TORONTO

STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED

Occupational Health and Safety Report - 1st Quarter 2014

Date:	July 7, 2014
To:	Employee and Labour Relations Committee Executive Committee
From:	City Manager Executive Director of Human Resources
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report provides information on the status of the City's health and safety system, specifically on activities, priorities and performance during the first quarter of 2014.

There was a 26.7% increase in the number of lost time injuries (LTIs) during the first quarter of 2014 relative to the first quarter of 2013 and there was double the number of recurrence injuries from 19 to 39. This significant increase in injury experience reflects the severe winter weather conditions. There was a 153% increase in falls due to icy conditions and half of the critical injuries were fractures as a result of slips and falls on the ice. Increases in overall injuries, including musculoskeletal disorders, were most notable in operating divisions whose activities were impacted by the effects of the storm and continued freezing temperatures.

WSIB invoiced costs for the first quarter of 2014 were approximately $5.85 million, $1.03 million lower than in the first quarter of 2013. The decrease is primarily due to a decrease in Firefighter cancer claims.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Manager and the Executive Director of Human Resources recommend that:

1. City Council receive the 1st Quarter 2014 Occupational Health and Safety Report.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts to this report.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of February 1, 2 and 3, 2005, City Council approved the recommendation of the Employee and Labour Relations Committee that staff report to Council quarterly on the functioning of the City's health and safety system. This report is for the First Quarter, 2014.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Continuously improving health and safety performance and a strong health and safety culture continue to be key priorities for the City. This report on the City's health and safety performance is intended to enable the Mayor and Councillors to monitor the City's performance.

COMMENTS

Injury and Accident Statistics

Number of lost time injuries, medical aid injuries and recurrences
Information regarding reported work-related injury/illnesses, by division, during the first quarter of 2014 is attached in Appendix A. Information is also provided for the comparable time period from 2010 to 2013. Information provided includes:

- Number of lost time injuries: injuries/illnesses in which lost time was approved by the WSIB or is awaiting WSIB adjudication, as the employee has lost time from work as a result of a reported workplace injury;

- Number of recurrences: injuries/illnesses that were approved by the WSIB or are awaiting WSIB adjudication, as the employee has lost time as a result of a previously reported workplace injury/illness. No new incident has taken place; and

- Number of medical aids: injury/illness in which health care only was approved by the WSIB or claim is awaiting WSIB adjudication, as the employee has either sought medical aid but not lost time from work as a result of a reported workplace injury or lost time has not been approved by the WSIB.

Overall, there was a 26.7% increase in the total number of lost time injuries in the first quarter of 2014 relative to the first quarter of 2013. Increases were noted in almost all categories of events or exposures, as follows:

- 63% increase in injuries resulting from contact with objects or equipment (from 19 to 31)
- 41% increase in slips, trips, missteps and falls (from 63 to 89), within which there was a 153% increase in same-level falls due to icy conditions (from 19 to 48)
- 21% increase in musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)(from 58 to 70)
- 43% increase in vehicle/transportation incidents (from 7 to 10)
- 33% increase in assaults and violent acts (from 9 to 12)

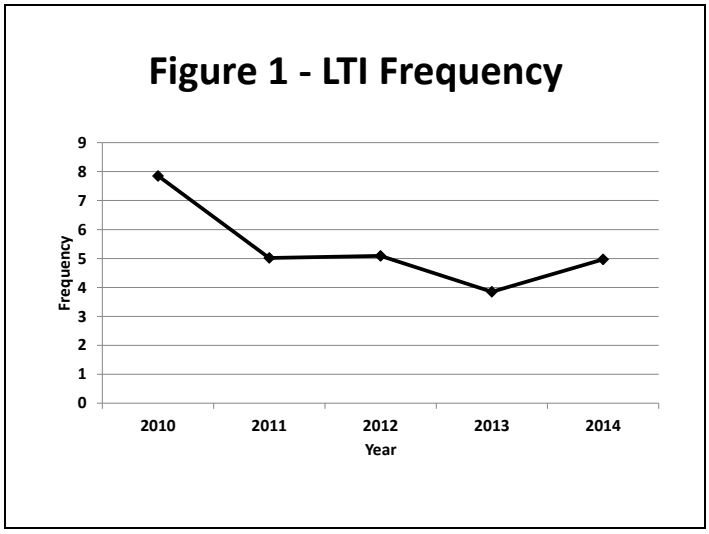
The number of recurrences increased from 19 to 39, largely attributable to a 66.7% increase in MSD recurrences (from 5 to 15).

This significant increase in injury experience for the first quarter of 2014 reflects the severe winter conditions. Increases in injuries including musculoskeletal disorders, were most notable in large operating divisions whose activities were most impacted by both the effects of the storm and long periods of freezing temperatures.

Even with this increase the five year trend is still very positive with a 40% decrease in lost time injuries and a 57% decrease in recurrence injuries. This reflects the ongoing organizational commitment to continuous improvement in health and safety.

Lost Time Injury (LTI) Frequency

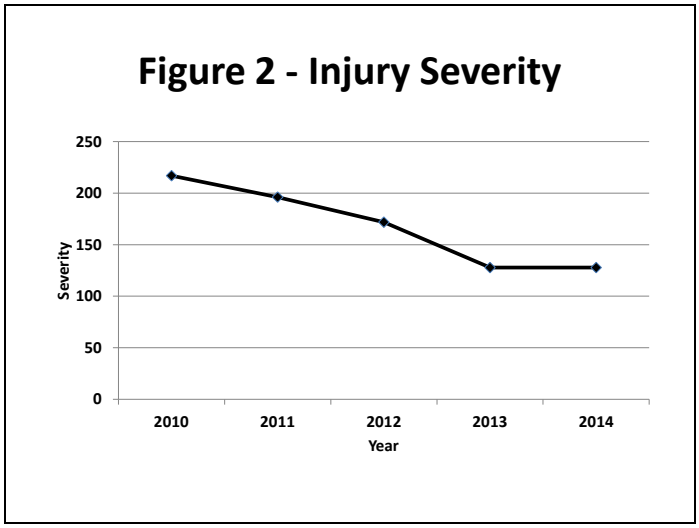
LTI frequency represents the number of LTI events (lost time approved by the WSIB or pending WSIB adjudication decision) per 200,000 hours worked (100 employee-years). The trend in the City's injury frequency during the first quarter of each year from 2010 to 2014 is provided in Figure 1 below.



Frequency rates for divisions are reported in Appendix B. It should be noted that in a division with a small number of staff, a single LTI can result in a high frequency rate.

Injury Severity Rate

The injury severity rate is a standardized statistic that enables comparison, year over year, of the number of days lost relative to hours worked. Figure 2 shows the City's severity rate during the first quarter of each year for the period from 2010 to 2014.

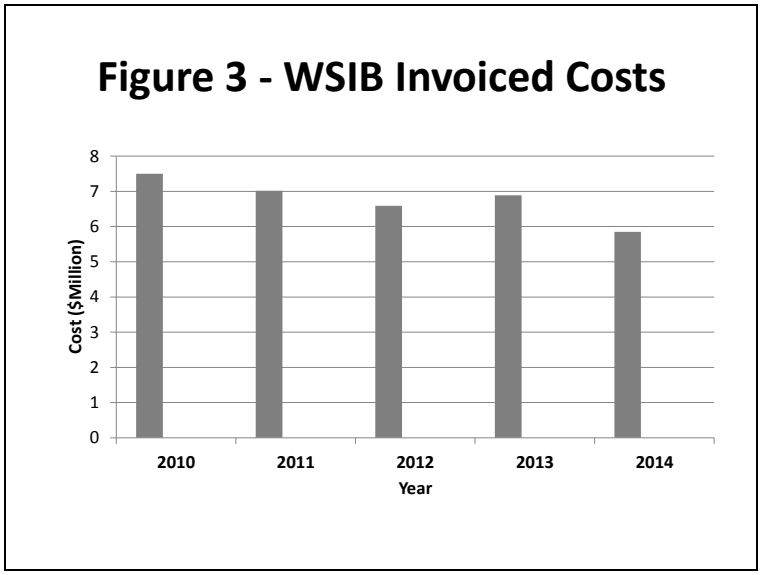


The severity number represents the number of days lost per 100 employees in the year. Although the number of LTIs increased the severity rate was maintained. This continues to be a reflection of both injury severity and effective return-to-work efforts.

Injury and Accident Costs [Overall Costs (all firm numbers) and Invoiced New Firm Costs by Division]

Overall costs incurred under all City firm numbers during the first quarter of 2014 are reported in Appendix C. This includes costs that continue from injuries sustained in pre-amalgamation municipalities. Information is also provided for the comparable time period in 2010 to 2013. Total costs for the first quarter of 2014 were $5.85 million, a decrease of approximately $1.03 million from 2013. The decrease was primarily as a result of a decrease in Firefighter cancer claims as well as continued diminishing costs related to injuries in the predecessor municipalities.

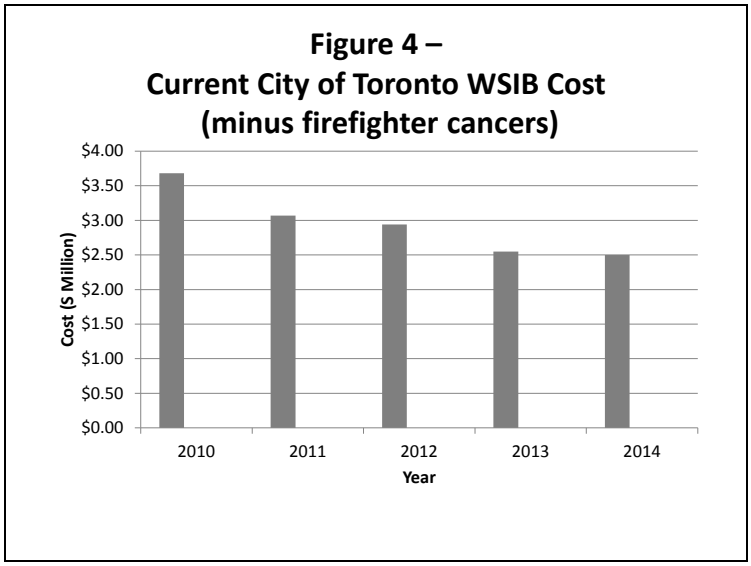
This information is summarized in Figure 3 below.



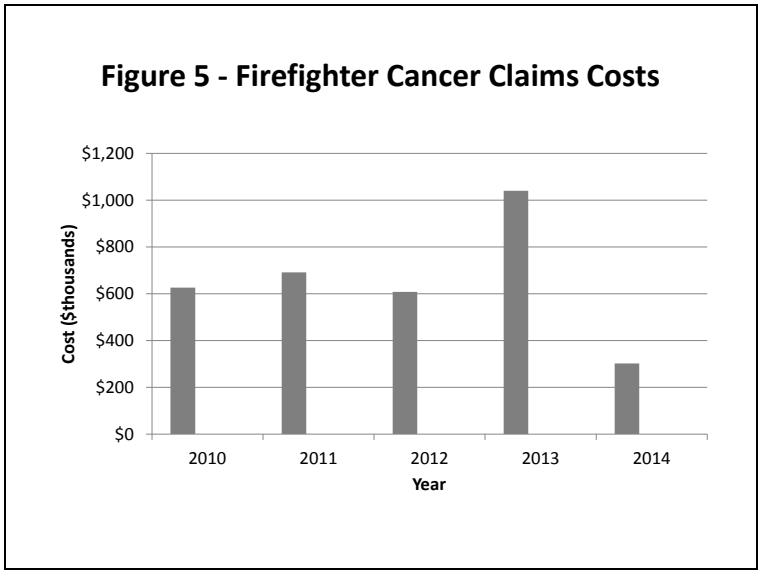
The "WSIB Invoiced Costs" report identifies all WSIB invoiced costs for the current Toronto by division. Appendix D(i) provides the information for divisions whose costs were less than $50,000 in the first quarter of 2014. Appendix D(ii) provides the same information for divisions whose costs were greater than $50,000.

Figures 4 and 5, which follow, show the following:

- WSIB costs for the current City firm number exclusive of firefighter cancers



- WSIB costs associated with firefighter cancers



Critical Injuries

Occupational health and safety legislation stipulates requirements for reporting fatalities and critical injuries to the Ministry of Labour (MOL). A critical injury is an injury of a serious nature that:

(a) places life in jeopardy,
(b) produces unconsciousness,
(c) results in substantial loss of blood,
(d) involves the fracture of a leg or arm but not a finger or toe,
(e) involves the amputation of a leg, arm, hand or foot but not a finger or toe,
(f) consists of burns to a major portion of the body, or
(g) causes the loss of sight in an eye.

Eleven work-related critical injuries were reported to the MOL in the first quarter of 2014:

- A Fire Services employee was assisting in backing an aerial truck into the fire station when his leg was struck by the front tire and his right foot was run over. The employee sustained a fractured right leg tibia and fibula.
- A Children's Services employee slipped and fell on icy pavement, sustaining a fractured right elbow.
- A Parks, Forestry and Recreation employee tripped and fell over a bump in the ice at the Ice Galaxy, landing on her right arm resulting in fracture.
- A Parks, Forestry and Recreation employee slipped on ice on the driveway to the entrance of his building, sustaining a fractured left ankle.

- A Fire Services employee slipped and fell on ice while walking from the parking lot to the back door of the fire hall, resulting in a broken fibula in the left leg.
- A Transportation Services employee slipped and fell on an icy sidewalk, causing a fracture of her right wrist and injury to her neck, back and right side of body.
- A Long-Term Care Home and Services employee sustained a fracture of the left ankle when she stepped out of her car in the parking lot and tripped on an uneven surface.
- A Toronto Water employee, while working with a co-worker in exchanging a propane bottle on a forklift, sustained a heart attack.
- A Transportation Services employee was entering her vehicle. A member of the public's car lost its wheel. It rolled against the employee's car door which struck her ankle, resulting in ankle fracture.
- A Fire Services employee was unconscious for approximately 30 seconds after reporting that he felt weak and lightheaded while standing at a training session.
- A Toronto Water employee was walking at an intersection when a City truck struck him, causing a head injury.

In addition, an injury (broken left ankle) to a Scarborough Museum patron at Thomson Park and an injury (broken right leg) sustained by a member of the public when she was struck by a City vehicle that was being reversed were also reported to the MOL as critical injuries.

MOL Visits (with and without orders)

The MOL issued twenty-four orders to the City during the first quarter of 2014 (during nine visits). These orders related to:

- Trip and fall hazards
- Storage of materials (securing from tipping and falling)
- Ladders
- Installation of mud flaps on trucks
- Accessibility of fire exits
- Storage of chemicals in electrical room
- Securing of shelves
- Electrical outlets in wet areas lacking ground fault interrupters
- Outdated material safety data sheets
- Availability of training records
- Ice rescue procedures
- Availability of eye protection and eye wash fountains

All orders were complied with.

MOL visits that do not result in orders are also tracked. Reports on the issues addressed during these visits and any recommendations or comments received are reviewed by the Occupational Health and Safety Coordinating Committee (OHSCC). It is intended that this information will inform the OHSCC regarding the MOL's priorities and expected employer responses to these priority issues.

There were twenty-two MOL visits to City facilities in the first quarter of 2014 that did not result in orders. Seven of these visits occurred in the context of injury investigation, six in response to complaints, three as compliance inspections, four to follow up on previous orders and two in response to a work refusal.

MOL and WSIB Initiatives

Ontario Government Increases Cancer Coverage for Firefighters

In April (early in the 2nd quarter of 2014), the province announced that it will help firefighters and their families get support and care by adding six cancers to the list of those presumed to be related to their work. These changes will make it easier for firefighters to qualify for benefits by reversing the burden of proof for those seeking coverage under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act. The extension of presumptive status for the six additional cancers will be retroactive to January 1, 1960, and apply to full-time, part-time and volunteer firefighters and fire investigators. Breast cancer, multiple myeloma and testicular cancer will be added to the list immediately. Prostate cancer, lung cancer and skin cancer will be phased in by 2017.

Ministry of Labour (MOL) 2014-2015 Inspection Blitz Schedule

The MOL has released its inspection blitz schedule for 2014. The focus of a number of these blitzes applies directly to City work operations, as follows:

- Excavation hazards in the construction sector in May
- New and young workers in the industrial sector from May to August
- Fall protection in the construction sector from July to August
- Material handling in the industrial sector in September and October
- Machine guarding in the industrial sector in November and December
- Slips, trips and falls in the industrial sector in February and March, 2015

Key City Initiatives

Some key health and safety initiatives in the first quarter of 2014 included:

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- Introduction of a new E-learning module on Slips, Trips and Falls Prevention on the City's Learning Management System.
- Actions to reduce lifting injuries among the 10 targeted divisions with the highest frequency of lifting injuries.
- Joint preparation for and participation in the Local 79 Health and Safety Summit that was held on Thursday, January 23rd.
- Preparation for compliance with the new Ministry of Labour regulation requiring mandatory Supervisor and Worker H&S Awareness training.
- Working Group on Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace.
- Initiation of an annual review through the OHSCC of divisional *Pandemic Influenza Exposure Risk Assessments.*

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – WSIB Incidents Data, by Division
Appendix B – LTI Frequency
Appendix C – Summary of WSIB Costs
Appendix D(i) – WSIB Invoiced Costs <$50,000
Appendix D (ii) – WSIB Invoiced Costs >$50,000