

WHSCC News



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PERSONAL INFORMATION AND THE WHSCC

The Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission (WHSCC) takes protecting privacy very seriously.

What information does the WHSCC gather, and why?

The WHSCC gathers personal information about individuals and companies under the mandates of both the *Workers' Compensation (WC) Act* and the *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act*.

Most of the personal information gathered is for work conducted under the auspices of the *WC Act*. To adjudicate and manage a claim, the WHSCC needs to evaluate information on a person's injuries, medical treatments and earnings.

Information gathered related to companies – such as business activity and accident record information – is necessary to conduct work authorized by both the *WC Act* the *OHS Act*.

This information is treated with great care.

How does the WHSCC protect my personal information?

Personal information is managed by the WHSCC according to the following protection mechanisms:

The New Brunswick *Protection of Personal Information (PPI) Act* applies to all government departments and agencies, including the WHSCC, and governs the collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

The New Brunswick *Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission (WHSCC) Act* prohibits the Commission and its employees from releasing personal information.

The New Brunswick *OHS Act* also has a confidentiality clause that prohibits the Commission or its employees from releasing specific corporate information. This covers, for example, trade secrets that are revealed in the course of an investigation.

WHSCC employees are required to sign an oath of confidentiality when they are hired.

Does all this mean that the Commission cannot release any information?

No. The *PPI Act* recognizes that for government programs to work there must be some flow of information, so it allows

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Please direct correspondence to:
COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT
WHSCC
PO Box 160
Saint John NB E2L 3X9
Toll Free: 1 800 222-9775
Fax: 506 632-2830
Website: www.whsc.nb.ca
AGREEMENT NO. 40064251

COMING SOON: “GOLD STANDARD” FORESTRY INDUSTRY SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM

The WHSCC and representatives of the five crown forest lands licensees are working together to develop a comprehensive new forestry industry training program.

“Currently there is no standard approach to logging and forestry safety,” says David Greason, Vice President of the WHSCC's WorkSafe Services Division. “Forestry workers and employers are struggling with inconsistent, outdated, repetitive, ineffective, or even non-existent training.”

The new program should replace all existing training options, becoming what Greason describes as “the gold standard” for the industry. It is being designed so that training organizations can easily deliver the



curriculum in a consistent, effective, and economical way. Education providers can also apply to have their existing forestry training sessions recognized, if they meet all of the requirements set out in the new program.

“Part of the reason we're developing this new program is because we're seeing a real disconnect between the available curriculum and actual application in the

[Continued on page 2]

DEMYSTIFYING THE 2006 EXPERIENCE RATING STATEMENT

Employers with average assessed premiums of \$1,000 or more for 2002, 2003 and 2004 have been automatically enrolled in the WHSCC's Experience Rating System for the 2006 assessment year.

This system is designed to improve employer awareness of the importance of safety in the workplace and to achieve greater equity through the use of surcharges or reductions to assessed premiums. The system rewards or penalizes employers by comparing their accident history to the employers that make up their rate group. A favourable comparison means a reduction in premium amounts. An unfavourable one means a surcharge is added to their premium for the 2006 year.

Employers that are enrolled in the system will receive an Experience Rating Statement in the mail this fall. To view a sample copy of the statement, annotated to provide added information on how experience rates are calculated, please access the following link on our website:

www.whsc.nb.ca/docs/experiencerating_e.pdf

For more information on the Experience Rating System, please contact the Assessment Services Department of the WHSCC at: 1 800 222-9645.

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information to be released in some circumstances, according to a strict set of rules put in place to protect the individual.

For example, the *PPI Act* allows information to be shared “to verify the individual’s eligibility for a government program or benefit for which the individual has applied.”

Who can my personal information be shared with?

WHSCC employees: Your personal information can be shared by WHSCC employees who have a role in adjudicating or managing your claim or providing treatment. This means, for example, that a case manager and a staff physician can share your personal medical information for the purposes of providing proper treatment.

Health care professionals: Personal information may also be shared with people outside the WHSCC. For example, the Commission has to share medical information with hospitals and medical professionals in the course of providing treatment. Keep in mind, however, that hospitals and medical professionals are also required to treat your personal information in confidence.

Your employer: The *WC Act* recognizes that employers play an active role in getting injured workers back to work. Because of this, employers have some access to the personal files of injured workers in their employ.

Appeals Tribunal, the courts: If you file an appeal with the Appeals Tribunal or with the Court of Appeal, the law allows the opposing party to your claim to defend or support the decision being appealed. This will require that the WHSCC share all the information in your file with the opposing party. On rare occasions a court will order the Commission to release the personal information it has on an individual.

I’ve heard that the federal government recently brought in some ‘privacy’ legislation. How does this impact me?

In 2004 the federal *Personal Information Protection and*

Medical professionals and other people who work with injured workers in the course of their business do come under the jurisdiction of this Act, however, and therefore must treat your information as being confidential.

Electronic Documents Act came into force. This legislation requires that persons and businesses who engage in commercial activity treat the information that they gather on their clients and customers as confidential. Since the WHSCC is not engaged in commercial activity, this *Act* does not apply. Medical professionals and other people who work with injured workers in the course of their business do come under the jurisdiction of this *Act*, however, and therefore must treat your information as being confidential.

Can I make a request under the *Right to Information Act* for information on another person?

No. The *Right to Information Act* does not apply to the WHSCC.

Please note: The Commission is committed to openness with information that is not confidential and can and does release statistical data that can’t be used to identify any individual.

FORESTRY *from page 1*

field,” Greason explains. “This has resulted in truly alarming numbers of accidents taking place in the woods. It’s a situation that just isn’t acceptable.”

The new program has a standard curriculum, will use established evaluation tools, and will require participants to demonstrate competence prior to gaining qualification. Stringent follow-up procedures will even allow for the suspension of qualifications should a worker be found to use unsafe practices in the field.

Courses, including both basic curriculum and supervisory modules, will include: Core Forestry Safety, Conventional Logging Safety, Mechanical Logging Safety, and Thinning Saw Safety.

The Steering Committee responsible for the new program plans to present the finished curriculum to the NB Forestry Products Association this fall, and hopes to begin implementation in Spring 2006, with a three-year roll out phase.

“There are just too many injuries and fatalities occurring in forestry operations,” Greason says. “We are excited about this new program, and look forward to the positive results we’re sure it will generate, because creating safer woodland workplaces is of critical importance to the WHSCC.”

FALL HARVEST SAFETY

It’s harvest time again, and keeping workers safe in the fields is top of mind in the northwest region of this province.



Last year’s successful pilot project – one that saw Centreville Community School students learn about harvesting safety by exploring some of the heavy machinery used in the fields – hit the road, spreading the word in many northwestern communities.

“The partnership between Potatoes New Brunswick and the WHSCC has allowed us to reach almost 600 students in grades five through twelve, and inform them about their rights and responsibilities under the *OHS Act*,” says Edith Savoie, Northwest Regional Director of the WHSCC.

“Thanks to the support of local farmers and agri-business, we were also able to provide harvest equipment on-site at the schools, and in some instances, host individual groups of students at operational farms; which gave these presentations a compelling hands-on component that is sure to stick with these young people for some time.”

BOARD MEMBER PROFILE: MORRIS MENDELSON, WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVE

Morris Mendelson can look around the boardroom table at the WHSCC and feel a bit unique.

"I'm not a business person," he explains.

He's not a member of a union executive, either. He's an educator.

In July 2004, he joined the WHSCC Board of Directors as a workers' representative, and in April 2005, he completed his Ph.D. studies in organizational behaviour and human resources management.

"My Ph.D. was in management studies, but my background is in the psychology of work — the importance of people," Mendelson says. "I think that enables me to bring a nice balance to the Board."

A Montreal native, Mendelson began his undergraduate career at Concordia

University, and then enrolled at St. Mary's University in Halifax for his Master's degree.

"My Master's thesis was a study commissioned by the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU) to examine the physical and psychological predictors of sick building syndrome," he says.

While completing his Master's thesis, Mendelson says he fell in love with the Maritimes.

"My academic career took me to Queen's University in Ontario for my Ph.D.," he says, "But I knew I wanted to come back some day."

While working towards his Ph.D., Mendelson began a series of teaching jobs which eventually brought him to Saint John in 2001, when he

If a company's workers feel like human beings rather than costs, that impression has a positive impact on many organizational outcomes, especially health and safety.

accepted a tenure-track position in UNBSJ's Faculty of Business.

In April of this year, Mendelson successfully defended his Ph.D. thesis, a comprehensive study comparing best practices models in human resources, with an emphasis on employee perceptions.

"Some human resources systems work better than others," he says. "But in general, if a company's workers feel like human beings rather than costs, that impression has a positive impact on many organizational outcomes, especially health and safety."

When the Minister of Training and Employment

Development asked the Association of University of New Brunswick Teachers (AUNBT) for a recommendation for the WHSCC Board, Mendelson's name was put forward.

"I am honoured to have been appointed to this Board," he says. "It's my first experience working on a formal Board, and I'm pleased to see that business is conducted by consensus, and not "groupthink." This Board keeps long-term effectiveness in mind as it operates. They don't rush decisions, and they understand the learning curve new members must work through."



Not surprisingly, Mendelson sees emphasizing prevention and education as critical to the Commission's success.

"I think continuing to foster public awareness of the preventable nature of accidents is key," he says. "But what does it take to change a mindset? What will it take to get all New Brunswickers to that place? It's a fascinating question."

Mendelson lives in Quispamsis with Laura Bond, his wife of seven years, and their nine "furry children": four dogs and five cats.

25TH ANNIVERSARY WHSCC HEALTH AND SAFETY CONFERENCE A LANDMARK EVENT

This past October 23rd – 25th saw the WHSCC celebrating the silver anniversary of its annual Health and Safety Conference with more than 500 delegates from across Canada.

"We are so pleased to be celebrating this landmark anniversary," says Douglas C. Stanley, President and CEO of the WHSCC. "To have reached such a milestone really speaks to the enduring value of an event like this, and to the hard work staff have put into making each conference a worthwhile investment for delegates, year after year."

This year's event included a wide variety of workshops, with updated sessions covering the fundamentals of health and safety, and new sessions such as determining competency, training for Joint Health and Safety Committee members, and claims adjudication and accident reporting.

"This year's conference program included some really interesting opportunities for delegates," says Dave Greason, Vice President of the WHSCC's WorkSafe Services Division. "An exciting plenary session debate on health and safety philosophies proved to be a highlight, as was the



WHSCC HEALTH AND SAFETY CONFERENCE

CONFÉRENCE EN MATIÈRE DE SANTÉ ET DE SÉCURITÉ DE LA CSSIAT

2005

sold-out tradeshow. The banquet and dinner theatre anniversary celebration was also a special event."

At this year's Awards Breakfast, the WHSCC honoured management and workers at Miramichi

Structurwood (Weyerhaeuser) and Villa St-Joseph Inc., in recognition of their health and safety efforts over the past year. The WHSCC also recognized the New Brunswick Construction Safety Association's continued commitment to providing high quality safety training

programs.

"This year's conference was a celebration of the committed effort that thousands of delegates have made, over the years, to address health and safety in their workplaces by educating themselves, learning from others, and sharing their successes," Greason says.

HARD WORK AND FAMILY SUPPORT GENERATE AMAZING RECOVERY

On October 24, 2004, Kevin McAllister was working beneath the trailer of a large transport truck in the service shop owned by his employer, Bayview International.

"I was taking apart one of the airbags," McAllister explains.

Large pressurized airbags, located at each axle of a trailer, are an important part of a trailer's suspension system. They are used to maintain constant ride height, and improve ride quality when the trailer is fully loaded.

As McAllister worked on the airbag, it suddenly kicked out of place. Under significant pressure, it ejected from its housing and the unit's metal base struck him violently on the forehead.

"I woke up a little while later," McAllister says. "I tried to get up, but my co-workers told to me wait for the ambulance."

He was taken to the Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital in Fredericton, where the wound on his head was stitched, to stop the bleeding. From there he was transferred to the St. John Regional Hospital for surgery to repair a fractured skull.

"The impact of the airbag crushed part of my skull against my brain," McAllister explains. "Bits of bone needed to be removed in order for everything to heal properly, and the damaged part of my skull was replaced with a metal plate."

McAllister was kept unconscious for three days, during which time his health care providers would not speculate on his prognosis.

"My parents were really worried," he says. "My friends and family – and even people I didn't know – did a lot of praying for me."

After McAllister was allowed to regain consciousness, he remembers getting CAT-scans, and having severe headaches and vision problems.

He spent two weeks in the hospital, recovering from the surgery. During that time, he was told that his driver's license was suspended – a routine precaution for an injury of this kind.

"My memory of my time in hospital is a little foggy," McAllister says. "But I do remember my headaches gradually getting better."

He was eventually discharged to the care of his parents, and started outpatient treatment as part of the recovery process.

McAllister describes the symptoms of his head injury – especially the vision problems – as "very frustrating."

He received outpatient care with Dr. Lecky at the Stan Cassidy Centre, and visits from Colleen Kinch, a WHSCC Occupational Therapist.

"Colleen would give me math tests to do, and ask me to count money – things like



"My parents were really worried," he says. "My friends and family – and even people I didn't know – did a lot of praying for me."

that," McAllister says. "Dr. Lecky administered eye tests, and also gave me challenging concentration and memory tests. He would tell me the names of 10 or 20 objects, and then we'd have a long conversation. At the end, he'd ask me to recall the names of the objects we discussed. It was hard!"

During his recovery period, McAllister had two eye tests performed, and the second showed how dramatic his improvement was - it revealed 20/20 vision.

"In January I underwent one and a half days of testing, and at the end, my driver's license was reinstated," he says. "After that, Colleen and I met with my employer to discuss my abilities and set up a return-to-work schedule. They were really supportive."

McAllister describes his return to work as a slow and steady process. By March 19th, 2005, however, he was back to full hours and full duties.

"I was a bit nervous about going back to work," he says. "Things had changed since my accident, so I needed to learn my way around new equipment. I also needed to get my confidence back."

Now he reports things are back to normal.

"I've even changed airbags since I've been back," McAllister smiles.

He explains that his accident left a positive impact on his work – he's more safety-conscious now than he was before his injury.

"I don't want to end up back at the Regional," he says with a laugh.

Moncton Publishing – An employee was controlling bundles of paper when his hand was drawn into an unguarded pinchpoint on a conveyor system. The employee suffered broken bones and burns on his hand. The employer was charged for failing to provide a safeguard where an employee may come into contact with a pinchpoint. The employer entered a guilty plea, and was fined \$3,000.

H.A. Fawcett & Son, Limited – A conveyor became jammed and two employees worked on it without locking it out. One employee was holding a drive belt when another employee started the machine. The employee holding the drive belt suffered injuries to his hand. The employer was charged with a lockout offence, entered a guilty plea, and was fined a total of \$5,000.

Michael Smith – A conveyor became jammed at a mill owned by H.A. Fawcett & Son, Limited and several employees worked on it without locking it out. One employee was holding a drive belt when Smith started the machine. The employee holding the drive belt suffered injuries to his hand. Smith was charged with a lockout offence, entered a guilty plea, and was fined a total of \$300.

Andrew Steeves – A conveyor became jammed at a mill owned by H.A. Fawcett & Son, Limited and several employees worked on it without locking it out. Steeves was holding a drive belt when another employee started the machine. Steeves suffered injuries to his hand. Steeves was charged with a lockout offence, entered a guilty plea, but was not fined in recognition of the injuries he suffered.

Regent Construction Inc. – The employer was contracted to rebuild a section of a roof that had fiberglass panels in some places. The building owner warned the contractor's supervisor about them. The supervisor went onto the roof to clear snow, walked on one of the fiberglass panels, and fell through. The supervisor suffered a broken leg and some bruising. The employer was charged with failing to provide fall arrest equipment, entered a guilty plea, and was fined \$2,000.

Guy's Welding Ltée/Ltd. – The employer was contracted to install decking on a 14' roof, and employees were not using fall arrest gear. One employee fell and suffered serious injuries. The employer was charged with failing to provide the necessary equipment, entered a guilty plea, and was fined \$5,000.

Kevin Annis – Annis was a supervisor for Guy's Welding Ltée/Ltd.. The employer was contracted to install decking on a 14' roof and employees were not using fall arrest gear. One employee fell and suffered serious injuries. Annis was charged with failing to provide the necessary equipment, entered a guilty plea, and was fined \$500.

Shermag Inc. – An employee was instructed to use a machine that he had not used before, and was given no training on its safe operation. The employee's hand came into contact with a saw blade and he suffered partial amputation of several fingers. The employer was charged with failing to provide the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure an employee's health and safety. The employer entered a guilty plea and was fined a total of \$8,400.

Eric McLenaghan, carrying on business as Eastwind Specialty Veneers – An employee was injured in an electrical accident and the WHSCC was not notified so that an investigation could be conducted. The employer was charged with failing to notify the WHSCC of an accident, entered a guilty plea, and was fined a total of \$1,200.

TRASH COMPACTOR FATALITY

A 22-year-old worker sustained a fatal head injury while checking a vertical cardboard bale compactor. The feedgate was in the open position, and the ramming plate was in the raised position. It is believed that the victim heard a noise in the machine and put his head into the opening to investigate. The hydraulic cylinder, which held the ramming plate up in the air, broke off at the joint, causing the plate to slide down rapidly. The young worker's head was caught in between the plate and the top of the bale chamber door, causing immediate and fatal injuries.

The unit functioned in such a way that when cardboard was piled evenly in the chamber, the plate could come down and crush the cardboard without putting stress on the cylinder rod and connection pin. If, however, cardboard was not placed squarely in the middle of the chamber, when the plate was lowered, it compressed the

cardboard unevenly, causing stress at the joints. It was found that the vertical cylinder rod broke due to fatigue at the joint where the rod connected to the pin. Due to repeated bending of the ram during compression of the uneven cardboard, there was excessive force on the connecting area, which led to a failure at the joint. On several



previous occasions, the ram became wedged sideways when compressing uneven loads, and a metal rod was used to pry it back into place. The bale compactor was not certified nor designed by an engineer, and had been in service for only seven months at the time of the accident.

[hazard alert]

RECOMMENDED PREVENTATIVE ACTION

1. Proper design: A bale compactor must be designed using an established standard or code such as the ANSI standard Z245.51-2004 for Equipment Technology and Operations for Waste and Recyclable Materials – Baling Equipment – Safety Requirements. The ram and cylinder in all bale compactors should be inspected regularly for any signs of wear. A secondary safeguard that holds the plate in the event of a cylinder failure or hydraulic fluid leak should be standard in the manufacturing of these units.

2. Information: The manufacturer must supply information regarding the proper installation, operation, and maintenance of the units.

3. Training: It is essential that employees be trained in proper procedures and maintenance of these units. All users must keep any part of their bodies out of the machine at all times, except to enter the unit to remove the bale. When it becomes necessary to remove the baled cardboard, there must be a means of blocking the plate so it cannot fall on the workers while they are inside.

E-NEWS PUBLICATION A HIT

After seven information-filled issues, we decided it was time to ask WHSCC E-News subscribers what they think about the publication. Here's what they said:

"We are a small office, and our risk for on-the-job injury would be deemed very low, but I have learned a lot that applies to us from reading your newsletters! For instance, I was not aware of the changes regarding first-aid kits. Thanks to you, we are compliant! Keep up the good work."

"I find you supply a wide variety of information. I find it all very interesting. I enjoy reading about the recent accident reports..."

"...the best thing I like about E-News is the convenience of it."

"Since I started receiving the WHSCC E-News I have been able to pass on information to our Health and Safety Committee Chairperson. It certainly keeps us up to date

on what is happening. I find the "Recent Accident Report" section very interesting.

Keep up the good work."

"Very well laid out - easy to read - contains pertinent information - just long enough not to cause boredom."

"What I like the most is the "Alerts". They are written perfectly for me to put in our staff safety binders. I also like the accident reports."

"I just wanted to compliment you on this wonderful and informative information publication. I print this document out monthly and go over key items in the publication at our Health & Safety monthly meetings (we meet every two weeks). The majority of the committee do like to hear about the Accident Reports.

We go over the accidents that have happened in our region and discuss if we possibly would have a similar incident happen at our property."

If you haven't yet added your name to our list of subscribers, now's your chance! Simply click the WHSCC E-News Subscribe icon on the home page of our website, and take a moment to give us your e-mail contact information. You'll join more than 2,000 members of the E-News subscriber community, and begin receiving free, convenient, and up-to-the-minute health and safety news on a monthly basis.

ACT NOW: All new subscribers between November 1st and December 31st will be entered to win a first aid kit!

- *The Small Business Guide to Health and Safety*
- *2004 Report to Stakeholders*
- *Planning a Residential Construction or Renovation Project? Don't Forget to Build In Safety!*

Hazard Alerts

- *Trash Compactor Fatality*
- *Worker Crushed While Unloading a Waste Container*
- *Environmental Conditions Create Unsafe Working Conditions*

[did you know?]



Danielle Hey shows ferry passenger Don McBrien how to prevent whiplash injuries.

WRC Therapists Spread the Word!

National Physiotherapy Month was celebrated this year between April 23rd and May 23rd. To mark the occasion, therapists at the Workers' Rehabilitation Centre (WRC) decided to spread a valuable prevention message. On May 13th, three groups of three physios went to the Westfield ferry landing in Grand Bay-Westfield, and spent the morning handing out brochures designed to educate drivers on how to prevent whiplash injuries through the proper adjustment of car seat headrests.

[frequently asked questions]

Question: "I own a plumbing business and employ eight people. Only five of them are plumbers, and the rest are office support. Why do I pay the same assessment rate for my office workers as I do for my actual plumbers?"

Answer: There are several steps involved in determining the assessed premium your business pays each year for workers' compensation insurance coverage. The first step in the process is to assign your business a Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code. These codes are assigned based on your primary business activity, and not the occupation of each worker employed.

There are a number of reasons why all workers' compensation commissions and boards across Canada use *industry* classifications rather than *occupational* classifications to calculate assessed premiums:

- **Simplicity:** attempting to classify employees individually would mean vastly more complicated guidelines and reporting and auditing procedures. The result would be much higher administration costs, which would be passed on to the employer.
- **Decreased fraud:** there would be a greater risk of error, and opportunity for fraud by reporting individuals in the wrong occupational category. This would mean more auditing and investigating, and again, higher costs.
- **No change in claim costs:** in 2004, employers collectively paid \$142.8 million in assessed premiums. If the WHSCC used an occupational classification system, employers would still need to pay that amount to cover the cost of claims. This means that although the rate for some occupations would decrease, the rate for other occupations would increase by a corresponding amount, in order for the amount of premiums collected to remain the same.
- **Stability:** occupational ratings would require far more classifications than are now currently used. Each classification would have fewer members, and would therefore be a less stable statistical base on which to establish rates, which would result in widely fluctuating assessment rates from year to year.

If you have any questions about the way your premium is calculated, please refer to the WHSCC guidebook Worker's Compensation: A Guide for New Brunswick Employers, or call 1 800 222-9645.

GETTING HURT REALLY STINKS!

Stella the Safety Skunk Takes New Brunswick Elementary Schools by Storm!

A charming hand-puppet bobs enthusiastically at the end of Silvy Moleman's arm. You can't help but notice the telltale white stripe running down its back.

"We are really excited about our new Stella the Safety Skunk program," says Moleman, Youth Programs Coordinator for the WHSCC. "She's going to help New Brunswick's teachers instill valuable health and safety skills in children from kindergarten to grade two."

September 2005 marked the launch of the Department of Education's new You and Your World curriculum, and Stella is built right in.



"Wendy McIsaac, Youth Education Coordinator at the Workers' Compensation Board of Prince Edward Island initially developed the Stella program for use in their school system," Moleman says. "We liked what we saw – and when we were notified that New Brunswick's Department of Education was working on a new curriculum for young students – we realized we had an opportunity."

With P.E.I.'s permission, Moleman borrowed the Stella framework, and adapted it to mesh with the new curriculum with the help of Mark Holland, Keith McAlpine and Joanne Williams, curriculum consultants with the NB Department of Education.

"Stella gives us the chance to reach our youngest

"elementary school is where a child's sense of responsibility for themselves and others is nurtured." – Silvy Moleman, Youth Programs Coordinator for the WHSCC

students," Moleman says. "That's an opportunity that can't be passed up, because elementary school is where a child's sense of responsibility for themselves and others is nurtured. We designed our program to build on that – and enhance children's interest, understanding and acceptance of health and safety principles."

New Brunswick's Stella program includes a comprehensive resource guide for teachers, a poster, four safety literacy books for the school library, removable tattoos and pencils for all students in kindergarten through grade two, and the all-important puppet.

"The skunk is a great mascot for a safety program," Moleman explains. "Children learn how skunks use a

variety of warning and defence mechanisms to help them stay safe, and then through Stella's classroom activities, they learn how they can do the same."

At press-time, Stella the Safety Skunk packages had have been requested by more than 60 New Brunswick elementary schools, and Moleman expects a full roll out to an additional 100 schools in the coming months. Work is also underway to connect the Stella program with the province's French-language curriculum, and the WHSCC plans to introduce it into French schools province-wide in 2006.

SMALL BUSINESS GUIDE TO HEALTH AND SAFETY SUCCESS STORIES

At press time, two companies have reported successful completion of all three stages of the WHSCC's new *Small Business Guide to Health and Safety*. The Guide – launched in August of this year – is an interactive tool specifically designed to help small businesses protect workers from injuries and occupational diseases.

"This is a major initiative for us," says David Greason,

Vice President of WHSCC's WorkSafe Services Division. "We know small businesses may have limited resources to devote to developing health and safety programs, so we designed the Guide to be straightforward and easy to use. We're excited to see that it's working for small business in New Brunswick."

The *Small Business Guide to Health and Safety* is an interactive, easy-to-use mini CD-Rom presentation that walks users through the basic steps of building a health and safety program. Users can progress at their own pace: learning about legislated requirements, identifying their workplace hazards, implementing solutions to eliminate those hazards, and appointing health and safety representatives.

"We believe health and safety planning is critical for small businesses," Greason says. "When you consider the costs associated with replacing an injured worker, other related accident costs, and the tight margins many small businesses operate under, injury prevention doesn't just make sense – it becomes a financial imperative."

Congratulations go to the following companies, who have reported completing Step 3 of the *Small Business Guide to Health and Safety*.

Ossekeag Publishing
Hampton NB
Technico Inc
Saint John, NB

WRC CLINICIANS ARE ON THE GO

The Workers' Rehabilitation Centre showcased some of the important research being done at the Centre through paper presentations at recent events in the fields of occupational therapy and rehabilitation.

Dennis Sennett, Kathy Calvin and Peter Ferris presented "Biofeedback: An Enhancement of Amputee Rehabilitation" to the Myoelectric Controls conference in Fredericton, a 5-day conference attended by clinicians, manufacturers and researchers from around the world.

The presentation illustrated the development of an in-depth myoelectric training program for amputee clients, instituted through the Centre's Assistive Devices Program (ADP).

The new program was developed with the assistance of a physiotherapist with specialized training in biofeedback. Two new approaches were instituted, each generating valuable benefits to clients:

- The first approach focussed attention on the condition of the residual limb, allowing clinicians to identify problems such as cold limb,

muscle tension and phantom limb pain. These issues, once isolated, were then resolved through a combination of biofeedback and autogenic relaxation techniques.

- The second approach focussed on the preparatory work required in advance of the provision of a myoelectric prosthesis, such as: electrode site location, reduction of co-contraction, and improved muscle endurance.

To enhance the ADP's ability to deliver these services, assessment equipment options were enhanced, improved prosthetic hardware options were made available to clients, and a more extensive myoelectric home training program was put into practice.

Kathy Calvin presented "Can't Touch That ... Post Nerve Injury: Detecting Hypersensitivity and

Establishing an Effective Desensitization Program" at the OT Atlantic Conference 2005, "Jazzing Up Your Practice" hosted by the New Brunswick Association of Occupational Therapists in Fredericton.

Calvin, an Occupational Therapist with more than 20 years experience, presented an approach for assessing the hypersensitive – developed through her clinical practice, and based on repeated successful interventions with clients. The methods for assessment, client education, communication, documentation and tools for establishing a home program were outlined, with case examples provided for illustration purposes.

Hypersensitivity to temperature (cold), touch, or vibration has a strong impact on a person's ability to return to work. The injury may be healed, and the hand fully functional, but the client cannot tolerate a cold environment or vibration as these stimuli are misinterpreted as painful.

Calvin's approach to these clients involves educating them about their condition and treatment, to allow them to be their own "therapist". The desensitization protocol then enables the client to gradually normalize their interpretation of the stimulus, and eventually enjoy a successful return to work and preaccident activities.

WHSCC Workshops

Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) Core Training – 3 days – Learn what's necessary for you to be an effective JHSC member.

- February 14-16, 2006: Bathurst (French), Edmundston (French), and Moncton (English).
- February 21-23, 2006: Beresford (English), Fredericton (English), Moncton (French), Saint John (English), St. Stephen (English), Woodstock (English).
- March 21-23, 2006: Moncton (English), Tracadie (French), Saint-Léonard (French).
- March 28-30, 2006: Fredericton (English), Miramichi (English), Moncton (English), Perth-Andover (English), Saint John (English), St. Stephen (English).

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) – half day – Learn the basics of WHMIS: protect yourself and your co-workers.

- April 11, 2006: Edmundston (French), Fredericton (English), Moncton (English), Saint John (English), Tracadie (French).
- April 12, 2006: Moncton (French), St. Stephen (English).
- April 19, 2006: Moncton (English).
- April 20, 2006: Bathurst (English), Woodstock (English).

Lock Out and Tag – 1 day – Does your workplace have machinery that requires maintenance, repair, adjustment and cleaning? Learn how proper lockout procedures eliminate hazards that can lead to serious injuries.

- April 25, 2006: Caraquet (French), Edmundston (French), Fredericton (English), Moncton (English), Saint John (English).
- April 26, 2006: Belledune (English), Moncton (French), Saint-Quentin (French), St. Stephen (English), Sussex (English).
- April 27, 2006: Miramichi (English), Woodstock (English).

To register call 1 800 222-9775.

April 28, 2006 – Day of Mourning

On April 28, the WHSCC invites you to join workers, their families, employers and government representatives in paying tribute to those who were injured, killed or suffer from an occupational disease as a result of their work.

[noteworthy]

INTERESTING LINK

World Health Authorities Prepare For Influenza Season and Potential Pandemic.

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety has published an article discussing the likelihood of a global influenza pandemic. Use the link below to access an online version of the article, and learn about what Canada is doing to limit such an outbreak, as well as what you can do to reduce flu transmission at your workplace.

www.whscc.nb.ca/pub/influenza.pdf