

April 2003

Mark your Calendars!

Rural Utilities and Safety Association, Alberta Cities Safety Council, Alberta Municipal Health and Safety Association - Annual Utilities and Safety Conference: December 1 - 4, 2003

Planning is underway for the 30th annual conference to be held in Red Deer (at the Red Deer Lodge) from December 1 to December 4 this year. Workshop topics are being firmed up as you read this, and the trade show is already selling well. The workshops will be on Wednesday December 3 and Thursday December 4, with the trade show on Wednesday only.

Topics for the workshop will include:

- GIS/GPS
- Ergonomics - two sessions: one for office, one for outside work
- Tour of Aquila
- Care and limitations of different types personal protective equipment
- Mission Possible at Work
- The aging workforce
- Panel Discussion: telecom line locates and moves
- Fall Protection
- ...and more

Information and registration packages will be sent out in the fall, but if you have any questions in the meantime, contact anyone on the RUSA executive, or AMHSA.

Regional Mini-Conference Dates for 2003

Many of you attended one of the 3 regional mini-conferences held for the first time in 2002, and we received many positive comments about them. So we're at it again! We've pared down the agenda to a more manageable size:

- Updates from the WCB, AHRE (workplace health and safety) and AMHSA
- Presentation by a municipality that has an exceptional h&s program in place - what works for them, and doesn't
- Something on risk management and how it relates to occupational health and safety
- Roundtable discussion - we would like participants to share not only their successes in their health and safety program, but also any problems or challenges. Perhaps other participants will be able to provide suggestions to address these challenges.

We want to really thank the following municipalities who have offered to host these sessions:

- Town of Canmore - May 22
- MD of Greenview - October 16

We are inviting municipal managers and health and safety coordinators to attend these sessions. If you would like to attend one, please RSVP to our office at 1-800-267-9764 (955-3701 in the Edmonton area). Note: registration deadline for Canmore is May 1st.

We are still looking for a municipality in central Alberta to host a 2nd session. Hosting means providing

a venue as well as refreshments and lunch for the participants. Contact Rose Ann for more information about this. Call the numbers above, or e-mail her at: roseann@amhsa.net

Welcome aboard to Mark Carrier

Business has been very brisk for AMHSA, which is excellent. But it means we needed more help to meet the training demands. Last fall we brought on Mark Wesley on a part time basis to help with training in the Edmonton area. In March we brought on Mark Carrier to help us out in the Calgary area (we call them Mark-north and Mark-south.)

Mark-south has a diploma in Industrial Hygiene from Mount Royal College and worked for the City of Calgary in their health and safety department for 5 years. Now when he isn't working for us, he operates a private consulting firm, providing a broad range of occupational health, safety and hygiene services to his clients.

Some of you might recognize Mark's name because he actually has been doing some training for AMHSA on a contract basis for 3 years now. So those of you in the southern Alberta area who are planning to take some training will get to see Mark-south on a more regular basis.

CSTS Computer Available

Many of you are familiar with the Construction Safety Training System. This is a computer based, interactive training program. It consists of 12 modules, addressing a variety of health and safety topics, such as roles and responsibilities, general safety, WHMIS, personal protective equipment, etc. Students are required to pass each of the 12 modules in order to receive certification. We used to make 4 computers available to municipalities to train their staff. The original 4 computers cannot handle the program requirement of the new software, so we needed to buy more powerful computers. Because the demand for the program has declined over the last few years we decided to replace only one computer. We now have that one computer up and running and available for use.

If anyone would like to borrow the computer e-mail Jim at jim@amhsa.net or phone him at 1-800-267-9764 (or 955-3701 in the Edmonton area).

The fine print: there is a time limit of one month per municipality; the cost is \$25.00 per successful student.

Summer Time means Summer Students

It's April already and many of you are in the middle of hiring students to help you out this summer. It is important to remember that these kids do not have the work or life experience that us "old guys" have. Please make sure that you take the time to orient these kids to your municipality, and make sure they receive proper training on how to do their jobs safely.

Many of these kids will be driving for you. Some of them will be driving vehicles that are different from what they are used to (e.g. full size pickup trucks, maybe pulling a trailer). Many of them will have had their driver's licenses for only a few years. You might want to have your students (as well as your permanent staff) take a defensive driving course. It will help reduce the risk of vehicle collisions, and the injuries, property damage, and expenses that go with them.

Partners in Injury Reduction Program - a change for 2003

Most of you who are participating in the PIR program have received information on your program requirements for 2003. If you haven't heard from us, give Jim or Rose Ann a call.

In the municipal sector we rely primarily on the Peer process for external audits. This means that when a municipality requires an external audit they contact AMHSA and we find auditors from another municipality to carry out this audit. Every year there are a few glitches in this process. For example, some municipalities don't care for the auditors we select, if the request is left late it can be difficult to find any auditors left, etc.



So this year: municipalities can hire a private consultant to perform their external audit. If you choose this option, the auditors you select **MUST** be certified in the AMHSA audit tool. Call us before hiring them to make sure everything is proper. Typical costs to have a consultant perform your audit are \$750.00 per day, per auditor, plus expenses.

Small Employer Program:

There are a number of small employers in the Partnerships program, and there are some new issues to be aware of.

- The standard for the small employer audit tool has changed and AMHSA is working on creating a new audit for you.
- In the old days, the definition of small employer was 10 or less permanent employees. Now it is 10 or less employees, including casual, seasonal and contract employees. This will bump several of you into the regular employer size.

AMHSA will be sending out letters to all participating small employers to provide more information, but give Rose Ann a call if you'd like to talk about this in more detail.

And the Winner Is...

AMHSA had a booth at the LGAA Trade Show in Red Deer on March 19 & 20. We had a draw for a lovely reversible fleece vest, and the winner was Leif Pederson from the Town of Mundare. Congratulation Leif!