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The Informer

A monthly newsletter addressing workplace safety by Iowa Municipalities Workers' Compensation Association .

Introducing the Safe Driver Manual

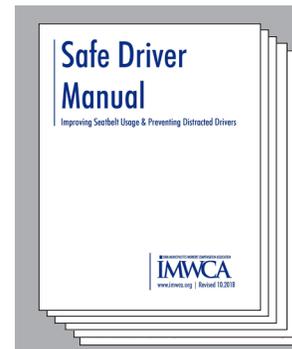
Incidents with vehicles remain as one of the top causes of injury among IMWCA members. Distracted driving has become a significant factor in the growing number of vehicle-related incidents, and the lack of seatbelt usage contributes heavily to the severity of vehicle-related claims. When the two factors are combined the compounded effect on large, costly injuries becomes staggering.

IMWCA has previously adopted a policy requiring members adopt and implement a seatbelt policy that goes beyond state law. The result was a decline in seatbelt incidents for members who adopted and consistently enforce the policy. Conversely, members who do not have a separate policy or have not enforced their policy continue to see significant losses. A recent review of claims showed three of the largest claims in 2018 involved truck drivers not wearing seatbelts and being distracted in some fashion while driving.

The new Safe Driver Manual has a model seatbelt policy that also covers off-road equipment and passengers. The model policy also clarifies who qualifies for the slow-moving route exception defined in state law, which is generally misinterpreted to be broader than it really is. In addition, the new model also makes clear that management is responsible for the enforcement of the policy.

The manual includes commonly asked questions, seatbelt facts and seatbelt-related training IMWCA members can access through the IMWCA Online Safety University.

Distracted driving has become a bigger issue as more employees rely on cell phones to communicate personal and work needs. The model policy defined distracted driving and sets guidelines for employees to follow to safely use personal communication devices. Some of the updates include use of hands-free technology which is now available in more trucks and heavy equipment.



Find the pdf
manual under
Loss Control >
Model Programs
at
www.imwca.org.

The policy also addresses operating vehicles and equipment while taking medications, being ill or fatigued. Employers should review their policies on how to address employees who may be impaired due to illness or using medications while working. This is a policy very similar to what is used by the Iowa League of Cities, and therefore followed by IWMCA administrative staff.

To help curtail the number of needless vehicle and equipment-related claims, IMWCA hopes members will utilize this manual to give employees and management more tools to be safe drivers. At the end of the day, the manual is about getting wherever you're going, including home, safe.

Company Nurse triage services

Reporting injuries through Company Nurse has been mandatory for IMWCA members since 2009. IMWCA's partnership with Company Nurse allows injured workers to report an injury immediately following an accident. If the injury is not a medical emergency, the injured worker should call Company Nurse prior to seeking medical treatment. If the injury is a medical emergency, call 911 or transport the injured worker to the emergency room. Once the injured worker has stabilized, call Company Nurse to report the injury.

The injured worker will initially speak with an Injury Care Coordinator who records the injury and incident information. The injured worker is then offered to be transferred to a registered nurse who will provide First Aid advice and, if needed, direct the employee to the appropriate level of care.

The nurses the injured employees speak with at Company Nurse do not diagnose injuries. They do perform a triage process that will guide the employee to the appropriate level of care based on the information gathered

during the phone call. Possible outcomes of the triage process are:

- Self/home care
- Basic first aid
- Referral to your designated clinic
- Referral to Urgent Care
- Referral to an emergency room

Employees with minor injuries may be advised to seek medical treatment within 48-72 hours following the injury. An employee's refusal to seek the recommended medical treatment will be documented in the report, and the claim will be coded as an "incident only" claim.

One advantage of using Company Nurse is cost savings. Having a medical professional direct your injured employees to the appropriate level of care should result in fewer emergency room visits and fewer claims if first aid or self-care can be administered. Remember, the Company Nurse Injury Hotline is available 24 hours per day, seven days a week, and all holidays.



Agent training seminar in January

County Risk Management Services (CRMS) is hosting its second annual educational seminar for all IMWCA and ICAP insurance agents.

The seminar is designed to elevate the level of service and information that members receive from their local agent, and will include two seminars on two separate dates: Wednesday, Jan. 16 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Johnston and Thursday, Jan. 17 at Boulders Conference Center in Denison. Each seminar will start at 9 a.m. and end around 2 p.m.

There is no cost to the agent, and lunch is included. Classes have been approved for three hours of continuing education credits through the Iowa Insurance Division. Registration is available at www.crmsia.com/crms-educational-event.

Seeking loss control representative

IMWCA is hiring a new loss control representative. Under the direction of the loss control manager, this person is responsible for conducting on-site loss control visits with members, advising municipal officials of programs to minimize injuries, analyzing exposures, advising and assisting in developing and implementing risk management programs to control exposures, and investigating and analyzing specific incidents.

With the upcoming retirement of Ed Morrison in July, IMWCA has some big shoes to replace. If you're interested in this position, or know someone who should apply, check out the full job posting online, then send resume and cover letter by January 31 to jeffhovey@iowaleague.org.

Annual Financial Report available

Audited financial information for IMWCA, including the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report as of June 30, 2018, is available online. Visit www.imwca.org, then choose "Financials" in the "About IMWCA" tab.



The end of the season(al employee)

Dashing through the snow in a 200 horsepower rig, o're the roads we go, sanding all the way...

As the temperature falls and the ground becomes white we roll into one of the two main times of year that public entities use seasonal employees. Previous articles in this newsletter have covered how to recruit seasonal employees, as well as what to do when a seasonal employee does not work out. Now it is time to look at steps to take to properly end the employment of high-performing seasonal employees.

It is important to remember that for all intents and purposes seasonal employees should be treated the same as other employees. A good off-boarding process for your employees, especially for your seasonal employees, is imperative if you have any intention of bringing them back for the next season.

First of all, have an end date set ahead of time, and if this is not possible try to give the seasonal employee at least a two week notice. This courtesy allows the employee to make arrangements for after their current season ends.

Next consider a performance evaluation. As much as performance evaluations tend to be a dreaded action,

completing one for a seasonal employee can be an important tool. Not only does it provide necessary documentation on the employee's performance, it also provides the seasonal employee with recognition and praise for their performance. A seasonal evaluation form does not need to be the same as the one used for regular employees; it can be a shorter, more-concise form as long as you evaluate all seasonal employees in that department with the same form.

Once an end date is selected, hold an exit interview as close to the end date as possible. An exit interview allows the employee to provide open, honest feedback in a safe environment. This setting can also provide a format to determine if the employee has a desire or intention to return the next season, which can be the first step in hiring for your next season.

As you finalize the off-boarding process be sure to follow the check list you use for regular, full-time and part-time employees so as not to miss an important step.



Only for the month of January, IMWCA's free Online University offers the course *Family Medical Leave Act*.

Take advantage of this limited opportunity for some great training, and check out all the courses in the Online University. The core curriculum includes nearly 90 courses, some of which qualify for CEUs. Learn more at www.imwca.org.

IMWCA Informer is a monthly newsletter published by the Iowa Municipalities Workers' Compensation Association (IMWCA) in cooperation with the Iowa League of Cities. View past issues online at www.imwca.org.

Comments or suggestions: contact Bethany Crile, newsletter editor, at (515) 244-7282 or bethanycrile@iowaleague.org.

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