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OCCUPATIONAL FIRST AID ATTENDANTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Summer Edition 2013

Don't miss
Kamloops First Aid
Competition this
September 21st at
the City Works Yard
955 Concordia Way
Kamloops

2013 First Aid Competition

CSSE Canadian Society of Safety Engineering Thompson Chapter is holding 22nd Annual Invitational First Aid Competition being held in Kamloops on Saturday September 21st at the Kamloops City Works Yard, 955 Concordia Way. 7:30 am draw for order of participation. First entries received, first in, only ten teams allowed. Registration fee is \$225 Banquet is in the evening (location determined later), cash bar 6:30 pm and dinner 7:15 pm.



Elaine Wolfson telephone/fax at: 250-374-0058 (Thompson Nicola Training), or cell number: 250-319-2418 Email: ewolfsonnt@telus.net

Jessica Kruger

Was a Featured speaker at the Day of Mourning Ceremony held in Vancouver in 2011 (picture attached) telling her

story about her workplace injury. The April 28th ceremony has presentations from representatives of management, labour, WorkSafeBC, and injured workers



Jessica spoke to the audience about her experience as an injured worker. She has been a spokeswoman in the WorkSafeBC outreach program for Young Workers since 2010, speaking to youth at schools and in the community to talk about safety at work.

Jessica has told her story many times: she was injured working as a house painter at the age of 15 when she fainted and fell from a ladder, and broke her neck and spine in four places. She had only been on the job for ten days when she fell. This was her first job, and she liked the work as a house

painter working from tall ladders.

Jessica is a featured speaker for The **Young Workers Speakers Program** of WorkSafeBC teaching students and young workers the importance of safety, because if she had been wearing a fall protection harness she would not have been injured.

An active athlete before her accident, Jessica now plays wheelchair rugby, an event known as "murder ball", with the goal of playing on Canada's national team.

Recently SFU student **Jessica Kruger** has been in the news for another reason, when she was selected by cosmetic manufacturer **Lise Watier** as the winner of their contest to be the face and spokesperson for **Something Sweet** perfume.

Critical Incident Stress Claims for First Aid Attendants:

The Occupational First Aid Attendants Association recommended that the Workers' Compensation Board allow First Aid Attendants more than one



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year to file compensation claims for work-related Critical Incident Stress cases.



WorkSafeBC invited comments about establishing new policies as a result of recent legislation changes. The OFAAABC acting for its members and OFA's in the field made written submission regarding the effect of trauma events on First Aid Attendants.

June 26th submission by OFAAABC recommended that in cases of serious traumatic incidents at work, WorkSafeBC collect the facts and evidence on a critical incident stress management basis to ensure early intervention and the best possible outcome for OFA's. The Association recommended WorkSafeBC allow the time period for compensation payments be determined by healthcare providers trained in

critical incident stress treatment and stated in the interest of our Members we welcome the opportunity to comment on the Policy review for Critical Incident Stress claims where it relates to Occupational First Aid Attendants in the performance of their duties.

We note that Bill 14 was interpreted to apply to ambulance paramedics, fire fighters, and police officers and recommend that Occupational First Aid Attendants be treated similarly and included due to the nature of our work and severity of traumas encountered.

We debate the reasonability of applying a one year time limit; however, we understand and recognize the complexities of providing a rationalized insurance program. Our Members, know from direct experience that catastrophic incidents can be overwhelming to even the most experienced Occupational First Aid Attendants and other first responders. And this reaction may not be immediate, and may take time to develop.

We would recommend and support a Critical Incident Stress Management care review

in any case of serious trauma. This would allow WorkSafeBC, from an insurance perspective, an opportunity to collect the facts and evidence at the time when it is most available, and importantly ensure that the O.F.A.A., or other first responder, is evaluated at the earliest opportunity to ensure the best possible outcome.

Neither the *status quo* nor the second option presented adequately addresses our concerns. We believe that responding to a Critical Incident Stress situation and examining the Occupational First Aid Attendant would be the precursor to determining the possible long term effects and we suggest it be to the judgment of a professional trained in Critical Incident Stress Management rather than solely based upon a fixed time limit owing to the complexities and unique nature of each individual. Simple legislation such as time limits makes sense from an insurance standpoint, but our members believe it can be problematic when delivering an appropriate level of care.