

# **WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES ARE IMPROVING ACROSS NORTH AMERICA ACCORDING TO EMPLOYEES...**

## **WHILE COMPLIANCE WITH WORKERS' COMPENSATION LAWS IS STILL AT ISSUE**

***Majority Of Workers Across North America Trust Their Workers' Compensation System To Act In Their Best Interests***

***One-Quarter Of Workers Say That Employers Are Not Reporting Accidents When They Occur, And One In Three Workers Say They Know That Employees Report False Claims***



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**Vancouver, BC** – A North American study has found that momentum is building in occupational health and safety trends with more than 3 in 10 workers in Canada (32%) and the United States (31%) reporting that health and safety practices in their workplace are better compared to one year ago.

The study conducted by Ipsos-Reid in July 2003 was released at the first joint Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada (AWCBC) and American Association of State Compensation Insurance Funds (AASCIF) Conference in Vancouver. The study identified positive trends in worker awareness and perception of occupational health and safety – specifically that:

- 2/3 of workers trust their workers' compensation insurance provider (68% in Canada and 67% in the U.S.) to operate in their best interests;
- 1/2 of workers (45% in Canada and 53% in the U.S.) are receiving health and safety training and feel it's fairly comprehensive (69% in Canada and 70% in the U.S.); and

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- More than 6 in 10 workers (62% in Canada and 63% in the U.S.) say they are receiving proper supervision to protect their health and safety at work.

### ***However The Study Also Found That Compliance With Workers' Compensation Laws Is Still At Issue...***

- 3 in 10 workers in Canada (29%) and the U.S. (29%) say they know employees report false claims;
- 1/4 of workers say they know that employers are not reporting accidents (27% in both Canada and the U.S.);
- 3 in 10 workers in Canada (30%) and the U.S. (27%) say employees are afraid to report accidents;
- 1/3 of workers have had an accident that required medical attention (32% in Canada and 37% in the U.S.), and 3/4 of these workers submitted a claim (75% in Canada and 71% in the U.S.); and
- 2 in 10 workers say employees ignore health and safety procedures.

### ***The Study Also Found That Awareness Of Workers' Compensation Systems And Laws Could Be Improved...***

- 3 in 10 workers in Canada (35%) and the U.S. (28%) say they are familiar with the workers' compensation insurance system in their province/state; and
- Slightly more than one-half of workers in both Canada (54%) and the U.S. (58%) are aware of the laws that protect their health and safety in the workplace.

While the study indicates there is work to be done to increase worker and employer awareness and compliance with workers' compensation and occupational health and safety



regulation, the high level of trust and improved health and safety practices is encouraging. The responses in both Canada and the United States were similar – even though the jurisdictions have very different systems.

The survey results will be broken down geographically and by other variables so jurisdictions can look closely at both the positive and negative findings and respond accordingly.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted between July 15<sup>th</sup> and July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2003. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 651 adult Canadians and 579 adult Americans who are currently in the work force. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 4$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire population in Canada and the United States been polled. The margin of error will be larger for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's age/sex composition reflects that of the actual population according to the most recent Census data.*

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