2022 COUNCIL REPORT - Workplace Safety

Introduction

The Winnipeg Public Service generates an Annual Report on workplace safety for Council[1]. Performance measures used in the report are Workers Compensation Board (WCB) Statistics and Lost Time Injury (LTI) Rates.

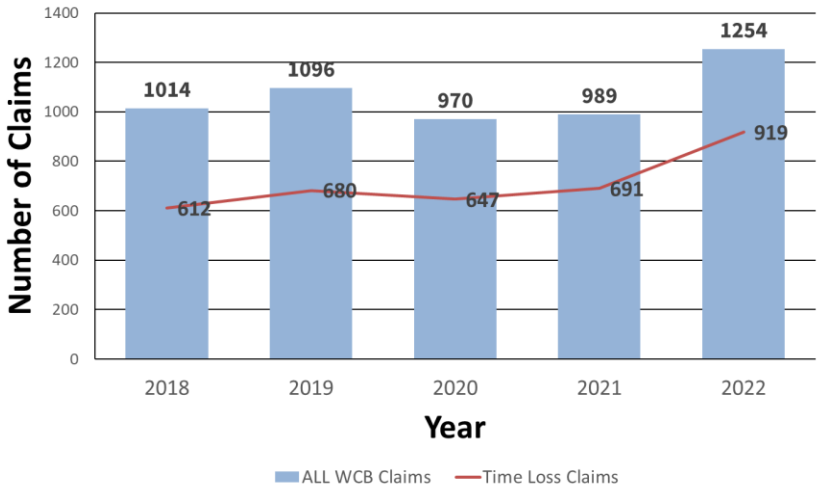
WCB statistics used in this report are provided to the City by the WCB with the exception of costs provided for this report by the City's Finance Department. All Lost Time Injury (LTI) metrics are generated internally using the organization's PeopleSoft System. All LTI metrics include those injuries that result in absence from work and have an accepted or pending WCB claim. These figures do not include time loss associated with long-term disability, or injury claims processed through Manitoba Public Insurance.

Performance Analysis

WCB CLAIMS

The total number work-related injury and illness claims accepted by the WCB was 1254 in 2022. This represents an increase of 27% from 2021 (989) and was above average for the reporting period.
The number of accepted Time Loss Claims in 2022 was 919, an increase of 33% from 2021 (691).
WCB claims related to COVID-19 accounted for 19% of WCB time loss claims in 2022.

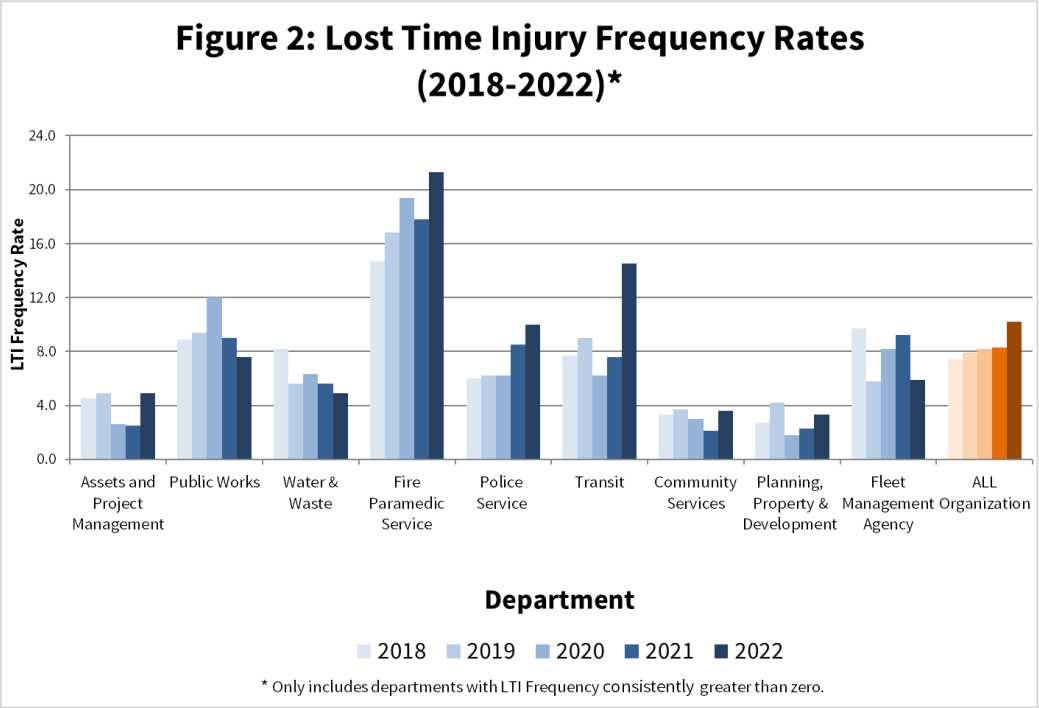
Figure 1: Organizational WCB Claims (2018-2022)



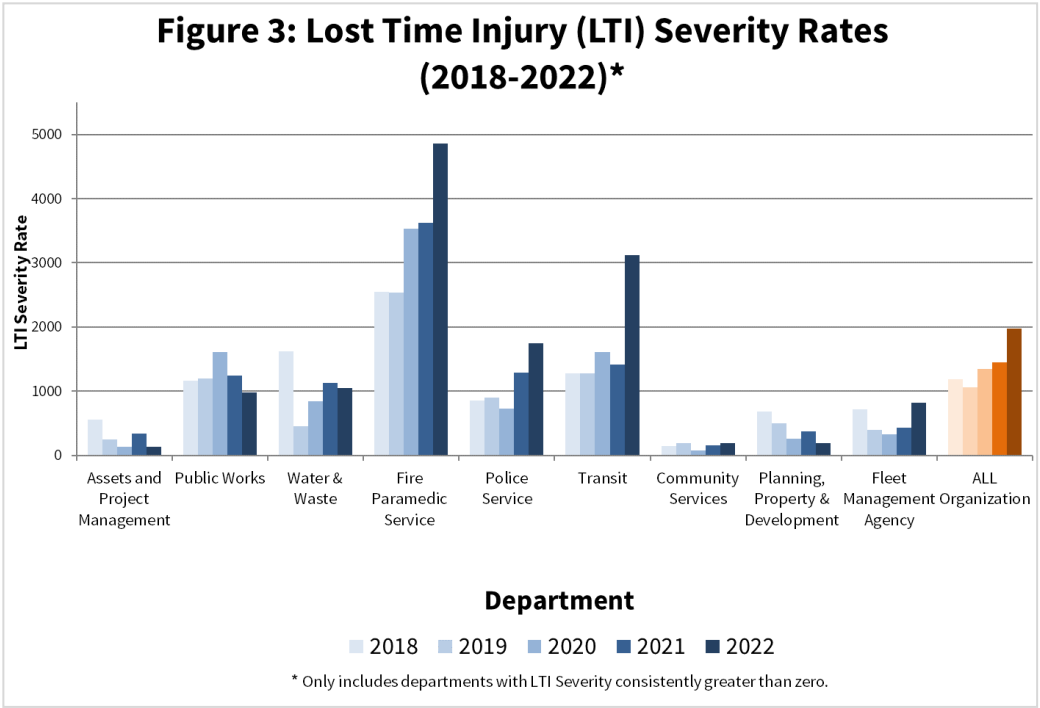
[1] In 2014, City Council received the *Workplace Safety Audit* dated November 2013 and adopted that an Annual Report be submitted to Council within 6 months of the previous year end (Council Minutes – September 24, 2014, Minute No. 752).

LOST TIME INJURY (LTI) RATES

LTI Frequency is the number of lost time injuries per 100 workers per year. The City's LTI Frequency was 10.2 in 2022; higher than year end 2021 (8.3).



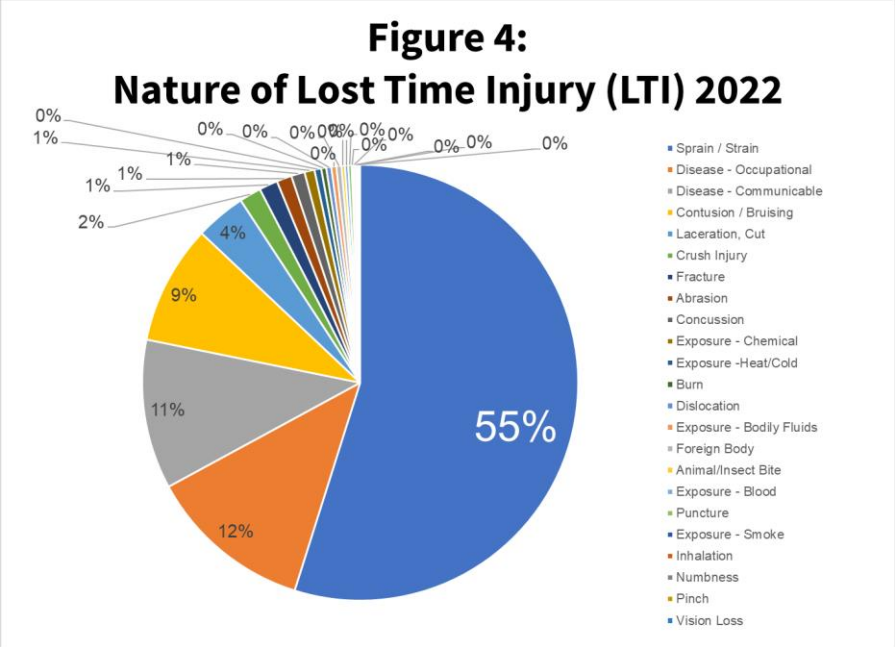
LTI Severity is measured as hours lost due to injury per 100 workers per year. It includes any hours lost in a given year regardless of the year of injury. Organizational LTI Severity was 1978 in 2022; higher than year end 2021 (1450).



NATURE OF LOST TIME INJURY

In addition to the LTI data, both at the organization level and the department level incidents are analyzed by the nature of injury. This information enables the City to focus efforts and monitor trends.

As Figure 4 illustrates the most predominant injury that led to time loss in 2022 was strains and sprains, accounting for 55% of all lost time injuries.

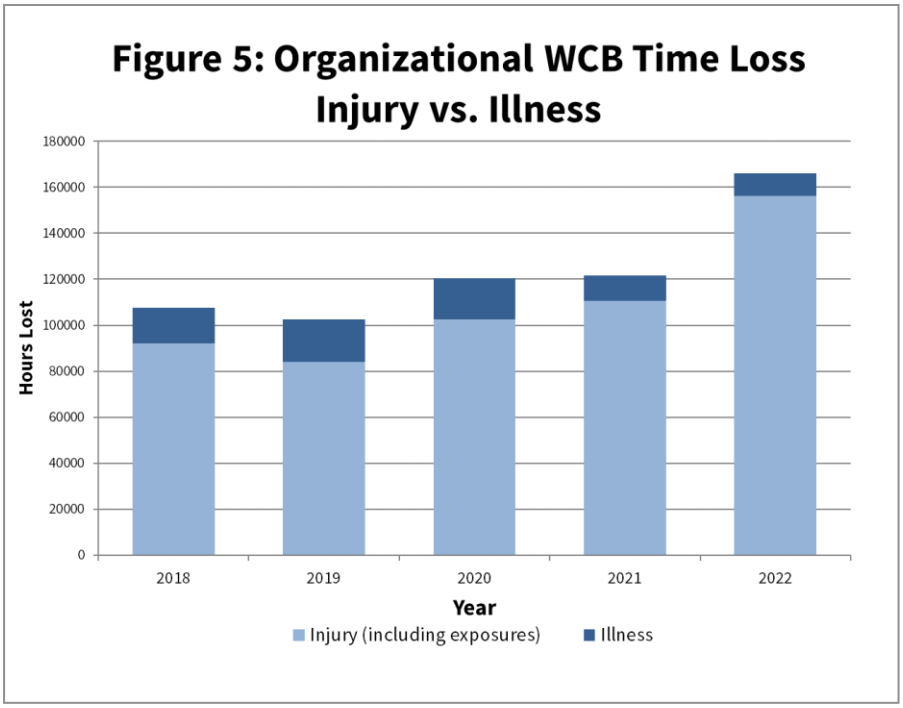


WCB TIME LOSS – INJURY VS. ILLNESS

WCB time loss for incidents reported as workplace illness are compared to workplace injury (including exposures) in Figure 5.

WCB claims reported as workplace illness are not included in LTI rates because they did not result in physical injury and/or are chronic in nature.

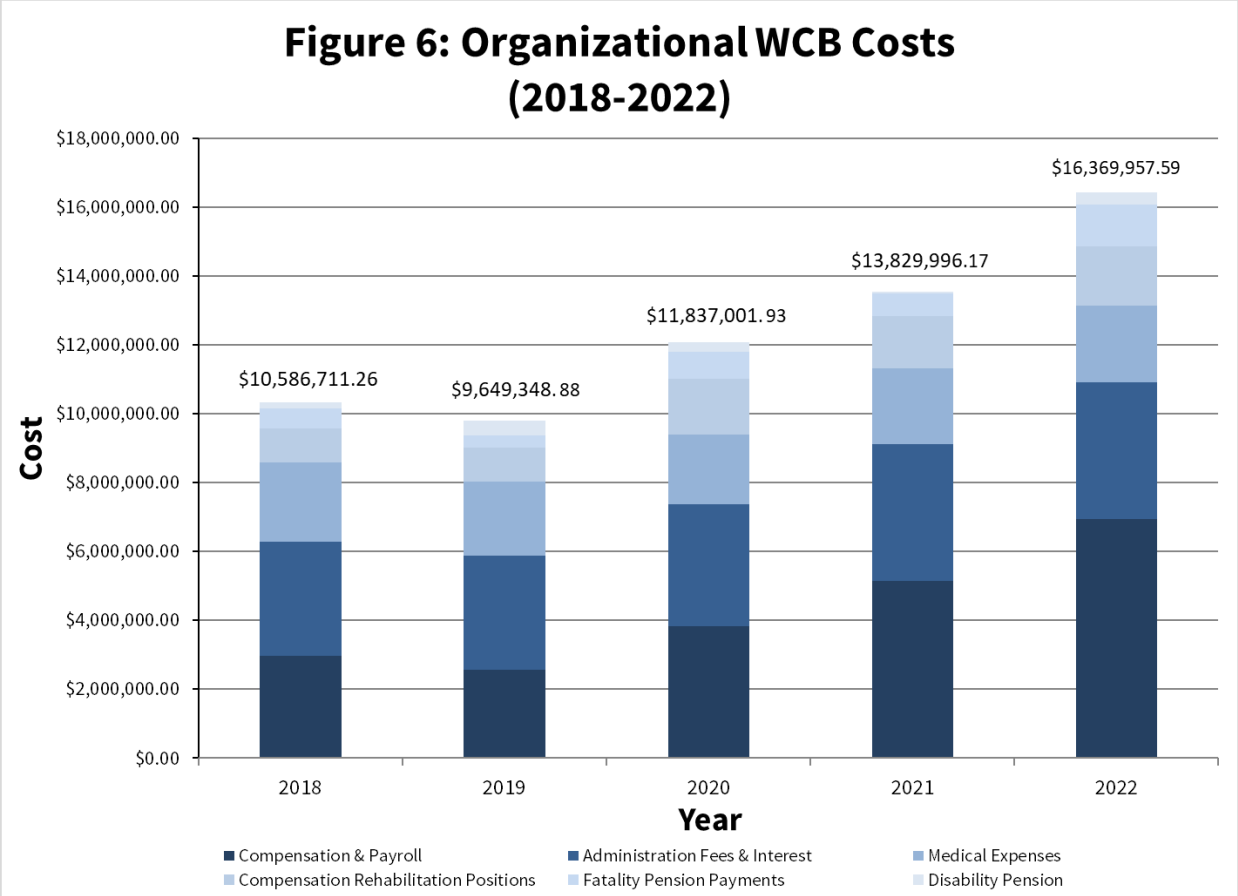
WCB time loss associated claims reported as workplace illness in 2022 was less compared with prior years during the reporting period.



WORKERS COMPENSATION COSTS

Workers Compensation Board (WCB) related costs; compensation for direct hours lost, rehabilitation and WCB claim administration fees are tracked by the Corporate Finance Department.

See Appendix A for definitions of WCB cost categories.



WCB related costs were $16.4 million in 2022; higher than in 2021 ($13.8 million). Over half of claim costs in 2022 resulted from prior year claims. The City experienced a greater impact to higher paid positions in 2022 which increased WCB related compensation and payroll costs. COVID-19 claims directly accounted for $325k in WCB costs. Significant portion of costs in 2022 (~10%) attributed to Compensation Rehabilitation Positions which represent hours spent in 'light duties' once employee has returned to work following a claim.

SAFE Work Certified

SAFE Work Certified is a voluntary standard for workplace safety and health launched by SAFE Work Manitoba in January 2017. The standard is built on three essential principles – leadership commitment, hazard control and worker participation. These principles are essential to achieving the City's goal of a workplace free of accidents, injuries and occupational illnesses.

The City adopted a certification plan which is outlined in Administrative Standard HR-014 – SAFE Work Certified. The plan requires external audits of various departments to ensure consistent application of effective safety and health management practices; leading to fewer injuries and illnesses for workers.

Over the past year Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service as well as remaining areas of Water & Waste Department achieved certification. The list of other departments to achieve certification (over the last 5 years) include Winnipeg Fleet Management Agency; the Community Services Department; a number of divisions in the Water and Waste Department; Winnipeg Transit; the Planning, Property & Development Department; the Winnipeg Police Service and Public Works Department.

On April 15, 2023 the City of Winnipeg achieved its goal of becoming Safe Work Certified at the organizational level. The City of Winnipeg Public Service is the first Workers Compensation Board individually-assessed organization in Manitoba to achieve SAFE Work Certification and is the largest workplace to achieve SAFE Work Certification in the province.

Conclusions

- The total number work-related injury and illness claims accepted by the WCB was 1254 in 2022. This represents an increase of 27% from 2021 (989) and was above average for the reporting period. The number of accepted Time Loss Claims in 2022 was 919, an increase of 33% from 2021 (691).

- Organizational Lost Time Injury (LTI) Frequency was 10.2 in 2022; higher than year end 2021 (8.3). Organizational LTI Severity was 1978 in 2022; higher than year end 2021 (1450).

- The majority of LTI in 2022 were strains/sprains (55%) most commonly caused by falls/slips/trips and overexertion.

- WCB related costs were $16.4 million in 2022; higher than in 2021 ($13.8 million). Over half of claim costs in 2022 resulted from prior year claims. The City experienced a greater impact to higher paid positions in 2022 which increased WCB related compensation and payroll costs. COVID-19 claims directly accounted for $325k in WCB costs. Significant portion of costs in 2022 (~10%) attributed to Compensation Rehabilitation Positions which represent hours spent in 'light duties' once employee has returned to work following a claim.

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- The COVID 19 pandemic had an impact on the organization in 2022. WCB claims related to COVID-19 accounted for 19% of WCB time loss claims in 2022. For a COVID-19 claim to be

accepted, the WCB must determine that the virus was contracted as a result of an exposure arising out of and in the course of employment. We continue to focus on protecting City staff.

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

INJURY STATISTICS:

Lost Time Injury (LTI) Frequency = (# of lost time injuries / total hours worked) x 200,000

Lost Time Injury (LTI) Severity = (hours lost due to LTI / total hours worked) x 200,000

The factor of 200,000 normalizes results to produce the average frequency or severity per 100 workers per year.

WORKERS COMPENSATION COST CATEGORIES:

Compensation and Payroll Costs – wage loss benefits paid to an injured employee while s/he is unable to work in their pre-injury job in whole or in part.

Administration Fees & Interest – portion of the WCB's operating costs/annual expense budget funded by the City of Winnipeg.

Medical Expenses – benefits for healthcare-related services and products used to aid an injured employee's recovery (e.g., healthcare treatment by attending doctors, chiropractors, physiotherapists, etc.).

Compensation Rehabilitation Positions – wages paid to employees who are being accommodated in rehabilitation positions, generally on a temporary and transitional basis, to support the employee's recovery and return to full, regular duties.

Fatality Pension Payments – Benefits for a surviving spouse or common-law partner and dependents of fatally injured employees.

Disability Pension – Compensation for a degree of permanent loss of function processed as a lump-sum benefit (claims after 1991) or a monthly payment (claims before 1992).