

# Press Release

## **EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAMS EARN RECOGNITION, SAVE MONEY**

**Port Coquitlam, BC – December 12, 2011...** The City of Port Coquitlam is setting a new standard in the region for employee health and safety, while saving tens of thousands of dollars each year in WorkSafeBC fees.

At Monday night's Council meeting, the British Columbia Municipal Safety Association will present the City with a Certificate of Recognition following an external audit of its Occupational Health & Safety and Disability Management programs in October. The Certificate of Recognition is a partnership between the BC Municipal Safety Association and WorkSafeBC and is provided to employers who go above and beyond WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation in their OHS and DM programs.

The City achieved a score of 92 per cent on its OHS audit and 85 per cent on its DM audit. Port Coquitlam was also the first city in Metro Vancouver and the second in B.C. to achieve the COR for both its OHS and DM programs.

"This is great news," Mayor Greg Moore remarked. "I think our citizens appreciate that their City is providing a good quality work environment. It helps us deliver a higher quality of service, and at the same time it's saving our taxpayers money."

The City's OHS and DM programs have earned the City a 15 per cent incentive on its WorkSafeBC fees, which amounts to a savings of more than \$150,000 every three years.

Cities across B.C. are undertaking these BCMSA-led external audits in an attempt to obtain COR certification and achieve the WorkSafeBC incentive. A score of greater than 80 per cent is required for the certification and 50 per cent in each of the nine elements. The City will need to complete an internal maintenance audit every year and a recertification audit every three years to maintain its COR status.

OHS programs are plans designed to prevent accidents and occupational diseases and injuries. DM programs – also known as Stay at Work/Return to Work programs – assist employees affected by injury or illness to either stay at work or return to work more quickly.

These programs not only show City workers they are valued, but they help keep workers healthy, safe and productive while reducing claims and retraining costs.

According to Mayor Moore, the programs are one reason Port Coquitlam has a unique corporate culture among local governments. "Staff take it to heart. They embrace having a safe work environment for themselves and their colleagues, they're proud of where they work and they're passionate about the services they provide."

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### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

Kulwinder Sall, Acting Manager  
Human Resources  
City of Port Coquitlam  
Tel 604.927.5459  
Email [sallk@portcoquitlam.ca](mailto:sallk@portcoquitlam.ca)