

# Municipal Safety News

Alberta  
Municipal  
Health  
&  
Safety  
Association



May 2009

## E-Newsletter

Sign up to receive this newsletter via email. Send your request to [stephanie@amhsa.net](mailto:stephanie@amhsa.net).

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## Public Consultation Leads to Improved Worksite Safety Rules – Employers Have Three Months to Phase in Changes

The Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Code has been updated to keep workplace health and safety rules current and relevant. Alberta employers have until July 1 to comply with the updates.

The Occupational Health and Safety Council recommended changes to the code after extensive public consultation.

Updates to the OHS Code include the following:

- New requirements for lift calculations, tag lines and personnel baskets;
- Healthcare requirements specific to patient/client/resident handling;
- New requirements for medical sharps;
- New concepts of a 'restricted' space with less stringent requirements than a 'confined' space;
- Requirements applicable to respiratory protection against airborne biohazardous material;
- Mobile equipment requirements specifically for concrete pump trucks;
- New, specific factors for rigging components;
- Occupational exposure limits revised for nearly 150 chemical substances; and
- Updates to better reflect current mining practices.

The 2009 OHS Code and a bulletin that compares the 2006 and 2009 editions of the Code can be found online at: <http://employment.alberta.ca/whs-ohs>. The 2009 OHS Code Explanation Guide will be available online at this site in June.

Copies of the 2009 OHS Code can be purchased from the Queen's Printer at (780) 427-4952 (dial 310-0000 for toll-free access) or online at [www.qp.alberta.ca](http://www.qp.alberta.ca). Shipping will begin in late May.

*Source: Government of Alberta*

Note: Code Comparison available at [http://employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-PUB\\_li029.pdf](http://employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-PUB_li029.pdf).

## Annual Training Awards

AMHSA provides recognition awards to municipalities for their commitment to providing health and safety training to municipal workers. The criteria is based on the number of participants sent to AMHSA training programs compared to the number of full-time employees on staff. The 2008

Award Winners are:

- Birch Hills County
- M.D. of Northern Lights
- Starland County
- Town of Bon Accord
- Village of New Sarepta

AMHSA also recognizes the following municipalities, who undertook extensive training initiatives in 2008:

- City of Calgary
- City of Cold Lake
- City of Edmonton
- City of St. Albert
- Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
- Calgary Housing Company

## Annual General Meeting

AMHSA's 18th Annual General Meeting was held on April 1, 2009 in Leduc. Voting delegates attended from the Town of High Prairie, Parkland County, the Municipal District of Bonnyville, and the Cities of Spruce Grove and Edmonton. The meeting included a presentation of the 2008 audited financial statements and an Executive Director's report.

## 2009 NASC Meetings

The Northern Alberta Safety Council met on April 15, 2009 at the Municipal District of Bonnyville with over 25 participants. AMHSA is grateful to Barry Kissel for hosting the meeting. The next meeting will be held in October 2009 and we are looking for a municipality to host. Please contact Shannon Thomas at (780) 417-3900 or 1 (800) 267-9764 or [shannon@amhsa.net](mailto:shannon@amhsa.net) for details.

## Shared Commitment to Workplace Safety Earns Rewards... Together 7,814 PIR Employers Earn \$70 Million in 2008 Rebates

For more than 20 years in Alberta, employers enrolled in the Partnerships in Injury Reduction (PIR) program have diligently worked to prevent Albertans from being injured on the job. This successful program which began in 1989 encourages injury reduction through an innovative pricing program. Over the years, Alberta employers have truly embraced its ideals. With fewer than 100 employers enrolled at first, this program now has more than 7,800 employers from all industries registered.

Teaming up with associations, government, workers and industries, PIR employers are committed to disability management and keeping their workforce safe. In 2008, in spite of the 4.9% increase in workers covered from 2007, partners still managed to reduce the number of time-lost claims by 8.6% and the average duration of a claim to 32.1 days. Their efforts have collectively earned them \$70 million in 2008 rebates.

“They’ve earned it like an athlete earns gold,” says Guy Kerr, WCB—Alberta’s President and CEO. “PIR employers have worked on their programs for years, they’ve trained to perfect them and they’ve made adjustments to adapt to different environments.”

To be a part of this highly safety conscious group means employers must adhere to stringent Alberta safety standards. They have to earn and maintain a Certificate of Recognition (COR) and improve their performance or maintain industry leadership. It requires much more than just signing on the dotted line; it means continually making safety a priority in their workplaces.

“We all share a common purpose,” says Kerr. “We strive towards improving our workplaces where fewer Albertans will be hurt on the job, but when they do get hurt, our shared ability to manage injuries through solid disability management programs is effective.”

The Workers’ Compensation Board (WCB) — Alberta is a not-for-profit corporation legislated to administer the workers’ compensation system for the province.

*Source: WCB Website, April 22, 2009*

### Auditor Update

The annual Auditor Notice was emailed to all active AMHSA auditors in April. If you did not receive a copy (or are in the process of becoming certified), please see [www.amhsa.net/document/show/1243](http://www.amhsa.net/document/show/1243). Included in the Notice was information on

- PIR Status 2009
- Auditor Training / Recertification
- Updated Forms & Documents
- COR / PIR Survey
- Audit Deadlines
- Justification Tips
- Audit Revisions

Upcoming Audit courses include:

- May 11, Wood Buffalo (Recertification)
- May 13-14, Edmonton
- May 28-29, Sherwood Park
- June 2, Red Deer (Recertification)

Contact Lorraine to register at 1 (800) 267-9764 or (780) 417-3900 or email [lorraine@amhsa.net](mailto:lorraine@amhsa.net).

### 2009 Audits

The 2009 PIR status letter was sent to CAOs of all participating municipalities in April. It confirms what stage of the audit cycle the municipality is in for 2009 (external, first internal, or second internal audit) and contains the 2009 PIR Program Requirements document.

Please note that the deadline for requesting an external audit for 2009 is June 15th. AMHSA will try to accommodate requests received after that date, but cannot guarantee that peer auditors will be found – the external peer audit planning process is very involved and requests to participate received after the audit groups have been formed are extremely disruptive and affect many auditors and municipalities.

Requests for external audits can be submitted to Susanne by phone at 1 (800) 267-9764 or (780) 417-3900 or email [susanne@amhsa.net](mailto:susanne@amhsa.net). Include:

- your name and contact information,
- names of your municipality’s certified auditors,
- scope (number of sites and total employees), and
- month you’d prefer to have the audit conducted.

Remember: AMHSA must receive all 2009 audits by November 15th.

We thank you in advance for your participation and cooperation!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### SPRING SASC MEETING

The next meeting of the Southern Alberta Safety Council will be held on May 12th in Taber at the Heritage Inn – see details at [www.amhsa.net/calendars/show\\_event/2881](http://www.amhsa.net/calendars/show_event/2881). RSVP by May 5th to shannon@amhsa.net.

The meeting will include updates from participating municipalities, Workers' Compensation Board, and Alberta Employment and Immigration. In addition, there will be education sessions on recent prosecutions and more!

### AAMDC BUSINESS SERVICES GOLF TOURNAMENT

June 17, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. at the Ponoka Golf Club. Registration is \$99/person. Sponsorship opportunities are available. To register, contact Kaala Johnson at (780) 955-4092, or register online at [www.aamdc.com](http://www.aamdc.com).

### WCB ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

June 24, 2009 – Workers' Compensation Board – Alberta's 2009 charity golf tournament will be held at Links of Glen Eagles in Cochrane in support of the Northern, Southern, and Central Brain Injury Society. The tournament entry fee is \$250.00 per person. Help make this year's event a huge success – WCB offers seven levels of sponsorship opportunities, and donations of prizes and raffle items are welcome. Details are available online: [www.wcb.ab.ca/public/charity\\_golf.asp](http://www.wcb.ab.ca/public/charity_golf.asp).

### SAFETY 2009 – AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SAFETY ENGINEERS CONFERENCE

June 28 – July 1, 2009, San Antonio, Texas. For more information visit [www.asse.org/education/pdc09/](http://www.asse.org/education/pdc09/).

### RURAL UTILITIES / MUNICIPAL SAFETY CONFERENCE

November 30 – December 3, 2009, Red Deer Lodge, Red Deer. For more information, contact Al Coker toll-free at 1 (877) 347-0324 or visit [www.rusa.ca](http://www.rusa.ca).

## WCB – Industry Custom Pricing

The Workers' Compensation Board has given presentations to AMHSA's Board of Directors and the Northern Alberta Safety Council about Industry Custom Pricing. ICP is a voluntary pricing program that offers customized pricing features. Through increased incentives, employers who perform well will pay less and employers who perform poorly will pay a higher share. For more information, contact the Workers' Compensation Board.

## Municipal News

Strathcona County and Leduc fire departments have been chosen by Motorola and Westcan Wireless for a trial program using 4.9 Gbz communications technology. The technology is a frequency band assigned by Industry Canada for the exclusive use of emergency services. It allows photos, videos and information to be sent wirelessly and securely. Emergency crews can use the technology to send photos to hospitals or provide real-time video to front-line staff.

A pilot by Alberta Environment will provide Lac La Biche County with a spill response unit. The unit is housed in a specially-equipped trailer designed for first-responders and will enable fire crews to contain a spill unit until clean-up crews arrive. Last year, the Lac La Biche fire department responded to three spills.

Source: AAMDC Newsletter

## Alberta First Chiefs Warn of Crisis as Staff Crunch Hits Departments

Alberta's volunteer first departments – representing about 80% of firefighters across the province – are calling on government to help rescue them from a staffing shortage fire chiefs warn is growing increasingly critical. The number of men and women willing or able to make the commitment has dropped steadily over the past two decades, leaving some departments scrambling for recruits or trying to hang on to the few they have. Shifts in the economy mean people are pulled away for longer hours at the office or to different communities for work, making potential recruits more difficult to find. Municipalities and municipal districts are solely responsible for funding their fire departments. It is up to chiefs to submit budgets for training, equipment, and remuneration.



Source: AAMDC Newsletter, and Calgary Herald April 13, 2009.

Upcoming AMHSA Courses — Please see [www.amhsa.net](http://www.amhsa.net) for full course listings.

COURSE	DATE		LOCATION	FEE
Auditor Recertification	Jun 2		Red Deer	\$50 / \$70
Confined Space Entry	May 12	p.m.	Wetaskiwin	\$40 / \$50
	May 19	a.m.	Lacombe County	
	May 21	a.m.	Okotoks	
Defensive Driving	May 13		Sturgeon County	\$65 / \$90
	May 26		Parkland County	
	Jun 10		Cochrane	
	Jun 16		St. Albert	
	Jun 17		St. Albert	
	Other dates also available			
Disability Management	May 21		Edmonton	\$0
	May 21		Calgary	
	Jun 8		Wood Buffalo	
	Jun 18		Edmonton	
	Other dates also available			
Formal Workplace Inspections	May 11	a.m.	Beaumont	\$40 / \$50
	May 14	a.m.	Slave Lake	
Ground Disturbance, Trenching, and Excavation Safety	May 13		Okotoks	\$50 / \$70
Hazard Identification, Assessment & Control	May 6	a.m.	County of Two Hills No. 21	\$40 / \$50
	May 6	p.m.	Yellowhead County	
	May 14	p.m.	Wetaskiwin	
Health & Safety Management Systems	May 26-27		Sherwood Park	\$90 / \$145
Health & Safety Management Systems - Audit	May 13-14		Sherwood Park	\$90 / \$145
	May 28-29		Edmonton	
Incident Investigation	May 14	p.m.	Slave Lake	\$40 / \$50
Joint Health & Safety Committees	May 11	p.m.	Beaumont	\$40 / \$50
	May 19	p.m.	Okotoks	
OH&S Act, Regulation & Code Overview	May 6		County of Two Hills No. 21	\$40 / \$50
Supervisor's Role	May 20	p.m.	Smoky Lake	\$40 / \$50
WHMIS Overview	May 27	a.m.	Okotoks	\$40 / \$50
	May 27	p.m.	Okotoks	
WHMIS Train-the-Trainer	May 27		Edmonton	\$50 / \$70
Working Alone	May 19	a.m.	Okotoks	\$40 / \$50

**To register, contact Lorraine.**

**1-800-267-9764**

**or**

**To schedule an onsite course, contact Susanne.**

**(780) 417-3900**

May 2009



## Municipal Safety / Utility Workshops and Trade Show

November 30 - December 3, 2009  
Red Deer Lodge, Red Deer

[www.rusa.ca](http://www.rusa.ca)

Tentative session topics:

1. Workplace Violence — WCB
2. Lab Testing — water, wastewater, soil testing procedures
3. Worker Orientation — AMHSA
4. Ground Disturbance — AMHSA
5. Reporting & Investigations
6. Work Life Balance — Kendrith Bentley
7. Load Securement/Fleet Safety Audits
8. Dealing with Substance Abuse in the Workplace: “Thinking Outside the Cup” — Alberta Health Services
9. Working Alone
10. Safe Driving — Mel Mottram
11. Operator Retention & Sharing Program — Alberta Environment

For more information, contact Al Coker toll-free at  
**1 (877) 347-0324**

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