

**NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release
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***Saskatchewan's 2016 workplace time loss injury rate lowest in 64 years
Total injury rate drops 11.9% from 2015***

- **Total injury rate 5.55%**
- **Time Loss injury rate 1.86%**
- **85.7% of rate codes have a lower total injury rate than in 2015**
 - **88% of Saskatchewan employers achieved zero injuries**
 - **Saskatchewan 3rd-highest in Canada for workplace injuries**

REGINA, SK – Today, the Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) officially released its 2016 injury rates. The total workplace injury rate for 2016 was 5.55 percent, an 11.9 percent drop from 2015, and a significant decrease from 2008 when the total injury rate was 10.21 percent. The Time Loss injury rate decreased from 2.07 percent to 1.86 percent. Time loss claims fell by 604 claims to 7,813. Total claims fell 2,220 from 2015, an 8.69 percent decrease.

The WCB's Chief Executive Officer Peter Federko credits the injury prevention efforts of employers, workers, partners, and the WCB's own partnership in WorkSafe Saskatchewan and its goal "Mission: Zero" for the significant decreases. "When we launched Mission: Zero in 2008, the intent was to bring about immediate and drastic reductions in Saskatchewan's injury rates. We began a focused effort to enlist leaders, employers and the public to join us in the shared responsibility to make Saskatchewan workplaces safer. Clearly, they've responded."

WorkSafe provides classroom and online training and tools for workers and employers. "WHMIS 2015 came into force in 2016," Federko explains, "We provided free online training for over 6 months for WHMIS 2015 transition, and provide a number of online courses and tools for workers and employers on our WorkSafe website." WorkSafe also launched an extensive Foundational Pillars safety system for employers to access for free online.

Eighty-eight percent of Saskatchewan employers had zero injuries in 2016 and over 85 percent of WCB rate codes have lower total injury rates in 2016 than in 2015.

The decreases are more significant given that they have occurred consistently since 2008, despite ever increasing number of registered employers and an increase in the number of workers. In 2016, there were 420,279 Saskatchewan workers covered by the WCB.

The Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety (LRWS) is the WCB's partner in WorkSafe Saskatchewan.

Don Morgan, the Minister of LRWS and the Minister responsible for the WCB, is encouraged by the 2016 injury numbers. "The WorkSafe partners have taken a targeted approach, working with the employers and industries that have the highest injury rates or risk of injury. The numbers show that this approach is working. However, we are concerned that our progress may slow as the time, energy and resources businesses need to make a

real change in safety culture become more challenging to access, especially in small to medium sized enterprises.”

“The Occupational Health and Safety Division continues to see varying levels of compliance when it comes to basic safety regulations,” said Morgan. “We still have a long way to go, so we will continue to work with employers, their employees and our WorkSafe partners until we achieve Mission: Zero.”

The provincial fatality rate has also decreased. It has dropped by 18.24 percent from 2002 to 2016, but both Morgan and Federko point out that it still remains too high. Federko says, “Even one injury or death is too many. Last year 31 families were devastated by workplace deaths. Thirty-one people had their lives cut short because of something that occurred at work. It’s unacceptable. We mourn every lost life as one too many. We need to be diligent every day as workers, as employers, and as citizens to keep ourselves and each other safe.”

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For more information, please contact:

Carolyn Van der Veen
Director, Communications
Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board
Phone: 306.787.4386
cvanderveen@wcbsask.com



About WorkSafe Saskatchewan:

WorkSafe Saskatchewan is an injury prevention and workplace safety partnership between the WCB and the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety. Through the partnership, both agencies offer programs and support that help employers and workers develop workplace health and safety programs. Visit www.worksafesask.ca to

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learn more about preventing workplace fatalities or phone 1.800.667.7590.



Mission: Zero is an initiative to eliminate all injuries in Saskatchewan. Launched in 2008, the **Mission: Zero** campaign and programs drive home the effects of injuries and the importance of safety and injury prevention at home, work and play. The intent behind **Mission: Zero** is to bring about a significant reduction in the provincial injury rate.