

From: Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation on behalf of Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation
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BWC eNews



October 2015

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BWC eBriefs

Workers' comp fraud case in the news



A BWC fraud case involving a Columbus area construction worker was

BWC ending mandatory coverage for volunteer officers of nonprofits

A recent legislative change will soon have a positive impact on Ohio's nonprofit organizations.

BWC no longer requires nonprofits to have workers' compensation coverage for their volunteer corporate officers. In turn, this means nonprofits will no longer need to pay premiums for these individuals.

Historically, Ohio law required corporate officers – whether paid or unpaid – to have workers' compensation coverage. The premium payments associated with this coverage often meant nonprofits with volunteer corporate officers had to pay premiums that could negatively impact already tight budgets.

Proposed and supported by BWC, this much-needed law change removes an unnecessary financial burden on Ohio's non-profits. This will free up more money for non-profit organizations to provide services that help local communities throughout the state.

If it wishes, a nonprofit may still cover a volunteer officer by reporting any amount of payroll for that individual. This will trigger minimum reporting requirements and associated premiums for the employee.

If you have questions, please email BWCTPAForum@bwc.state.oh.us, or call 1-800-OHIOBWC.

recently featured on WSYX 6. Watch [here](#) and [contact us](#) if you suspect workers' compensation fraud.

Monthly safety news

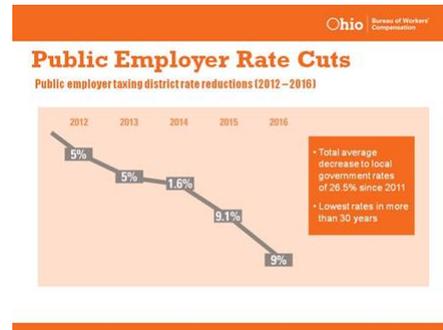
Check out this month's Safety Update, which can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

BWC launches new blog

We just launched a new blog! Your link to even more important stuff about Ohio's workers' comp system is now [here](#).

Average workers' comp rates for local government employers falling once again

The BWC Board of Directors approved a nine percent reduction in average workers' comp rates for Ohio's 3,800 local government employers beginning Jan. 1, 2016. The reduction, combined with decreases implemented during the past five years, will result in a total average decrease to local government rates of 26.5 percent since 2011.



The Jan. 1 effective date for the new public employer rates is the same day local governments will begin paying premiums under a new system that allows employers to pay in advance for the upcoming year of coverage.

Savings from the ability to collect premiums in advance of coverage accounts for 3.9 percent of the proposed overall reduction of nine percent. Additionally, BWC is providing a premium credit to all employers totaling \$1.2 billion to avoid double-billing during the transition; an estimated \$200 million of that total will be credited to the accounts of local government employers beginning next May.

Ohio employers approved for more than \$2.8 million in workplace safety grants

BWC recently approved 105 safety intervention grants for Ohio employers totaling more than \$2.8 million. The Safety Intervention Grant Program provides matching funds to Ohio employers to purchase equipment that will substantially reduce or eliminate workplace injuries and illnesses.

Employers in both the public and private sectors will receive grant funds. These employers represent a variety of industries, including construction, extraction, health care, manufacturing, schools, service, townships, transportation, villages and utilities.

Learn more about the Safety Intervention Grant Program and view a full listing of entities recently approved for grants at [bwc.ohio.gov](#). View stories about previous grant recipients on [BWC's YouTube channel](#).

BWC to fund additional research into occupational safety and health

BWC will soon increase its investment in research targeting innovative approaches to preventing injuries and illnesses among Ohio's workforce. Earlier this year, nine grants totaling \$2 million were awarded to six Ohio universities through the Occupational Safety and Health Research Program. BWC is now making an additional \$1 million available through the program and expects to announce selected proposals early next year.

The program was created as part of Another Billion Back, the plan that returned \$1 billion in rebates to Ohio employers in 2014 and allotted dollars to promote occupational safety and health research.

"Workplace safety and accident prevention have long been part of our mission at BWC," said BWC Administrator/CEO Steve Buehrer. "We are excited to support research that could shift thinking on current workplace safety practices in Ohio and across the country."

Research is currently under way at the Ohio State University, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland State University, Bowling Green State University, Ohio University and the University of Cincinnati. Those institutions are conducting research in a number of areas from safe patient handling in nursing homes, total worker health and fitness, wearable technology, and ergonomic standards for pushing and pulling.

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