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Grant McMillan, President

COCA Update on WorkSafeBC Activities #514 August 3, 2011

COCA Journal of Commerce Column on Experience Rating

The following column appeared in today's Journal of Commerce. It is also available online at: <http://www.joconl.com/article/id46061>

**August 3, 2011**

**Construction rates impacted by longer duration of claims**

**COLUMN | Grant McMillan**

The preliminary assessment rates for the construction industry for 2012 have been announced by WorkSafeBC. The rates are described as preliminary because they have not yet been approved by the WorkSafeBC board of directors. However, this approval is expected by October, as the preliminary rates normally become the actual rates.

The Industrial, Commercial and Institutional rate is at its lowest rate ever – \$3.35 per \$100 of payroll. This is excellent news during a time of fragile recovery from global economic upheaval. However, there are signs of a major problem on the horizon.

The duration of construction claims – the average time off on claim – continues at record high levels of about 75 days. This is up from an average of 50 days only three years ago. This increase is probably due to the effects of the recession, but construction companies need to become more active with Return to Work and Stay at Work programs.

With fewer jobs to go back to, workers may be staying off longer. Employers may also have been focused on securing new jobs rather than on Return to Work plans for injured workers.

We need to focus on Return to Work plans to reduce our rates. The best way to improve performance on Return to Work is to seek help from the new WorkSafeBC Construction Nurse Line when you need it. The service is free, as you already pay for it with your assessments. To get help with Return to Work, Disability Management or Claim Updates call: 604-279-8155 or 1-877-633-6233.

The changes in some of the construction rate groups are shown below.

All rates shown below are in dollars per \$100 of payroll. Examples of preliminary rates decreases are:

Highway Maintenance decreases from \$3.06 to \$2.85  
Industrial, Commercial and Institutional decreases from \$3.93 to \$3.35  
Low Slope Roofing decreases from \$6.52 to \$5.19  
Masonry drops from \$3.02 to \$2.90  
Concrete Placing decreases from \$3.28 to \$3.24  
Steep Slope Roofing decreases from \$11.72 to \$10.88  
Highway Maintenance decreases from \$3.28 to \$3.24

Examples of preliminary rates increases are:

Construction labour supply increases from \$3.39 to \$4.01  
Building Demolition increases from \$4.81 to \$5.32  
Crane Operation increases from \$3.21 to \$3.39  
Plumbing, Heating, Residential Air Conditioning increases from \$2.26 to \$2.39  
Home Building increases from \$4.66 to \$5.19  
Power Pole, Powerline, or Transmission Line Installation, Service and Repair increases from \$3.14 to \$3.38  
Electrical Work increases from \$1.71 to \$1.81  
Painting or Wallpapering increases from \$3.12 to \$3.30  
Structural Moving increases from \$4.36 to \$5.12

The complete list of WorkSafeBC preliminary rates for 2012 can be viewed online at [this link](#).

*Grant McMillan is the president of the Council of Construction Associations (COCA), which represents the interests of 16 construction associations in B.C. on WorkSafeBC matters. Grant is also a member of the Journal of Commerce Editorial Advisory Board.*