

# KWORDS *from* KWORCC

## Modified Duty Programs ~ Part 1

*By Brandon Mann, KWORCC Loss Prevention Specialist*

Modified duty programs, also referred to as light duty or transitional duty, are a beneficial tool for both employers and employees. Whereas other initiatives of a safety program within a county may focus on loss prevention and reducing the frequency of workplace injuries, modified duty programs instead focus on reducing the severity of a work-related injury by returning the employee back to their original job as quickly as possible. This is accomplished by modifying the employee's job duties so that the work tasks the employee will be doing will fit within any work restrictions given by the treating physician.

Modified duty benefits the employer in many ways. First, and possibly most important to a county, it helps to lower worker's compensation costs. Lost wage benefits for an injured employee are guaranteed under the worker's compensation law. A modified duty program reduces the amount of lost wage benefits paid out by returning the injured employee back to work, in a limited capacity, rather than having the employee completely off work while recuperating from the injury. By reducing what the worker's compensation carrier is spending for lost wage benefits, the organization's loss history and experience modifier will be affected positively, and worker's compensation premiums will reflect the savings. The cost savings seen by implementing a modified duty program has been shown to be anywhere from 8%-90% savings, depending on the organization and whether the cost of the program itself was factored into the cost savings.

A second major benefit of modified duty is that it returns the injured employee back to their original position

sooner, and they are more likely to return to work overall. The overall number of days lost is cut in half when the organization implements a modified duty program, but the employee is also more likely to return to work for the same employer. Conversely, the longer an employee is away from the workplace on injury leave, the less likely he is to return to work. There are obvious financial consequences for an organization when an injured employee does not return to work. The time spent advertising for the vacant position, interviewing applicants and training the new employee are all activities that cost the organization time and money.

A third major benefit of modified duty for the employer is that it gives the opportunity for the employer to cross-train employees in different jobs, thereby creating a workforce that is more flexible and can respond efficiently to changes in the work environment.

Lastly, a modified duty program assists the injured employee by speeding their return to their regular job. The tasks that an employee on modified duty may be required to perform due to the treating physician's restrictions may be far removed from their normal job duties. Since most people self-identify with their job, an assignment to something different may be uncomfortable to the employee. The result is an employee that is motivated to heal quickly and return to their normal duties. There is a direct correlation between the mind and the speed of physical recovery, and the modified duty program serves as a catalyst for an expeditious return to work.

## Exceptional Loss Ratios Winners for 2016

Premium	Winners	Ratio
0-\$43,999	1st ~ Wallace County	0.000%
	2nd ~ Edwards County	0.028%
	3rd ~ Stafford County	0.157%
\$44,000— \$125,000	1st ~ Russell County	0.342%
	2nd ~ Republic County	0.344%
	3rd ~ Haskell County	1.114%
Greater than \$125,000	1st ~ Cherokee County	0.856%
	2nd ~ Jefferson County	4.135%
	3rd ~ Miami County	9.767%

### Legal Detail: "Cause - It's Important"

*by Dortha Bird*

*The Kansas Workers Compensation Appeals Board (and affirmed by the Kansas Court of Appeals) tells Kansas employers that it is the burden of the employer to prove the reason for the on-the-job injury. Therefore, when reporting a claim to KWORCC, please be sure to identify the cause of the injury. This means interviewing the injured worker and any witnesses who saw the injury or may have information concerning the circumstances of the injury. While the investigation will take a bit of extra effort, such will be helpful in determining compensability. Do not hesitate to contact Amanda Chamberland concerning investigation and reporting of a work-place injury: 1-844-702-2353, Extension 4713, [amanda.chamberland@tristarqgroup.net](mailto:amanda.chamberland@tristarqgroup.net)*

# KWORCC

KANSAS  
WORKERS RISK COOPERATIVE  
for COUNTIES

700 SW Jackson • Suite 200  
Topeka, Kansas 66603  
Toll Free 1-877-357-1069  
www.kworcc.com

## CLAIMS REPORTING

To submit a claim online, go to [www.tristarrisk.com](http://www.tristarrisk.com) and select "report a claim". To call in a claim: 1-855-495-1554. Questions on claims should be directed to Amanda Chamberland: 1-844-702-2353 [Amanda.Chamberland@tristargroup.net](mailto:Amanda.Chamberland@tristargroup.net)

## TRUSTEES

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## Department of Labor Compliance

KDOL inspectors are making the rounds again this year. One of the areas of compliance they look for is training for county employees on various topics. In most departments at least the custodian, and often everyone, needs to have received training on:

Emergency Action Plan  
Hazard Communication  
Personal Protective Equipment  
Blood Borne Pathogens  
Lockout/Tagout

KWORCC has Gov U classes available on all of the above topics throughout the year. You can find a chart for each topic and who needs the training by department on the KWORCC website at: [http://kworcc.com/kdol\\_compliance\\_help.html](http://kworcc.com/kdol_compliance_help.html) You will also find a listing of where each topic is located in the loss prevention manual and additional information to ensure your county is complaint when the KDOL inspectors come knocking at your door.

If you need assistance evaluating your work environment and developing a safety policy, please contact one of KWORCC's Loss Prevention Specialists, Brandon Mann (Cell - 785-250-5118) and Ben Woner (Cell - 785-249-6270).

KWORCC wants to help ensure when inspection time comes, your county passes with flying colors.

## *Focus on Claims: Parking Lot & Grounds Maintenance*

By Amanda Chamberland

**Recently we have experienced inclement weather all across the state of Kansas. Due to the snow and ice we have seen an increase of slips and falls on employer premises. Frequently I am asked if an accident is covered when the injured employee has already clocked out and is leaving work yet still on the premises. Although each situation is unique, generally speaking a slip and fall on employer property while coming in the building or existing is covered IF the employer owns and maintains the premises. To avoid these types of injuries try to use preventative maintenance as much as possible in the winter months such as ice melting materials, non-slip shoe mats, etc. If the injury occurs outside of the employer's premises or the employee is deviating from their job duties there may be exceptions to this rule. If you have an employee who has slipped or fallen on your premises please call me at 1-844-702-2353 ext 4713 so we may discuss the compensability of their claim.**

# KWORCC Learning Center

Safety awareness and safety training are a large part of keeping your employees safe. Regular safety meetings (KWORCC recommends once a month) can be used to show videos from the KWORCC Safety Video Library as well as to discuss housekeeping and timely safety topics. Additionally, individual employees can take online courses through Gov-U (contact Ren Heitman at [rheitman@localgovu.com](mailto:rheitman@localgovu.com) or 866.845.8887 to set up an account if you don't have one) and the KWORCC Loss Prevention Staff is available for on site, in person group training.

## Gov U Classes

- Absorbents and spills
- Active Shooter (LEO): 1
- Active Shooter: Ambush Awareness and Preparation
- Advanced Defensive Driving Techniques
- Annual Taser Controlled electronic Weapon
- Basic Firearm Safety
- Best Practices in Dangerous Canine Encounters
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Dealing with Stress
- Defensive Driving Basics
- Discipline and Termination
- Distracted Driving for Local Government
- Dump Truck Safety(NEW)
- Emergency Preparation and Egress
- Excavation 102
- Fitness & Nutrition: 1(NEW)
- Fitness & Nutrition: 2(NEW)
- Fitness & Nutrition: 3(NEW)
- Fitness & Nutrition: 4(NEW)
- Fitness & Nutrition: 5(NEW)
- Forklift Safety
- Global SDS & the Hazard Communication Standard - Local Government
- Handling Difficult Customers
- Ice Control for Managers & Decision Makers
- Lockout/Tagout 101
- Lockout/Tagout 102
- Managing Risk in an Aging Workforce
- Mental Health in Jails
- Officer safety and Procedure in Domestic Violence Response
- Personal Protective Equipment 101
- Personal Protective Equipment 102
- Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls
- Stress and Your Health(NEW)
- Training for Small Communities
- Understanding Carpal Tunnel Syndrome(NEW)
- Work Zone Traffic Control 101
- Work Zone Traffic Control 102
- Workplace Bullying
- Workplace Ergonomics
- Workplace Harassment

## Selected Video Learning

Most of the safety videos are available only on VHS. However, all videos with a number of G-106 and higher are available on DVD. The KWORCC staff is working to get popular topics on DVD. If you have a particular topic you would like to see us carry on DVD, please email Nicole at [nicole@kworcc.com](mailto:nicole@kworcc.com).

A complete list of available videos can be found on the KWORCC website.

### Suggested video library selections:

- G-6 Driving Risk Control
- G-12 Minus Ten
- G-30 Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- G-32 How to prevent slips trips and falls
- G-80 Road crew safety
- G-159 Winter Driving: When the Rules Change - *NEW*
- G-160 Cold Stress - *NEW*



## On-Site Training Suggestion: Skid Steer Loader

By Carl Eyman, Loss Prevention Manager

**One of the most versatile pieces of equipment available in the Road & Bridge arsenal. This little guy can be equipped with an almost unlimited number of attachments which allows it to perform numerous tasks. The key to operating any piece of equipment is knowing its virtues and limitations. This class will bring both issues to light and discuss the available optional attachments.**

**The KWORCC Loss Prevention staff has available the Bobcat Operator Training Course which assist in the training of new operators and make the experienced operators more aware of the safety issues. Please contact the KWORCC Loss Prevention staff to discuss the class and schedule a date and time.**



## WINTER Weather Advisories

Each year, winter brings cold, wind and frozen precipitation to our area, making for dangerous conditions and treacherous travel. It's a good idea to familiarize yourself with the various winter weather alerts that the National Weather Service will issue, so you know what to expect throughout the winter storm season.

- **Winter Storm Watch:** A winter storm is possible. Stay tuned to local forecasts as heavy snow and/or ice may affect your area in the next 12 to 36 hours.
- **Winter Weather Advisory:** Winter weather is expected to cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous. Usually a few inches of snow or a glaze of ice. Use caution.
- **Winter Storm Warning:** A winter storm is occurring-expect heavy snow and/ or significant icing. Travel will become dangerous, if not impossible.
- **Blizzard Warning:** Winds more than 35mph and falling/blowing snow will reduce visibility to almost zero for three hours or longer. Expect travel to become dangerous, if not impossible with white-out conditions. Significant drifting of snow is likely.
- **Ice Storm Warning:** Ice will accumulate 1/4" or more, leading to the potential for snapped trees and power lines. Travel will become extremely dangerous, if not impossible.

As always, the number one tip for winter travel is to slow down! Wet, icy and snowy roads are slick - you must reduce speed to maintain control of your vehicle. It's also a good idea to carry a charged cell phone with you in case of an emergency. The best advice however, is to stay home and off the roads until travel conditions improve.

## 2018 Board Meeting Dates

- X January 18th
- X February 15th
- March 22nd
- April 26th
- May 17th
- June 21st
- July 26th
- August 23rd
- September 20th
- October 15th – Annual Meeting
- November 15th
- December 13th