

COMP BITS

January 2020

- Enrollment for the 2020 Traditional Group Rating discount program is now closed.
- The Ohio BWC Annual Safety Congress & Expo will be held in Columbus this year from March 11th thru March 13th. The Expo features numerous free educational sessions, workshops and training programs in all areas of occupational health and safety. Employers can enroll online at ohiosafetycongress.com.
- In addition, BWC provides two monthly webinars on the second Tuesday and fourth Thursday of each month. The programs are free and last 20-25 minutes per session. Employers can participate via the link: Monthly Employer Update Webinars on the BWC website.
- If your company does not have a Company Safety Manual and does not provide initial and annual safety training to employees, you may be in violation of federal law. OSHA penalties are very harsh and frequently issued to employers as a result of on-the-job injuries subsequently investigated by OSHA. BMSO can provide a comprehensive safety manual with detailed safety policies and procedures. We also have an extensive library of safety training programs and related materials to assist your company with compliance to OSHA standards. Call Bob Carr at (330) 856-9213 or email at bcarr@bmsoinc.com for further information. Putting this off can be very expensive, not only in fines imposed, but significant legal costs and workers' comp costs.
- In 2017, Ohio recorded the second highest rate of opioid overdose deaths in the nation. 39.2 people out of every 100,000 Americans died as a result of opioid overdose. By now, everyone has probably heard about OxyContin, which is the term used for oxycodone hydrochloride, used for chronic pain relief. BWC will no longer authorize the use of OxyContin for workers' comp claims, but has replaced it with Xtampza ER, which is a slow release form of oxycodone. Employers should train their supervisors on the signs of possible opioid addiction which includes the following: sudden weight loss, frequent mood swings, pinpoint pupils, changes in personality, withdrawal from personal and family relationships, financial hardships and many other changes in personality and recognized behavior.
- According to the new BWC rules, the definition of voluntary abandonment can now be defined as:
 - Voluntary retirement - when an employee retires for reasons unrelated to the work related injury
 - Termination - when an employee is fired for violation of a known written rule or condition of employment
 - Abandonment - when an employee is capable of performing light-duty or modified work but fails to return to work
- Every employer should be aware of the Rebuttable Presumption Rule in Ohio Workers' Comp Rules. Basically, it means that a workers' comp claim may be denied if the injured worker is proven to be intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance. Employers must post the Rebuttable

Presumption rule, must have a written policy outlining the drug testing and must have reasonable cause to obtain the drug test. Does your company perform random drug screens? What is your company policy?

Benefit Management Services of Ohio

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