2013 proves the value of financial strength

By Ann Bennett

Over the years, WCIA members have embraced the importance of funding beyond the statutorily required confidence level. The growth of the undesignated reserve is the direct result of member financial discipline regarding pool assets. 2013 has proved to be a year where the financial prudence exercised in the past now allows the pool to remain financially stable while experiencing significant negative loss development.

WCIA's 2013 Financial Statements have been finalized and, unlike most years, the outcome was disappointing. In 2013 the pool's operating expenses remained stable; however, claim payments and reserves increased considerably. Loss and loss adjustment expenses were $17 million higher in 2013 than in 2012 and claim reserves increased by $22 million. Overall, revenues decreased slightly (about 1%) and the pool saw investment income decline as longer term investments continued to mature, and were re-invested into current lower yielding or shorter term investments. The net effect was a decrease in Unrestricted Net Assets of $30 million.

Although 2013 was a very expensive year in terms of member claims, WCIA still remains well funded at a 98% actuarial confidence level, over 20% more than the statute requires, with approximately $57 million in undesignated member reserve.
All-inclusive play area combines family fun and ADA solutions

By Debbi Sellers

The City of Renton and the Renton School District recently held a grand opening of a new, all-inclusive playground at the Meadow Crest Early Learning Center.

This is the first joint development project between the city and school district, where the park is co-located on property owned by both entities. Meadow Crest Early Learning Center is a school for 600 students, 50 percent of which have special needs. The playground took two years to complete and was funded with contributions from the city, school district and multiple community donors to meet the $2 million cost.

As a joint project, the city and school district entered into an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) for the operation and maintenance of the school (see sidebar page 4). Renton contacted WCIA requesting review of this agreement and received assistance through the Legal Consultation Program.

An all-inclusive playground is a place where children can play together with their peers, family, friends, and neighbors without experiencing physical or social barriers to inclusion. Today, all-inclusive playgrounds are rare, but they are one solution to meeting the requirements outlined in the most recent update to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Chapter 2, Section 240, which applies to state and local government play areas, that these playgrounds have a certain percentage of accessible play components and accessible routes to those play components.

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These requirements can be quite detailed. For example, Section 240 regulates the number and types of ground level play components that are required to be on accessible routes. The accessible route must connect at least one ground level play component for each different type of play represented (e.g., climbing, swinging, spinning). When elevated play components are provided, an accessible route must connect at least 50 percent of the elevated play components. Members must consider how to meet these requirements, effective as of March 15, 2012, when renovating existing or building new play areas.

In addition to the ADA requirements, all new playgrounds should be built to meet national standards. While there are no legal requirements for the design, construction or installation of playground equipment, members should refer to the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) as these organizations have established nationally recognized safety standards and guidelines for public playground equipment.

Currently, the City of Auburn has a playground similar to Renton’s that opened in June 2010 and the City of Spokane Valley has a smaller playground, with accessible components.

WCIA members are encouraged to contact their Risk Management Representative for guidance on projects such as Meadow Crest; legal consultation is also available for complex questions.

Meadow Crest occupational and physical therapist staff were consulted on the design to incorporate exercise equipment, such as the arm-cycle pictured above.

The swing design allows for children of all abilities to safely enjoy the ride with a safety bar system.

This new twist on a merry-go-round allows for safer, seated access.

Several ways to make music fill the playground such as this accessible xylophone, chimes and drums pictured left.
Joint ILA needs special consideration

To jointly own and operate the new playground at Meadow Crest Early Learning Center, the city and school district had to address unique concerns in the ILA. Some issues addressed were access to the park, responsibility for maintenance and supervision and differing immunities for the school and the city.

Since the playground is jointly owned and would be used by both the school and members of the public, the agreement needed to address indemnification language and insurance requirements.

In this instance, the city worked with its WCIA Risk Management Representative and received legal assistance through the WCIA Consultation Program during the drafting of the ILA.

The final ILA outlined that the playground would be used by the school during school hours and open to the public all other hours, including Fridays, weekends and breaks when the school is closed. Responsibilities for maintenance and repairs were allocated to effectively preserve park facilities and promote safety.
Add these DVDs to your training library

By Patti Crane

Members can request the following training DVDs from WCIA to build their own on-site training opportunities. Contact Member Services at memberservices@wciapool.org to request a copy.

**Unlawful Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation**
This is an updated version of Anti-Harassment training for employees covering the definitions of unlawful discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment) and retaliation, and what to do when you experience or observe those situations as well as what to expect if you make a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

**COMPACT 2014 Audit Topic – Land Use Liability**
This session is designed to teach those responsible for planning and land use development how to comply with the 2014 COMPACT Audit for Land Use. This all-encompassing video addresses: risk exposures and recommended controls for land use regulations; the responsibilities and authority of legislative and administrative bodies; project review, permit processing, environmental regulations, subdivisions, vesting and enforcement.

**Reporting Child Abuse and Sexual Misconduct**
This training covers the warning signs staff should recognize that indicate possible child abuse and the proper protocol for reporting child abuse and sexual misconduct.

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**Training reimbursements go online**

By Maria Orozco

Training reimbursement requests can now be done online through the WCIA website.

This feature lists all eligible reimbursement programs in one place and provides for members to upload their supporting documentation.

Members can use the Reimbursement Summary Report to view all approved reimbursements and the total dollars provided to them through this WCIA program.

To access the online reimbursement requests link:

- Go to www.wciapool.org and login with your email address and password.
- Click Training and Education, and then click Training Reimbursements from the drop down menu.
- All available programs will appear in alphabetical order.

To utilize the Reimbursement Summary Report:

- Login with your email address and password.
- Select Member Resources from the navigation bar.
- Click on the link under My Reports.

Members may submit reimbursement requests for this year, through December 4, 2014.

Beginning January 1, 2015, all reimbursement requests will need to be submitted via our website in order to be processed by WCIA.

If you have any questions regarding the online reimbursement process, please contact Katie Madsen or Maria Orozco in Member Services.
Membership
News In Brief

Do you have an innovative risk management practice?
Members with outstanding or innovative risk management practices were highlighted at the last Full Board meeting in Yakima. To make this a regular practice at our meetings, we need to hear from you!
If you feel you have an innovative or stand-out risk management practice or procedure, let your Risk Management Representative or Executive Director Ann Bennett know about it. The entire membership will benefit from your good work!

Travel reimbursements for October Full Board meeting
Full Board travel reimbursements will be available for the Full Board meeting scheduled for October 17, 2014 at the Foster Golf Links in Tukwila.
Applications for travel reimbursement will be sent to your delegate and alternate, as well as posted on our website, in September.
Even if you have already fulfilled your COMPACT attendance requirement, we encourage you to attend this important meeting to approve the 2015 goals, assessments and operating budget.

Calendar of Events

August 7, 2014
Loss Control Committee Meeting
WCIA Offices, Tukwila

August 8, 2014
Executive Committee Meeting
WCIA Offices, Tukwila

September 10-12, 2014
Executive Retreat
The Majestic Inn, Anacortes

October 10, 2014
Executive Committee Meeting
WCIA Offices, Tukwila

October 17, 2014
Full Board Meeting
Foster Golf Links, Tukwila

November 14, 2014
Executive Committee Meeting
WCIA Offices, Tukwila

Visit our website at www.wciapool.org for training schedules and online registration.