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WSIB

ECAO’S WSIB Guide Now Available

If you haven’t taken the time to learn about the Workplace Safety and Insurance system before you have to report an incident, you’ve left it too late.

When one of your workers is injured, you are drawn into a world of forms, deadlines and responsibilities, most of which (unless you’ve been down the road before, or have a specialist on staff) you may not even be aware of. It can be confusing, time consuming, and costly unless you understand how the system is intended to work, and your role in it. ECAO’s latest publication, Contractor’s Guide to Workplace Safety and Insurance, was specifically written to provide contractors with the information they need to handle claims fairly and efficiently.

Jason Mandlowitz, now with the law firm Hicks Morley Hamilton Stewart Storie LLP (formerly Director of the Ministry of Labour’s Office of the Employer Advisor) and Rob Boswell, a lawyer specializing in employment law with Hicks Morley, carefully examine every aspect of workplace safety and insurance, and provide expert advice for every step along the way.

The Guide explains the origins and evolution of worker’s compensation in Ontario, the roles of each of the participants, how premium rates are calculated, and all the steps and responsibilities involved in a claim. Other topics examined include claims management, contracting and subcontracting, incident and accident investigations, and compliance. All topics are discussed with a contractor’s interests in mind. And while the Guide was written primarily for electrical contractors, it has application for all construction trades.

WSIB GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE

This may not be the most entertaining book you read this year, but it could well be the one you recommend most often to your friends in this industry.

Order forms are available in the publications area of our website (www.ecao.org) or by contacting our office.

Glen Wright Returns

Glen Wright returned on June 1 to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) after taking a leave of absence last June. Prior to last June, Mr. Wright had been chair of the WSIB and had asked for a leave of absence for up to one year to chair Hydro One's interim board.

WEST NILE VIRUS

West Nile virus is a disease that is transmitted to humans by being bitten by infected mosquitos. Only 20% of infected people develop a mild flu-like form of the disease called West Nile fever, and only 1 in 150 will contract the severe neurological form of the disease, West Nile meningitis or encephalitis. Severe cases of this form can lead to brain damage, which can be permanent or even fatal.

While chances of contracting the serious form of the disease are remote, contractors who employ workers, especially in outdoor environments, should be aware of the symptoms and preventative measures.

People with the following symptoms should consult their doctor:

- fever
- muscle weakness
- severe headache, stiff neck
- convulsions or seizures
- sudden sensitivity to light or an inability to perform routine tasks
- extreme swelling or infection at the site of a mosquito bite

Preventative measures take a two pronged approach.

First, prevent mosquito bites.

- Workers, where possible should avoid working outdoors at dusk and dawn, when mosquitos are most active.
- Workers should wear long sleeves and long pants with the cuffs tucked into their socks.
- Exposed skin should be sprayed with an insect repellent containing DEET. A product with 6.5% DEET offers about 2 hours protection. 25% protects for about 5 hours. Heavy perspiration reduces the length of time the repellent is effective. The Ontario Government warns against using products with more than 30% DEET. The lowest effective concentration is recommended. Read and follow the instructions on the label.
- Do not apply repellents to skin under clothing. Spraying clothing helps prevent bites through the clothing.

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Second, eliminate standing water where mosquitos breed. Adult mosquitos can emerge in as little as four days after the egg is layed.

- Fill in any ruts or depressions where water can collect.
- Store wheelbarrows, pails, etc., upside-down. Ensure water can't collect in tarps.
- Check flat roofs for standing water and clean out all eavestroughs and downspouts.
- Remove any waste tires, buckets or containers from the site. If they can't be removed, put drain holes in them.

Again, the chance of contracting West Nile Virus is low at this time. However, it should be considered when working outdoors.

SKILLS COMPETITIONS

This year, in addition to staging the 14th Ontario Technological Skills Competition, RIM Park in Waterloo hosted Skills Canada's national competitions.

ECAO, through the Joint Electrical Promotion Plan, has been an active supporter of these competitions for many years, and this year was no exception.

ECAO and the IBEW joined with the other organized trades in the Ontario Construction Secretariat's area to provide hands-on displays for the thousands of students who visited the competition site. Visitors were able to make wire joints, bend conduit, splice communication cables and fit them with connectors, try a light bulb identification quiz and see displays of traffic control systems and advanced household wiring. For their participation, they were given an indoor frisbee and given information on how to enter the trade.

We also ran two wiring competitions, one for secondary school students and one for post-secondary students, as well as the network cabling specialist competition at the provincial level. The winner of the post-secondary competition went on to compete against nine other provincial winners at the national competition that we also ran.

Dave Spena, of Durham College, beat out Ken Rivers of Humber College and Robert Woods of Durham College in the Network Cabling Specialist competition.

In the secondary school wiring competition, gold went to Nathan Parsons of the Wellington Catholic Board. Silver was won by Darcy Martin of the Wellington District Board, and bronze went to Toronto's Andrew Bell.

At the post-secondary level, an ECAO/IBEW apprentice from Ottawa, Dave Powell, prevailed over two apprentices from Conestoga College, Scott Hickey and Ryan Rawn, who won silver and bronze, respectively.

Dave Powell went on to win the national competition. This is the second year in a row that one of our apprentices has won the Ontario event and gone on to win the nationals.

Coming up with the materials to stage these competitions is always a challenge, and with two competitions this year, it was even more so. ECAO and the IBEW are grateful to the following organizations for their help in this regard:

- Cooper Industries (Canada) Inc.

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- Quantech Electrical Contractors Limited
- JD Electric
- RBC Dominion Securities
- Pass & Seymour Canada Inc.
- Stacey Electric
- Guild Electric Ltd.
- Westburne-Ruddy
- Guillevin International Co.
- Anixter
- CTF Supply
- Resource Rental
- Graybar
- Gerrie Electric
- Eaton/Cutler-Hammer
- Kearsley Electric
- Ideal Industries
- Electra Supply

REGISTERING AN NCS APPRENTICE

Many contractors were unwilling to register Network Cabling Specialist apprentices until the exam for the 631A C of Q was available. After many delays, this exam was offered for the first time on April 7.

The NCS apprenticeship is a contract between the apprentice, the company that employs him/her, and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

To register an apprentice, contact your local MTCU training advisor. The advisor will come to your site, interview the candidate and, if all is well, register him or her. You will then be responsible for ensuring that the apprentice completes the necessary work in the field and make arrangements for the two trade school sessions at the appropriate time. An NCS apprenticeship is 4500 hours.

The Communications Training Trust offers pre-exam courses to prepare apprentices to challenge the exam.

According to the Communications Agreement, contractors are allowed three communication apprentices for every communications electrician/senior communications technician.

ECAO News is published at the ECAO offices — 170 Attwell Drive, Suite 460, Toronto, Ontario, M9W 5Z5. Address changes may be sent to this office by mail, by telephone at 416-675-3226, by fax at 416-675-7736, or by e-mail to ecao@ecao.org. Comments and questions can be directed to Earle Goodwin at the above numbers (extension 313) or by e-mail to egoodwin@ecao.org.

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