
PATS Member Kelly Unruh Assist Utility Workers During the Aftermath of Hurricane Sandy

Athletic Trainers treat more than the traditional athlete. Mrs. Kelly Unruh, Co-Owner of CIP Solutions, Inc. utilizes her athletic training knowledge and skill set, as well as her experience in athletic training to provide care for the industrial athletes working for PECO energy & PP&L.



Kelly Unruh LAT, ATC

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In the early morning hours of Monday, October 29th 2012 Hurricane Sandy slammed the densely populated areas of the northeast as a Category 1 hurricane. High winds and rain left thousands of people without power, for days and weeks at a time. This storm demonstrated the complex physical challenges that utility workers regularly face and must overcome, just to keep the power on. A person's quality of life diminishes rather quickly without electricity because they can no longer provide heat, use water or appliances that many people rely on for their basic needs. Utility linemen and electricians often face these very complicated, intricate issues and regularly overcome these physically exhausting challenges.

Fortunately, the highly skilled workers at two northeastern power companies PECO energy and PP&L have regular access to athletic trainers to help keep them performing at a high levels because of the health care services provided by Mrs. Kelly Unruh and her colleagues at CIP Solutions. These companies were quick to recognize just how expensive it is to have a highly trained, highly specialized employee out due to an injury.

Time lost equals greater time with power lost which ultimately leads to revenue lost. "Our main goal is to bridge the gap between suffering an injury and making a full and complete recovery, by working closely with the client within their specific work setting guiding them safely every step of the way." – Mrs. Kelly Unruh, CIP Solutions. The industrial athletic trainer spends a good portion of their time working on injury prevention and immediate care to help prevent small injuries from becoming more serious. It is a very important asset for the company to have an athletic trainer who can serve as a gatekeeper to distinguish between personal injuries from injuries that occur at work.

The role of the Industrial Athletic Trainer starts the day early before 7:00am so they can lead dynamic warm-ups or engage their clients, evaluating any pre-existing or new injuries, this typically occurs prior to the start of the first shift. Building relationships, mutual respect and trust are all important for establishing a rapport of working together within one on one, health care solutions – for injury, illness, referrals and fitness consultations. Provide injury prevention services that are compliant with OSHA requirements, and protocols based on statistics and monthly reports on time lost to injury. Document, and justify cost-effectiveness by providing quarterly reports and task specific educational programming based on specific demands of the client's job: climbing a telephone pole, digging and shoveling; welding with fire retardant gear. This may include a job task analysis, job risk assessment, and biomechanical assessment. In order to fully integrate with the client dress and safety gear is unique to the work setting, steel toe boots, jeans and a polo shirt, hard hat and safety glasses.

Industrial Athletic Trainer's clinical skills and knowledge base

- A complete understanding of orthopedic injuries, confidant evaluation skills, and a complete understanding of orthopedic protocols for acute, chronic and post-surgical rehabilitation.
- A thorough understanding of the job tasks that are performed within a company and be able to recognized safety issues.
- Knowledge of kinesiology and ergonomics, and their roles in injury etiology and prevention. Perform an ergonomic assessment of both static and dynamic activities, including interactions with tools or workstations. Interpret the results, and identify individual positive and negative behaviors relative to sustaining an injury or acquiring an illness.
- Fit employee with proper personal protective equipment (PPE), tool belt, climbers, and other donned equipment or tools.
- Develop a line of communication when dealing with an employee incident (i.e., workplace accident) including union stewards, worker compensation representatives, safety managers and the treating medical professional.
- Develop and record an accurate assessment of job duties by which necessary functional capacity exam standards can be established. Describe organization and administration of a basic functional capacity exam. Instruct a prospective employee to properly perform various tasks associated with a functional capacity exam.
- Become familiar and knowledgeable in regards to the company's established safety guidelines in additional to familiarization of OSHA guidelines, OSHA reporting, and any corporate injury reporting procedures.
- Be able to professionally research a given topic, create a presentation and present material to pertinent parties, whether it be employees, safety committee members or management.

From the National Athletic Trainers Association's website
<http://www.nata.org/advanced-knowledge-skills#industrial>



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