

WHSCC News



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23RD ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY CONFERENCE A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

More than 600 delegates from across Canada gathered in Saint John from October 19th to the 21st, to attend the WHSCC's 23rd annual Health and Safety Conference.

"This conference is always a great achievement because it attracts attendees that represent all aspects of health and safety," says Douglas C. Stanley, President and CEO of the WHSCC. "When you can bring together youth representatives, business owners, CEOs and managers, Joint Health and Safety Committee members, workers, health and safety professionals, and other groups, you benefit from a truly multi-faceted pooling of ideas."

This year's event included a variety of workshops covering the fundamentals of health and safety, and a set of more focused sessions for those who were ready to learn the tools and methods

required to implement and apply those fundamentals.

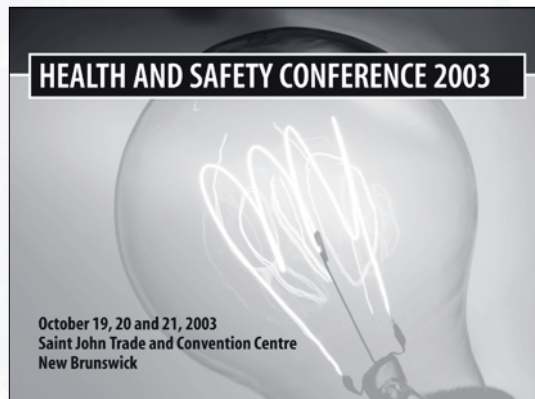
"The conference also included sessions designed to help attendees visualize up-and-coming health and safety issues," explains Dave Greason, Vice-President of the WHSCC's Prevention Services Division. "Sessions like these stimulate attendees to plan proactively for their future health and safety needs, and that's invaluable."

These sessions – which proved very popular with attendees – included an overview of the Swissair Flight 111 accident investigation, and the prevention

and management of aggressive behaviour. Organizers were able to offer delegates the opportunity to view the HEROES youth safety roadshow presentation, to attend more industry-specific workshops than ever before, and participate in a new segment – exhibitor demonstrations – which were designed to give both workers and employers access to health and safety products and services currently available on the market.

"The organizing committee of the WHSCC's Health and Safety Conference strives each year to find new ways to reach Canadians

[Continued on page 2]



WHSCC POTATO GROWING SAFETY CAMPAIGN

During the potato harvest of September 2001, WHSCC Prevention Services Division staff set in motion an aggressive plan to address safety issues relating to the potato farming industry in New Brunswick.



"We keep tabs on injury and accident statistics," says Lise Malenfant, Manager of Regional Services (Northwest Region) at the WHSCC. "And the number of fatalities and severe injuries in harvesting activities was unacceptable. Something needed to be done."

Malenfant says the WHSCC is well aware of the dangers potato farmers and their workers face.

"Half the Prevention staff in the Northwest office grew up or worked on a potato farm," she says. "WHSCC employees understand the issues and how things have changed over the years."

Malenfant's first call was to Potatoes NB, an agency representing more than 390 potato growers, and a working group was formed.

"We put our heads together, and developed a four-year campaign to address the issue of safety on potato farms," she says.

The first priority was to develop a training tool for growers. A training program was formalized, and a set of general guidelines were developed, including a Safety Orientation Checklist for potato harvesters. WHSCC publications including a revised hazard alert entitled "Farm Accident Kills Worker", a new hazard alert entitled

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[employer information]

THE SAFER YOU ARE, THE LESS YOU PAY...

WHSCC's Experience Rating System

The WHSCC's Experience Rating System (ERS) is designed to improve employer awareness of the importance of safety in the workplace and to achieve greater equity when it comes to assessed premiums, through the use of rewards and penalties based on an employer's own accident cost experience.

The system is designed to benefit both employers and workers, and is automatically applied to all employers who pay \$1,000 or more in annual premiums to the WHSCC.

"The Experience Rating System benefits employers by giving them some control over their insurance costs and a financial edge over the competition," explains Claude Savoie, Manager of Assessment Services. "It also benefits workers, by encouraging employers to provide them with safe and healthy workplaces."

The Experience Rating System is designed to accommodate the different types and sizes of firms within New Brunswick.

[Continued on page 2]

The system is designed to benefit both employers and workers

[continued from page 1]

CONFERENCE *from page 1*

by expanding our offerings, keeping current and relevant, and as always, adding a touch of excitement,” says Greason.

At this year’s conference, the Commission recognized management and workers at Graymont (NB) Inc. and The Fairmont Algonquin with awards for “Efforts in Improving Health and Safety.”

“It’s all about growing the health and safety army,” Greason says. “We want to give our delegates the tools to be successful in preventing accidents and occupational diseases.” □

POTATOES *from page 1*

“Powered Mobile Equipment Kills,” and a new brochure entitled *Guidelines for Potato Growing Safety* were produced to help raise public awareness of the dangers of working on potato farms. The Commission also became active in supporting the delivery of the Safety Start farm safety program to students in the region’s schools.

Now in its third year, the campaign for potato growing safety continues with many new initiatives.

“Our campaign is built around assisting the growers and helping them get support from agencies such as the RCMP and the Department of Public Safety,” says Malenfant.

The Department of Public Safety became involved in the campaign when a member of the public was killed in a potato harvesting accident. Since then, they have supported farmers in their efforts to keep the public away from equipment operating in their fields.

The RCMP has also supported the campaign. Scott Sawyer, a local officer, approached the RCMP in Ottawa to request their official participation in the safety campaign by lending their logo to “Employees Only” signs to be posted in potato fields. Also lending their logos to the project were the Department of Public Safety, Potatoes NB and the WHSCC. Almost 1,000 of these signs, designed to be posted while harvesters are in the fields, have been distributed to protect the public as well as workers. On August 27, 2003, the WHSCC, Potatoes NB, the Department of Public Safety and the RCMP introduced the new signs with the support of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture at a ceremony at the Centennial Building in Fredericton.

The potato growing safety campaign has given operators two years to adjust equipment and practices, and take part in

“Half the Prevention staff in the Northwest office grew up or worked on a potato farm... WHSCC employees understand the issues and how things have changed over the years.”

— Lise Malenfant, Manager of Regional Services (Northwest Region)

training programs. This year, WHSCC health and safety officers will visit farm operations and begin writing health and safety recommendations – but will be writing orders if life or limb-threatening situations are encountered. In the fourth year of the campaign, officers will visit operations and write orders as required.

“The machines used on potato farms can be dangerous, and safety training is important,” says Malenfant. “When people and machines interface, the machinery always wins. These tools must be respected and safety awareness must be uppermost in everyone’s mind.” □

ERS *from page 1*

Experience rating compares employers to their peers – those within the same rate group – who face a similar level of risk. If an employer has a lower injury cost than their competition, their premiums will be smaller.

“The basic formula is simple,” explains Savoie. “We add all the costs, up to a per claim maximum of \$50,000, associated with workplace injuries in a given rate group over the last three years, and then we determine if an employer’s cost is above or below their rate group’s average, relative to their payroll. If the costs are below average, they’ll receive a discount on their basic assessment rate, which is used to calculate their annual premium amount. If they’re above average, they’ll pay a surcharge.”

For a good record, an employer may receive as much as 40% off their annual premium. An employer with a poor record, on the other hand, might end up paying a surcharge of 80% more than their regular annual premium.

If you have any questions about the Experience Rating System, please contact Assessment Services Department staff by calling 506 632-2820 or toll free 1 800 222-9645.

FIRST AID EQUIPMENT SUPPLIER IMPLIES RELATIONSHIP WITH WHSCC

Section 12 of Regulation 91-191 under the Occupational Health and Safety Act sets out the requirements for first aid training and equipment in New Brunswick workplaces. This section requires that specific equipment be on site depending on the number of employees at that worksite. The *Regulation* also states that the employer is to provide trained personnel to provide first aid services.

It has come to our attention that an out-of-province firm has been contacting some New Brunswick employers and stating that their first aid equipment has expired. The company then offers to provide new equipment to that employer. Some of these employers have

reported that the seller implies that they are acting as an agent of the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission (WHSCC) of New Brunswick.

the *Regulation* there is no statutory obligation to replace equipment at set time intervals. Employers have an obligation under the *Act* to ensure that the equipment is

It has come to our attention that an out-of-province firm has been contacting some New Brunswick employers and stating that their first aid equipment has expired.

The Commission does not authorize nor recognize any supplier of such first aid material.

The WHSCC has not, through staff or an external agent, contacted New Brunswick employers to inform them that their first aid equipment must be replaced. Under section 12 of

in usable condition, but there is no expiration of otherwise serviceable equipment mentioned in the legislation.

If you have further questions regarding this matter, please contact us at 1 800 442-9776. □

NEW EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVE ON WHSCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Linwood Hupman joined the WHSCC Board of Directors as an Employer Representative in January 2003, for a 3-year term. He replaces Pat Darrah, who had served on the Board since 1996.

“The Board wanted to replace the construction industry expertise Pat Darrah represented,” Hupman says, “and that’s one of the things I bring to the table.”

Hupman has worked for Shaw Brick, a 142-year-old Nova Scotia company, for the past 38 years. In 1975, he moved to Fredericton to act as District Sales Manager for New Brunswick and New England. Now he’s closing in

on retirement – a milestone he’s scheduled for May 2004.

Hupman was nominated to join the Board by the Construction Association of New Brunswick not only because of his industry expertise, but because of his extensive experience serving on boards and associations including the Province of New Brunswick Apprenticeship and Occupational Certification Board, the Masonry Industry Association of Atlantic Canada, the Construction Association of New Brunswick, and many others.

Hupman understands the challenges faced by the Board of Directors at the WHSCC.

“It can be a challenge to leave our hats outside the door,” he says, “but we’re all

“The Board benefits from the Commission’s committed staff, and the fact that the executive is very well-informed...we spend a lot of time reading Commission material prior to making our recommendations.”

— Lin Hupman, new member of the WHSCC Board of Directors

here to see that preventing accidents is a priority in New Brunswick workplaces – and that injured workers get looked after as quickly as possible, so they can get back to work. It’s better for them and it’s better for the employer.”

Although he describes the work as challenging, Hupman says he’s excited to participate in the smooth operation of the

Board, as it influences and recommends changes that will help the province’s employers and injured workers.

“The Board benefits from the Commission’s committed staff, and the fact that the executive is very well-informed,” he says. “We spend a lot of time reading Commission material prior to making our recommendations. It’s been an education so far, and I have a lot more to learn.”

Hupman lives and works in



Fredericton with his wife Shirley. The couple have three children, including Lisa, 29; Adrienne, 25; and Jonathan, 21.

“The construction industry has been good to me,” Hupman says, “and I see serving on the WHSCC Board of Directors as a good way to give something back.” □

POWERED MOBILE EQUIPMENT KILLS

A landscape worker died when run over by a one-ton company truck; a 59-year-old woman was fatally injured when run over by a potato harvester; a road construction worker was killed when he slipped under a bulldozer. Many workers are killed or suffer serious injuries when working around powered mobile equipment. There are also numerous close calls that are either ignored or not taken seriously. These accidents are easily preventable. They often result from a lack of training or the development of complacency. Never forget that working with and around powered mobile equipment can be dangerous!

RECOMMENDED PREVENTIVE ACTION

Workers

- Ensure you have established eye contact with the operator before walking around powered mobile equipment.
- Learn to identify danger zones and stay clear of them.
- Be alert; keep an eye out for yourself and your co-workers.
- Report close calls and unsafe conditions to your supervisor.

Operators

- Always complete a 360-degree visual check before operating equipment.
- Be careful of blind spots and

get a signaller if your view is obstructed.

- Check that all safety guards and devices are in place, especially the audible back-up alarms.
- Apply the “no extra riders” rule.
- Use your seatbelt and wear hearing protection.
- Drive safely.

Supervisors, Employers, and Owners

- Ensure operators are competent in the use of powered mobile equipment, based on their knowledge, training and experience.

[hazard alert]



Above: a potato harvester.

- Review training regularly – never assume that a worker knows how to operate and work around equipment safely.
- Ensure the equipment is properly maintained – guards, brakes, and back-up alarms should be checked regularly.
- Ensure that safety devices are not de-activated and that seatbelts are worn when required.
- Pay attention to safety concerns and particularly to close calls; taking appropriate action can save a life.

BRINGING HEALTH AND SAFETY INTO THE CLASSROOM

“Good materials. Effective for the classroom.” “I feel students would benefit greatly from this.” These are just a few of the many positive comments New Brunswick teachers made about the youth resources offered by the WHSCC in the 2002/03 school year.

Silvy Moleman, Youth Programs Coordinator at the Commission, works to ensure the youth of our province are informed about health and safety in the workplace. Her efforts are paying off – in the 2002/03 school year alone, 26,033 students were exposed to health and safety awareness activities stemming from WHSCC initiatives. That’s an increase from 16,035 students in the prior school year.

“This past school year was really successful,” says Moleman. “In large part that’s due to our partnership with the New Brunswick Department of Education.”

Throughout the 2002/03 school year, the WHSCC played a key role in writing health and safety-oriented curriculum for use in the New Brunswick public school system. Of particular significance are 31 health and safety modules for grade ten Broad Based Technology Education (BBTE) and grades six and eight Middle School



HEROES presentations took place at six New Brunswick high schools from October 21, 2003 to November 5, 2003 and reached approximately 11,000 students.

Technology Education (MSTE). These modules are part of the mandatory curriculum within both programs, and cover safety in the world of work, safe decision-making, hazard recognition (MSTE), and fundamentals of workplace health and safety (BBTE). All safety modules created by the WHSCC are featured on the Department of Education Web site. (Please see: http://tt.nbed.nb.ca/tve_ms_gr6sco1.asp and http://tt.nbed.nb.ca/tve_ms_gr8sco1.asp.)

In 2002/03, many students attended presentations by the WHSCC’s Youth Spokesperson, Candace Carnahan. A young worker who lost part of her leg in a workplace accident, Candace has spoken to a total of 6,416 students at 61 different venues around the province. She shared with students her personal story, as well as some key tips for preventing workplace accidents.

Candace’s presentations made a lasting impression:

“It was the best presenta-

tion I have ever seen,” one student said.

“I was surprised that you are allowed to refuse work that seems dangerous to you,” said another.

Many were surprised to find out just how dangerous a workplace can be.

“I didn’t know you could die or get badly hurt where you work,” one student commented, while another said, “I learned that safety is

[school year stats]

In the 2002/03 school year:

- 3,342** students participated in the Safety Start program;
- 26,033** students were exposed to health and safety awareness activities stemming from WHSCC initiatives;
- 925** students attended a presentation conducted by WHSCC consultants; and
- 15,131** students were exposed to *Choices for Life* activities and other WHSCC youth initiatives;
- 85** Youth Apprenticeship Program students participated in workshops coordinated by the Youth Programs Coordinator.
- 6,416** students attended a Youth Spokesperson presentation;

very important and not just something your parents talk to you about.”

With a new school year well underway, Moleman is in the process of launching some exciting new initiatives.

“We’re bringing the HEROES program to the province this year,” she says. “The program – which is a multi-media roadshow – has received international recognition for its ability to reach young people and illustrate to them the importance of identifying and handling the risks they encounter every day.”

In the one-hour presentation, HEROES combines a large-scale multi-image presentation with a talk given by a young injury survivor. The presentation reviews ways to reduce the likelihood of injury.

HEROES presentations took place at six New Brunswick high schools from October 21, 2003 to November 5, 2003 and reached approximately 11,000 students.

Other new initiatives for the 2003/04 school year include:

- new health and safety resources for schools, including four new videos and a “spot the injured worker” poster;
- a promotional pamphlet

detailing WHSCC youth initiatives;

- a provincial mail-out to high school science teachers to promote safety in the science lab;
- a program for schools to pilot the new workplace health and safety component for co-op education 110 curriculum, created by the WHSCC; and
- provision of health and safety support resources to schools for the new grades 6 to 8 provincial Health Curriculum.

For more information on upcoming youth initiatives, or to obtain resources pertaining to youth health and safety in the workplace, please contact Silvy Moleman at molemans@whscc.nb.ca. □

[hot off the press]

The following publications are now available from the WHSCC by contacting the Communications Department at 1 800 222-9775.

- *Workers’ Compensation: A Guide for New Brunswick Workers* (booklet)
- *2002 Report to Stakeholders* (booklet)
- “Powered Mobile Equipment Kills” (hazard alert)
- *Workplace Disability Management: A Guide to Establishing a Program in Your Workplace* (booklet)
- *Guidelines for Potato Growing Safety* (pamphlet)

Now available on our Web site at: www.whscc.nb.ca

• *WHSCC Quarterly Corporate Report* – compiled at the end of each quarter, the Corporate Report is the Commission’s report to the Board of Directors on our progress towards our five major corporate objectives. The results reflect the coordinated effort of all divisions. □

TAKING IT IN STRIDE: STEVE DURELLE'S STORY

These days, Steve Durelle only comes to the Workers' Rehabilitation Centre (WRC) for "maintenance."

Today he's visiting the Assistive Devices Department to have Peter Ferris, the WRC's Prosthetist / Orthotist, attach a newly designed support cuff to his prosthetic forearm.

"It's a bit heavy to carry around all day," Durelle explains, popping the mechanical hook attachment off the end of his prosthesis and giving it to me to hold. "So I asked Peter to make something that would lighten the load a bit."

Since his injury in 2002, Durelle has spent a lot of time working with the Assistive Devices Department on ways to improve the comfort and effectiveness of his various prosthetic devices.

"I think they get a kick out of me," he says. "I'm full of new ideas, so we put our heads together and come up with solutions. Peter has even photographed some of the stuff we've come up with."

Durelle was injured while working as a packaging press operator in the peat moss industry. On June 25, 2002, the bags of peat moss his machine was producing weren't properly sealed.

"I decided to check the air hoses in the compressor area of the machine to see if they were the problem," he says, "and I stuck my hand in the wrong place."

The compression mechanism of the machinery amputated most of his right hand.

Durelle was brought by ambulance to the hospital in Miramichi, and then forwarded to the hospital in Moncton. He had two surgeries to clean and close the wound, leaving him with a complete amputation just above the wrist.

Durelle's claim was accepted by the Commission before he left hospital, and he was contacted by a WHSCC rehabilitation specialist on July 17th. Shortly thereafter, he travelled to the WRC.

Ferris took a mold of his injured arm, and tailor-made the socket of a prosthetic device to match. The device, with a manual hook attachment, was fitted in August 2002.

In January 2003, Durelle received a battery-operated myoelectric hook, which was much less restrictive to wear, and easier to operate. For this device, Ferris put together a set of electric "leads" designed to read small muscle movements in Durelle's lower right arm, and direct the hook to open or close.



Above: Steve Durelle and Peter Ferris (at right) adjust the sensitivity settings of Durelle's myoelectric hook. Below left: Steve Durelle at the WRC

Durelle has a myoelectric hand he can use instead of the hook attachment, but he says he only uses it when he has to wear a suit. "I mean who am I kidding? The hand doesn't look real," he laughs.

An avid sportsman, Durelle still uses his manual hook for many sports activities.

"I broke the hook once playing hockey," he says. "I taped my stick to the end, and by the second game, the aluminum had chilled enough to make it brittle, and it broke right off."

After that, the staff at the WRC assisted him with prosthetic attachments designed

Together Durelle and Bernard decided to invest in a kick-start for his teaching career, and in September 2002 – just three months after his accident – Durelle enrolled in the Education Department at UNB, to pursue certifications in French and a Diploma in Special Education.

"That first term I signed up for two courses," he says. "It took me 30 hours to type my first paper – I mean I used to type 30 words per minute!"

Durelle's case manager, Pierre Bossé, was there to help. He arranged to purchase voice-recognition software Durelle could use on his computer to type his papers.

"It has been a real comfort to know I can turn to the Commission for help," Durelle explains. "I have been really fortunate – everyone from the people in my home town, the health care professionals who treated me and all the folks at the WHSCC and WRC have been really good to me. I am very grateful to them all."

Now Durelle is looking to the future. He will complete his new certifications at the end of 2004, and he's got lots of plans for putting them to good use.

"Maybe I'll try to teach here in New Brunswick or go up and teach in the northern Canadian territories for a while," he says. "Who knows?"

Since his injury in 2002, Durelle has spent a lot of time working with the Assistive Devices Department on ways to improve the comfort and effectiveness of his various prosthetic devices.



specifically for sports activities.

Durelle now uses one for hockey, another for cross-country skiing, and a third that is designed specifically for basketball.

"Michael Jordan's job is safe, though," he reports.

Basketball prowess aside, Durelle wasn't about to let his disability prevent him from getting back to work.

As part of his return-to-work process, Durelle began working with rehabilitation specialist Donald Bernard in the Moncton office. Figuring out what he wanted to do for a living was easy: he wanted to capitalize upon his existing educational background, which includes a Bachelor of Education with a major in phys ed.

MANUAL PUSH CART SAFETY

Every year, many workers suffer injuries while handling manual pushcarts.

Work method, equipment / cart design and environmental conditions are all contributing factors in injury prevention when working with carts. Below are some tips* for purchasing / modifying / assessing carts that will help reduce the risk of injury.

The force that a worker is able to generate is related to posture. The most effective force application is in a direction parallel to the floor. Carts should be handled with two hands and be pushed instead of pulled whenever possible.

The posture of a worker can be influenced by various

factors including the orientation, height, diameter, and shape of the handles along with the distance of the handles away from the cart.

Try to load the cart so that the heaviest / most frequently used objects are around waist height. It is also important to ensure the load in the cart is

Work method, equipment / cart design and environmental conditions are all contributing factors in injury prevention when working with carts.

stable in order to minimize the amount of force required to maneuver the cart and to avoid falling loads.

Minimize the amount of handling performed. For example, allow the cart to slow down on its own rather

than trying to stop the cart abruptly. Other examples of ways to minimize handling include ensuring hallways are clear and free of debris / clutter and other obstacles. Round mirrors in some corners may allow the worker to see oncoming traffic / obstacles. This could give the

employee more time to maneuver / stop as required.

Ensure that the cart's castor configuration is appropriate for the type of work it is used for. Explore the pros and cons

of various castor configurations prior to purchasing or modifying your cart.

Carts that have swivel castors on one end and straight castors on the other should be maneuvered from the swivel end of the cart.

Implement effective floor inspection and cart maintenance programs. Monitor tread wear (i.e. flat spots) and replace castors as required.

Footwear with poor traction limits the amount of force that a worker can exert and encourages improper body mechanics. Imagine trying to move a cart while standing on ice!

Large, hard and narrow wheels are generally the easiest to maneuver. The floor type will be a factor in determining the type of castor to be used. The dimensions and

materials of castors play a role in the cart's maneuverability. Again, explore the various options before purchasing / modifying your carts.

There are presently automated cart "pullers" / "tugs" available on the market. These provide an alternative to manually handling carts and can potentially take several carts at the same time.

** Please note that these tips are not all inclusive. For more information, contact your regional ergonomic consultant. □*

[did you know?]

E-LEARNING

The University of New Brunswick is pleased to announce that their Certificate in Health, Safety and Environmental Processes program is now available online. A world-first, this program incorporates safety, quality and environmental management, and is available to learners around the world on a 24/7/365 basis.

The program targets learners from mid-management to the shop floor, and equips them with process skills that are applicable in any industry, sector, or jurisdic-

tion. Current learners are employed in a wide variety of industries, including mining, petro-chemical, forestry, transportation, health care, manufacturing, and others.

To learn more, please visit the program Web site at: www.unb.ca/extend/hsep. For information on registration, please contact Barry Hughes (UNB) at: bhughes@unb.ca.

[upcoming events]

ASHCAT Conference

The Association of Safety & Health Consultants and Trainers, Inc. (ASHCAT) will be holding their 2004 conference at the Howard Johnson's Hotel (formerly Keddy's Downtown) in Moncton, NB, April 5 - 7, 2004. For more information, please visit their Web site at:

www.ashcat.com/Events.htm.



WHSCC training workshops for return-to-work coordinators

The WHSCC will be offering one-day workshops to provide training for workplace return-to-work coordinators as part of our ongoing activities under the Disability Management Program. These workshops are offered at no cost to participants, and will be of interest to those

responsible for assisting employees in returning to work following an injury or illness.

Topics covered will include:

- how to develop a joint labour / management Disability Management Program;
- roles and responsibilities of the return-to-work coordinator;
- legislation impacting the re-employment of injured or ill employees; and
- job task analysis.

A number of case studies and workshop activities will be included to allow participants an opportunity to apply the information shared.

Return-to-work coordinator workshop dates:

All workshops will be held from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM on the dates indicated:

November 24: Ramada Inn, Fredericton (*English*)

November 25: Howard Johnson, Edmundston (*French*)

November 26: Atlantic Host, Bathurst (*French*)

November 27: Atlantic Host, Moncton (*English*)

December 1: Crystal Palace, Moncton (*English*)

December 2: Crystal Palace, Moncton (*French*)

Registration details:

Please note, the deadline for registrations is November 14th. As space is limited, early registration is encouraged.

More information:

For all workshops please contact Gilles LeBlanc
E-mail: leblancg@whsc.nb.ca
Phone: 1 800 222-9775 or 506 867-0510. □