

**Ontario's Workplace Safety and
Insurance Board Presents...**

A MIRACLE ON FRONT ST.

The WSIB's annual benefits payment to workers have been reduced by over \$800 million a year since 2009, from \$3.2 billion to \$2.4 billion in 2014. They expect to continue reducing their expenditures every year.

Injured Workers are upset and say that the WSIB is not helping them. But the WSIB says they're doing better than ever. They say they're performing miracles from their offices at 200 Front Street, helping more by spending less. They say they've made Ontario workplaces safer than ever, prevented more permanent impairments than ever, returned more people to work at full wages, and made injured workers richer than they were to begin with.

Are they really making miracles? Lets see... 

www.injuredworkersonline.org

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WSIB Says: Work is safer than ever. Ontario reported injuries are at an historic low rate, the lowest of any jurisdiction in Canada.

Since 2009, the number of lost-time injuries reported has fallen by 19%. So the number of accepted WSIB claims is down too. But if you take a closer look, the number of fatalities in 2015 (226) is the same as in 2009 (229). Ignoring injured workers' doctors and charging reduced rates to employers who hide or manage claims is easy, but the WSIB cannot hide the bodies of those who died from unsafe work.

WSIB says: It is responsible for medical miracles – it has prevented more injuries from becoming permanent. The percentage of claims where a permanent impairment is accepted has gone from over 10% in 2001 to 5.9% in 2015, a very sudden 41% reduction. But the WSIB has also launched an aggressive campaign and changed their policy to blame aging and pre-existing conditions for ongoing disabilities. They reduce numbers by saying "no."

WSIB says: It is responsible for medical miracles – it has reduced the level of disability suffered by workers. The average permanent impairment rating has gone down from 14% in 2011 to 9.5% in 2015. That's a 32% reduction in just four years. But the WSIB has also stopped doing medical examinations on the worker to rate the level of disability. Instead they just look at the file, sometimes they even make up the numbers, or reduce the rating because of so-called "pre-existing conditions" that have never affected the worker before.

WSIB says: Healing happens at work. It's better if injured workers "are at work." They are right when they say that injured workers who are not back to work within 6 months of their accident are likely to have long or permanent absences from work. This is reverse logic. Another way to say this is that workers who acquire serious injuries simply need more time off to heal, and have fewer employment prospects.

WSIB says: "Injured Workers are richer than they think after Injury." A study funded by the WSIB looked at some injured workers before 2008 and found that the average income was higher than pre-injury income, 48% had incomes as good or better after their injury. If you take a closer look at the study, you see that the majority of injured workers did not do better. One quarter of them live on less than 75% of pre injury income, 9% are 'extreme wage-losers' living on less than half of pre-injury earnings. Another study, not funded by the WSIB, found that up to 26% of injured workers live in poverty.

WSIB says: "We saved so much we can give \$2 billion back to the employers of Ontario." Sadly, this one is true. WSIB Chair Elizabeth Witmer announced in November 2015 that the WSIB finances were doing so well that they would soon reduce employer rates by \$2 billion every year to employers. Unsurprisingly, this is the same strategy she followed in 1996 when she was Labour Minister in the Mike Harris government. Witmer and Harris reduced employer rates by 30%, directly creating the funding crisis that has been blamed for recent cuts to injured worker benefits. Injured workers have lived with deep cuts for five years in the name of savings, and now employers will benefit.

**Do you believe these magic numbers? Fight the WSIB's
Miracles On Front Street**