



Vision **at** Work

OCCUPATIONAL VISION PLAN NEWSLETTER

Extended benefits often not enough to protect workers

the Occupational Vision Plan staff is routinely asked if company extended benefit insurance covers prescription safety eyewear.

Management often believes employees are covered under a company's extended benefit insurance plan because premiums are paid to cover all prescription eyewear.

This is partially true, as most plans cover one pair of prescription eyewear every two years to a maximum of \$200 to \$220. If workers need prescription eyewear, they usually require two pairs – a safety set for work and a set for everyday use.

With only one pair covered by a benefit plan, there is a gap in coverage that can have serious consequences on the safety and well-being of workers and the company's safety costs.

The B.C. Association of Optometrists Occupational Vision Plan (OVP) closes this gap by protecting workers from workplace eye injuries with regular, consistent and professional care.

All OVP eyewear meets CSA standards and WCB regulations, so the company benefits from reduced eye incidences and injuries.

In the end, OVP member companies benefit from reduced insurance and disability claims as well as lower liability. The OVP staff also performs the plan's administration tasks, freeing up safety officers and HR staff to be more productive.

Overall cost savings for a company make the OVP necessary, whether a company has an extended benefit plan or not.



Dr. Grant Timmins (left) and Safety Coordinator Art Bilodeau at the new Canfor-Louisiana Pacific OSB Plant in Fort St. John.

Road tour builds relationships

beginning in January 2005, the OVP hit the road to meet with member optometrists and companies across the province.

Over this period of time, OVP staff has been holding face-to-face meetings with numerous OHS and HR officers from both client and prospective companies. This work is helping OVP staff to better understand the environment and challenges these individuals face in the workplace.

Member OVP optometrists across B.C. have been providing information on local companies, their workers and the perception of the OVP in the community.

They have also introduced the OVP to new companies, and met with OHS and HR officers from both prospective and current OVP companies. These safety officers are benefiting from meeting with an optometrist because they get an expert opinion on their specific needs and concerns.

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► | Supplier relationships key to a successful program

In today's fast-moving economy, supply chain management is a key area of focus for most businesses, and the OVP is no different – our suppliers of safety frames and lenses are critical to the smooth operation of the plan.

Currently, On-Guard Safety supplies our safety frames, with finished lenses coming from two British Columbia laboratories, Cascade and KW Optical.

The OVP benefits from having a good working relationship with these quality suppliers, taking advantage of their strong business practices, network of contacts, resources and experience, and the synergy created through aligning our marketing efforts.

Since October 2004, the OVP staff has continued to meet with our suppliers to initiate joint ventures through tradeshows, the OVP website, Optofair and this newsletter to name a few.

The end result of maintaining excellent relationships with our suppliers is patients receiving quality products delivered in a professional manner.

We would also like to welcome North Safety, a newly contracted supplier to the OVP. North Safety's product line includes the Lightning,



Lightning Plus and The N-Vision 5600 Series wrap-around goggles – all of which accommodate a line of prescription inserts that can be quickly changed – offering a clear, wide field of vision for users.

The OVP's primary interest in North Safety products is the Rx insert. When a safety officer gives a North Rx to an employee, we want the employee to visit an OVP optometrist for a proper eye examination and prescription fulfillment.

If you are interested in obtaining more information about these glasses, please contact the OVP at 1-866-687-2226.

Vision At Work, the Occupational Vision Plan newsletter, is published by the British Columbia Association of Optometrists. The newsletter is available online at www.ovp.bc.ca

OVP, a program of the BCOA, meets the needs of more than 300 client companies throughout British Columbia. Protecting workers' eyes for more than 20 years, OVP has a network of over 270 doctors of optometry participating in more than 80 communities throughout BC.

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Contact us

100 – 10751 Shellbridge Way
Richmond, B.C. V6X 2W8
Tel: 604-270-6095 or 1-866-687-2226
Email: ovp@optometrists.bc.ca
Website: www.ovp.bc.ca

Comments / ideas

Vision at Work, as well as our website, is always looking for articles, comments, ideas, interesting stories or questions from the workplace. Please e-mail us at ovp@optometrists.bc.ca



British Columbia
Association of
Optometrists

www.whatcouldbemoreimportant.com

Safety seminars helping land new clients

(Continued from page 1)

Doctors have held safety seminars at a variety of companies: Dr. John Gentles presented to employees at Canfor–Louisiana Pacific OSB, a new client company, in Fort St. John in August; Dr. Brenda Horner gave a 30-minute seminar to New Westminster Scott Paper OHS officers and employees in September; and Dr. Mike Dennis was asked to present to Prince George Pulp and Paper this fall after participating at Canfor's Northwood Wellness Days in the same city.

The OVP staff continues to travel B.C., visiting optometrists, client and prospective OVP companies, listening to clients needs, raising awareness, and offering assistance.

If you are an OHS officer and feel you would like to know more about the OVP and member optometrists in your area, please e-mail us at ovp@optometrists.bc.ca or call toll free 1-866-687-2226.

Welcome aboard

The British Columbia Association of Optometrists welcomes the following new client companies participating in the Occupational Vision Plan:

Acro-Helipro	Richmond
BLJC WSI.....	Victoria
Canadian Forest Products	Mackenzie
Canfor – LP OSB Ltd. Partnership	Fort St. John
City of Port Moody.....	Port Moody
CWS Industries.....	Langley and Surrey
Encana Corporation	Fort St. John and Fort Nelson
Greater Vancouver Regional Development.....	Lower Mainland
Madill Equipment.....	Nanaimo
Mining Services International.....	Fernie
Peter Kiewit Sons Company Ltd.	Richmond
Weatherford Partnership Canada	Fort St. John

► | Look to progressive lenses for seamless vision correction

Somewhere between the ages of 40 and 45, people begin to have trouble seeing close-up objects or small print. This natural age-related visual problem is known as presbyopia.

There are several ways to correct presbyopia. Bifocals and trifocals are two examples, but the method of correction that is the most effective is progressive addition lenses.

Progressive addition lenses are designed to correct vision in the distance, intermediate and near vision zones as well as all points in between. Rather than having an instant change in prescription, the lens power gradually changes, providing clear focal points at multiple distances.

With no visible line, a progressive addition lens allows for more focusing versatility, where as there are only two focal points with a traditional bifocal lenses, and three with the trifocal style. Some of the newer styles of progressive lenses also provide intermediate and reading areas that compare in width with those provided by the bifocal segment.

In addition to eliminating image jump and the visible line, progressive style lens wearers do not experience the prismatic effect that occurs in a bifocal lens, giving anyone performing intricate work at an arms length distance, or less, significant benefits.

Nevertheless, it is essential the wearer be informed on how to use progressive lenses because new users sometimes have trouble adjusting. Studies have shown, however, more wearers experience adaptation difficulties with traditional bifocals than with progressive addition lenses.

It is best to use progressive lenses at the onset of presbyopia, as those who begin with using bifocals sometimes have trouble adjusting to a progressive lens. For people who fall into this category, there are new progressive lenses, which make the adjustment easier because they are designed specifically to help people who use bifocal or trifocal lenses transition to progressive addition lenses.

Notice board

The OVP has participated in the following events in 2005:

B.C. Municipal Occupational Health and Safety Conference.....Victoria
 Western Conference on Safety.....Vancouver
 Canfor – Northwood Pulp Mill Wellness Day.....Prince George

Ainsworth Golf Tournament.....100 Mile House
 Scott Paper Wellness Week.....New Westminster

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