

AHLA BOARD OPENS ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP TO RESTAURANTS

In the September/October issue of *Innsight*, the AHLA asked its members for their feedback on the possibility of pursuing restaurants to become members of our association. Responses were evenly divided for and against expanding the AHLA's membership to include restaurants.

The trend of merging existing lodging and restaurant associations has been spreading across Canada. Recently, the Alberta Restaurant & Foodservice Association (ARFA) asked the AHLA if it would consider such an amalgamation. After much discussion, research, and deliberation, the AHLA's Board of Directors decided to invite restaurant operators to join our association as Associate Members. Restaurants who are currently AHLA Associate Members, or who are considering becoming AHLA Associate Members, will be eligible to participate in most AHLA Member Value Programs. With the support of ARFA's Board of Directors, the AHLA will issue an invitation to ARFA's members early in the New Year.

The AHLA's Board of Directors also agreed to review annually the number of restaurants that have become Associate Members, and will consider whether to offer additional membership services and benefits to restaurants in the future.

The AHLA's Board of Directors continues to review the association's bylaws and governance, and will be presenting recommendations for amendments to bylaws to our members at the 2007 Annual General Meeting, which will take place on Tuesday, May 22 at The Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge.

The AHLA thanks those members who responded by fax, email or telephone to the survey for their feedback.

Seasons Greetings!

The Board of Directors and Staff of the Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association wish you and your staff a peaceful and joyous holiday season.

We hope that each and every one of our members will find time to enjoy their favorite holiday traditions.

We wish you every success in the New Year, and look forward to serving all of our members in 2007!

In the November/December 2006 Issue...

Natural Gas Program Savings
Sign Up Alberta!
Group Health & Dental Benefits

Continuous Employment & Business Purchase
Successful First Year for AHLA's Insurance Program
2007 Housekeeping Award Winners Announced!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

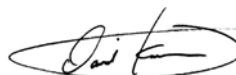
As our industry grows more global in scope we are invariably impacted by national and international issues such as the war in Iraq, SARS and the events of 9-11. The proposed elimination of the GST Visitor Rebate Program will have serious impact on Alberta's lodging industry particularly for operators who rely on foreign convention, group, and tour business.

Increasingly, we require an effective national voice to advocate on behalf of our industry. Most AHLA members are aware that they are also members of the Hotel Association of Canada (HAC) by virtue of their provincial hotel association membership. The HAC is the national organization representing the accommodations industry in Canada.

The AHLA has three seats on the HAC Board currently. AHLA Chair Lina Venchiarutti, Past AHLA Chair Will Schmidt and I serve on this board. We recently attended a HAC Board of Directors meeting in Ottawa, followed by a reception with federal Members of Parliament. A common theme that emerged at the Board meeting was that the tourism industry in Canada is not really on the radar of the federal government. During the MPs' reception, HAC's Board of Directors focused on three key messages:

1. The government should continue the GST Visitor Program for the group, tour and convention business, with additional measures in place to ensure transparency, accuracy and accountability.
2. The government should support the tourism industry with a permanent increase of \$100 million annually to the Canadian Tourism Commission.
3. The application process for the Temporary Foreign Workers Program needs to be accelerated and simplified. It should be extended to all areas of Canada and not just Alberta and British Columbia.

In conversation with my own Member of Parliament, I was reminded of the importance of coordinated local lobby efforts. Most elected officials pay more attention to messages from their own constituents than they do from paid lobbyists. After all, these are the people who keep them in office. I encourage all AHLA members to develop a relationship with their local M.P. and engage them in the issues that are critical to our industry. Working together with the AHLA and the HAC we can coordinate a powerful unified message that will have impact in Ottawa.



Dave Kaiser, CHA
President & Chief Executive Officer

ENERGY PROGRAM ENLIGHTENMENT – NATURAL GAS PROGRAM SAVINGS

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING

ON THE AHLA'S NATURAL GAS PROGRAM?

Demand charges for properties with annual consumption over 8000 GJ can be renegotiated, resulting in significant savings. Natural gas supply is purchased on behalf of our members at the Daily Index price until attractive prices for natural gas contracts are available. This means wholesale pricing without retail markups.

Gas Alberta Energy's pricing methods have consistently resulted in their customers paying less than the Gas Cost Recovery Rate used by Direct Energy and AltaGas Utilities.

Contact Lynn Senetchko at the AHLA to find out how your property can take advantage of our natural gas program.

Month	GAE Actual Rate	ATCO North GCRR	ATCO South GCRR	AltaGas GCRR	Savings of GAE rate vs Avg GCRR
March	6.29	6.20	5.10	6.20	0.46
April	6.23	7.05	5.97	4.84	0.28
May	5.31	6.48	5.92	6.92	-1.13
June	5.56	3.56	2.68	3.53	2.30
July	5.49	5.89	5.88	4.74	-0.02
Aug	6.14	4.15	5.30	3.93	1.68
Sept	4.31	6.70	6.83	6.65	-2.42
Oct	4.12	4.10	3.72	3.47	1.80
Nov	7.30	6.95	6.78	7.65	0.18
Dec		8.28	8.23	7.98	
Average Savings					0.29/GJ

Alberta Human Resources & Employment

CONTINUOUS EMPLOYMENT & BUSINESS PURCHASE

The General Holiday Pay sections of the Employment Standards Code (Code) are the source of most questions for employers. But the area that causes the most surprise is Section 5 - Continuous Employment. When a business is purchased, the continuous employment section affects the employees of the purchased business and the entitlements that they maintain under the Code.

If the business changes owners but the employees continue to work for the business, Section 5 deems their employment to be continuous. The intent of this section is to secure employees' entitlements at the earned level throughout changes of ownership.

It is the employee's length of service with the business that determines entitlements not length of service with any particular owner of that business. If the ownership of a business changes and the new owner continues to employ the staff, the employee's previous length of service comes along with the employee. The exception would be if the employee is terminated by the seller and the break of employment before starting with the new owner is greater than three months. In this case only, the employment would not be deemed to be continuous.

When calculating wages or entitlements under the Code, the employee's length of service will be the total of that employee's service with all owners of that business. Employees maintain their accrued seniority. Areas of the Code which are affected by the continuous employment section are:

1. General Holiday Pay

Employees do not have to re-qualify, by working another 30 days, for the first holiday with the purchaser.

2. Vacation Pay

If they have already reached 3 weeks or 6% they continue to receive vacation pay at that rate.

3. Termination Pay

Employees do not have to serve a new three month probationary period.

Once hired, the purchaser must terminate an employee by providing notice or pay in lieu of notice based on the total length of service.

4. Maternity/Parental Leave

Employees do not need to requalify for an additional 12 months before leave.

If you purchase a business it is critical that you obtain and maintain all relevant payroll records for employees you are assuming. This should give you a complete history of the employees and allow you, if necessary, to do any future calculations.

The seller is responsible for terminating all employment relationships and paying out all entitlements to the employees. The Code does not transfer liability for employee debts from the business seller upon a change of ownership. I have seen, in some cases, the buyer agree to assume the seller's liabilities. Unless specified, the seller remains responsible for the payment of wages, overtime, vacation pay and general holiday pay upon the sale of the business.

In the event that a business is placed into receivership and the employees are retained to continue the running of the business or the winding down of the business, the employee's length of service still carries over with the receiver. If the business is subsequently sold to a new owner and the employees are retained, the length of service now includes the seller, the receiver and is carried on to the new owner.

Bankruptcy causes an exception to continuous employment. If a bankrupt business is purchased the period of employment for the employees is not deemed to be continuous.

Before you decide to hire all employees from the property that you are purchasing, I suggest that you interview all staff and decide if they are a fit for your business. If you decide after a few weeks that you don't want a particular employee, you will be responsible for termination pay for the total period of employment.

Please call me if you have any questions about continuous employment and section 5 of the Code, or if you are thinking of buying or selling a business.

For more information, call Carolyn Bennett at (780) 422-7276 (toll free through the Rite Line at 310-0000) or by email at carolyn.bennett@gov.ab.ca



STRONG BOOKINGS & HIGHER RATES MARK SUMMER TOURISM SEASON

Alberta's tourism industry had a very strong summer with both occupancy and revenue increases over 2005, says the new Post-Summer 2006 Alberta Tourism Operator Survey. The trend is expected to continue into fall and winter.

"Tourism operators are saying it was a good year. A strong economy brought more corporate bookings, and a hot summer encouraged Albertans to vacation near home," said Economic Development Minister Clint Dunford.

In northern Alberta, energy sector demand meant many hotels were full or nearly full, and room rates increased significantly.

In Edmonton, both occupancy and rates were above last year's levels.

In the national parks areas, occupancy rates and revenues ranged from flat to slightly higher. While the number of Asian visitors fell, more regional visitors came and they stayed longer.

In central Alberta, occupancy rates were slightly above last year's levels.

In Calgary, hotel activity exceeded industry expectations, with occupancy and room rates making for a strong season.

In southern Alberta, occupancy rates were slightly above last year.

Across the province, campgrounds and RV parks had a strong season, and many had waiting lists. Good weather and a number of events helped attraction and event operators be successful.

The survey also asked operators about their concerns.

Many companies said that staff were working extra-long hours, that staff housing was an issue, and hours of operation were being affected. Other industry concerns included the stronger Canadian dollar, and the appeal of soccer's World Cup keeping European visitors at home. Feedback about the impact of higher gasoline prices was mixed: some felt they kept more Albertans near home, while others said it did not affect travellers' decisions.

The report is available online at <http://www.alberta-canada.com/> in the "Statistics and Publications" section. The reporting period for the survey is May through Labour Day. The survey was conducted as part of Alberta Economic Development's research to support the tourism sector.

SIGN UP ALBERTA!

The Tourism Highway Signing Program, which commenced in June of 2004, has been changing the face of tourism signing province-wide. Alberta Infrastructure & Transportation has placed a 3-year conversion timeframe on the program to allow a process of change that would provide good visibility and recognition, which is to be achieved by March 31, 2007.

If you are not already aware of the new sign program, you should know that if you have an existing brown & white tourism sign it will need to be converted to the new blue & white format by March 31, 2007. Any brown & white tourism signage will be removed starting in April 2007. If you do not currently have tourism signs but believe your attraction warrants highway signage, please contact Guide Sign Industries at the number listed below or visit the program website.

If eligible, your signs would appear similar to this example of the new blue & white format.



The primary objective of the Tourism Highway Signage Initiative is to manage an efficient and effective tourist and service information system throughout the province, which meets the requirements of the traveling public, the tourism industry and government requirements. Objectives include:

- providing high quality, regulatory, directional and traveler-related signing; and
- displaying highly legible and visually appealing messages along with installing safe structures.

To determine your eligibility, apply for a Tourist Oriented Directional Sign (TODS), or for more information about the Tourism Highway Signing Program, go to www.signupalberta.com or call Guide Sign Industries Ltd. toll free at 1-866-560-7446.

AHLA INSURANCE PROGRAM

The AHLA's Protected Self-Insurance Program celebrated its first anniversary on December 1, 2006. The program now insures 323 AHLA members with \$5,730,204 in total annualized premiums.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL PARTICIPATING MEMBERS FOR MAKING THE FIRST YEAR OF THE NEW PROGRAM A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS!

Designed specifically for members of the AHLA and administered by HED Insurance, the program includes such advantages as immediate guaranteed premium savings, eligibility for year-end rebates, and comprehensive coverage. A solid foundation has been laid for long-term premium savings and program stability.

The first annual renewal of the program was December 1, 2006. As indicated in the renewal letter to participating members, HED and the AHLA are pleased to advise that there was an overall 10% reduction in renewal rates on the program. In addition, insured members received significant improvements in coverage and information concerning the level of coverage required to avoid co-insurance penalties relating to property coverage, through the Boeckh building estimated valuation system.

HED and the AHLA are proud to advise members that since the December 1, 2005 inception of the program, premium rates have reduced by 25% overall (15% on inception and 10% on renewal this year), and coverage has been substantially improved.

As of November 30, 2006 the first year of the program has resulted in a surplus of \$1,331,482. **This surplus is owned by insured members.** This surplus money is eligible to be rebated to members after a reserve has been established for "incurred but not reported" claims.

In order to be eligible for rebates, your property must be insured under the program at the time the rebate is paid.

Based on the current surplus of \$1,331,482, and taking into account the established policy of maintaining a claims reserve of \$1,000,000, \$331,482 will become eligible for rebate in 2007. Calculation of the exact amount of rebate will be made as at August 31, 2007. This \$331,482 would represent a rebate of approximately 6% of total collected premiums in the December 1, 2005-06 policy year. Further, the \$1,000,000 reserve is also owned by insured members. It is gratifying that even at this early stage, your program has developed exactly as described during the initial enrolment period in fall, 2005.

To enroll in the new AHLA Commercial Insurance Program, or to obtain more information, please feel free to contact Justin Friesen, HED's Commercial Insurance Sales Manager at 1-800-665-8990 ext. 7211, or the AHLA office directly at 780-436-6112/toll free 1-888-436-6112.

The AHLA's 87th Annual Trade Show & Convention will take place May 20 - 22, 2007 at The Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge. The Convention Committee has made a number of changes to the convention format as a result of feedback from our members:

Convention starts with the Trade Show on Sunday, May 20, and ends with the Chairman's dinner on Tuesday, May 22.

Housekeeping Awards will be presented at a gala dinner on the evening of Monday, May 21.

Terry Saik Memorial Golf Tournament on Wednesday, May 23.

Book your rooms early to ensure that you are not disappointed!

OPCOM/GLOBALIVE 24 HOUR TECHNICAL SUPPORT LINE

Questions or concerns regarding technical service issues for OPCOM Telecommunications Services should be forwarded directly to their 24 hour Support line. The toll-free number is 1-877-445-8606 Ext. 248. This will reach an operations officer who will be able to provide any assistance necessary.

2006 WAGE SURVEY

The 2006 Wage Survey is now complete! Those properties who participated in the survey have already been sent a copy at no charge. If you would like a copy of the survey, please contact the AHLA office at 1-888-436-6112.

November/December 2006

TOTALGUARD EMPLOYEE GROUP HEALTH & DENTAL BENEFITS PROGRAM

Since the AHLA transferred our benefits program to TOTALGUARD, participation amongst our members has grown from 67 properties to 105. Employee participation within enrolled members has also increased, growing the total annualized premium from \$729,245 to \$1,426,507! The new TotalGUARD Employee Benefits Program provides AHLA members with a long-term solution. Major features & enhancements include:

- **Premium Savings** Properties with 10 or more employees will receive an immediate 10% premium savings on an equivalent coverage basis, and properties with 5 - 9 employees will receive an immediate 5% premium savings on an equivalent coverage basis.
- **Pay-Direct Drug/Dental Card** all insured persons will receive this automatic payment card, which is like a credit card that insured persons can use for drugs and dental services instead of having to pay up front and then applying for re-imburement. Insureds are required merely to pay the amount of any co-insurance at the time of purchase/service.
- **Program Flexibility** Member properties now have many different coverage options to choose from.

TotalGUARD is HED's proprietary employee benefits program, which presently provides comprehensive life, health and dental plans to 857 independent Canadian businesses. Through TotalGUARD, HED provides the product and all related services such as invoicing/billing, production of benefit booklets, day-to-day administration, analytical support, new business sales, and ongoing service and claims support. With all these services under one roof, TotalGUARD is very different and economically superior to the traditional method of purchasing group benefits coverage.

TotalGUARD's economic and administrative efficiencies mean that AHLA members will realize immediate premium savings and have long-term rate stability. Offering benefits will help you to attract and retain staff.

For more information, please contact Scott Stewart, HED's Employee Benefits Sales Manager at 1-800-665-8990 ext. 7211, or the AHLA office directly at 780-436-6112/toll free 1-888-436-6112.

November/December 2006

CLASSIFIEDS

Employment

Parkland Motel in Rimbey seeks resident manager couple to oversee 30 room property. Please call Joe at (403) 843-2294 or fax resume to (403) 843-2980.

Noralta Lodge seeks two full time permanent Front Desk Clerks. Work is 14 days on, 7 days off. Staff accommodation is provided. Remote location with free transportation to site. Full benefits after 3 months. Interviews take place in Edmonton. For information, please call (780) 483-6800.

For Sale

Hotel in Thorhild for sale by owner. Seating for 92, 3 VLTs, 10 guest rooms, 2 big screen televisions. Smoking permitted. Includes manager's suite. Asking \$379,900. Call Roy at (780) 398-3534.

8' x 3' solid wood, steel frame folding banquet tables. \$25.00/each. Must pick up in Edmonton. Contact Keenan Carley at 780-421-1212.

Classified ads are available at no charge to AHLA members. Classifieds are printed in the Insight newsletter and posted online at www.ahla.ca. To place yours, fax information to Valerie Smeltzer at (780) 436-5404, or email vsmeltzer@ahla.ca

Alberta Finance and Alberta Economic Development are pleased to advise that the late filing rate for the Tourism Levy has dropped substantially.

Last year, the late filing rate was 23%. This dropped to 13% in the first quarter of 2006/07 and is now 5% in the third quarter. Alberta Finance's Tax & Revenue Administration has received no further complaints since the revised penalty policy was implemented.

An Internet based e-filing option is expected to be available in the near future.

December 31 is fiscal year end for the AHLA. To assist us in preparing for our financial audit and so that we can prepare the 2006 Annual Report for our members, please ensure that your account is paid in full. If you have questions about invoices or statements sent to your property, please contact the AHLA office at 1-888-436-6112.

DAWN RINGROSE & ASSOCIATES INC.

Why hire a Certified Management Consultant?

- Special expertise
- Additional resource on a project
- Independent and objective opinion
- Temporary member of your management team

Dawn Ringrose has provided consulting services to the hospitality and tourism sector since 1984 in the following areas:

- Strategic planning
- Business planning
- Market research and planning
- Market and financial feasibility
- Operational review
- Executive search
- Quality management systems
- Customer service
- Corporate training and development

Complementing these areas of specialization, Dawn also draws on valuable practical experience such as: working in a variety of hospitality, tourism, and recreation operations; spearheading the Alberta Attractions consortium; co-owning a motel & restaurant; co-owning a travel accessory manufacturing business; serving on industry boards and committees; serving as a judge for provincial and national tourism award programs; winning the ALTO award for innovative marketing; presenting at industry conferences; teaching at post-secondary institutions; and training for ATEC, the Quality Council of Alberta, and the National Quality Institute.

To learn more:

Phone: (780) 434-1179

Email: info@dawnringrose.com

Web: www.dawnringrose.com

CAMPGROUND CORNER

On December 4 & 5, the AHLA's campground members met in Red Deer for a Christmas supper and general meeting. The attendance was great and everyone enjoyed getting together to discuss the summer's business.

A special thank you to everyone who gave input into our 2007 planning portion of the meeting. Many positive things came out of the discussions. As a group, the AHLA's campground members now have a sense of direction that will enable our group and the AHLA's Board of Directors to better plan for the future of our industry. One of the questions that campground operators considered was "What will affect your business in 2007?"

Responses included:

- Lack of staff
- Fuel prices
- Stability of input costs
- Ability to keep up with consumer demand and campers' expectations
- Complexity of permits and regulations
- Whether to operate campgrounds for seasonal or overnight campers
- Water, sewer, and infrastructure requirements
- Cultural diversity of campers
- Campers dry-docking at local businesses
- The need to develop, implement, and communicate operational policies for staff & campers

The AHLA's board and staff will consider these factors and needs as we plan for 2007. The next meeting of the AHLA's campground members will take place on Monday, February 5, 2007 at the Black Knight Inn in Red Deer.

Submitted by Adam Ledwon, Owner/Operator, Spring Lake R.V. Resort & AHLA Board Member representing campgrounds

Welcome to New AHLA Members

Argyll Plaza Hotel, Edmonton
Coaldale Motor Inn, Coaldale
Misty Mountain Inn & Suites, Grande Cache
Roadrunner Motel, Edmonton
Sandman Hotel & Suites Calgary West
Spruce Point Park Association Marina, Beaverlodge
The Cedars Motel, Edson
Totem Motel, Edson
Western Valley Inn, Valleyview
York Hotel, Edson

November/December 2006



Don't make them go back to the parking lot.

Introducing a whole new system for managing your hotel parking. A system that will improve your guest services and increase your staff efficiency. It's the Impark Wireless Hotel Pass. This web-based system gets rid of paper passes, manual reporting, and the inconvenience of sending guests back to their vehicles once they've checked in. With the Impark Wireless Hotel Pass you'll enjoy more control and much, much happier guests.

To find out more, visit our website:
www.imparkwireless.com
Or contact:

Darren A. Morgan
Director, Business Development
t. 403.299.7266
e. dmorgan@impark.com



SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

Recognizing your employees for the good work they do can make the difference between keeping them at your property or having them go elsewhere. Effective recognition does not have to be costly - but it does have to be meaningful! When implementing a rewards and recognition program, remember to:

Decide what you want to achieve through your recognition efforts. Create goals and action plans that are achievable for staff and profitable for your property.

Be fair, clear and consistent. People need to see that each person is eligible to be recognized. Don't play favorites!

Be as specific as you can. Tell the individual exactly why they are receiving the recognition.

Offer employee recognition as close to the event you are recognizing as possible. Immediate rewards will encourage the staff to repeat the desired behaviour. Evaluate the program often. Rewards can easily turn into expectations. Make sure you are achieving the results you want.

Some popular rewards and recognition ideas:

Money - increase in base salary, bonuses, gift certificates, cash awards

Written Words - handwritten thank you notes, a letter of appreciation in the employee file, recognition posted on the employee bulletin board, contribution noted in the company newsletter

New Work Opportunities - provide cross training opportunities, send people to conferences and seminars, provide opportunities for empowerment and self-management

Gifts - company logo merchandise, gift certificates, event tickets

Symbols and Honors - certificates to hang on the wall, engraved plaques

The important thing to remember is that the reward must be meaningful to the individual. So even if you think a free trip to the North Pole would be great, your staff might not!

Reward programs do not have to be expensive. While monetary rewards are important, a thank you can really go a long way.

If your property would like to be in the "spotlight" for great human resource practices please contact Lisa Yasinko at the AHLA office at 1-888-436-6112 or lyasinko@ahla.ca.

2007 HOUSEKEEPING AWARDS ANNOUNCED

The AHLA's Quality Assurance Team has selected 125 properties to receive a Housekeeping Award for 2007. Recipients were selected on the basis of findings and observations made in the course of the AHLA's annual inspection program, and have achieved excellence in cleanliness, comfort, and maintenance. The Housekeeping Award is a reflection of a property's commitment to providing visitors with clean and comfortable accommodation. For a full list of award winners, visit www.ahla.ca

The Housekeeping Award presentation ceremony will take place at a gala dinner on Monday, May 21, 2007 at The Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge. To recognize your property's achievement, the AHLA encourages you to bring your Housekeeping staff to attend the ceremony.

During this year's inspections, many operators told us that finding, training and keeping staff was becoming increasingly difficult. Our Human Resource Development team has numerous resources that can help, including the *emerit* Housekeeping Room Attendant and Front Desk Attendant Workbooks & Certifications.

The AHLA has developed guidelines & checklists to help your Housekeeping department understand how your property is evaluated. You'll find them in the Tourism Marketing section of www.ahla.ca.

The Hotel Association of Canada's Annual Conference will take place on February 19 & 20 at The Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto. This event gives lodging industry executives, managers and suppliers the opportunity to learn about new developments and current topics and to network with hospitality experts. The conference has been enhanced with a new operational focus and an educational format with plenary and breakout sessions...at an attractive price!

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- What can the hotel industry learn from other sectors of the hospitality industry?
- Getting the most from Design... Renovating and Repositioning
- The Challenge of Recruiting and Retaining Staff in a Tough Labour Market
- When to Say No!
- Yield Management: Squeezing Out That Last Dollar
- Adapt or Perish
- The Internet: Friend or Foe?
- Hotel Association of Canada/GPC Public Affairs Travel Forecast for 2007!

Occupancy Statistics from Canadian Lodging Outlook, October 2006

October 2006	# of Rooms	Occupancy Rate (%)		Avg Room Rate (\$)		RevPAR (\$)		Room Supply % Change	Room Demand % Change
		2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005		
Calgary	8418	75.4	73.3	129.65	116.91	97.76	85.70	0.9	3.7
Edmonton	7277	75.6	70.4	110.77	103.75	83.74	73.04	1.8	9.4
Alberta North	2513	75.2	74.6	134.92	116.14	101.46	86.64	1.3	2.1
Alberta South	6537	65.4	68.0	118.05	115.46	77.20	78.51	1.9	-2.0
October 2006 YTD									
Calgary	8418	76.1	71.6	130.43	117.50	99.26	84.13	0.2	6.5
Edmonton	7277	74.6	67.9	107.85	102.30	80.46	69.46	2.2	12.3
Alberta North	2513	78.1	73.9	145.08	126.33	113.31	93.36	1.5	7.3
Alberta South	6537	66.3	66.8	140.85	137.09	93.38	91.58	3.1	2.4

Alberta Workers' Compensation Board Online Annual Return Makes Filing Easier & More Accurate

You've puzzled over sections in the Annual Return before, trying to see how they apply to your business. Well, puzzle no more! Reporting earnings has never been easier. Traditionally, employers have had to wade through a paper form with a worksheet to explain each section. Last year, WCB piloted an online version of the form. The positive response from participating employers encouraged WCB to make the online option available to all employers this year.

Why should employers report online?

The online form was designed to make reporting easier and reduce errors, to ensure your premiums are accurate. It offers built-in error checking, calculations and proration. It also provides you with step-by-step instructions on how to complete each section. When you need further instruction or assistance, help pages guide you through.

"The return was quick and easy to fill out," says one user of last year's online form. "I was able to do it at my convenience and didn't have to waste time mailing in the form and wondering if it would arrive on time or at all."

When you work online, you can save your work in progress and continue working later. The system maintains a copy for you online, and sends you an automatic confirmation when it has been submitted. A real bonus: it has resulted in fewer premium audit adjustments for online filers than for those who completed the paper form.

How do employers access the Annual Return online?

The site is confidential, so you will need a password to file online. Your password will be included in a letter to employers in December. From there, getting started is easy:

- 1) Gather your WCB account number, password, a record of actual earnings paid to employees in 2006 and an estimate of what will be paid in insurable earnings in 2007.
- 2) Log on to www.wcb.ab.ca > Online Services > File an Annual Return.
- 3) Complete your form and submit it by Feb. 28, 2007.

You'll find a convenient, secure form that tailors itself to your needs, showing only screens relevant to your business. No puzzling required!

Reporting's not all you can do online

Open and maintain your WCB account from wherever you access the Internet. Seven days a week, 18 hours a day access to WCB's online account services makes it simple and handy to manage your account.

Visit WCB's website at www.wcb.ab.ca to find out more about these and all of our online employer services.

November/December 2006