

## New Executive Director Selected!

As you learned in the June edition of Municipal Safety News, AMHSA's Executive Director David Doyle left the organization after 5 years of dedicated service. Dave joined AMHSA in 1996 as Program Services Coordinator and accepted the position of Executive Director in 1998. Dave will be missed; his knowledge, enthusiasm and friendliness were a great asset to AMHSA and its members, and his replacement will have big shoes to fill.

However we think we found the right person to take on the challenge! Jim Moroney has accepted the position of Executive Director and will start on August 1st. Some of you may recognize Jim's name – he is coming from the City of Calgary, and before that worked for the City of Edmonton. He has several years of health and safety experience, in both the private and public sector. And while working for the City of Calgary, Jim sat on AMHSA's Board of Directors, so is also quite familiar with the Association. Jim brings an excellent combination of both health & safety, and municipal experience to the Association.

AMHSA would like to welcome Jim to our group.

Jim's first priorities will include getting to know AMHSA's members, so you may well be hearing from him. However, feel free to get acquainted with Jim by dropping in, sending him an email, or giving him a call.

## Trench Collapse

AMHSA recently learned about a near miss trenching collapse that occurred in a small town in Alberta. The Town crew dug a trench 10 to 12 feet deep to reach a water shut-off valve. There was approximately 6" water in the trench, and the walls were straight cut. There was no shoring or cage used.

One worker was in the trench, digging with a spade, when one of the side walls started to give way. The worker's rubber boots got stuck in the mud, but he managed to escape – just barely.

The Town estimated that approximately 200 to 300 pounds of dirt caved in. (Note that two feet of dirt on someone's chest weighs approximately 700 pounds, so the actual weight of dirt in this incident may have been more. It is important to recognize that 700 pounds distributed over a worker's chest makes it impossible for him to breathe, even if his face and shoulders are clear.)

Unfortunately, trench collapse is still a fairly common incident to occur in Alberta. The regulations are clear, the proper procedures are straight forward, and the equipment to do the job properly is available to any employer. This incident should be a reminder to us all: if we don't take the proper precautions, things will go wrong, and people can get hurt.

Employers should ensure that for trenching *or any other work*:

- hazards have been identified,
- procedures are developed,
- equipment is properly maintained and available,
- workers are trained,
- monitoring is in place (including both inspections and adequate supervision), and
- corrective actions are taken if any problems are found

To learn more about proper trenching and excavation, or any other health & safety topic, give AMHSA a call.

## Survey Reminder

Just a quick reminder about the Membership Survey. Every year we ask for your feedback: what we're doing well, what we could improve, what we could add.... This information is important to us; it helps us try to improve, and helps us plan for the upcoming year. The survey was sent out in June, and many of you have responded already – we really appreciate your help. If you haven't yet completed the survey, this is your reminder! We would like the surveys returned by August 24th. The results are compiled, consolidated and used in our 2002 planning meeting in September. In case you need a bit of added incentive, each municipality that completes the survey is eligible for draw prizes. There will be 7 draws. If you never received a survey, or can't find your copy, give Lorraine a call.

## Reminder For All Municipalities Participating

### in the PIR Program in 2001

Don't forget that Health and Safety System audits are required to be completed EVERY year. Audits can be conducted at almost any time during the calendar year, but most municipalities prefer to have them done in the fall; all audits must be submitted to AMHSA by November 30th every year.

You will require either an Internal Audit, or an External Audit, depending on where your municipality is in the program cycle. Each participating municipality was sent a letter in the spring explaining their individual program requirements for 2001, however if you have any questions call Rose Ann at AMHSA.

- Internal Audit: an audit conducted by your certified auditor
- External Audit: an audit conducted by a certified auditor from another municipality (external audits are arranged by contacting AMHSA)

Note that if you have lost your certified auditor, you will need to ensure that another employer gets trained and certified. Auditor training will be offered sometime in October. The dates and locations have not yet been set; all these details will be available in August.