

WSC, Rural Mutual Insurance Company: Sick workers is top workplace safety concern, according to new study

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MADISON, Wis. — June 11, 2020 — In a new study conducted by Wisconsin Safety Council

(WSC) and Rural Mutual Insurance Company, 85% of respondents said they “sometimes” or “often” see a coworker come to work sick even though he/she should have stayed home. In the current environment, exposure to sick coworkers is the leading safety concern for workers in Wisconsin.

In an effort to identify top workplace safety concerns and provide solutions during National Safety Month in June, WSC and Rural Mutual polled more than 180 WSC members, the majority of whom are safety professionals working in Wisconsin trades, including contractors, manufacturers and construction workers. The study was completed in April.

“Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, we know businesses and organizations across the state are looking to create safer work environments now more than ever,” said Aaron Huebner, WSC executive director. “This study revealed safety professionals should focus on establishing initiatives that prevent the spread of infection and reduce exposure to employees who are sick.”

The respondents indicated several other top safety risks in the workplace:

□ Interacting with hazardous materials (80%)

- Driving for work-related activities (80%)
- Standing for more than two hours in a row (79%)
- Working in high noise levels where a raised voice is needed to talk to people less than four feet away (76%)

A new, free e-book from Rural Mutual and WSC is now available to help safety professionals and trade workers in Wisconsin address these leading safety concerns. The 'Work Safe in Wisconsin' e-book offers easy to implement solutions for a safer and healthier workplace.

"Helping Wisconsin businesses lower their safety risks is a big part of Rural's mission," said

Chris Schlechta, safety and loss control manager at Rural Mutual. "We're excited to work with WSC to introduce the 'Work Safe in Wisconsin' e-book in hopes to inspire workers to jumpstart safety initiatives during National Safety Month and throughout the year."

The e-book includes tips for those looking to create a safer workplace, including:

- Foster a safety culture. Ensure all employees feel comfortable reporting a safety concern when they see it. See something, say something, do something.
- Give employees a voice at the table. Before implementing a new safety initiative or when elevating existing safety programs, engage the frontlines and ask employees for their feedback.
- Adopt a proactive, not reactive approach. If we wait until an accident happens to address a safety concern, we will never get ahead of the issue.

To download a free copy of the e-book, visit www.ruralmutual.com/insurance/business/work-safe/.