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NEWS RELEASE

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A YX]U7 cb]UW Mary Tucker, Manager of Communications
 WorkSafeNB
 Telephone: 506 632-2828 or 1 800 222-9775

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: fYXYf]Wcb: On October 13, at its Company Recognition Awards Breakfast, WorkSafeNB recognized Belle Île Fisheries Ltd. and the City of Edmundston for their impressive efforts in improving workplace health and safety. The breakfast was part of WorkSafeNB's 31st Annual Health and Safety Conference, held in Fredericton October 12-14.

Located in Sainte-Marie-Saint-Raphaël, Belle Île Fisheries Ltd. harvests and processes seafood from the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. The plant workers log long hours to get snow crab and other delicacies from the processing plant to consumers in the United States and Japan, but producing these products is a repetitious and labour-intensive affair. Workers contend with a large number of safety risks, particularly soft tissue injuries resulting from repetitive movements and standing in one spot for long periods of time. Despite this, the company hasn't filed a lost-time claim in over six years and, as a result, boasts assessment rates that are considerably lower than the industry-average.

The City of Edmundston was selected after a marked improvement in its health and safety record over the past few years. City employees work in offices, on construction sites and in industrial settings, to name a few. They can be involved in high-risk activities like trenching, working with heavy equipment and machinery, working from heights and working with electricity. Before a renewed focus towards health and safety, city employees were suffering workplace injuries at a troubling rate. However, since introducing WorkSafeNB's 5*22 program in 2008, the city has managed to cut its lost-time claims by almost 50%.

"These employees and employers both have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to safe work practices and to a safe workplace," Shelly Dauphinee, vice-president of WorkSafeNB's WorkSafe Services Division said. "They have also shown exceptional leadership and innovation in promoting a safety culture, and, in doing so, they've not only significantly reduced workplace injuries but they've significantly decreased their premiums and improved their bottom line. We appreciate their commitment to the health and safety of workers and hope this example will inspire other employers to learn."

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From Belle Île Fisheries Ltd., left to right: Laurie Robichaud, Nathalie Larocque, Rénaud Guignard, Adam Chiasson.



From the City of Edmundston, left to right: Luc Tardif, Rachel Comeau, Pierre Schelling.