

WorkSafeBC Rates Reduced for City of Parksville

The City of Parksville is on an impressive downward trend in its WorkSafeBC claims costs and experience rating. The safer we are the lower the premiums – the concept behind WorkSafeBC's experience rating plan.

In 2012, the City paid a surcharge of 26.5% over the base rate for the Local Government and Related Operations classification. There was a small decrease in the City's surcharge in 2013 to 24.4% and then in 2014, the surcharge has decreased to 9%. WSBC has indicated the downward trend will continue if the City continues its efforts to improve safety in the workplace. It is because of the commitment from all employees the City has been able to see significant improvements to costs.

"Everyone plays a vital role in the health and safety of the workplace; we congratulate our employees for a job well done," said Mayor Chris Burger. "Protecting people in the workplace is an ongoing priority for the City and top of mind for employees."

The preliminary forecast for 2015 will see the City actually attain a discount to the projected base rate for its classification, based on our safety rating (low claims costs and low experience rating). Employers who work safely can earn discounts on their base rate of up to 50 percent over time. Firms working less safely may face surcharges of up to 100 percent on their base rate over time. WorkSafeBC has set the average base premium rate for 2015 at \$1.70 per \$100 of employers' assessable payroll.

At a safety luncheon today, City employees were congratulated for their successful efforts to reduce and prevent workplace injuries. Employees are committed to safety and to continually improving the City's safety program and culture to reduce and prevent accidents and injuries and subsequent claims and their duration. Working together, first aid attendants, supervisors and workers strive to get employees back to work faster or provide opportunities to keep injured employees at work through the enhancement of a return-to-work/stay-at-work program.

"Senior management is committed to the core values of safety and have consistently worked to create a culture of health and safety. Everyone knows first-hand how important safety is to the City and for our employees, this culture of safety carries through to personal lives as well," said Fred Manson, Chief Administrative Officer. "The City's primary goal is to provide a safe work place for our employees and by doing this, the City also benefits through reductions in premium costs."

The City’s occupational health and safety component supports the City in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all employees and is committed to the prevention of injuries, to improving return-to-work/stay-at-work outcomes and to ongoing employee wellness.

Director of Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety, Shannon Kleibl, stated, “We are all responsible for safety at work. Management, supervisors and employees, first aid attendants and our Joint Health and Safety Committee recognize ‘we are all in this together’. This achievement is a direct result of effort and commitment; we should be proud of what we have accomplished and continue to work towards.”

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How the rates are set (from WSBC)

Employers are assigned to one of 549 classification units with other similar businesses. These classification units are then pooled into one of 62 insurance pools we refer to as rate groups. Employers in each rate group pay the costs of injuries and diseases that occur to the workers within the group, with the intent that each rate group be self-sufficient with regard to compensation costs. This limits cross-subsidization between industries, maintains relatively stable base premium rates, and limits growth of unfunded liabilities in the insurance pools. Each year, costs in some rate groups go up, some go down, and others stay the same. This year, 44 percent of employers will experience an increase to their industry base premium rate, 54 percent a decrease, and two percent will see little or no change.

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