

BWC eNews

Annual memorial service honors Ohio fallen workers



Director Michael P. Taylor rings the BWC Memorial Bell during the Annual Fallen Worker Memorial August 31, 2018.

BWC paid tribute to 96* Ohioans who died as a result of a workplace illness or accident. BWC Administrator/CEO Sarah Morrison led the annual Fallen Workers Memorial on Aug. 31 in Columbus.

“We mourn as we hear the tolling of the bell and the names of the men and women who lost their lives fulfilling their job duties,” said Morrison. “We’ll think of them and their families all year as we pursue our mission of creating a culture of safety across the state to prevent more tragedies in the future.”

Also participating in the ceremony were Phil Fulton, an injured worker representative and attorney, BWC Board of Directors Chairman Nicholas Zuk and board members Michael P. Taylor and Peggy Griffith. Director Griffith recited the poem, “Memorial for Workers.”

Taylor ended the ceremony with three tolls of BWC's Memorial Bell.

Names of the fallen workers are available at bwc.ohio.gov.

**Each year the ceremony honors those workers whose death claims were approved by the bureau since the previous ceremony. The 2018 roll of the fallen includes 53 allowed claims with dates of death in the last policy year (7/1/17-6/30/18), as well as 43 allowed claims with dates of death that fell within the two-year filing period and were not included in previous memorials.*

BWC pilot program to address opioid impact on workforce

BWC will launch a pilot program in October to support employers willing to hire workers struggling to overcome an addiction to opioids and other dangerous substances.

The Opioid Workplace Safety Program will provide up to \$5 million over two years to help employers in Montgomery, Ross and Scioto counties hire, manage and retain workers in recovery.

“Many employers are struggling to fill jobs because otherwise qualified applicants have a history of substance abuse or addiction,” said Dr. Terry Welsh, BWC’s chief medical officer. “We also know that folks in recovery have a better chance staying sober if they have a job. What we want to do is give employers resources to help them better manage these workers so everyone wins — businesses boost productivity without compromising safety, and workers have a greater chance of a successful recovery.”

BWC will partner with county Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health boards to coordinate the pilot program. The boards will identify eligible employers and employees, disperse funding and measure results.

BWC will cover the following:

- Reimbursement for pre-employment, random and reasonable suspicion drug testing;
- Training for managers/supervisors to help them better manage a workforce that includes individuals in

recovery;

- A forum/venue for “second-chance” employers to share success stories that will encourage others to hire workers in recovery.

The pilot’s launch, pending approval by the State Controlling Board, is scheduled for Oct. 15. We’ll have more details on the program in *BWC eNews* and at bwc.ohio.gov as the launch date approaches.

Ohio local government rates to fall 12%

The BWC Board of Directors signed off on a 12 percent cut to premiums for public employers next year, giving cities, counties, schools and others the second largest rate cut in at least 30 years.

The vote means BWC will collect \$21 million less from the state’s 3,900 public employer taxing districts in 2019 than it did this year.

“This reduction means public employers will have another \$21 million on hand to advance their mission and their communities,” said Kevin Abrams, BWC Chief Operating Officer. “Our goal is to keep rates as low as possible, and all Ohio employers can assist in that effort by emphasizing safe workplaces and injury prevention.”

The actual premium change for individual public entities will differ based on several factors, including their employer type or classification, recent claims history and program participation.

BWC system-wide outage set for Saturday, October 13

The Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation (BWC) will be conducting routine maintenance that will impact internet and phone services on Saturday, October 13.

Due to this scheduled shutdown, BWC’s website, bwc.ohio.gov, will not be accessible nor will our automated phone service via 1-800-644-6292. All other BWC phones will go directly to voicemail. Website users will see a static page of information explaining the outage

and will not be able to access any of the site's functionality.

All systems will be up and running by start of business Monday, October 15, 2018. Please pass this information along to anyone within your organization that could possibly be impacted by this outage.

BWC grant funds the development of new push/pull guidelines



Pushing and pulling tasks can pose an ergonomic hazard to workers. Are you due for a reevaluation of how your workers are performing these tasks?

BWC's [Ohio Occupational Safety and Health Research Program](#) funded the development of new push/pull guidelines by the Spine Research Institute at The Ohio State University. Based on biomechanics instead of psychophysics, the guidelines protect workers' shoulders as well as the lower back. A [mobile-friendly web app](#) allows for on-the-spot field analysis.

As employers have increasingly recognized the dangers associated with lifting, they often replace lifting with pushing and pulling by using overhead hoists, carts and articulating arms. Yet pushing and pulling has its own risks. These guidelines will help employers design safe pushing and pulling tasks and reduce the risk of costly shoulder and back injuries that are the leading cause of lost work days.

BWC eBriefs

The clock is ticking



Did you cash your [BWC rebate check](#)? If not, now is time time! The checks are part of the \$1.5 billion rebate BWC is delivering to Ohio employers and they will begin expiring in early October.

While the money is yours to spend as you wish, we encourage employers to invest in workplace safety measures that prevent injuries and reduce workers' comp costs.

If you participate in the Group Retrospective Rating Program, your check is scheduled to arrive in October.

[Interactive charts reveal Ohio workers' comp claims trends](#)

Have you checked out the data charts BWC created in partnership with the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health? The charts display summaries of 1.2 million Ohio workers' comp injury claims. This interactive tool, covering claims from 2001 to 2011, displays injury trends by year, industry, and diagnosis or cause of injury. [Check them out!](#) They can help you better understand the injuries occurring in your industry.

[From the BWC Blog](#)

Dr. Brian Wilson, DC, Medical Projects Director, details the new Opioid Policy Inventory that he developed in coordination with BWC's workers' comp counterparts across the country in his blog, [Sharing strategies to battle the opioid epidemic.](#)

[Medical marijuana and workers' comp](#)

Medical marijuana is on its way to Ohio. Read more about the law and its impact on BWC in our [medical marijuana fact sheet](#).

September employer webinar

Join us Sept. 27 at 11:30 a.m. for the next brief and informative webinar that will cover topics of interest to you. We conduct them twice a month, and they last approximately 20 minutes.

The September webinar will cover information about new electronic notification options and online invoices, the Policy Activity Rebate Program (PAR), premium rate decreases, safety grants, and our monthly safety tip. Register to attend at bwc.ohio.gov.

Safety Update

Noise in workplace, reducing strains and sprains on the job, and much more. Catch up on the latest workplace health and safety news in the [September Safety Update](#).

Your workplace safety innovation could be a winner!



Has your organization developed a new piece of equipment, tool or process to reduce risk to your workforce? Have you made changes to an existing method to improve safety and health in your workplace? If so, you could earn a cash prize for your ingenuity by applying for a BWC Safety Innovation Award.

The application period for our 2019 Safety Innovation Awards is now open.

If you are an Ohio employer – or know one – that has taken an innovative step to reduce risk of injury or illness, check out the [award criteria and application](#). Hurry, the deadline is Sept. 30!

Be your own **GUARDIAN ANGEL!**

Don't let safe habits slip at work and at home



Learn more at

BeSafeOhio.com



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Questions? Call 1-800-644-6292
or visit us on the web www.bwc.ohio.gov

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