Message from Workers Compensation Director
Welcome to Our New Safety & Health E-newsletter

On behalf of DHR's Workers' Compensation Division, I am happy to help launch Safety & Health Matters. I am proud to represent the City & County of San Francisco in the management and oversight of your industrial injury and illness claims. However, the best claim is the one that is prevented. I hope that this e-newsletter provides you with helpful strategies to ensure that CCSF employees are healthy and safe while at work, and look forward to providing useful information and directing you to the resources that you need. My goal is to help create and nurture a culture of safety that reflects the innovation for which CCSF is known.

I welcome your ideas. Please let us know of any particular issues that you believe we should address.

Peggy W. Sugarman, Workers' Compensation Director

What's New at OSHA?
Tighter OSHA Reporting Requirements

One of the areas where CCSF departments get fined relates to reporting requirements to OSHA. As of 2012, employers are required to report any incident that results in either an in-patient hospitalization of even a single employee, or any form of amputation (even of a portion of a finger). Avoid OSHA fines! Report these types of incidents promptly by calling (415) 557-0100. OSHA website
Small Department IIPP Exceptions

If You're Small, You're Off the Hook for Some Requirements

Departments of less than 10 employees don't have the same written communication and documentation requirements regarding their Injury and Illness Prevention Programs. You may communicate to and instruct employees orally in general safe work practices with specific instructions unique to the employees' job assignments. You only need to maintain inspection records until the hazard is corrected. And you can handle the documentation of safety trainings by maintaining a log of instructions provided to employees with respect to the hazards unique to their job assignments when first hired or when assigned new duties. OSHA's IIPP Website

What's New in Workers Comp?

CA Workers Comp "News you can use"

The California workers' compensation system was under the legislative microscope again in 2012 resulting in the enactment of SB 863 and making extensive changes to the system. The focus of the labor-management group that hammered out the agreements was to solve some problems created by the 2003 and 2004 changes and to deal proactively with other problems that have hindered the ability of claims administrators to function in a cost-efficient manner. Some changes represent unprecedented policy turnabouts when compared with the 100 year history of California's no-fault system.

First, medical treatment disputes will no longer be decided through litigation but through an Independent Medical Review process managed by the State Division of Workers' Compensation which mirrors the system that is used in non-occupational health plans. The idea is to ensure that injured employees receive medically necessary care that is consistent with evidence-based guidelines where the final decision is made by a physician, not a workers' compensation judge.

Other changes are designed to increase permanent disability benefits that are to be offset by administrative savings, the extent of which is the subject of much debate in the industry. In addition, the state assessments against employers to fund workers' compensation and other labor-related activities increased substantially, hitting the City & County with a $2.6 million dollar tab in January while increasing our responsibilities and workload that are required to implement the reforms.

One way that departments can help is through timely reporting of injuries, quick responses to our investigations into the specifics of the injury, and returning injured employees to the workplace by providing temporary modified duty while employees are on the path to recovery. This limits exposure for temporary disability payments while helping our employees to recover and re-acclimate to the workplace more quickly, a win for all.

Ergonomics in the Workplace

Quick Refresher on Ergonomic Principles & 5 Risks You Can Avoid

Check out this concise article to remind you of what it takes to help your employees "work smarter, not harder." Read article
**Need a Giggle?**
Ergonomic Chair Humor

Take half a minute and enjoy this video on the wrong kind of new office furniture, [Click here](#).

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**Back to the Basics of Hand-washing**
Reduce Workplace Infections and Absenteeism

Remember the benefits of continuing to remind your employees to wash their hands or to use hand sanitizer when soap and water aren't available. The Centers for Disease Control website has all that you need by way of health promotion materials to keep getting this important safety message across to your employees. [Click here](#).

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**Free Zumba in SF Parks!**
Saturday & Sunday mornings in March and through April 14

Enjoy SF's beautiful parks while getting a great workout. Saturdays from 10-11am at Golden Gate Park Carousel Area (198 John F. Kennedy Dr) or Sundays from 11am-Noon at Sunset Recreation Center Outdoor Volleyball Courts (2201 Lawton St.). Free with RSVP (send email to willa@themovementsf.org) or call (415) 831-2738. [Click here](#).

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Let us know what you think! [Quick Feedback Survey](#)