

Media Advisory: March. 31, 2011

## Buehrer Announces Expansion of Safety Council Program

COLUMBUS – Stephen Buehrer, Administrator/CEO of the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC), has announced the continuation and expansion of the Safety Council Rebate Incentive Program, which allows employers to earn rebates on their workers' compensation premiums for participating in their local safety council and reducing workplace injuries.

The incentive program, which was due to expire soon, allows participating employers to receive a 2 percent rebate for attending a specific number of safety council programs, and an additional 2 percent for demonstrating a reduction in the frequency and/or severity of workplace incidents. Under Buehrer's proposal, the program will not only continue, but also will be expanded to allow group-rated employers to participate in safety councils and earn a 2 percent performance rebate for demonstrating improvements in workplace safety. This would be in addition to receiving their group rating discount.

"We know that those employers who are most active in taking control of their safety programs are the most successful in preventing claims and managing workers' compensation costs," Buehrer told 1,400 employers and workplace safety professionals attending yesterday's general session of BWC's 81st Annual Safety Congress & Expo. "I believe good safety programming ought to be good for all employers across the state."

Buehrer noted the savings potential is significant, providing an additional opportunity to reduce overall premium costs for nearly 100,000 Ohio employers allowing them to direct those resources into business growth and job creation. He also stated that he will soon present the proposal to the BWC Board of Directors for their advice and consent.

BWC's Division of Safety & Hygiene sponsors more than 80 safety councils across the state that are organized by local safety-minded groups to inform participants of new safety techniques, products and services, and provide a thorough knowledge of topics, including occupational safety and health, workers' compensation and risk management education.

BWC is a non general-revenue fund state agency that provides workers' compensation insurance for 230,000 Ohio employers and covers approximately two-thirds of Ohio's workforce. With approximately \$2.1 billion in annual premium and assessment income, BWC is the largest state-fund system in the United States and one of the top 10 underwriters of workers' compensation insurance in the nation.

Visit [ohiobwc.com](http://ohiobwc.com) for more information about the Safety Council Program. You can also see a list of all safety councils.

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