

(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)

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OFL Releases Report Exposing Employers' Claiming Rebates After Workplace Accidents

(TORONTO) – “The Report, *The Perils of Experience Rating: Exposed!*, shows that employers who have been penalized for workplace accidents and deaths receive rebates that exceed the cost of the original fine,” said Ontario Federation of Labour President Wayne Samuelson.

The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board has in place a practice called Experience Rating that effectively adjusts premium rates based on an individual employers' claims history. In theory this is supposed to provide an incentive for safety and injury prevention. Also in theory, employers receive rebates on their premiums for good claims records and are penalized for poor claims records.

The Report shows that the reality of this practice is just the opposite. This practice encourages employers to mis-report and under-report accidents, to force injured workers back to work before they are medically ready, and to pay workers sick pay rather than have them receive compensation benefits. Anything goes to keep the employers claims history in good standing.

“Tens of millions of dollars are drained out of the WSIB's accident fund each year by employers who have learned how to play the game of experience rating,” said Samuelson. “In fact, according to the WSIB's own figures, rebates have exceeded penalties by more than half a billion dollars in the last four years alone.”

An example from the Report:

INCO

- The death of a worker at INCO's Copper Cliff site led to a fine of \$375,000 for failing to provide adequate information and/or instruction and/or supervision to a worker regarding the operation and/or testing of valves on the oxygen system.
- The amount of the fine reflects not only INCO's size, but its terrible record of past convictions for workplace safety offences.

- Yet INCO's experience rating rebate for the Copper Cliff site alone of \$2,424,406 for the corresponding period which financial records were obtained by the OFL was **over six times the amount of the fine.**

With the release of the Report the Ontario Federation of Labour is once again calling for the elimination of the experience rating programs in Ontario. "This lavish boondoggle for large employers at the expense of injured workers must end," Samuelson said.

The complete Report is available on the OFL website at www.ofl.ca

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