

DNR eDigest

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[Previous E-Digests](#)

[Print This Page](#)

The Bureau of Education and Information's goal is to publish "The E-Digest" bi-weekly on paydays. The bureau will publish additional issues, as needed. Contact "E-Digest" editor Diane.Brinson@wisconsin.gov or at 608/266-5215 to submit stories, story ideas and photos that communicate internally the department's work, policies and issues that matter to DNR employees.

January 21, 2010

In this E-Digest:

- [White House agrees to meeting on Asian carp threat to Great Lakes](#)
- [Apply for Income Continuation Insurance by February 1](#)
- [Unity Insurance now will pay for H1N1 flu shots at Monday's clinic](#)

 [Print](#)

White House agrees to meeting on Asian carp threat to Great Lakes

One day after the U.S. Supreme court denied Michigan's call for an injunction that would close the shipping route near Chicago that could stave off the invasion of the destructive Asian carp to the Great Lakes, the [White House agreed to a summit](#) about the invasive fish in early February.

On Tuesday, January 19, Governor Jim Doyle and Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm teamed up to call for a summit among Great Lakes governors and senior White House officials. On the agenda, the real threat to Lake Michigan's ecosystem and the region's economy created by the Asian carp and other invasive species. Go to Gov. Doyle's Media Room to read his complete news release ["Governors Doyle, Granholm call for White House summit on Asian carp."](#)

The Wisconsin and Michigan governors sought the meeting on the heels of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision on Tuesday denying the requested injunction to temporarily close the gates and locks on the shipping route near Chicago leading into Lake Michigan, while parties of interest work on a long-term solution.

Gov. Doyle chairs the Council of Great Lakes Governors and included in his January 19 news release a call to action: "We must act quickly to protect the Great Lakes, our region's greatest natural resource, against the devastating threat of Asian carp."

Also on Tuesday, the [Army Corps of Engineers announced](#) that tests show Asian carp DNA in Lake Michigan. Wisconsin Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen, who had joined Michigan's action on behalf of Wisconsin, issued a statement on Tuesday reiterating his concern for the threat imposed by the carp's migration to the lakes' ecosystem and economy.

Learn more about the devastation caused by the attack of the Asian carp on the Great Lakes in the January 14 issue of the "DNR Digest" story ["DNR a partner in battle to block invasive carp from Great Lakes."](#)

 [Top](#)

 [Print](#)

Apply for Income Continuation Insurance by February 1

An illness or injury that causes you to miss work for an extended period of time doesn't have to be financially devastating. As a state employee who accrues sick leave, you can receive Income Continuation Insurance that

pays up to 75 percent of your previous calendar year's earnings to a maximum of \$4,000 per month for basic coverage, in the event you become disabled.

Benefits under Income Continuation won't duplicate benefits available from state, federal or employer sponsored programs such as the Wisconsin Retirement System, long term disability insurance, Social Security, etc. Benefits begin when you exhaust your accrued sick leave, up to a maximum of 1040 hours, with a minimum waiting period of 30 calendar days.

New employees have an initial enrollment period, but employees who didn't enroll during their initial enrollment period and have accrued sick leave balances explained below may enroll by completing and returning an Income Continuation Insurance application to your central office or region's payroll office **no later than February 1, 2010. If you're found eligible for coverage, it will be effective beginning April 1, 2010.**

Note: Your payroll representative must receive your application no later than 4:30 p.m. on Monday, February 1, 2010 for an April 1, 2010 effective date.

The category you enroll in and the premium you pay are based on your sick leave usage and balance as of December 19, 2009. The state contributes to the premiums in four categories for eligible employees. Following are the only categories that you're eligible to enroll in by February 1 under the deferred coverage option:

- **Category 3:** An employee accrued at least 80 hours but less than 520 hours of sick leave (the difference between the sick leave hours earned during the 2009 calendar year and the amount of those hours used during the calendar year) **by December 19, 2009**. Sick leave is prorated for part time employees. For example, those employees on a half-time position only need to accrue 40 hours of sick leave in the prior calendar year, instead of the 80 hours required for full-time employees. To remain in Category 3, an employee must accrue 80 hours or 40 pro-rated hours of sick leave each calendar year. This pro-ration applies only to Category 3.
- **Category 4:** An employee has a balance of 520 hours of sick leave as of December 19, 2009, but less than 728 hours.
- **Category 5:** An employee has a balance of 728 sick leave hours as of December 19, 2009, but less than 1040 hours.
- **Category 6:** Employees with more than 1040 hours of sick leave can enroll any January.

You can only apply for Income Continuation Insurance the first time your accumulated sick leave balance reaches the minimum number of hours needed for Categories 3, 4 and 5.

Employees that already have Income Continuation Insurance will automatically be put into the proper categories effective with the February 2010 premium taken from the February 25, 2010 paycheck.

Employees applying for this coverage during the annual deferred enrollment with annual earnings exceeding \$64,000 may apply for **supplemental Income Continuation Insurance** at the same time they apply for basic coverage. Employees with the basic coverage and earnings exceeding \$64,000 who didn't elect to enroll for supplemental coverage during their initial open enrollment period may do so during the annual enrollment period each January. Employees whose annual earnings first exceeded \$64,000 in the prior year may enroll in supplemental coverage during the annual January enrollment period.

Regional employees can obtain applications from their region's payroll office. Central office employees can obtain applications by emailing [Betty McWilliams](#) in the Bureau of Human Resources on the 8th floor of GEF 2, or call her at 608/266-0850. Or, you can download the [application form](#) from the Employee Trust Funds website.



[Top](#)

 [Print](#)

Unity Insurance now will pay for H1N1 flu shots at Monday's clinic

If you're a central office employee with Unity Insurance, Home Health United now can bill Unity if you receive the H1N1 vaccination at the flu shot clinic scheduled for Monday, January 25. Originally, only flu shots given to those insured by Dean Care, Group Health, Physicians Plus, Medicare and Medicaid were covered. So, if you're already scheduled to receive a shot between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. in room G09 of GEF2, be sure to bring your Unity Insurance card with you to the clinic. If you still need to sign up, email [Marty Karow](#) or call her at 608/246-7998. Since time is running out, if you call and Karow isn't available to talk with you, leave her a voicemail message.



[Top](#)



[DNR Intranet Index](#) || [Search](#) || [DNR Home](#) || [Wisconsin Home](#) || [CE Intranet Home](#)

Produced by: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Communication and Education

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Last updated:  01/21/2010 11:19:43