



Spring Into Safety

2021 Safety Grant Program Gets Underway

The Workers' Compensation Trust is pleased to announce for a fifth year in a row, that we have established a Safety Grant for our members for 2021. **This year's grant pool is \$450,000, with a maximum of \$15,000 per member** for projects to improve or implement employee safety or loss control efforts for the organization.

So far, a total of \$1,400,000 has been awarded to Trust members since 2017, fulfilling 182 grant requests.

The Safety Grant will be awarded for projects or initiatives that improve employee safety or reduce risk for workplace injuries. Grants can be used for enhancements to the safety and security of your workforce or workplace. The program objective is to encourage and support member efforts in developing innovative safety initiatives by defraying the cost of participating, adding or enhancing a risk reduction strategy, program or process.

To apply for the Safety Grant, go to www.wctrust.com. Grant applications must be completed in full and emailed no later than March 19, 2021. Safety Grant award winners will be announced on April 21, 2021. Projects must be completed by December 31, 2021.

If you have any questions, please contact Carol Fronczek at 203-499-9651 or email her at fronczek@wctrust.com.

The 2020 safety grant recipients were able to measure successes even during the pandemic.

- Safety grant funds were used to purchase electric beds to replace manual crank beds resulting in zero injuries to staff.
- Bite related injuries have decreased due to the purchase of cut/bite resistant hoodies for staff.
- In two group homes, ergonomic hygiene chairs were purchased and utilized by staff thus decreasing the amount of manual transfers and repositioning by over 50 per day.
- Safety grant funds were used to develop a slip, trip, fall prevention video using the theme of Walk Like a Penguin for use with new hire orientation and annual safety training for a home care companion agency. There have been zero falls due to slippery surfaces.
- Non skid Shoes for Crews were purchased for direct care departments in a skilled nursing facility. There have been no slip/fall injuries due to wet surfaces since implementation.



We expect that over the course of this year, there will be even greater benefits with loss reduction for our 2020 safety grant recipients.

OSHA News

The pandemic has been a focal point for OSHA. They have developed COVID-19 resources, implemented COVID-19 guidelines, and have completed thousands of inspections due to employee related COVID-19 deaths, hospitalizations and employee complaints. The Trust continues to provide this information to our members and clients on an ongoing basis through email blasts, the development of resource documents, educational webinars, and ongoing dialog with our members on your questions and concerns.

While OSHA has not yet issued a standard on the Pandemic, there is information that OSHA will be issuing temporary regulations concerning COVID-19. However, please keep in mind that several standards continue to apply to employers based upon exposures and include:

- Respiratory Protection
- Hazard Communication
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- General Duty Clause
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Recordkeeping and Reporting
- Emergency Action Plans

In addition to the information sent to our members on an ongoing basis, the Trust has a COVID-19 informational section which can be found on our website www.wctrust.com. Many of the OSHA bulletins can be found on the site as well as resources developed by our loss control team to assist members with meeting compliance and keeping employees safe.

Some of the more recent OSHA information can be found on our website:

- “Protecting Workers: Guidance on Mitigating and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in the Workplace”.
- COVID-19 Resources-link is updated regularly
- OSHA Standards That Apply to COVID-19: A Resource Guide
- OSHA COVID-19 Alerts
- Coping with Stress
- Frequently Asked Questions-COVID-19 Safety Facts
- Guidance on Returning to Work

Trust is Collecting DART Information

Annually the Trust provides our members and clients with DART and Incident Rate data to assist your organization with establishing injury reduction benchmarks and to understand how your organization compares to like organizations in CT. The Rates are computed using OSHA 300A data. OSHA also uses the DART Rates (obtained through the electronic reporting requirement) to identify organizations with high DART Rates which may result in OSHA inspections or inquiries. The information provided by the Trust will help you determine if your organization does have a high DART Rate and thus be better prepared for a potential OSHA inspection.

If you are interested in participating in this voluntary survey or have questions, please contact fronczek@wctrust.com . Data is due to the Trust by March 31, 2021. All requested information can be obtained from the OSHA Form 300A, which you completed and posted for the **2020** calendar year. All the fields on the form need to be completed in order to provide you with your DART, Incidence and Severity Rate information. A confidential summary report will be sent to all participating organizations via email by June 2021.

To provide timely information, we request that you complete the form **electronically**, as we are no longer mailing out paper forms. Your timely response to this request for information is greatly appreciated. **The deadline for submissions is March 31, 2021.**

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Carol at (203) 499-9651 or fronczek@wctrust.com.