

Specialty Safety Services, Inc.

Your "What's Hot" Newsletter

April 2008

Worker's Comp Claims Training and Audit System

Recently, I had the pleasure of facilitating a Professional Development Conference sponsored by the American Society of Safety Engineers and the Washington Self-Insurers Association. It was great to see professionals from both groups networking and discussing ways they can work together to create an environment that will benefit all employees.

Over the last 20 years I've had the opportunity to work with some great people in the Safety and Workers' Compensation arenas. I've learned one overriding fact in that time: For either of these programs to reach their full potential, they need the assistance of the other.

We know that accident prevention is the best way to reduce human suffering and control workers' compensation costs. However, despite the best efforts of safety professionals injuries still occur. Once an injury or illness is reported, workers' compensation professionals do everything they can to assist the injured worker through the recovery process and back to gainful employment.

Employer safety programs are required by law to provide a detailed analysis, also known as an accident investigation, of every serious incident in the workplace. In cases where an injury or illness occurs, that investigation is critical when developing steps to prevent a similar injury. The analysis or accident investigation is also critical to the workers' compensation team. The claims adjuster depends on accurate and timely information from the safety department to start the claims process and to make sure an injured employee receives all the necessary treatment and services they deserve. Coordination between the workers' compensation and safety departments of any organization is necessary to ensure workers return to safe jobs and that all comp regulations are followed.

But how do employers know that their safety and worker's comp programs are functioning at maximum benefit for both the injured worker and the employer? Many companies understand the importance of auditing their safety program or auditing their workers' compensation program. But, how often do we audit them as a single entity? I suggest that to be as effective as possible we must look at our program from the basic steps of safety to the closing of a workers' compensation claim.

With these thoughts in mind Gordon and I are excited about offering our clients a new service: Worker's Comp Claims Training and Audit System. This new service will focus on claims training for L&I Certification, preparation for Self Insurance Department claims audits, and an invaluable training for your company's claims supervision. The claims service can also be used as an independent review of those difficult and hard to close claims. And the good part is we bring the service to your location.

For more information on our new Worker's Comp Claims Training and Audit System:
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Herb Sherburne joins Specialty Safety Services as a guest columnist and safety trainer. For the past five years Herb has been the Training Coordinator for the Washington Self-Insurer's Association. Prior to joining WSIA, Herb Sherburne worked twenty-five years for The Seattle Times, thirteen of those years as The Times Safety Manager. Herb has twelve years experience as an authorized trainer of the Steven Covey Institute's "7 Habits of Highly Effective People."

