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# Summit County Safety Council Newsletter

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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

February 18, 2009

11:30 a.m.

Regular Meeting at Tangier

Tanya Weiker, PT, CPT

Spherica

Healthy Backs: Back to Basics

## Some Facts About Back Injuries

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), preventing back injuries is a major workplace safety challenge. Despite safety procedures, workers will still try to lift and carry items that weigh between 40 and 100 pounds without assistance. There's something in the human psyche that says, "That doesn't seem so heavy; I can do this myself." That 60-pound weight range is the source of back injuries that cost U.S. businesses more than \$1 billion a year in lost man-hours, medical costs, workers' compensation and disability payments.

### Applicable Regulations

- Regulations specific to ergonomics do not currently exist. In the interim, ergonomic issues fall under the OSHA General Duty Clause.
- NIOSH Lifting Guidelines

### Additional Information:

- As workers age they gain valuable experience but their bodies become more susceptible to injuries.
- Back symptoms are the most common cause of disability for persons under age 45.
- Back injury is the number one reason for seeing a doctor other than the common cold.
- Back injuries alone cost American industry \$10-\$14 billion in workers compensation (direct cost) and 93 million lost workdays per year.
- Direct costs can total \$15 to \$20 billion per year. Indirect costs increase the total to \$45 to \$54 billion. That's an average of \$135 million per day.
- 50% of all U.S. workers admit to some lower back pain suffered each year.
- "Average" cost for a "simple" sprain or strain of the lumbar spine is approximately \$18,365 in direct costs per occurrence.
- Indirect costs are calculated to be 15-40 times the direct costs.
- Second back injury is usually more complicated and costs 2-4 times more than the first injury.
- An Ohio State University research group found that back injuries often result from re-injury, cumulative wear and tear, rather than a sudden injury.
- The moment an injury occurs, the extent of harm or the cost to treat is unknowable. Prevention is always cheaper and avoids pain and suffering.
- Engineer the hazard out of the job by reducing the things lifted.

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**February's Featured Program.....****Tanya L. Weiker, PT, CPT, CSHE****Healthy Backs: Back to Basics**

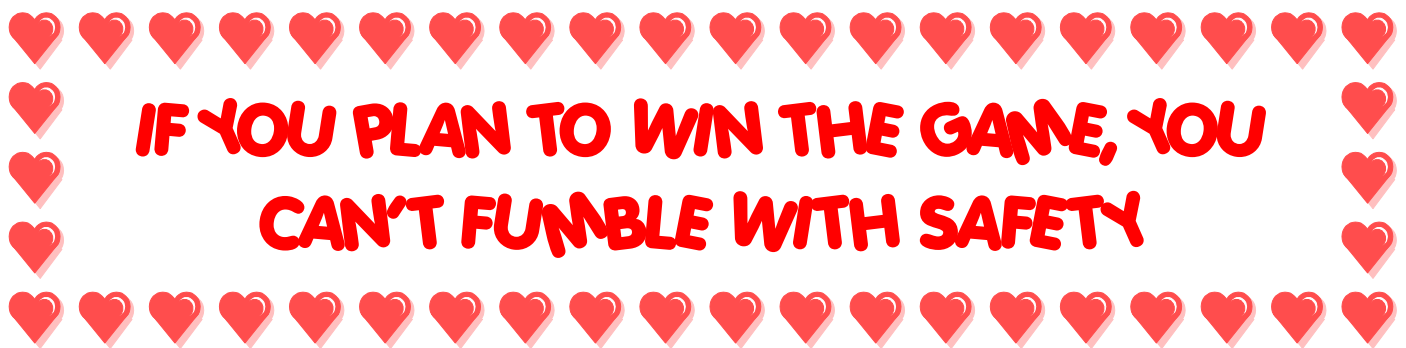
Tanya is an Orthopedic Physical Therapist and a Certified Personal Trainer with 17 years of experience in all aspects of spine care, preventative health, the physiology of stress and responsive relaxation, athletic and executive performance, and CORE training. Tanya's experience as the lead physical therapist for the Cleveland Clinic Foundation's multidisciplinary spine team and her work with clients across the continuum from professional athletes through to people experiencing chronic pain, creates the platform from which she builds and designs all of her curriculums. Tanya obtained a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy from The Ohio State University. Tanya's *Back to Basics* is a jam-packed, interactive and hands-on workshop that delves into the essentials of establishing, moving with and sustaining a healthy and fit back.

**2009 Ohio Safety Congress and Expo**

Registration is now open for the 2009 Ohio Safety Congress & Expo, March 31 - April 2, 2009, at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. Visit [www.ohiobwc.com](http://www.ohiobwc.com) for complete information about the event including registration, educational sessions, hotels, and more. A policy number is required for registration. Students and federal government employees must register by phone.

In addition to top-notch keynote speakers, the Ohio Safety Congress & Expo offers more than 100 educational sessions on such topics as safety program development, emergency planning, cost-cutting safety strategies, construction safety, injury management and ergonomic lifting guidelines. The Expo marketplace includes displays of state-of-the-art occupational and safety health products.

Continuing education units as well as discount credit for BWC's Premium Discount Program +, One Claim Program and Safety Council Program are available for attending most 60-minute educational sessions. Register today!



This month's winner of the Safety Slogan Contest is Amy Bornstine of Ohio Concrete Sawing & Drilling. Amy's slogan "**IF YOU PLAN TO WIN THE GAME, YOU CAN'T FUMBLE WITH SAFETY**" was selected by the Executive Committee. Amy will receive a \$25.00 gift card for her winning slogan. Congratulations Amy!

Please continue to submit your safety slogans to Sally Cox at [scox@neo.rr.com](mailto:scox@neo.rr.com). Each month's winner will receive a \$25.00 gift certificate. The winning slogan will be printed in the newsletter and projected at the monthly meeting. Slogans are selected one month prior to announcement. If your slogan is not selected it remains in the pool for future consideration.

### **News From OSHA**

#### **Final Rule Issued on Employers' Duty to Provide PPE and Train Employees**

OSHA issued a final rule on Clarification of Employers' Duty to Provide Personal Protective Equipment and Train Each Employee. The rule revises OSHA standards to clarify that, for employers to be in compliance, they must provide personal protective equipment (PPE) and hazards training for each employee covered by the standards. More information is available in the Jan. OSHA Quick Takes at [www.OSHA.Gov](http://www.OSHA.Gov).

### **Safety Grant Best Practices**

The BWC SafetyGRANT\$ program recently introduced a new interactive Web page designed to share results of the program. This initial introduction allows users to select an industry and risk factor type or enter a key word search to obtain case studies specific to their interests. Future additions to this page will include Web links, articles and other resources specific to the user's request. You can access this interactive Web Page at [www.ohiobwc.com](http://www.ohiobwc.com) under Safety Services then Safety-GRANT\$.

#### **Preliminary Results of the CTD Grant Program**

BWC also offers a series of publications that could help prevent cumulative trauma disorders (CTDs) in your workplace. You can also download and print the manuals listed below from BWC's website at [www.ohiobwc.com](http://www.ohiobwc.com) under SafetyGRANT\$. BWC developed these best-practice manuals based on the research data gathered through their SafetyGRANT\$ program.

- Ergonomics Best Practices for the Construction Industry
- Ergonomics Best Practices for Extended-Care Facilities
- Ergonomics Best Practices for Manufacturing
- Ergonomics Best Practices for the Plastics Industry
- Ergonomics Best Practices for Public Employers

The Safety Intervention Grant\$ Program is available to any Ohio state-fund or public employer who wishes to purchase equipment to substantially reduce or eliminate injuries and illnesses associated with a particular task or operation. For more information, refer to BWC's website or contact your local BWC Customer Service Office at 330-471-0937.

### **Upcoming Events & Reminders**

February 18, 2009  
Regular Meeting—Tangier  
Tanya Weiker, PT, CPT  
Spherica

Healthy Backs: Back to Basics

March 18, 2009  
Regular Meeting—Tangier  
Timothy Campbell

Hanna, Campbell & Powell, LLP  
New Industrial Commission Policy  
Regarding VSSR's

March 31, 2009  
PDP+ & DFWP Reports for 7/1/08 program period are due to BWC  
Fax to 1-877-721-9420

March 31—April 2, 2009  
Ohio Safety Congress & Expo  
Greater Columbus Convention Center  
Register at [www.ohiobwc.com](http://www.ohiobwc.com)

April 15, 2009  
Regular Meeting—Tangier  
Pat Grischow  
Manager - Gov't Affairs - HR & Gov't  
Communications  
The Timken Company  
Employment & Safety Related  
Legislative Updates

April 22, 2009  
Awards Banquet—Guy's Party Center

May 20, 2009  
Regular Meeting—Tangier  
Michael Kovacic  
TMK & Associates  
NFPA 70E 2009 -  
Continuing Implementation

## *News From BWC*

### **BWC Board Approves Plan to Limit Extreme Premium Jumps**

#### **Gives go-ahead for exploration of a solution to ensure more equitable payments for all employers**

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) Board of Directors approved a cap on premium increases that is expected to prevent unforeseen spikes in workers' compensation insurance costs. The cap on an employer's experience modifier (EM) is expected to limit extreme premium swings in the event of a serious accident or loss of a group-rated premium. Large shifts in premium have shown to be detrimental to existing operations and hinder business growth. The capping plan is part of BWC's ongoing efforts to foster economic growth by stabilizing premiums and providing relief for small businesses that are striving to remain competitive in a difficult economy.

An employer's EM is one of the key components in calculating an employer's overall premium rate, measuring the total costs of the claims filed within an experience period. BWC plans to leave this cap in place permanently to provide ongoing pricing stability. The cap will take effect on July 1, 2009.

The board also approved a motion to allow BWC staff to explore options designed to create greater equity in what Ohio employers are charged for workers' compensation insurance coverage. The agency will look for new approaches to ensuring employers pay the right rate for the right risk. BWC staff will provide the board with regular updates on progress to this initiative with board members making a final decision in the coming months.

In addition, the Board of Directors heard the first reading of a plan to initiate a deductible program that will give employers better control of their workers' compensation insurance spending. Under this type of program an employer agrees to pay the portion of claims below the deductible and receives a premium discount in return. The proposed creation of a new deductible program is part of a menu of new programs under consideration with target implementation dates as early as of July 1, 2009.

The BWC Board of Directors also voted to extend the deadline for employers to apply for the group rating program from **February 28 to April 24**. The application deadline extension will allow additional time for sponsoring organizations to determine how to proceed once potential changes are implemented by the Board of Directors.

### **BWC Board of Directors to Host Public Forum on Paperwork Reduction**

Ohio business owners, medical providers, stakeholders, injured workers and other interested parties are encouraged to attend an upcoming open forum with the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) Board of Directors. The topic of discussion will be opportunities for paperwork reduction at the agency.

The forum will be held from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 19 in the auditorium of the William Green Building, located at 30 W. Spring St., Columbus.

During the forum, the Board of Directors will hear comments on how BWC can reduce its reliance on printed material while making communication with the agency more customer friendly. Topics for discussion include:

- Eliminating duplicate, confusing or unnecessary forms;
- Cost avoidance/cost reduction opportunities;
- Opportunities for process changes that result in measurable improvements in efficiency and effectiveness;
- Opportunities to use electronic communication rather than paper; and
- Suggestions for providing more responsive customer service through clearer, more efficient communication.

Those interested in participating in the public forum are encouraged to pre-register by 5 p.m. Monday, February 16. Speakers will be registered on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration forms are available online at [ohiobwc.com](http://ohiobwc.com). On-site registration will also be accepted.