

# THE WIRE



4th District IBEW Health Fund  
**KEEPING YOU WIRED TO BENEFITS  
NEWS AND INFORMATION**

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SPRING 2013

*In this issue, the **Fund Business** section provides a comprehensive overview of the state of the Fund. We analyze the Fund's financial performance in light of market trends since 2010 and examine key indicators to assess the future of health care costs. It is our belief that the more our members understand about the financials of providing benefits, the better prepared they are to make smart choices when using them, such as substituting generic drugs for higher-priced brand name counterparts and taking advantage of preventive care benefits. We also cover the new contribution rate for the Building Trades Plan as of June 1, 2013. **HealthCorner** highlights the behavioral health benefits provided under the medical plans and the MAP. Finally, don't miss the **Fund Stuff** section for a summary of all the services and resources covered under the MAP—it offers more than you may think.*

## FunD Business

### State of the Fund

Each year, the Fund reviews key indicators to ensure that our financial position is as strong as possible as we move into a new fiscal year. The formula is simple and, most likely, familiar:  $\text{Income} - \text{Expenses} = \text{Money the Fund can save, invest or spend}$ . The Funds' sources of income include employer and participant contributions and any associated investment income. Our expenses include the costs associated with health care claims and administering the plans. The remaining amount is our net assets. Our goal is to maintain an adequate reserve of net assets so we can sustain the Plan through an economic downturn and still provide meaningful benefits to our members and their families.

**Key Indicators of Fund Performance.** When evaluating the Fund's financial state, analysts rely on income, expenses, and net assets. Here's a definition for each of these terms:

- ✓ **Income:** Employer and participant contributions and associated investment income
- ✓ **Total expenses:** Total claims paid and administrative costs (i.e., what it costs to manage the Fund benefits)
- ✓ **Net assets:** The Fund's reserves (i.e., what the Fund has "in the bank" after expenses are paid).

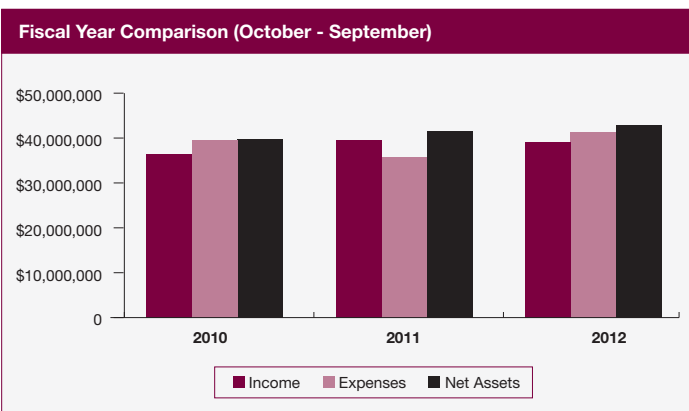
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## State of the Fund (*continued*)

### Fund Performance

The chart below compares the Fund's fiscal performance from 2010 through 2012. (As a reminder, the Fund operates on a fiscal year, which is October through September.) Looking back, there were a couple of challenging years; however, the Fund was able to increase net assets by approximately 8.5% between 2010 and 2012. As a result, we were able to maintain the level of benefits members are accustomed to, as well as provide several enhancements. (See related article "A Review of Benefit Enhancements" in the Winter 2013 edition of *the Wire*.)



In fiscal year 2012, the Fund paid out over \$41 million in expenses and benefit claims. This is an increase of \$5.8 million over the \$35 million that was paid out in 2011. Not surprisingly, medical, prescription drug and retiree benefits were the largest percentage of the 2012 claims, with a combined \$35 million in claim costs. Below is a summary of claims paid in 2012.

- ▶ \$21.2 million: medical claims
- ▶ \$10.7 million: retiree benefit claims
- ▶ \$3.1 million: prescription drug claims
- ▶ \$1.4 million: dental claims
- ▶ \$68,257: vision claims
- ▶ \$84,359: life and AD&D claims
- ▶ \$147,542: weekly loss of time benefits

On average, the Fund paid \$1,191.90 in benefits and expenses per active member per month in fiscal year 2012—compared to \$1,055.18 per member per month in 2011. This represents an average increase of \$136.72 per member per month.

### Working Together

Our analysts predict that health care claim costs are going to continue to rise. Therefore, we want to do what we can to help slow any increases in order to sustain Fund assets. For example, the Fund will continue to work with plan providers to keep administration costs low and make sure employer contribution rates are precisely set. However, we can't do it alone. We also need help from our members. Here are ways you can help minimize expenses:

- ▶ If you're currently taking a brand name medication, ask your provider if it is available in generic form. Many well-known drugs, such as Singulair, Lipitor, Plavix and Tricor now have generic alternatives.
- ▶ Use the emergency room only for a true, life-threatening emergency. Otherwise, you should go to your doctor's office, or if the office is closed, use an urgent care center.
- ▶ Follow up on the recommended preventive care services for your age. Many preventive care services are covered 100% when you see an in-network provider. For a complete list of covered preventive care services for men and women, visit the "Medical Benefits" page on the Fund's website at [www.4thdistricthealthfund.com](http://www.4thdistricthealthfund.com).
- ▶ Follow your doctor's orders when it comes to medications. Be sure to take medication exactly as it is prescribed, and don't change your schedule or dose without checking first. If you're not getting the full benefit of the medication, you could have a setback.
- ▶ Pay for eligible health care-related expenses not covered by the Plan with your HRA. For more information, visit the "Health Reimbursement" page on the Fund's website at [www.4thdistricthealthfund.com](http://www.4thdistricthealthfund.com).
- ▶ Use the GuidanceResources® Online tools and information in the "Wellness" and "Lifestyle" sections to help improve or maintain your health. If you haven't registered yet, go to [www.guidanceresources.com](http://www.guidanceresources.com) and enter in the Fund ID: "MAP\_4\_IBEW."
- ▶ Continue to use in-network providers when you need care (medical, dental and vision plans) and fill your prescriptions at a Sav-Rx pharmacy.

### Hourly Contribution Rate Change for the Building Trades Plan

**Effective with the September 2013 coverage month, the monthly cost for the Building Trades Plan will increase by \$14 to \$861 per month. The Board of Trustees for the Fund recommended that the hourly contribution be increased by \$.10 per hour to fund the increase in the Building Trades Plan monthly program cost.**

In each issue, **Health Corner** highlights hot topics in health care. The chart below shows you how the Fund's benefits cover related services and/or care. For more details about Fund Benefits, visit [www.4thdistricthealthfund.com](http://www.4thdistricthealthfund.com).

Health Topic	What It Is	Why It Is Important	Fund Benefits*
<p><i>April is National Autism Awareness Month</i></p>	<p>Autism is a complex developmental disability that affects a child's ability to communicate and interact.</p> <p>To highlight the increasing need for awareness about autism, the Autism Society observes April as a special opportunity to educate the public about autism and issues within the autism community.</p>	<p>At this time, there is no known single cause. Yet, studies show that with early diagnosis and treatment, the quality of life for a person with autism is greatly improved.</p> <p>The lifetime cost of caring for a child with autism ranges from \$3.5 million to \$5 million, according to the Autism Society.</p>	<p>The Fund's behavioral health benefit covers certain testing, evaluation and medication management for the treatment of autism. There are also benefits provided under the medical and prescription drug plans.</p> <p><b>Outpatient:</b> Fund pays 50% of covered charges.</p> <p><b>Inpatient:</b> Covered as any other illness under the Major Medical Plan; Flexible Choice Plan covers same as outpatient treatment.</p> <p>For a summary of prescription drug coverage, go to the "Prescription Drugs" page of the Fund's website.</p>
<p><i>May is Mental Health Awareness Month</i></p>	<p>Started by Mental Health America in 1949, May is dedicated to raising awareness about mental health conditions and supporting mental wellness for all.</p>	<p>According to Mental Health America, one in four American adults lives with a diagnosable, treatable mental health condition. Tools and resources are available to help affected individuals live full and productive lives.</p>	<p>The Fund's behavioral health benefit covers:</p> <p><b>Outpatient:</b> Fund pays 50% of covered charges.</p> <p><b>Inpatient:</b> Covered as any other illness under the Major Medical Plan; Flexible Choice Plan covers same as outpatient treatment.</p> <p>More details are available on the "Medical Benefits" page of the website.</p> <p>The Member Assistance Program can help, too. Counseling services are provided through ComPsych® at no cost to you and your family members.</p>
<p><i>June is Men's Health Month</i></p>	<p>Men's Health Month encourages men and boys to seek medical advice and early treatment for disease and injury. Take advantage of screenings, health fairs, media appearances, and other health education and outreach activities.</p>	<p>The purpose is to make men and boys aware of preventable health problems and to encourage early detection and treatment of various diseases specific to men and boys.</p>	<p>The Fund provides preventive care benefits for all eligible members. For example, the medical plans cover routine physical exams 100% as well as certain preventive care services. For a complete list, see the "Medical Benefits" page on the website.</p>

\* You must use PPO providers when receiving preventive, well-care services for benefits to be paid. Please see your Summary Plan Description for additional details about these benefits.

**"Behind the scenes" enhancements for the website.**

There's more to a website than what you see on the screen. We recently updated the login process to make it easier for members to access the site. The username and password boxes now display letters and characters instead of black dots, so users can see what they're typing. We believe this change will make the login process more successful. The next time you visit the Fund's website at [www.4thdistricthealthfund.com](http://www.4thdistricthealthfund.com), we hope that you'll find it faster and easier to complete the registration process or simply log in.

# FunD Stuff: MAP Offers More than Just Counseling Services

Have you taken advantage of the Member Assistance Program (“MAP”) recently? MAP provides counseling services but can also help with a variety of other challenges or life events you may face. With MAP, you can:

- ▶ Discuss personal concerns and relationship issues, including problems with your children, substance abuse, job pressures, stress, anxiety, depression, grief and loss.
- ▶ Receive legal information from licensed attorneys on issues such as wills, debt obligations, divorce, or bankruptcy.
- ▶ Get financial help with issues like debt, saving for college, estate planning, and taxes.

You can meet with a MAP counselor for up to five sessions per event. The next time you need a little extra help, call MAP at 1-877-627-4239. Counselors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you haven't had the opportunity to visit GuidanceResources® Online, the MAP website, scan the QR code to the right or visit [www.guidanceresources.com](http://www.guidanceresources.com) and enter the Fund ID, “MAP\_4\_IBEW.”



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