



“Our employees know we are serious about safety.”

Brewers Distributor Ltd.’s Story

Partners in Prevention Program Helps Company Reduce Workplace Injuries

Like many Manitoba companies, Brewers Distributor Ltd. (BDL) is concerned about workplace safety. So when the WCB’s SAFE Work Services team approached BDL at the end of 2008, they were open to meeting.

“We wanted to reduce our injury rate so when we were contacted by SAFE Work, the lights were already on,” says Birnie McIntosh, BDL’s Manager of Human Resources – Prairie Region.

SAFE Work Co-ordinator Peter Malegus approached BDL after learning that their number of injuries was higher than average. Upon meeting with Peter, the company learned about the Partners in Prevention program. “We discussed the analysis I would provide and the expectations of working together,” says Peter.

“The consulting was top notch,” says Birnie. “We learned about the level of work and commitment required to be successful. Peter was very helpful. Throughout the process, our staff worked with him as part of a team to develop solutions that made sense for our business and our employees.”

The consultation included an assessment of BDL’s safety and health and return to work programs, which involved a documentation review, interviews, observation and a safety climate survey. “After reviewing their programs, we worked together to develop recommendations for improvements to strengthen their safety and health and return to work programs,” says Peter.

The workplace safety changes that BDL implemented resulted in significant gains. In 2009, the company boasted a 45 per cent reduction in time loss injuries and a 67 per cent reduction in direct claim costs (i.e. wage loss and medical expenses) over the previous year. BDL also had its first assessment rate decrease since 2003.

BDL implemented several safety changes during 2009. “We developed an amazing safety structure and reporting system,” says Birnie. “Our employees know we are serious about safety.”

As a result of adopting the safety recommendations developed through the Partners in Prevention program, the company appointed a safety co-ordinator, established a dedicated return to work co-ordinator, provided easier employee access to safety equipment, and linked employees with a dedicated medical clinic. BDL also launched a formalized occupational injury policy, developed an improved employee orientation package, reinforced a clean-as-you-go program, initiated a power lift internal training program, and increased company-wide safety awareness.

“As a result of the partnership between the WCB and BDL, staff know their employer is committed to SAFE Work,” says Peter. “Everyone wins.”