



## Municipal Safety Newsletter - April 2007

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### WCB Charity Golf Tournament - June 20

The 16th annual WCB Charity Golf Tournament will be held on Wednesday, June 20, 2007 at the Links of Glen Eagles, Cochrane, Alberta. This year's event will support the Calgary Firefighters Burn Treatment Society. The Calgary chapter was formed in 1978 by Calgary Firefighters Local 255 to accumulate money for availability to burn victims in hospital and burn units throughout Calgary and Southern Alberta.

Registration/entry fee is \$250 (includes \$100 charitable tax receipt and prize entry). Make cheques payable to WCB Charity Golf Tournament. All registrations are "first come first served". A waiting list will be created if requested. Refunds will be granted up to one week prior to event. Notification of cancellation must be received by June 1, 2007.

Sponsorship opportunities are available.

#### [Tournament Website.](#)

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### External Audit Requests

If your municipality requires an external audit in 2007, please send your written request to AMHSA, including the following information:

- Name of municipality, mailing address, website URL
- Contact person, telephone, fax, email
- Number of employees, scope of audit (number of departments/sites)
- Names of AMHSA-Certified Auditors (to perform external on another municipality) and contact information (phone, email)
- Preferred month for audit to be performed

Questions? Contact [Susan Klingspor](#) or [Shannon Thomas](#).

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## **2006 Sets Record for Highest Ever OH&S Safety Fines - Over \$1 million went to organizations that help workers stay safe**

The year 2006 was record setting with the highest monetary annual penalties under the Occupational Health & Safety Act, including the highest penalty to a company and the highest penalty to an individual.

Seven companies and three individuals were found guilty of infractions for a total of \$1,534,500 in penalties. Over 74% of that total was in alternate sentences - court ordered payments to safety organizations, or organizations that assist injured workers. Recipients included STARS Air Ambulance, the Canadian Cancer Society, the University of Alberta's Burn Unit, the Wetaskiwin Airport, Hinton Healthcare Foundation, Northern Lakes College and other health regions and post-secondary institutions for safety training programs.

"With the steady increase in the amounts of penalties, the courts are sending a clear message that workplace health and safety must be taken seriously," said Iris Evans, Minister of Alberta Employment, Immigration and Industry. She added, "As our workforce grows, safety must be a top priority for everyone - government, employers and workers."

Reynolds Museum Ltd., a privately-owned facility, received the highest OHS penalty of \$500,000. This maximum penalty, the first of its kind, was the result of a July 14, 2005 incident in Wetaskiwin where a 14-year old was fatally injured when a truck box fell on him while he was sandblasting it.

Jeffrey Clements, operating as Reality Flooring, received the highest ever (\$75,000) penalty assessed against an individual. This penalty is the result of an OH&S investigation into an April 24, 2003 incident in Edmonton where an employee of Reality Flooring was burned while working with a solvent.

The maximum penalty for a first offence under the OHS Act is \$500,000 and/or six months in prison for each charge.

For more information on workplace health and safety in Alberta call 1-866-415-8690 toll-free, 415-8690 in Edmonton.

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## **National Day of Mourning - April 28**

The numbers are staggering. In Canada, some 855 employees die from work-related incidents each year, averaging more than 2 deaths every day. In fact, in 2005 the average increased to 3 fatalities a day. From 1993 to 2005, more

than 11,123 people lost their lives due to workplace incidents. Another 900,000 per year are injured or become ill.

Making workplaces safe is, or should be, a daily effort. But April 28th has been singled out to offer employees and employers the opportunities to remember the dead, injured and ill as well as publicly renew their commitment to improve health and safety in the workplace.

The National Day of Mourning, held annually on April 28th, was officially recognized by the federal government in 1991, eight years after the day of remembrance was launched by the Canadian Labour Congress. The Day of Mourning has spread to about 80 countries around the world and has been adopted by the AFL-CIO and the International Confederation of Free Trade.

The Canadian flag on Parliament Hill will fly at half-mast. Workers will light candles, don ribbons and black armbands and observe moments of silence. Businesses are asked to participate by declaring April 28th a Day of Mourning and to strive to prevent workplace deaths, illnesses and injuries.

CCOHS hopes that the annual observance of this day will strengthen the resolve to establish safe conditions in the workplace for all. It is as much a day to remember the dead as it is a call to protect the living.

[Details online.](#)

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## **WCB Poor Performance Surcharge Changes in 2008**

The Workers' Compensation Board - Alberta is a not-for-profit disability insurance system designed to protect workers and employers from the full impact of work-related injuries and illness.

WCB uses a performance-based pricing system to balance collective insurance protection for employers with individual employer accountability. To provide workers' compensation coverage at a fair price, employers that have similar operations and share similar risks are grouped together for premium rate-setting purposes. Premiums are then adjusted based on individual employer experience, creating more of a user-pay pricing system - employers with poor claims experience pay higher premiums. Financial incentives, in turn, promote injury prevention and disability management.

What is PPS? The Poor Performance Surcharge was introduced in 1999 and applies to large employers with very poor accident experience. These employers have reached the maximum surcharge for their size in the experience rating plan. For these employers, an additional poor performance surcharge may apply. The additional surcharge is designed to encourage employers to take immediate action to improve health and safety and claims management efforts, to help reduce injuries and avoid further surcharges.

Effective January 1, 2008, the PPS will be amended to increase the maximum possible poor performance surcharge. The intent is to focus on employers that have not changed their health and safety practices, and to

motivate them to improve.

For more information, see the [WCB Fact Sheet for Employers](#) or contact the WCB at (780) 498-3999 (Edmonton) or (403) 517-6000 (Calgary).

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## Selected Upcoming AMHSA Courses

Course	Date	Location
Auditor Recertification	May 2	St. Albert
Backhoe/Loader Operator Safety	June 4	Canmore
Confined Space Entry	April 27	Drayton Valley
Defensive Driving	May 3 May 10 May 24 June 14	Ponoka Fort McLeod Youngstown Strathcona County
Disability Management	May 24 June 7	Edmonton Calgary
Formal Workplace Inspections	May 10 May 15	Clearwater Red Deer
Front End Loader Operator Safety	May 23	Smith International
Hazard Identification, Assessment and Control	May 9 May 23	Clearwater Springbank Park
Incident Investigation	May 10	Clearwater
Joint Health and Safety Committees	April 25	Lamont County
Prime Contractor	April 27	Rockyview
Road Grader Operator Safety	May 11	Mountain View County
Workplace Violence Prevention	May 8, 9	Grande Prairie

To register or to request an on-site course, call Lorraine at (780) 417-3900 or toll-free 1-800-267-9764. [Complete course listings.](#)

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## **Occupational Hygiene: The Basics - University of Calgary Continuing Education**

This course illuminates the mystery behind the science and art of occupational hygiene and covers its past, present and likely future. Topics include: toxicology, occupational health and safety standards, airborne hazards, indoor air quality, ventilation systems, skin diseases, industrial noise, radiation, lasers, thermal stress, and protective equipment. **Call (403) 220-2988** for details.

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