

LIEN SCENE

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF

BOEHM & ASSOCIATES

HEALTHCARE RECOVERY SPECIALISTS

Winter Edition

January 2008

We hope everyone enjoyed a pleasant holiday season and wish you a happy and healthy 2008! We want to remind everyone that we value your input. If you have questions, suggestions, complaints, or would like additional service, please contact us. Our contact information is listed below.

We will be transitioning to a new telephone system in the next several weeks and may experience an occasional temporary loss of service. The main number for each office will remain the same. New individual contact numbers and/or extensions will be included in our next newsletter.

VALLEY FEVER

A recent article in the San Francisco Chronicle reported that occurrences of valley fever have reached epidemic proportions. The disease is contracted through spores found in soils across the U.S. Southwest, including California's valleys. The spores are inhaled when the soil is disturbed by wind, shoveling or even by footsteps. The infection usually attacks the lungs first and can lead to meningitis. At first blush, the symptoms appear to be nothing more than a common flu or cold. Undetected, valley fever can be lethal.

We mention this outbreak because so many of those afflicted contract the illness on the job. Claims examiners and hospital admission personnel should consider a work-related connection when a patient has a job working around soil and seeks medical treatment for flu-like symptoms. Jobs that raise red flags include farm workers, construction workers, archeologists and surveyors. Epidemiological research reveals that prison workers in the Central Valley are also quite vulnerable.

If you suspect that a group member or patient has received treatment for valley fever that may have been contracted on the job, please contact us and we will explore the viability of pursuing reimbursement of your bills.

WCAB TO GO PAPERLESS

The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) has released proposed regulations for the new Electronic Adjudication Management System (EAMS). EAMS is a computer-based system intended to simplify the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board's case management process. Currently, every document filed in a case is processed manually, creating a bottleneck that slows every aspect of a case, from calendaring to settlement.

It is anticipated that the new EAMS system will streamline the entire case management process to allow for a more efficient resolution of claims, improve scheduling and management of court calendars, and allow files to be shared between multiple users. The system will also reduce the need for physical storage space at local DWC offices once the paper files are converted to secure electronic files.

We are monitoring the progress of the EAMS development and are prepared to meet the requirements for utilization of the new system. Implementation of EAMS is planned for mid-2008. We shall hope for a smooth transition and for a system that expedites litigation and yields swifter recoveries for our clients.

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