

# Employer Newsletter



*Designed for payroll clerks, bookkeepers, accountants and others responsible for completing contribution reports for the Pension and/or LTD Plans*

May 2002

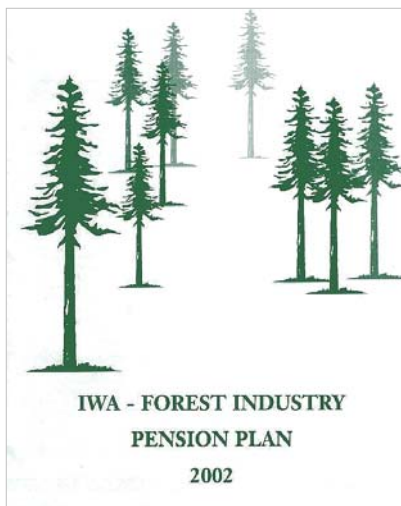
## ICBC Wage Loss Benefits

A new category of unfunded hours for which your employees can receive credit in the IWA – Forest Industry Pension Plan is ICBC Wage Loss. Members are eligible for 8 hours of credit for each day they receive wage loss benefits under Part 7 of the Revised Regulations (1984) to the *Insurance (Motor Vehicle) Act of British Columbia*, or any similar act in another province.

No contributions are required from employers for unfunded hours; however, we need start and end dates from you for each unfunded period. Please include this information in your Member Work Status reports, under code “I”. Other categories of unfunded hours are:

- Layoff - only complete weeks are counted, up to 5 weeks/yr
- Sick - must be receiving weekly indemnity benefits
- WCB - must be receiving wage loss benefits from WCB
- Vacation - if employee has > 5 weeks vacation/yr, can get up to 2 weeks

Any full-time employee who has less than 1500 Eligible Hours in a calendar year is eligible for credit for periods they are off work due to one of the above reasons.



## New Pension Plan Booklet

The Board of Trustees of the IWA – Forest Industry Pension Plan has recently completed a revised Plan booklet incorporating all of the amendments through January 1, 2002. On behalf of the Trustees, we are enclosing a copy for each company that participates in the Plan. A copy has been sent to all Active Plan Members. This publication is designed to give members an idea of how the Plan works, what they need to know about their pension if there are changes in their life or work circumstances, as well as what choices are available to them when they retire. If you would like additional copies, please let us know.

## Annual Statements

It's that time of year again. By the end of June, our office will have generated more than 60,000 annual statements for members of the Pension Plan. These statements give the members an opportunity to review the number of hours reported for them in the previous year, and see an estimate of their accumulated pension benefit. If any of your employees do not receive an annual statement, they should contact our office to make sure we have their correct address.

## Pregnancy and Parental Leave

Under the IWA – Forest Industry Pension Plan, contributions must be made for employees taking Pregnancy Leave. The Plan rules stipulate that contributions are required for the duration of the approved leave under the BC Employment Standards Act.

For Parental Leave, employers are only required to submit contributions to the Pension Plan if the employee agrees to submit their portion of the contribution. We recommend that any employee who declines to submit their contribution be required to put their decision in writing; doing so avoids confusion in the future if an employee questions why Parental Leave contributions were not made on their behalf.

For your convenience, below is a summary of the revised standards. If you have questions, you should contact the BC Employment Standards Branch Inquiry Line at 1-800-663-3316 (Toll free in BC) or online at [www.labour.gov.bc.ca/esb](http://www.labour.gov.bc.ca/esb)

	<b>As of January 1, 2001</b>
<b>Pregnancy</b>	<b>17 weeks</b> If leave is requested before birth or termination of pregnancy
	<b>6 weeks</b> If leave is requested after birth or termination of pregnancy
	May be extended by 6 weeks if birth mother is unable to return to work for reasons related to birth or termination of pregnancy
<b>Parental</b>	<b>35 weeks</b> If taken by birth mother who has taken maternity leave
	<b>37 weeks</b> If taken by birth mother who has <u>not</u> taken maternity leave, birth father or adoptive parents
	May be extended by 5 weeks if child has a physical, psychological or emotional condition that requires an additional period of parental care

The requirement to pay Pension contributions is independent of whether or not an employee is eligible to receive Employment Insurance benefits.

Please note that Long Term Disability, Health & Safety and Education Fund contributions are not required during Pregnancy or Parental Leaves.