

**From:** Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation  
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October 2019

Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation

# BWC eNews

## Watch the October edition of BWCNow

Here's a 95-second video roundup of BWC's biggest news in October.

 **BWCNOW**

## Ohio governor, BWC, announce drug disposal bag program

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) Administrator/CEO Stephanie McCloud, and RecoveryOhio Director Alisha Nelson announced a new, statewide effort on Oct. 10 to prevent opioid diversion and addiction in situations where an injured worker is prescribed opioids as part of a BWC claim.

Starting Nov. 1, injured workers receiving an opioid prescription for the first time within the past 12 months will automatically receive a drug disposal bag upon filling the prescription at a retail pharmacy. The bags destroy the opioids in a chemical process, rendering them useless for legitimate or recreational use.

"Newly injured workers don't always need every opioid pill in their prescription, and this new effort will simplify the process for safely disposing these dangerous drugs," said Governor DeWine. "By giving these drug disposal bags to injured workers at the time they fill a prescription, we can not only educate them about the dangers of opioid addiction, but also reduce the risk that unused pills will end up where they shouldn't – in the hands of children for example."

"We need every tool available to resolve the opioid and substance epidemic in this state, and it's my hope these bags will move us closer to that goal," said Administrator Stephanie McCloud announcing the initiative at Crosby's Drugs & Home Health Care in Columbus Thursday. "This effort is consistent with Governor DeWine's [RecoveryOhio](#) initiative, and BWC is proud to do its part."



To address the mental health and substance use public health crisis in Ohio, Governor DeWine created the RecoveryOhio initiative to coordinate and improve prevention efforts, increase access to treatment, and support proven recovery supports in the state. The RecoveryOhio Advisory Council released their [initial report](#) that provides 75 actionable recommendations to better address the public health crisis in Ohio.



*Governor DeWine and Administrator/CEO Stephanie McCloud demonstrate how to use the drug disposal bag.*

Data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health states that nearly one-third of people aged 12 and over who used drugs for the first time began by using a prescription drug for non-medical purposes.

BWC will cover the full cost of the disposal bags, which are limited to opioid prescriptions only. The bags will be available at every retail pharmacy across the state.

A [fact sheet](#) with questions and answers about the disposal bags can be found on BWC's website.

## **BWC sends up to \$1.5 billion to Ohio employers**

BWC started sending up to \$1.5 billion in dividend checks to Ohio employers Sept. 26.

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and BWC Administrator/CEO Stephanie McCloud announced plans in May to provide the money to employers following strong investment returns, falling injury claims, and other agency cost savings. The proposal was approved by BWC's Board of Directors in June.

“We are committed to providing resources for Ohio businesses to expand, support their employees, and become stronger competitors in the global marketplace,” said Governor DeWine. “Because of BWC’s leadership and strong investments, Ohio employers will now have the opportunity to make additional investments in their businesses.”

BWC mailed approximately 177,000 checks in seven batches over four weeks, concluding Oct. 24.

“We are grateful and more than pleased to once again be in a strong fiscal position that allows us to send these dollars to Ohio employers,” said Administrator McCloud. “Our hope is employers will reinvest these dollars into their companies, particularly in the area of workplace safety, and help our economy continue to prosper.”

The dividends mark the fifth time since 2013 BWC has issued \$1 billion or more to Ohio’s private and public employers covered by the agency.

The checks equal 88% of the premiums employers paid in policy year 2017 (July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2018 for private employers; calendar year 2017 for public employers). Nearly \$172 million went to counties, cities, townships, and other local government entities. Of that, \$51.4 million went to public school districts.

In total, BWC has saved employers nearly \$10 billion in workers’ compensation costs over the last decade through dividends, discount programs, reduced rates and other cost savings.

For answers to frequently asked questions, click [here](#). Employers: For more detailed frequently asked questions and answers, click [here](#).

## **BWC approves \$6.6 million for school safety, security enhancements**

### **School Safety and Security Grant Program off to strong start**

COLUMBUS – The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) has approved \$6.6 million in grants since July 1 to improve school safety and security across Ohio.



BWC's [School Safety and Security Grant Program](#) awards grants of up to \$40,000 to help schools purchase equipment to substantially improve safety and security and reduce the potential for injuries. This program is aligned with Governor Mike DeWine's STRONG Ohio plan, which includes his [Ohio School Safety Center](#) initiative and the expansion of Ohio's [statewide school safety tip line](#).

"It's important that we continue investing in Ohio schools' safety, while giving each school the flexibility to invest in resources that are specifically needed for their facilities," said Governor DeWine. "In addition to the funds from the recent budget, we will continue to make investments that will help safeguard students, teachers, and staff."

Added BWC Administrator/CEO Stephanie McCloud: "We're pleased we can be a part of Gov. DeWine's vision for making Ohio's schools as safe and secure as possible. These dollars also keep workers safe in their daily routine activities by paying for equipment that lessens the risk for sprains, strains and other injuries that might arise on the job."

Sharing the \$6.6 million in grants are 219 Ohio school districts and other schools licensed for preschool through 12th grade instruction. A county listing of school districts approved for grants since July 1 can be found [online](#).

BWC pays \$3 to every \$1 a school district spends toward eligible equipment, which includes:

- **Building/grounds/transportation security enhancements** such as interior and exterior security doors and mechanisms (for example, panic bars or other fire code compliant door-locking mechanisms, bulletproof glass, bullet resistant coating materials for existing glass); modifications of building/facility entrances to restrict access; and secured keycard systems.
- **Incident response equipment** such as equipment bags/backpacks stocked with trauma first-aid supplies; two-way communication devices and software designed to directly interface with emergency responder radio systems; and schoolwide panic alarm/panic button systems.
- **Other equipment that improves workplace safety.**

The program is part of BWC's larger Safety Grants Program, which is supported by \$40 million over two years under Governor DeWine's 2020-2021 budget for the agency.

Interested schools can visit BWC's [School Safety and Security Grant webpage](#) to learn more about the program and to download a [fillable PDF version of the application](#). Questions or inquiries can be submitted via the BWC Division of Safety & Hygiene's Safety Intervention Grant [email box](#).

## From Our Blog

[BWC safety grants save lives, time and money!](#) Read how a Columbus construction company saved tens of thousands of dollars investing in safety through our Safety Grants program.

[Our \\$1.5 billion employer dividend a confluence of safety, savings and investment.](#) Administrator Stephanie McCloud kicked off her state tour passing out ceremonial dividend checks to employers with a visit to a Marietta business.

[BWC to cover drug disposal bags.](#) Check out this blog from Pharmacy Program Manager Miranda Williams on the importance of this initiative.

[High-hazard employers find success with BWC consulting program.](#) One of our Safety & Hygiene Fellows writes about the value to employers of BWC's OSHA On-Site Consultation Program and debunks the myth our consultants exist simply to report businesses to OSHA.

## Safety Updates

Safety updates for September and October are available! Click [here](#) for September and [here](#) for October to read up on NIOSH & OSHA news, worker health resources and more.



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