



Yukon Workers'  
Compensation  
Health and  
Safety Board

## **For Release**

November 5, 2008

### **YWCHSB announces 2009 Assessment Rates**

**(Whitehorse – November 5, 2008)** The Board of Directors of YWCHSB is pleased to announce that the 2009 assessment rates for all industry groups will be held to 2008 levels.

However, three industries will be paying more than last year.

In 2007, YWCHSB announced that three industries, Diamond Drilling, Placer Mining and Exploration were being moved into a higher risk category because of clear trends of their rising claims costs.

To make things easier on these industries, YWCHSB announced their transition into the higher risk group – and correspondingly higher rates – would be spread over two years.

In 2007 Diamond Drilling was paying an assessment rate of \$6.31. In the first transition year, 2008, their rate increased 27% to \$8.60. The risk group and rate increase were reviewed this year and confirmed. This means in 2009, their rate will increase 27% to \$11.73. Now all industries in this rate group are paying the same assessment premiums.

In 2007 Placer Mining and Exploration were paying an assessment rate of \$4.18. In the first transition year, 2008, their rate increased 12% to \$4.76. The risk group and rate increase were reviewed this year and confirmed. This means in 2009, their rate will increase 12% to \$5.42. Now all industries in this rate group are paying the same assessment premiums.

YWCHSB has decided to put a hold on assessment rate increases because of a number of positive trends.

Today the sign in front of the YWCHSB office building shows 1,690 reported injuries. This is a moderate improvement over this time last year when the sign showed 1,767 reported injuries.

There's also been an increase in the number of workers and employers seeking safety training and Return to Work planning.

The new *Workers' Compensation Act* puts the onus on injured workers to mitigate their injury and calls on employers to cooperate in getting injured workers back on the job safely and quickly as part of the healing process.

Starting January 1<sup>st</sup>, employers who wish to bid on YG contracts for road surfacing and gravel production valued at \$500,000 or more will need to be COR certified.

The 21 COR companies in Yukon have developed and are maintaining high standards of safety in their operations. This results in fewer injuries and declining claims costs.

YWCHSB's improved administrative and financial efficiencies are another contributing factor to holding rates in 2009.

Its Investigator has already saved the organization more than \$2 million with more savings expected in the coming months.

Approximately 500 employers have joined YWCHSB's CHOICES incentive program. These employers are improving safety in their workplace and have committed to developing Return-To-Work plans for injured employees.

Following meetings this year with all 52 industry groups, and at employers' request, YWCHSB is reviewing the entire industry classification system and looking at super assessment options.

This review will be completed in time to impact the 2010 assessment rates.

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