

Memo

Date: September 3, 2010
To: ICBA Members
From: Philip Hochstein, President
Subject: WorkSafe BC Rates and Claims

RATES:

WorkSafeBC has released its preliminary rates for 2011. These rates are subject to approval by the WorkSafeBC board so they could change.

You can connect to the preliminary rates page – and the rate for your classification – on the WorkSafe website at <http://tinyurl.com/3y3mac3>.

CLAIMS:

The construction industry numbers are in at WorkSafeBC and there were continued improvements in on-the-job safety with a 30% drop in number of claims, a 22% drop in injury rate, and a 14% drop on serious injury rate

Of course we always want to see lower claim and injury rates. But part of what was driving this decline was a drop in construction activity. WorkSafe reported a 10% drop in 2009 in the assessable payroll in the sector, and a 12% drop in employment in the same year.

Nowhere is the impact of the slowdown more pronounced than in claims from young workers – down 45%. Much of that was driven by the lack of work for junior workers.

Though there's no official numbers for 2010 so far, all indications are that claim volumes are continuing to fall while the employment losses have leveled off and job numbers are up slightly. The injury rate also appears to be continuing its downward trend.

One troubling development, though, is the increase in the average duration of short-term disability claims. They have climbed from 53 days to 65 days. And so far this year it looks like STD is continuing to rise – negating much of the other positive trends.

