

IN THIS ISSUE:

Page

- 2 Staying safe in windy conditions
- 2 Avoid stairway slips, trips and falls
- 3 Claims Corner: Heart attack claims
- 3 Service on Board of Trustees

the Informer

A monthly newsletter addressing workplace safety by Iowa Municipalities Workers' Compensation Association .

It's your Online University

IMWCA members have taken ownership of the Online University. From a rather humble beginning in 2009, with 30 course offerings, the Online University has grown to more than 60 course offerings, adding one new course each month. Use has grown from 115 courses completed in 2009 to more than 28,000 courses completed through April 2016. For the first time, this Fiscal Year we exceeded our available seats, a nice problem to have! And we have experienced a 22 percent increase in use from last FY. You can see from the chart below that usage is on the rise, and calendar year 2016 is on track for yet another increase.

In April 2016, IMWCA distributed a survey to find out what its members think about the various services and products offered. The survey was distributed electronically to the IMWCA contact for all 521 member emails on file. In the responses a repeated theme members reported: You are happy with the Online University! And we're happy that you're happy!

One of the most unique features of IMWCA's Online University is the versatility of the campus. Each member has the option to set it up in a way that best meets their needs. Most members establish one person to oversee the training, then set up each department as a subset of the entity. This allows

each department head to manage and track training for their group. It doesn't stop there. Each member or department has the ability to track training outside of the course offerings. For example, if you have someone come in to deliver CPR training, you can enter this in each attendee's training record, and it will reside online along with any other safety training delivered using the Online University.

Then there's the reporting capabilities. As an example, the chart in this document was developed using the Dashboard tool. Each member has the ability to track training and develop reports like this. This can really come in handy when you are preparing a report for your board or council.

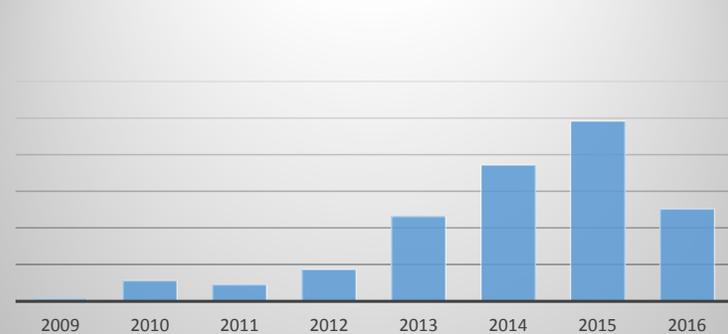
If all this sounds a little daunting, not to worry! Our vendor, FirstNet Learn-

ONLINE UNIVERSITY COURSE HIGHLIGHT

Aquatic Safety: PG02

Learn more online
www.imwca.org

Course Use 2009 - 2016



Top Five Courses Taken

1. Bloodborne Pathogens | 990 courses completed
2. Fire Prevention | 534 courses completed
3. Hazard Communication | 431 courses completed
4. Emergency Evacuation & Egress | 377 courses completed
5. First Aid & CPR Academic Training | 347 courses completed

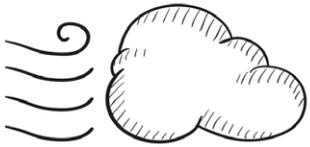
continued from previous page

ing, stands ready to help with hosted webinar trainings on the system. To learn more or to request a webinar with your group, email losscontrol@iowaleague.org, and we will set you up with a webinar suited to your schedule.

Remember—it's your Online University. We're glad you use it!

New Courses for FY 2016-2017

Month	Course Name	Course Code
July	Aquatic Safety	PG02
Aug	Space and Time Management	DM01
Sept	Active Shooter Response in the Workplace	WV59
Oct	Avoiding Collisions with Animals	DM11
Nov	Driving in Adverse Weather	DM09
Dec	Workplace Ergonomics	ER60



Staying safe in windy conditions

Have your employees been dealing with windy conditions? It seems like a week does not go by without at least one day being very windy. Dealing with wind can put an added strain on staff and creates the possibility for a number of potential injuries.

The first step to addressing possible wind related injuries is for management to carefully consider if the work activity needs to be carried out during the windy period. Can the activity wait until a calmer period of the day or even another day? If the activity cannot be delayed, then management should carefully consider what personal protective equipment (PPE) should be used.

A common injury incurred by employees working in windy conditions concerns the eyes. Wind borne debris can enter the eye and cause injuries ranging from slight discomfort to infection to even physical damage. Wearing effective protective eye protection is critical to preventing or minimizing eye related injuries. Good safety glasses with side shields are a start, or choose glasses equipped with foam attached to the frame to create a good seal against the skin.

Another hazard to workers dealing with wind is in-

halation of wind borne debris. Inhaling dust and debris can cause a number of different issues that affect an employee's health. The most common way to handle this is to have the employee wear a dust mask or respirator. It is important, however, to first determine if the employee has the capability to wear such devices. Wearing a mask or respirator makes it more difficult to breathe. The wearing of a respirator also brings into play Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards to conduct medical assessments, respirator fit testing and effective employee training.

A last hazard to consider is how strong wind may affect working on various terrains. Wind gusts that become very strong can easily knock a person over. Working on uneven terrain or a slippery surface can make the likelihood of this happening more likely. Footwear with good traction soles or traction aid devices, such as cleats or ice pins, can help an employee maintaining their balance.

With all this in mind, remember, the goal is for everyone to go home safe at the end of every day. Even the windy days.

Avoiding stairway slips, trips and falls

Almost everyone has used a stairway sometime in their life. However, even something as easy as a stairway can be dangerous if approached incorrectly. This can lead to serious falls that cause major injury or death.

Probably the biggest issue with stairs is that too many people go up and down too fast. The familiarity breeds confidence, and confidence causes us to lose caution. As a result, we can go too fast and miss a step which can cause a fall.

It is also important to use hand railings on stairs which provide stability. Always keep one hand clear to hold on to the

railing. If you do have to carry something, try to carry smaller parcels so you can see where you are stepping and not impede your balance.

Keeping stairs clear of trip hazards is also a key safety practice. Nothing should be stored on steps, even temporarily.

Finally, footwear can affect how we use steps. Flip-flops and high-heeled shoes can lead to imbalance. Wearing shoes with good sole grip and low heels provides better maneuverability.

Slip and falls on stairs are very easy to avoid if we respect stairways and take some commonsense precautions.



Heart attack claims

A heart attack occurs when the flow of blood to the heart is blocked. This most often occurs by a build-up of fat, cholesterol and other substances. Symptoms of a heart attack can include, but are not limited to, pain and tightness in your chest and arms, nausea, fatigue and shortness of breath.

Some risk factors of heart attacks can include:

- Age
- Tobacco Use
- High Blood Pressure and/or Cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Stress
- Family History

Heart attack workers' compensation claims are usually very complex, and every claim has a different set of facts that must be evaluated. Heart attack claims usually take longer to investigate due to having to obtain and review many medical records. This is especially true if the injured employee had a pre-existing heart condition.

Heart attack claims are usually divided into two categories. Claims with no pre-existing heart condition and

claims with a pre-existing heart condition. Normally, we need to look at the type of work and how long the injured worker was performing the task. There will need to be medical evidence that the exertion or work caused the heart attack. In certain cases the injured worker will also need to meet a legal causation standard as well.

- Did the work aggravate or accelerate a pre-existing condition?
- Was the employee performing unusually strenuous activities?
- Were there continued exertions placed on the heart?
- Was the stress in the work activity greater than the employee's regular job?
- What was the weather like on the day of the injury?
- What occurred first, the employment incident or the heart attack?

These are just a few of the questions that will be asked or considered as we conduct our investigation. Remember to monitor your employees working outside this summer or employees that perform heavy physical labor.

Service on Board of Trustees

Are you interested in serving on the Board of trustees for IMWCA?

We are in the process of identifying interested representatives from the IMWCA membership in anticipation of an opening of a city seat on the board. You must be an elected or appointed official from a member city to be eligible for election to the board.

The IMWCA Board of Trustees governs the operations of the association and meets five times a year with staff from the Iowa League of Cities who provides the administrative services for the association. The nine-member board is comprised of five city and four

county officials. Each trustee is elected to a three-year term with no limit on the number of terms.

Interested officials are invited to submit a letter of interest by July 29, 2016, to jeffhovey@iowaleague.org or by regular mail to: Director of Risk Services; IMWCA; 500 SW 7th, Suite 101; Des Moines, IA 50309.



IMWCA Informer is a monthly newsletter published by the Iowa Municipalities Workers' Compensation Association (IMWCA) in cooperation with the Iowa League of Cities. View past issues online at www.imwca.org.

Comments or suggestions: contact Bethany Crile, newsletter editor, at (515) 244-7282 or bethanycrile@iowaleague.org.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES Board President

James Dowling
Sac County Auditor

Gerald Clausen
Carroll City Administrator

Wayne Clinton
Story County Supervisor

Michelle Giddings
Franklin County Auditor

Cindy Gosse
Buchanan County Auditor

Kelly Hayworth
Coralville City Administrator

Wanda Hemesath
Decorah City Clerk/Treasurer

Sara Kurovski
Pleasant Hill Mayor

Scott Wynja
Sheldon City Manager

IOWA MUNICIPALITIES WORKERS' COMPENSATION ASSOCIATION
IMWCA

 www.imwca.org

 (800) 257-2708
(515) 244-7282

 imwcainfo@iowaleague.org



Endorsed & administered by