

September/October 2005

2005 Annual Awards

Innovation in Workplace Health and Safety

Alberta businesses continue to demonstrate innovation and creativity in working to reduce workplace injury and illness. Three organizations earned awards this year for their ingenuity. Winners were:

- **Ensign Resources Service Group Inc.** created the Automated Drill Rig which reduces the amount of equipment on the rig floor, the amount of connections to be done, and the amount of interaction of workers with the pipe and tools.
- **Rocky Mountain Reset Inc.** developed Push Off 2000, a float release device for fuel gas scrubbers. The permanently mounted fitting resets the internal float, restoring the flow of fuel gas. Any gas released will be contained within the piping system.
- **Cage Industries Ltd.** developed the Complete Ladder Cage System, which is to be used on fixed scaffold ladders. The cage provides evenly spaced metal hoops for the ladder to protect a worker who might lean or fall back from the ladder.

In addition some of the 2004 winners are worth bragging about some more. These winners have created programs and products that could be useful in the municipal sector:

- **Procor Limited** created The Quest, a proactive program that rewards the efforts of employees regarding quality, environment, health, and safety by challenging employees to test their knowledge in monthly quizzes. Prizes are given for correct entries. A program like this rewards participation and knowledge of the health and safety management system, rather than focusing on injury statistics.
- **Beck Technologies** created a LeveLadder™ an addition for extension ladders which allows people to adjust the ladder to fit uneven ground and stairs.
- **University of Lethbridge** created a web based working alone log-in system in which workers who work alone log on to a specifically designated web site. The security department is able to monitor who is on campus working alone, and when they leave. Other universities are looking at adopting this program.

Applications for the 2006 awards will be accepted starting in October. To learn more about the application process, or to get more information about any of these innovations, go to www.whs.gov.ab.ca, click on **Work Safe Alberta**, and search for *Awards for Innovation in Workplace Health and Safety* link.

Workers' Compensation Board Activities

2006 WorkSafe Award of Distinction

In addition to Alberta Human Resources and Employment's awards for innovation, the Workers Compensation Board also recognizes employers who excel in managing workplace health and safety.

There are 2 categories: Safety Leader; and Safety Turnaround. Safety Leader recognizes an employer that leads its industry with an exemplary health, safety and disability management program, and proven injury prevention track record. The new Safety Turnaround award recognizes an employer that has dramatically turned around its performance, and created an exceptional health, safety and disability management program.

New WCB 'Annual Return' form for 2006

A review by the WCB found that many employers have trouble properly filling out the Annual Return (the form used to report earnings). Therefore, starting in December there will be a new consolidated Annual Return form, which will provide employers with step-by-step instructions on how to complete each section. In addition to the redesigned paper form, a web form will be piloted which: performs calculations automatically; allows the work to be saved in progress; can be customized for the user; has a "lookup" and validation of sub-contractors; will send confirmation of receipt of report. If you are interested in piloting this new on-line application, contact the WCB at es.annual.return@wcb.ab.ca by October 31st. In the e-mail, provide your business name and WCB account number.

PIR Updates

The WCB is one of the Partners in the Partners in Injury Reduction Program; they provide the financial incentive to employers who successfully implement/maintain a health and safety management system. The WCB has been reviewing its incentives program and is making some changes. They will waive the application deadline for joining the program (historically employers needed to be registered in the PIR program by December 31st, in order to be eligible for refunds for the next year). They are also planning to issue the refund cheque earlier for first time participants, rather than waiting until the following spring. A third **possible** change dealt with increasing the incentive itself; the increase proposed was for first year participants only. This third proposal was sent for public consultation; the deadline for comment has passed and the WCB is now reviewing the feedback. AMHSA believes that any increases should be given to all participants, not just those who are new to the program, and advised WCB of this. We'll let you know the final decision from WCB.

For more information about any of these initiatives you can go to the WCB's website: www.wcb.ab.ca.

Occupational Health and Safety Code Review

Alberta Human Resources and Employment has initiated a review of the OH&S Code. This review is based on comments and suggestions received by the department from employers and workers since the Code was introduced in 2004. Changes have been recommended in almost every Part of the Code, and there are a few new provisions recommended as well. The recommended changes are posted on their website at <http://www3.gov.ab.ca/hre/whs/law/codereview/>. They are looking for your feedback by December 31st.

RUSA/ACSC/AMHSA Conference

This annual conference will soon be here. Registration packages were mailed out last week; if you haven't seen the information give Lorraine a call at 1-800-267-9764. As always there is a wide variety of topics in health & safety and utilities operation, including: ethics and the criminal code, alcohol/drug testing, fall protection, clandestine labs, managing airports, identity theft, etc. **New in 2005:** there will be a 1/2 day pre-conference workshop on water/wastewater operations. Both the pre-conference workshop and the conference itself are eligible for continuing education units from AWWOA. Information is also posted on RUSA's website: www.rusa.ca.

AMHSA Course Offerings

You should have seen our fall course schedule by now. Courses are being offered in both Okotoks and Sherwood Park. New this fall is a one day violence prevention course. One of our most popular course is Defensive Driving, which is taught by Bill Price. In case you weren't aware, Bill also offers a safe winter driving course. If you would like to find our more about these courses, contact Lorraine. Also our schedule and course descriptions are found on our website: www.amhsa.net.

And the winners are...

Every year AMHSA asks for your input into running our operation by distributing a survey. In the survey we ask about what we're doing well, where we could improve, what we should do more of, what we should do less of, etc. As thanks for taking the time to give us your input, your name goes into a draw box, for exciting prizes. The winners this year are:

Municipality	Prize
Town of Sylvan Lake	course registration
City of Fort Saskatchewan	course registration
Town of Beaumont	course registration
Village of Bittern Lake	training video
Red Deer County	travel mug
Town of Barrhead	travel mug
Wheatland County	fleece vest