that

can demonstrate the flooding caused them to delay paying the premium may request that their BWC policies have the lapse period removed and penalties abated.

Employers must submit a letter to the BWC Adjudication Committee, PO Box 15398, Columbus, OH 43215 or

by fax to (614) 719-5941. The employer must submit a request by **October 31, 2007**.

The BWC will also assist employers in the affected counties with the recovery of lost or destroyed documents. For more information on these services, please contact us.

## **KEY SAFETY PARAMETERS**

Orientation and training for all employees. Determine the specific training needs of your employees including supervisors, managers and team leaders. Develop a written safety and health training plan that documents specific training objectives and instruction procedures.

New employee orientation should include a review of the Safety and Health Policy and the safety and health responsibilities of the employee. Orientate employees on proper procedures for reporting injuries or illnesses (See related information on new OSHA injury recording standard) and actions to take in case of emergencies. Provide employees with a method to report unsafe work practices or conditions and explain the return to work procedures. The orientation process must be documented and signed by the employee.

Safety and health training must include specific job/task safe work practices and hazard

recognition. Training should cover procedures for the safe and efficient use of machinery and tools. Train employees when applicable on hazard communication, bloodborne pathogens, lockout/tagout, hot work permit and confined-space entry. Provide training for new, current and transferred employees and when new substances, equipment, processes or procedures are introduced into the workplace. All training must be documented with the date, topic, instructor's name and signatures of employees in attendance.

Published safe work practices so that employees have a clear understanding of how to safely accomplish their job requirements. Both general and job specific safe work practices must be identified, documented and made available. Employees must be provided a copy of the general safe work practices and they should sign a statement indicating that they have read, understand and will

follow the practices. Examples of general safe work practices expected of employees include: Practicing good housekeeping; Wearing personal protective equipment; Applying first-aid procedures (if trained); Using good ergonomic principles; Wearing respiratory protection; Using and following lockout/tagout procedures; Using and following confined-spaced entry; Using hazard communication; Avoiding bloodborne pathogens, if applicable.

Job-specific safe work practices apply to operations that involve recognized hazards and risks associated with specific job functions and procedures. Job-specific safe work practices must be posted or made readily available in the work area. Each department manager should review the safe work practices with the employees on a recurring basis, at least annually.