



## The Quarterly Connection

## 2013 Quarter 4

### Work Refusal can affect your Unemployment Insurance Tax Rate

Claimants must be eligible for each week filed for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits, which includes accepting suitable work when an offer is made. Please be aware if you have job attached employees, they must report to work if you recall them. Refusal to show up may constitute work refusal and can disqualify them from further UI Benefits. Please call the UI Benefit Payment Control Unit at 307-235-3262 if a job attached employee refuses to come to work or is a no-show.

In order to be job attached, a claimant who lives in Wyoming must be returning to work:

- ◆ Within twelve (12) weeks from the effective date of the claim, full-time or for the same number of hours worked in the base period; and
- ◆ The employer must have paid at least fifty percent (50%) of the base period wages

Job attached status must be determined by the UI Division and will be verified with the employer.

After twelve (12) weeks, if the claimant has not been recalled, notice is given to the claimant that they must register for work and actively seek work. The employee must make two (2) verifiable work search contacts per week.

Also, if you as an employer offer a job to an individual who is filing for UI Benefits and the individual refuses the job offer or is a no-show, the individual may be disqualified for not accepting suitable work. Again, please contact the UI Benefit Payment Control unit at 307-235-3262 to provide this information.

### Workers' Compensation

#### Looking at New EMR Formula

The Workers' Compensation Division has worked with their actuary to develop a more balanced Employer Experience Modification Rating (EMR). The new formula is called a "Split Rate" plan due to the ability to measure both the severity and frequency of an employer's claim experience. This is a balanced method of measuring the potential of an employer's future claim experience and will give appropriate credit to those employers with better than average claim experience.

The Division will hold employer meetings around the state in 2014 to explain this new formula, how it works, and the timeline for implementing the change in the formula. For more information, please contact John Ysebaert, Department of Workforce Services, Standards & Compliance Division Administrator or Bill Cole, Workers Compensation Deputy Administrator at 307-777-6763.

Reports **MUST** be filed on WIRE or Division provided original forms. To obtain blank reporting forms, contact us by calling 307-235-3217. To file on WIRE, please go to: <https://doe.state.wy.us/wire>. When filing by WIRE you have the option to make payments by EFT.

The **WC Officer/Owner Average Wage for 2013** is **\$10,974.00**

The **UI Taxable Wage Base for 2013** is **\$23,800.00**



Research & Planning  
Wyoming DWS

### Truck drivers lead projected occupational growth in state

The top 20 occupations in Wyoming with the largest employment in 2012 represent approximately one-third (33.0% or 92,774 jobs) of all employment (280,767) in the state. The highest projected net change from 2012 to 2022 in these occupations are heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (1,784), oil, gas, and mining service unit operators, (1,475), and operating engineers and other construction equipment operators (1,422). Highest paying among these 20 occupations is general and operations managers, with a mean hourly wage of \$43.31. For more information about occupational projections by industry and sub-state region, see the Department of Workforce Services' Research & Planning section's website at <http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/projections.htm>.

## Wyoming's State Occupational Epidemiologist Releases Report on Workplace Fatalities, Injuries for 2012

The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services (DWS) State Occupational Epidemiologist Dr. C. Mack Sewell recently released a report outlining workplace fatalities and their circumstances by industry for 2012.

"The unique combination of Wyoming's prevalent industries, its climate and geography create challenges for safe working environments," said Dr. Mack Sewell. "It is my hope that this report will provide insight into areas where improvement needs to be made."

Also provided in the report, which can be found at [www.wyomingworkforce.org](http://www.wyomingworkforce.org), are trends identified through a review of workers' compensation claims for hospitalization, amputations, burn injuries requiring hospitalization, high medical cost claims and long-term disability.

"We know that changing the culture of safety will not happen overnight," said Director of the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services Joan Evans. "The surveillance system developed by Dr. Sewell is the first of its kind in Wyoming and I believe it is a step in the right direction for making important changes in workplace safety in our state."

Two DWS programs monitor workplace-related deaths: the State Occupational Epidemiologist's count of workplace deaths, and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI). Differences in each programs' confidentiality rules, along with access to federal investigatory information means that the two strategies can be expected to produce different counts of workplace deaths. The programs have two different goals: the State-run program allows for a more detailed look at workplace deaths at the industry-level based primarily on documents such as death records, police crash reports and coroner's reports while the CFOI program allows for the collection of national data across states.

### Fatalities

Transportation sector deaths (16) account for more than half of all workplace fatalities, followed by agriculture (5), construction (3) and oil and gas (3). Through the surveillance system he developed, Dr. Sewell noted that the 2012 work-related fatalities were disproportionately older males who are non-residents working in some form of transportation or with heavy equipment.

### Injuries

Construction leads the industry classification in hospitalizations, high medical cost claims and long term disability claims. Mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction, and construction lead the industry categories for amputations followed by manufacturing and transportation and warehousing. Additionally in the report, Dr. Sewell notes that total claims activity has been on a downward trend since 2005.

### Ongoing Efforts to Improve Workplace Safety in Wyoming

Several industry groups have formed over the past several years dedicated to promote safety in the workplace including: the Wyoming Oil and Gas Industry Safety Alliance (WOGISA), the Wyoming Refinery Safety Alliance and the Transportation Safety Coalition. Each has identified needs in its respective industry to improve the safety culture and wellbeing of workers. A construction trade safety group is currently in the beginning stages of formation, along with efforts to connect individuals involved with agriculture through the University of Wyoming Agriculture Extension Services.

In 2012, the Wyoming Legislature provided the Wyoming Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) with seven additional safety consultants. The legislation additionally made available \$500,000 for a program administered by DWS that provides employers with up to \$10,000 to buy safety equipment or safety training that goes above and beyond OSHA requirements.

In 2013, the Legislature created a program within DWS to provide workers' compensation premium reductions for employers who participate in health and safety consultations.

Governor Mead established the state occupational epidemiologist position within DWS to ensure a closer tie to Wyoming OSHA, the Workers' Compensation division and data compiled by the department's Research and Planning division.

#### Are you in need of a Certificate of Good Standing?

For **UI** Certificates, go to <https://doe.state.wy.us/cert>

For **WC** Certificates, go to <https://wconline.wyo.gov/web/#>