

Health & Safety Alert

September 24, 2009

Union Affiliates & and Labour Council Leadership, please forward to your Health & Safety Activists.

Attention all Union Health & Safety Committee Members:

Has your Joint Health & Safety Committee had its annual eight (8) hour educational entitlement required under the **Workers Compensation Act**? If not, there is still time to take advantage of education opportunities provided by the BCFED Health & Safety Centre right in your region.

Remember that Section 135 of the **Workers' Compensation Act** states that:

- (1) Each member of a joint committee is entitled to an annual educational leave totaling 8 hours, or a longer period if prescribed by regulation, for the purposes of attending occupational health and safety training courses conducted by or with the approval of the Board.
- (2) A member of the joint committee may designate another member as being entitled to take all or part of the member's educational leave.
- (3) The employer must provide the educational leave under this section without loss of pay or other benefits and must pay for, or reimburse the worker for, the costs of the training course and the reasonable costs of attending the course.

As a worker Health & Safety activist, **you should be aware** of these facts:

- Educational leave should be discussed by the Committee and written request forwarded to the employer through the Joint Health & Safety Committee.
- The employer **must not unreasonably deny** this request. Disagreements under this provision are handled by the regional WCB officer.
- Committee members have the individual right to request training from a provider **of their choosing**. The entire Committee does not need to take training at the same time.
- Committee members may **give their annual eight hour entitlement to other members** on the Committee. This is done to facilitate taking more than one course per year or to take a course of longer duration, i.e., Health & Safety Level 1 or 2 at Harrison Winter School. This is advantageous for new members serving on a Committee.

- The BCFED Health & Safety Centre is funded by WCB to deliver Joint Health & Safety Committee training across BC. It is a **recognized training service provider** by WCB. Not all providers are. Go to http://www2.worksafebc.com/PDFs/SafetyUpdates/training_providers.pdf to see the recognized list.
- Some employers attempt to have in-house personnel provide employer-focused Health & Safety training to satisfy this **Regulation**. If the training you are offered is **not recognized** content by the WCB, this does **not satisfy** the requirement.
- Beware of the current employer push towards computer based online training. It is a fact that adult oriented classroom learning has been proven to be **the best** way adults learn, retain and put into practice new skills.
- The BCFED Health & Safety Centre is one of the **only** organizations that provides Health & Safety Education from a worker perspective.

BCFED Health & Safety Centre training sessions are open to not just union representatives. Non-union and management representatives are encouraged to attend this training. The Centre can also facilitate private workplace or union sessions upon request.

The Fall 2009 course calendar and descriptions can be found online at www.bcfedhsc.ca.

Any questions can be directed towards the BCFED Health & Safety Centre at 1.888.223.5669 or email ohsadmin@bcfed.ca.

You wouldn't let the employer ignore your Collective Agreement.

Don't let them ignore their educational responsibilities in the WCB Regulations.

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