



10 Money-Saving Tips & Tools

Overview of the best practices to help save money on your workers' comp insurance

1 Adopt a safety culture A commitment to safety on the part of your company's senior management is the first – and most important – step you can take to reduce accidents and lower your workers' compensation insurance premiums. Because a majority of injuries are caused by unsafe behaviors, it is essential for management at all levels, but especially top management, to commit to developing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all employees.

Adopting a safe workplace can have long-term benefits as well as short-term, because your company's three-year loss experience (or e-mod) can decrease as you increase the number of safety measures in your operation that may cause injuries and lost-time claims to decline. As your injuries and claims decline, so can your overall workers' compensation insurance costs. Chesapeake Employers can help you create this all-important safety culture. Contact one of our safety specialists for a personal consultation at 1-800-264-4943 or go to www.ceiwc.com and visit the Safety University section.

2 Set up a safety program Your safety program should be a comprehensive one involving not only program development but also risk assessment surveys, risk analyses, loss reviews, ergonomics assessments, training sessions, and educational materials. Your safety program should involve all employees in your organization and emphasize that working safely is a condition of employment in your organization.

3 Employ good hiring practices Attracting qualified employees is important for any business. A well-organized recruitment and hiring process will ensure a better fit for you and your newest employees, and it will take you one step closer to your goal of making your business a safer place to work. Your goal is to hire an all-star employee, not your next work comp claim. We encourage you to consult with your human resources and employment legal counsel for information on "Effective Hiring Practices."

4 Establish a drug-free workplace According to the 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 74.9 percent of all adult illicit drug users are employed full or part time. In a 2007 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) report, it indicated the highest rates of current illicit drug use were among food service workers (17.4 percent) and construction workers (15.1 percent). However, drug abusers can be found in all types of occupations.

Under current Maryland law Health-General §17-214*, employers may test their employees for drugs and alcohol for any legitimate business purpose. Develop and implement a written substance abuse policy and make job offers contingent on passing a pre-employment drug test. Your substance abuse policy could also include these types of tests; random testing, post-accident and reasonable cause or suspicion.

*Note: Under §17-214 (b)(2) - this does not apply to an employer that has entered into a collective bargaining agreement that prohibits the employer from using a preliminary screening procedure to test a job applicant for the use or abuse of any controlled dangerous substances.



5 Supervisory training and accountability for safety

Supervisors set the standard for behavior each day on the job by ensuring employees adhere to all company safety rules and regulations. Management and supervisor training should focus on how to manage safety effectively by using constructive feedback to produce long-term results. Job descriptions should include safety roles and responsibilities, and performance appraisals and salary increases and/or bonuses should be tied to safety performance as a way to measure safety responsibilities.

6 Schedule ongoing safety trainings

Safety training is really the key to preventing work-related injuries. When properly trained, employees will know how to prevent accidents by following proper workplace safety procedures. And, companies are required by OSHA to provide safety training to their employees. Document all safety activities, including training sessions and meetings where safety is discussed, as proof of trainings attended. Chesapeake Employers offers safety training on a host of topics, as well as jobsite safety tip and training sheets for various industries.

7 Form an effective safety committee

Your safety committee should be able to regularly evaluate workplace safety conditions and recommend changes that address the causes of injuries or worker safety and health concerns. It is also the safety committee's responsibility to perform scheduled safety audits and site inspections to check for compliance with OSHA safety standards, to correct violations, to create plans to avoid recurrences, and to follow up on corrections.

8 Establish a prompt injury reporting policy and procedures

Prompt injury reporting is an important step in controlling the cost and duration of your workers' comp claims. Early intervention in a claim helps ensure the best medical care for the injured worker. Reporting injuries early can also help reduce unnecessary attorney involvement and the potential for litigation later on.

Develop procedures for supervisors and employees to report injuries immediately, preferably within 24 hours of the accident. Proactively develop relationships with local healthcare providers, doctors, occupational specialists, and urgent care facilities that can evaluate and treat employees quickly, and encourage your employees to use these providers if they should get injured. The sooner Chesapeake Employers knows of the injury, the faster we can review the case for a compensability determination and provide initial benefits to your injured employee. Furthermore, our statistics show the longer the delay in reporting an injury, the higher the costs.

9 Designate someone to coordinate all work comp claims

It could be someone in HR or someone in Finance. Establishing a central location and contact person for all work comp claims gives you greater oversight and control over them. Your company needs a proactive claims representative to stay in contact with us on all aspects of the claim.

10 Establish a return-to-work program

Developing a transitional-duty program is another opportunity to control costs. An effective early return-to-work program minimizes lost time and helps to lower medical and indemnity costs, resulting in savings on your workers' compensation insurance. ■

Chesapeake Employers has the **know-how** to help you implement these 10 cost saving tips and tools.

For more information go to www.ceiwc.com/safety-university or contact safetyservices@ceiwc.com 