Highlighting the Activities and Accomplishments of the NYS & CSEA Statewide Safety & Health Committee

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

The NYS & CSEA Statewide Safety and Health Committee worked collaboratively as a team to provide a forum for discussion of health and safety issues, facilitation for trainings, and technical expertise to assist employees.

The committee served CSEA-represented employees by striving to promote safe work environments, increased employee satisfaction, and better performance.

We are pleased to share our accomplishments during the 2011–2016 contract period and we look forward to continued success and the opportunity to provide CSEA-represented employees with tools, support, and resources for workplace safety and health.

Edward Cottrell
NYS Co-Chair

Janet Foley
CSEA Co-Chair

NYS & CSEA Statewide Safety and Health Committee Working For You

Workplace safety for the State of New York workforce remains a priority. The NYS & CSEA Statewide Safety and Health Committee, established under Article 15 of the agreements, continues to address workforce issues related to safety and health.

The Committee reviewed workers’ compensation data and provided feedback to implement programs and services aimed at reducing workplace injuries and illnesses.

According to the New York State Executive Branch Agency Workers’ Compensation Reports for 2014 and 2015, there were 271,765 lost workdays stemming from work-related injuries. A total of 14,734 compensable incidents were reported during this time. Total direct costs, including lost wages and medical treatment amounted to $56,282,386.

The most common injuries were soreness or pain-excluding back (40.5%); sprains, strains, and tears (21.6%); and bruises and contusions (6.0%). The top three injured body parts were: back (13.8%), knee (12.7%), and shoulder (11.9%).

The Direct Support Assistant title experienced the highest number of incidents in 2014 and 2015 with a total of 1,958 reported injuries. This represents 13.3% of the incidents for all of the executive branch agencies combined.

Other CSEA-represented titles among the top ten highest rates of injury include Youth Division Aide 4, Youth Division Aide 3, Developmental Disability Secure Care Treatment Aide 1, Mental Health Therapy Aide SL, Mental Health Therapy Aide, Developmental Disability Secure Care Treatment Aide 2, Mental Health Therapy Aide Trainee, and Secure Care Treatment Aide 1.

In total, eight CSEA-represented titles comprise the top ten titles with the highest rates of injury among the combined workforce.

This report outlines the accomplishments of the Committee, as supported by the NYS & CSEA Partnership for Education and Training and the CSEA Occupational Safety and Health staff.
Accomplishments

Curriculum Development and Training Delivery

Based on its review of work injury data, the Committee identified the following topics for new curriculum development and offered feedback to the Partnership on the content prior to training delivery:

- Back Injury Prevention (in progress)
- Computer Workstation Ergonomic Assessor Training
- Preventing Slips, Trips, and Falls

In addition, the Partnership revised and updated the Forklift Operator Safety, Asbestos Awareness, and Scaffolding Safety courses to meet current standards.

Ergonomics

The Computer Ergonomics Assessor Training was developed to equip employees with the ability to conduct workstation assessments to reduce injuries and illnesses associated with computer operations. The Partnership piloted this training in Albany, Buffalo, and New York City. A total of 76 employees participated. The Partnership collected and incorporated feedback from the Committee and from training participants to improve the curriculum. Plans are underway to deliver additional trainings in Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, Long Island, New York City, and Rochester in May and June of 2016.

Safe Patient Handling

The Committee recognizes the importance of safe patient handling while taking in to consideration that agencies may need assistance meeting the requirements of the NYS Safe Patient Handling Act of 2014. With the enactment of this law, the Committee has renewed its efforts to help prevent injuries among patients, nursing home residents, and staff.

During this contract period, the Partnership sponsored 108 employees to attend three conferences focused on safe patient handling. These conferences provided participants with the knowledge and skills necessary help keep patients, residents, and employees safe from injuries. Additionally, the Partnership awarded several grants to support safe patient handling initiatives at various facilities throughout the state.

High-Pressure Heating and Distribution Piping Systems Program

Working on boiler and pressure systems has resulted in serious and fatal injuries. The High-Pressure Heating and Distribution Piping Systems program was designed to train employees and supervisors to recognize hazards associated with piping systems in steam tunnels, high-temperature underground piping systems, and building piping. More than 50 Plant Utilities Engineers and Plant Utilities Assistants from various DOCCS facilities and SUNY campuses attended this three-day program.

Safety and Health Grants Program

The Safety and Health Grants Program provides funding opportunities for NYS agencies to improve workplace safety and health programs, reduce employee injuries and illnesses, and enhance organizational safety and health knowledge.

During this contract period, the Partnership awarded $147,274 to various state agencies and facilities. Of this amount, $89,669 was allocated to support Safe Patient Handling initiatives and $57,605 was allocated to support Electrical Safety/Arc Flash training.

Worksite Training

The Partnership offers CSEA leaders and NYS managers the opportunity to jointly request courses for their worksite that provide employees with the knowledge and skills needed to maintain safe work environments. During this contract period, the Partnership offered 70 classes serving over 1,000 employees in the following topics:

- Asbestos Awareness
- Asbestos Awareness Train-the-Trainer
- Computer Ergonomics Assessor Training
- Confined Space Entry
- Construction Safety Awareness
- Control of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/Tagout)
- Excavation and Trenching Safety
- Forklift Operator Safety
- Forklift Operator Safety Train-the-Trainer
- Heavy Equipment Operation Safety
- High-Pressure Heating Distribution Piping Systems: Hot, Water, and Steam
- Lead Awareness
- OSHA 10-Hour Construction
- Powerful Presentations Train-the-Trainer
- Preventing Slips, Trips, and Falls
- Scaffolding Safety (assembly, use, and disassembly)
Article 15 funds support two CSEA safety and health professionals who work with labor and management to improve safety. Accomplishments during the 2011-2016 contract period included:

- Reviewing and providing recommendations for compliance and improvement of the agency Workplace Violence Prevention plans for DEC, DFS, DMV, DOCCS, NYSED, OCFS, OGS, OPRHP, OPWDD, OTDA, SUNY, and Gaming
- Reviewing and providing recommendations for the Permit-Required Confined Space Program and Lockout/Tagout programs for DOCCS, OCFS, and OGS
- Assisting in setting up demonstration training at OMH for Preventing and Managing Crisis Situations and Partnering for Safety
- Performing Workplace Violence Prevention program implementation reviews at the DOCCS Local Presidents meetings and presented a summary report at the annual agency-level DOCCS Workplace Violence Prevention meeting
- Preparing summary reports of the NYS Workers’ Compensation Board Annual Report
- Performing indoor air quality investigations for over 50 state worksites and provided recommendations for improving the air quality in those buildings
- Participating in the development and presentation of train-the-trainer programs including Permit-Required Confined Space, Lockout/Tagout, First Responder at the Awareness Level, and Respiratory Protection
- Assisting in the development and presentation of the Partnership’s Asbestos Awareness train-the-trainer program
- Developing and providing training for the Statewide Safety and Health Committee including Proper Computer Workstation Set-up and Design, Lockout/Tagout, Back Injury Prevention, Respiratory Protection, and Personal Protective Equipment
- Assisting in the development of the Partnership’s Computer Workstation Assessor and Back Injury Awareness and Prevention trainings
- Assisting the Department of Taxation and Finance in the development and implementation of a computer ergonomics policy and Workstation Assessment program
- Assisting the DEC in identifying and training employees who work on live electrical equipment on Arc Flash Protection
Future Recommendations

• Assist agencies in implementation of the new Safe Patient Handling Act
• Expand back injury prevention efforts through ergonomics training
• Promote trenching and shoring training
• Promote arc flash safety
• Develop workplace violence prevention training through collaboration focused on hazard control and implementation, and crisis de-escalation
• Develop multi-union committees to address safe patient handling, ergonomics, and workplace violence prevention
• Promote training for pressurized heating systems
• Streamline grant application process and increase grant program utilization
• Improve marketing strategies
• Explore curriculum development and training related to the most common causes of injury and illness for state employees

“The Partnership is pleased to support the NYS & CSEA Statewide Safety and Health Committee. Through labor-management collaboration, we were able to develop initiatives to help prevent work-related injuries and illnesses and reduce lost work time and workers' compensation costs. We look forward to continuing this important work during the next contract period.”

Jeannine Morell & Karen Chase-Corcoran, Co-Directors
NYS & CSEA Partnership for Education and Training