

## CALIFORNIA HOPES TO CURB OPIOID ABUSE WITH NEW REGULATIONS, BETTER MONITORING

Written by BUSINESSINSURANCE.COM



(Photo courtesy of GOOGLE)

California lawmakers and workers compensation regulators want to curb prescription opioid abuse, and they are turning to Washington state for inspiration in the fight against narcotic addiction and deaths.

Last fall, prescription drug abuse provisions were left out of a California workers compensation reform bill to help the legislation win passage, experts say.

Now that those reforms are being implemented, California is attacking opioid painkillers on several fronts, including new workers comp medical regulations and a push to boost funding for the state's prescription drug monitoring program.

"There's a lot of interest in the opioid abuse issue, which was not addressed in" the recently passed law, said Marjorie Berte, Western region vice president at the American Insurance Association.

California's Division of Workers' Compensation is devising new medical treatment guidelines similar to those used by Washington, sources say.

Dr. Gary Franklin, a neurologist and medical director for the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries, is advising the California workers comp division, but he declined to discuss details.

Dr. Franklin's research and recommendations helped spur development of the Washington state medical treatment guidelines adopted in 2007.

For further reading and up-to-date Workers' Compensation articles visit <http://www.businessinsurance.com/section/workers-comp>

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### Attorney Spotlight

#### John Garcia



John Garcia presently serves as the Head of Homan & Stone's Workers' Compensation Department. He has been practicing law for twenty years. His practice is 100% devoted to Workers' Compensation cases. Mr. Garcia has published several articles on Workers' Compensation Law topics. Mr. Garcia uses his considerable expertise to resolve cases expeditiously and economically. In addition, he is the lead trial attorney at Homan & Stone before the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board. Mr. Garcia represents Insurance Companies, both regional and national, Self-Insured Private Companies, Governmental Agencies and Employers, Third-Party Administrators, relating to Workers' Compensation, Section 132a Claims and Serious and Willful Claims.

### EVENTS

**CALIFORNIA COALITION ON WORKERS' COMPENSATION 11TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE LEGISLATIVE & EDUCATION FORUM**

**WHEN: JULY 17-19, 2013**

**WHERE: Disney's Grand Californian Hotel & Spa - Anaheim, CA**

Presented by:



## No July 2013 Filing As New Governing Committee Convenes

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (April 5, 2013) -- Earlier this week, the WCIRB Governing Committee met in San Francisco for the first time following the March 21, 2013 election of Employers Compensation Insurance Company and Hartford Accident and Indemnity Company to serve three-year terms on the Governing Committee. At the beginning of the meeting, the Committee members elected Kevin Harnetiaux from Hartford Accident and Indemnity Company to serve as the Committee Chairman for the next two years.

The Committee also discussed the WCIRB Actuarial Committee's review of December 31, 2012 insurer experience and a potential July 1, 2013 Pure Premium Rate Filing. In his presentation to the Committee, Executive Vice President, COO and Chief Actuary Dave Bellusci reported that (1) statewide pre-

mium has increased significantly due to increases in the average rate level and increases in insured payroll, (2) loss development projections are consistent with those underlying the January 1, 2013 Pure Premium Rate Filing, (3) accident year 2012 claim frequency is increasing modestly while loss severity remains relatively flat, and (4) allocated loss adjustment expense severity trends are beginning to moderate.

The Actuarial Committee's analysis shows the July 1, 2013 indicated average pure premium rate is \$2.61 per \$100 of payroll which is the same as the indicated average pure premium rate contained in the WCIRB's amended January 1, 2013 Pure Premium Rate Filing and only \$0.06 cents more than the industry average filed pure premium rate as of January 1, 2013.

For further reading on this article visit <http://www.wcirb.com/news/no-july-2013-filing-new-governing-committee-convenes>

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