When Shirley Goguen began feeling pain in her hand and wrist a little over a year ago, she didn’t think much of it. “My husband had just had a hemotoma, and I was tense – I thought the pain was a result of my anxiety,” Goguen said. But when that pain worsened and spread to her arm, neck and shoulder, she knew it was serious. “It got so bad I couldn’t hold a pencil, or sign a credit card slip.”

Goguen’s doctor advised her to stop work and start physiotherapy for her RSI (repetitive strain injury). Her employer thought that as a part-time worker, she did not qualify for workers’ compensation. So she paid for her own therapy, and continued therapy until her employer asked her to return to work. This aggravated her injury, and after six weeks, her doctor once again advised her to stop work. Meanwhile, she found out that she was entitled to compensation and rehabilitation services. She was assessed by a WorkSafeNB case manager, and was sent to the Workers’ Rehabilitation Centre (WRC).

“I was apprehensive – I didn’t know what to expect. But I really wanted to go back to work.” And she did. Goguen is back to work as a credit associate, doing the job she loves.

Goguen’s treatment lasted seven weeks, and included physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and job simulation exercises.

“At one point, they had me moving marbles, one by one. I thought ‘How is this supposed to help?’ But it did. It’s not about moving marbles – it’s about using and healing those muscles used in the action of moving those marbles,” Goguen said.

“The staff are very good at their jobs — they know exactly what to do.

They learn from every patient. The service was really unbelievable, and all my needs were met.” But, “it’s not a love-in,” she said. “They can’t help if you don’t want to be helped. It’s got to be a two-way street.”

Although Goguen said she still has symptoms and pain, her condition has greatly improved.

“I appreciate being able to return to the job I love, and thank you (WorkSafeNB) for helping me do that. You are doing fantastic work in a most professional way.”
A marine captain, Keith Rogers knows what it takes and how important it is to keep his crews safe. And as a small business owner with a background in finance he knows how important safety is to a company's bottom line. Rogers is an owner of D.M.K. Marine Services Ltd., a business that has been in his family for more than 80 years. This experience makes him a good fit for WorkSafeNB’s board of directors.

“I believe my ability to provide an effective, safe workplace while maintaining a profitable business brings value to the board,” he said. Rogers was appointed to WorkSafeNB’s board of directors as an employer representative in February 2008. “Although I am here (on the board) to promote the best interests of employers, I don’t see that promoting employer interests and promoting workers interests are opposing forces,” he said. “No employer wants to see a worker get hurt. And beyond the emotional reasons, injuries cost a lot, and can adversely affect a company’s profits. And without profit, there’s no business.”

Rogers was only 22 when he became a marine captain in 1987, a role he took very seriously. “I had to be up on all the safety regulations and ensure our vessels were up to snuff safety-wise. The lives of my crews depended on that.” After receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of New Brunswick (Fredericton), Rogers returned in 1989 for a business degree. He later took over the helm of D.M.K. Marine Services.

He’s proud of the company’s safety record. “In charge of personnel transportation for the Canaport LNG project, we’ve made over 85,000 crew drops in every type of environmental condition imaginable, without injuring a single passenger. The company also handles diving, salvage recovery and vessel moorings, ship stores and transport.”

Rogers recalls one single safety regulation being 159 pages long, so he was undaunted by the amount of reading material he had to familiarize himself with as a board member.

“It’s an exciting time to be on the board. We’ve got strong members with fresh ideas. It is definitely a challenging time, but that makes it interesting.”

Rogers said he’s committed to “finding efficiencies in the organization, and helping it meet its vision and goals cost-effectively.”

When not working, most of Rogers’s time is spent with his family – wife Cindy, and children Lynda, 15, and Patrick, 15.

“They are the joy of my life.” In the summer the family spends time boating and water-skiing at their summer home on the Belleisle. They also enjoy hunting, fishing and several other sports.

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**SHOULD YOU BE REGISTERED WITH WORKSAFE NB?**

In December 2008, WorkSafeNB and the Canada Revenue Agency entered into an information agreement to identify employers registered with one organization but not with the other.

“So far, we’ve found 400 employers who were not registered with WorkSafeNB, but should’ve been,” said Claude Savoie, manager, Assessment Services. “Identifying these employers and enforcing compliance ensures a level playing field for all business, and guarantees that New Brunswick’s workers receive the benefits to which they are entitled,” he said.

Because so many employers were not registered with WorkSafeNB but were required to, Savoie believes that employers may be confused as to their obligations.

“Any business that usually employs three or more workers at the same time is required to register with WorkSafeNB,” he said, explaining that workers are defined as all full-time, part-time, and casual employees, as well as officers and directors of limited companies. WorkSafeNB interprets usually employed as meaning a predictable pattern of employment, including seasonal or repeated hiring trends. Savoie said the length of time a worker is employed is not a consideration for exclusion.

Residency is also not grounds for exclusion, he said, and employers outside the province who have three or more employees working in New Brunswick must register. (Employers in the fishing industry with fewer than 25 workers are excluded.) And while, per policy, those operating in the province for less than five days during the year are not required to register with WorkSafeNB, Savoie said it’s a good idea to do so. “If any of that employer’s workers are injured on the job during that time, a claim may be accepted and any assessments and costs charged to the employer.”

Savoie stressed that regardless of whether an employer is registered, a worker hurt in the course of employment in New Brunswick is always covered if they are working for an employer who should have been registered.

If you have any questions on whether you or your employer should be registered with WorkSafeNB, please call Assessment Services at 1 800 222-9775 or email assessment.services@ws-ts.nb.ca.
SAVE THE DATE!

The 29th Annual WorkSafeNB Health and Safety Conference will take place September 27-29, 2009 in Saint John. Choose from among more than 20 French and English workshops, on topics such as:

- Dos and Don'ts of Ladders
- Traumatic Outcomes: Slips, Trips and Falls
- Work Life Balance
- New Worker Orientation

WorkSafeNB is especially excited to host Nick Perry as this year’s plenary speaker. Nick has become a passionate advocate for safety training since breaking his back in a workplace accident at the age of 19. He is featured in the graphic video, Lost Youth, encouraging parents, employers, workers and communities to make sure young people know how to be safe on the job. Following the conference, Nick will tour New Brunswick, sharing his story and the importance of safety training.

Visit our trade show, featuring the latest innovations in health and safety equipment and services, for your chance to win great prizes – a Samsung 40” LCD TV and a trip to Canada’s largest health and safety conference, IAPA’s Health and Safety Canada 2010.

Conference registration opens June 10. For more information, contact Laragh Dooley at 506 632-2223 or by email at laragh.dooley@ws-ts.nb.ca.

LET’S MAKE INJURIES A THING OF THE PAST

Globally, work kills more people than wars.* It’s a shocking statistic, and what’s even more shocking is that the majority of Canadians believe that workplace injuries are inevitable. An Ipsos-Reid survey conducted in 2005 found that 61% of Canadians believe that getting hurt on the job is inevitable. Even more disturbing was that the figure was higher in New Brunswick. A 2006 survey done by Corporate Research Associates had 69% of New Brunswickers believing that workplace injuries were inevitable.

But WorkSafeNB is buoyed by a recent Omnibus survey, which shows that attitudes are slowly changing. In February 2009, the number of New Brunswickers who believed that workplace injuries were inevitable was 57%, a full 12 percentage points down from 2006, and 9 percentage points down from the same time in 2008.

“We’re pleased by these numbers, although we recognize there’s still a long way to go,” said Doug Stanley, WorkSafeNB’s president and chief executive officer. “It’s a long-term process, but one that we’re committed to. We know that changing the culture won’t happen overnight. It took Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) almost 25 years to change the culture from one that viewed drinking and driving from inevitable to intolerable,” Stanley said.

“That 57% of New Brunswickers still believe that workplace injuries are inevitable is troubling, and we must turn the thinking around so that all New Brunswickers view them as unacceptable, and convince them to make safety their priority.”

WorkSafeNB is looking to social marketing as a means to help change New Brunswick’s workplace safety culture. On April 20, WorkSafeNB launched its Let’s Make Injuries a Thing of the Past campaign, featuring past behaviours once considered normal but not tolerated today—behaviours such as drinking and driving, smoking in public and not wearing a seatbelt. “Our aim is to ingrain safe workplace behaviours as automatic, so that one day all New Brunswickers will view workplace injuries as unacceptable,” Stanley said. •

*Facts on Safety at Work – ILO 2006