



CONTACT

2011 H & S CONFERENCE IS A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

WorkSafeNB's Annual Health and Safety Conference held on October 17-19, attracted 677 participants. For the first time in the conference's history, it was held in Fredericton, at the new Fredericton Convention Centre and the Crowne Plaza Lord Beaverbrook Hotel. In addition to the high numbers, the conference garnered high praise. Of those delegates who responded to a general evaluation survey, 92.14% rated overall satisfaction with the conference as excellent or very good.

Conference highlights included a plenary session, featuring Curtis Weber, and the always-popular mock trial, which simulated a courtroom prosecution under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, which one delegate described as "Fun, educational, very practical and credible."

Curtis Weber brought delegates to tears as he related his personal account of how a workplace accident changed his life. As a promising 17-year-old athlete, he was electrocuted on his third day of a new job. Hit by 14,400 volts of electricity – enough to light up a town – a severely burned Weber spent six weeks in a coma on life-support, and lost an arm and part of his leg. Weber spoke candidly about his experience, expounding the importance of making safety a priority in all aspects of life.

"Excellent presentation. Curtis was able to present his tragedy in a way that caught everyone and held them throughout his story. Excellent ending to a great conference," said one delegate.

"Very touching, emotional, eye-opening story. I wish he and his family all the best."

"Brought tears to my eyes – what a story! I will talk about Curtis and his story for a long time to come," said another, echoing the comments of all the other delegates in attendance.

A second plenary session, *Attitude Change, Behaviour Change and Safety Practices in the 21st Century*, presented by Stephen Torrence, focused on new strategies for bringing workplace accidents closer to zero. In addition to the two plenary sessions, 26 workshops offered a variety of topics, including ammonia safety, maintaining a WHMIS program, confined spaces, office safety, fall protection, machine guarding, living with shift work, and managing employee behaviour. More than 91% of survey respondents rated the workshops as very good or excellent.

WorkSafeNB thanks all those who attended our 31st Annual Health and Safety Conference, proving

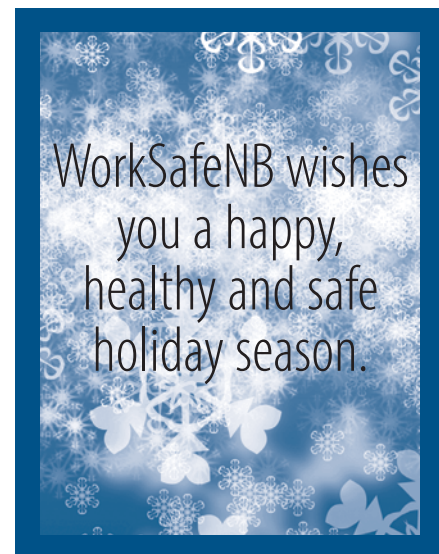


A conference highlight was Curtis Weber's moving and unforgettable presentation.

your commitment to workplace health and safety. We hope to see you next year, when WorkSafeNB's Annual Health and Safety Conference will be held September 26-28 in Saint John. •



The Conference Welcome Chili & Chowder Night was a big hit, with several great prizes awarded. Pictured is MC Tim Maloney with Roland Brisk (on right), of the LNG Chipping Plant, winner of a 42" Samsung LCD TV.



BOARD MEMBER PROFILE



David Ellis

While the role of a WorkSafeNB board member brings with it tremendous responsibility, it is a responsibility that David Ellis is happy and proud to assume.

Ellis was nominated to WorkSafeNB's board of directors by the Construction Association of New Brunswick. His nomination was reviewed and accepted, and Ellis was appointed to a four-year term as employer representative on February 19, 2009.

"I was very flattered and grateful that my peers put my name forward and that the lieutenant-governor in council confirmed my nomination," Ellis said. And while he was pleased to be nominated, "being accountable for an accident fund in excess of \$1 billion is a huge, scary responsibility," he said.

"But on the other side of that, we've managed that fund effectively to ensure that future benefits for our injured workers are secure. This is extremely important and it is gratifying that we are in the position to make that promise (of compensation and treatment for injured workers) and keep it.

It is also gratifying to be on a board that other jurisdictions look to as a model of efficiency."

Ellis, who has a bachelor's degree in political science from UNB and a master's in public administration in industrial relations from Dalhousie, is the executive director of the Electrical Contractors Association of New Brunswick, a position he's held since 1990. Before that, he served 15 years in the municipal and provincial sectors. His background in both the public and private sectors provides him with "useful experience and a unique perspective" as a board member.

And this experience is especially useful now, since, with the exception of the chairperson Sharon Tucker, Ellis is a senior board member, as new members replaced those whose terms expired, and two new positions were added.

"New blood is required regularly," Ellis said. "They bring a fresh perspective on issues. The only downside might be that a lot of orientation is required."

But the new members seem to have brought themselves up to speed quite quickly. "The board now is working very well. There's more of a collegial atmosphere. We don't have the worker/employer

divide I saw when I first joined. Everybody makes WorkSafeNB their first priority, and leaves their other hats at the door."

Another change Ellis has witnessed since he joined the board is a personal one. "When I first joined I was much more focused on the business side of things, but that focus for me shifted to that of the lives of injured workers, and to the dependants of those who have died. Working on the Fatality Review Committee showed me first-hand the consequences. Meeting the families made it real, and is what converted me."

When not working at the Electrical Contractors Association or poring through the thousands of pages of documents of required reading as a board member, Ellis enjoys playing classical piano, and shares a passion for landscaping and gardening with his wife, Lyne St-Pierre-Ellis, the Associate Deputy Minister of Health.

"I'm very proud of my wife. I wouldn't be where I am without her."

Ellis said he is very happy to be a board member and, with his wife's support, is committed to continuing to serve the best interests of both New Brunswick's workers and employers until his term expires in February 2013. •

APPOINTMENT



Shelly Dauphinee

WorkSafeNB would like to congratulate Shelly Dauphinee, vice-president of WorkSafe Services on her four-year appointment as governor representing New Brunswick for the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety.

"I am pleased that Ms. Dauphinee has accepted this position," said Labour Minister Lisa Raitt. "As a results-oriented leader, her management experience in health and safety programs spanning over 15 years will be an asset to the Centre."

Dauphinee has held several executive positions during her career. Before taking on her current role as vice-president of WorkSafe Services, she was director of planning and policy for WorkSafeNB and Atlantic director of policy at the Canadian Red Cross.

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, located in Hamilton, Ontario, was created in 1978 to promote the fundamental right of Canadians to a healthy and safe working environment. •

COMPANIES RECOGNIZED FOR IMPROVING WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

On October 13, at its Company Recognition Awards Breakfast, WorkSafeNB recognized Belle Île Fisheries and the City of Edmundston for their impressive efforts in improving workplace health and safety. The breakfast was part of WorkSafeNB's 31st Annual Health and Safety Conference, held in Fredericton October 12-14.

Located in Sainte-Marie-Saint-Raphaël, Belle Île Fisheries harvests and processes seafood from the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. The plant workers log long hours to get snow crab and other delicacies from the processing plant to consumers in the United States and Japan, but producing these products is a repetitious and labour-intensive affair. Workers contend with a large number of safety risks, particularly soft tissue injuries resulting

from repetitive movements and standing in one spot for long periods of time. Despite this, the company hasn't filed a lost-time claim in over six years and, as a result, boasts assessment rates that are considerably lower than the industry average.

The City of Edmundston was selected after a marked improvement in its health and safety record over the past few years. City employees work in offices, on construction sites and in industrial settings, to name a few. They can be involved in high-risk activities like trenching, working with heavy equipment and machinery, working from heights and working with electricity. Before a renewed focus towards health and safety, city employees were suffering workplace injuries at a troubling rate. However, since

introducing WorkSafeNB's 5*22 program in 2008, the city has managed to cut its lost-time claims by almost 50%.

"These employees and employers both have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to safe work practices and to a safe workplace," Shelly Dauphinee, vice-president of WorkSafeNB's Worksafe Services Division said. "They have also shown exceptional leadership and innovation in promoting a safety culture, and, in doing so, they've not only significantly reduced workplace injuries but they've significantly decreased their premiums and improved their bottom line. We appreciate their commitment to the health and safety of workers and hope this example will inspire other employers to learn." •



From Belle Île Fisheries, left to right: Laurie Robichaud, Nathalie Larocque, Rénauld Guignard, Adam Chiasson.



From the City of Edmundston, left to right: Luc Tardif, Rachel Comeau, Pierre Schelling.

2012 ASSESSMENT RATES DROP

WorkSafeNB is pleased to announce a 15% decrease in the average assessment rate. A strong funded position and decreasing claims costs warranted an average rate reduction of \$0.30, from \$2.00 per \$100 of payroll in 2011, to \$1.70. The minimum assessment rate will also be reduced, from \$0.32 per \$100 of payroll to \$0.28. The rates, effective January 1, 2012, continue to be the lowest in Atlantic Canada.

The rate reduction will see assessed premiums for approximately 13,700 employer operations either drop or remain stable in 2012.

"By attaining a fully-funded level of 111.5%, WorkSafeNB has assured rate stabilization for employers and the continuing security of benefits for our injured workers," said Sharon Tucker, chair of WorkSafeNB's board of directors.

"But, more importantly, since accident costs are key to determining assessment rates, this rate decrease signifies healthier and safer workplaces for all New Brunswickers," she said.

In 2010 WorkSafeNB met its targets for both duration and frequency of lost-time claims. "We want to thank workers, employers and stakeholders for helping make this happen." •

IN THE COURTS



J. D. IRVING, LIMITED, carrying on business as Scierie Grande-Rivière, pleaded guilty October 24 to an offence under subsection 242(1) of the General Regulation 91-191 under the *OHS Act* for failing to provide adequate safeguards to prevent an employee from coming into contact with a roller known in the industry as a “bud wheel”. The employee lost his leg. J.D. Irving was fined \$8,500 with a \$1,700 surcharge. In addition, the company will donate \$2,500 to “La Fondation Simone Tardif,” a foundation that provides meals to school children in need.

ALFRED CHAPMAN, a supervisor, pleaded guilty August 24 to an offence under General Regulation 91-191 subsection 239(2) of the *OHS Act* for failing to provide a safety lock and key to an employee who may have to lock out a machine. An employee supervised by Chapman was seriously injured when he failed to lock out a machine he was cleaning. Chapman was fined \$2,000.

BLAIR CALDWELL, a linesman for NB Power pleaded guilty June 21 to an offence under subsection 232 of the *OHS Act* for failing to wear the appropriate personal protective equipment. He was fined \$300.

Caldwell was seen on June 9 working approximately 7.5 metres above ground in a boom truck, without a fall arresting device.

SELECT CONSTRUCTION INC., pleaded guilty June 8 to an offence under General Regulation 91-191 subsection 49(1) of the *OHS Act* for failing to provide an individual fall-arresting system to an employee required to work from an unguarded work area more than 3m above the nearest safe level. The employee fell more than 30 feet, sustaining fractures to his hip and ankle. The company was fined \$3,000, plus a \$600 victim surcharge.

WARM-UP AND STRETCH DVD LAUNCHED

While not generally thought of as a dangerous work environment, New Brunswick's nursing homes led the province in injury claims last year with over 400 cases.

To help reverse the trend, WorkSafeNB developed a *Warm-Up and Stretch* DVD, which premiered at the organization's Annual Health and Safety Conference on October 13.

Jane Logan, a WorkSafeNB occupational health and safety analyst, said a strategy was needed to help combat the high rates of soft tissue injuries

“The cause of these injuries generally results from client handling – moving, bathing and dressing. We've recognized the injuries are increasing so

there is a new focus on safe patient handling as part of a MSI prevention program.”

One component to prevention is ensuring muscles are properly warmed up before a work shift. Ergonomics consultants frequently compare working with cold muscles to trying to start a car engine on a frigid winter morning.

The bilingual DVD demonstrates how to do a full-body warm-up before a shift, and is a companion piece to the *Warm-Up and Stretch* series. A poster, pamphlet and pocket card are also available.

“The DVD is divided into two parts. The first is a teaching tool, with instruction and demonstration on how to properly perform a stretch,” Logan said. “Once workers are familiar with the techniques, they can move onto the more advanced version which leads them through a full-body stretch in under 10 minutes.”

For Minerva Porelle, an industry veteran of 22 years with Lincourt Manor in St. Stephen, the launch was highly anticipated.

“We actually have higher injury rates than construction sites, so something needed to be done. We believe working with WorkSafeNB with everyone on board is essential for success.”

Porelle also serves as the president of the CUPE Local 3392 and has represented the province on the CUPE National Health and Safety Committee since 2007. She said the video bolsters the union's belief that every worker has a right to return home safe and uninjured at the end of the workday.

“CUPE supports any initiative that fosters a safe work environment, particularly when it's effectively integrated into the work day. That's what this video does. When done at the beginning of a shift, not only does it prepare the body, but it gets workers in the frame of mind to work safely.” •

