Watco’s Western Australia Rail (WWAR) Team has been moving grain trains for their Customer CBH Group since March of 2012. By working closely with CBH, they are making significant operational improvements and returning value to CBH and the growers of Western Australia.

As a result of this attention to operational performance and significant yields from the subsequent crop, Watco has moved record tonnages by rail over the past four months.

David Capper, CBH general manager of operations, recognizes the positive value that Watco has been creating for CBH.

Capper stated, “The CBH Group, in partnership with Watco, moved record tonnages on rail for four consecutive months in February, March, April, and May 2015. April 2015 was an all-time high with 925,576 tonnes moved to port by rail. "This is a great achievement and wouldn’t be possible without the efficient and dedicated team at Watco. These records highlight the productivity gains CBH has been able to achieve through the acquisition of its rail fleet and the Watco partnership.

"As a co-operative, any gain in productivity is directly passed back as value to growers."

This is on the back of CBH returning significant rebates to growers from its freight fund at the end of 2014, which was created mostly through the efficiencies of grain by rail.

WWAR chief operating officer Grant Thomp- son states that our focus is on finding flexible solutions to operating the most efficient supply chain for our Customer CBH.

"The record tonnes reflect the dedicated focus from our team members working hand in hand with CBH Team Members to find solutions that create value and that are mutually beneficial to CBH and Watco,” said Thompson.

Since October 2014, Watco has moved approximately 5.6 million metric tons and broken month-to-month records consecutively since February.

"We couldn’t have achieved this without the support from our Customer,” said Thompson. "Our focus in the future is to continue to improve the relationship with CBH, further improve supply chain functions, and create value for both companies."

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**Western Australia operations are setting records**

One of many grain trains that have helped set records for grain moved by rail in Western Australia.

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**Fab four win awards at Norfolk Southern convention**

Four of Watco’s short line railroads took home awards from Norfolk Southern’s "Finale in the Valley" short line conference last month. For the past fourteen years, Norfolk Southern (NS) and their short line partners have met in Roanoke, Virginia to build relationships and improve processes. NS is moving their Roanoke offices to Norfolk this year, which led to the theme of "Finale in the Valley." This was also the last year that Lynne Siemon, NS manager of short line marketing, would be organizing the event due to her retirement at the end of June. Lynne has been a big help to the short lines and we wish her well in her retirement.

Awards were presented at the closing dinner, and four Watco short lines took home awards for meeting their 250-Squared challenge. Launched in 2007, the initiative challenges short lines to add at least 250 carloads of new business per year. The Blue Ridge Southern Railroad won a Bronze Award for bringing in an additional 251-500 cars. Ann Arbor Railroad took home a Silver Award with adding 501-750 cars. The Wisconsin & Southern Railroad took home a Gold Award with 751-1,000 cars in new business. The Grand Elk Railroad took home the Platinum Award by moving more than 1,000 carloads of new business.

Stefan Loeb, Watco EVP and chief marketing officer, said, "To win four awards with one in each category is a tremendous accomplishment the entire Watco team should be proud of. We view Norfolk Southern as a Customer, not just a Class 1 railroad, and our ability at each of these profit centers to deliver value to NS and our Customers every day safely and efficiently is shown in these recognitions."
Providing Solutions
Supply Chain Services

When a company is devising a transportation plan, they need to look at a variety of transportation modes to determine which is the most efficient and cost effective according to their needs. Planning a transportation plan can be very time consuming and, at times, the market is difficult to navigate. This is where Watco’s newly founded Supply Chain Services (SCS) division comes into play.

The division was created to provide solutions to transportation needs of shippers throughout North America and to take advantage of opportunities in the transportation market that involve modes other than rail.

“We are not biased to any particular mode of transportation or influenced by our assets,” said Eric Wolfe, SCS president. “Although we are proud of our heritage and capability to infuse rail into transportation solutions, our objective is to find the most cost-effective and efficient solutions to meet our Customers needs.”

Here’s an example of what SCS provides: a customer is bringing gadgets into southern California and needs to distribute them across the United States. After checking their sources, the SCS Team determines three different modes that will get the product to market most efficiently. The product is trucked from a local distribution center to Seattle, to Dallas using an intermodal solution, and by rail to a warehouse in Chicago, where it is distributed to area stores by truck load. All this is handled by SCS and the customer just has to make one call and pay one bill, which allows them to focus on what they do best, while SCS executes on the transportation piece.

Wolfe has surrounded himself with people that are experienced in putting together the pieces of the transportation puzzle. Wolfe himself has 27 years of experience in the supply chain industry. Throughout his career he has played a key role in launching four different logistics companies: J.B. Hunt Logistics, Cardinal Logistics, Clicklogistics, and BNSF Logistics. Vice President of Growth Strategies Lynda Patterson has more than 20 years of experience in logistics, and Vice President of Risk Management Judd Gilgen also has 20 years of experience in risk management, compliance, operations, and project management. Amy Parady provides both logistics and rail expertise as Vice President, Business Development and Corporate Liaison. Rounding out the team is James Rader. Rader serves as Senior Vice President of Engineering and Regulatory Consulting. Rader has played a role in producing several federal rulemakings and industry standards based on accident and incident investigations and research concerning transportation safety in the United States and Canada.

“What makes supply chain interesting is that there is a story behind everything,” said Wolfe. “Every product in the world has a supply chain story that is its own.”

Members of Watco’s Supply Chain Services Team meet in Springdale, Arkansas to review opportunities. Left to right are Amy Parady, Vice President, Business Development and Corporate Liaison; Brent Ellis, The Nunnely Group; Barth West, Branch Manager; Devin Tucker, Transportation Coordinator; Sandra Williamson, Transportation Coordinator; Chaun Smith, Team Leader, and Eric Wolfe, President.

Autauga Northern hosts motorcar excursion

Before Hy-rail trucks came into existence, it was the little motorcar that trolled the tracks looking for defects in need of repair. Over the past couple of decades, the motorcar was phased out but is still popular among railroad enthusiasts. On June 27th and 28th, 24 cars were on the tracks again, rolling down Alabama’s Autauga Northern Railroad.

A group called the Southeast Railcar Operators (SERO) contacted Autauga Northern Railroad (AUT) General Manager Anthony Kirkland early in the year about the possibility of using the railroad for one of the group’s excursions. SERO is affiliated with the North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA). NARCOA is a non-profit group dedicated to the preservation and the safe, legal operation of railroad equipment historically used for maintenance of way. After visiting with the Excursion Coordinator Chris Thompson, and understanding how well the group focuses on safety, Kirkland gave a clear signal for the weekend of June 27th and 28th.

“Everyone with SERO was very nice and thankful for us allowing them to run on our line. There were very safety-oriented, and everything went well,” said Kirkland. “We are going to work with Chris to schedule another excursion in the near future.”

As the group was setting up on Friday, the day before the rides, it began raining however, rain predicted for Saturday held off and the group had two beautiful days of weather for their trip. The trip started on Saturday with a safety briefing by Thompson. The first day they ran a 80 mile round-trip from Prattville, Alabama, to Maplesville, Alabama, and then on Sunday they ran 50 miles from Prattville to Billingsley, Alabama, and back.

“Everyone really enjoyed the trip,” said Thompson. “Tony (Kirkland) and Roadmaster Todd Abbott both were very accommodating and focused on safety. The track was in great shape, and everyone was amazed at how well it was maintained.”

Two team members took SERO up on their offer to ride along with the group. Track foreman James Richard and Roadmaster Todd Abbott both brought their families up to ride along.

Abbott said his daughters Carissa, 10, and Ava, 8, had a great time and continued talking about it long after Sunday’s trip was over.

Abbott added, “Of course I’ve been on the railroad many times, but this was something different, and I really enjoyed the experience. It’s a great thing for the community as well. They spent money on hotels and eating out, and at the same time brought a piece of history to life. I look forward to them coming back again.”

A safety briefing being held prior to the motorcar trip.

The Southeast Railcar Operators brought their cars to Prattville, Alabama, to ride the rails of the Autauga Northern Railroad.
**500th train rolls into Fryburg Terminal**

by Michaela Kinyon
Communications Intern

Safety and efficiency are both an integral part to the success of any business, and they are always something to strive for. On June 10th, the terminal location in Fryburg, North Dakota celebrated a huge milestone with their Celebration of Safety and 500 Trains. The 500th train contained a load of Bakken crude oil from the oil fields nearby. A luncheon was held on-site to commemorate the success and boasted about 90 people in attendance who enjoyed a catered meal of steak, shrimp, salad, and cake. Not only has Fryburg loaded their 500th train, they also celebrated over 400 days injury-free.

Jeremy Jones, the terminal manager of Fryburg, stated, “This event is really important to us, because we’ve grown so fast and, because of that, there have been some struggles. We’ve really managed to turn those struggles around." The head of Watco’s East Region Marketing, Duane Helms, although unfortunately unable to attend, was also excited by the success: "This shows how the two companies have come together to be even stronger than they were before. We really want to build a strong, long-lasting relationship, and this is a great step in that direction.

"Congratulations to everyone who played a part in making this a success! The team members at Fryburg were so excited by the celebrations, they even put a train on hold in the yard and went back to work afterward. Dan Smith, chief operating officer, attended the celebration as well, saying, "Great Northern is a very important Customer for Watco. We are thankful for the opportunity to serve them in the Bakken Region of North Dakota. Our Fryburg Team has worked hand in hand with our Customer to improve every day since start-up. This celebration is a testament to the men and women that worked so hard each day in Fryburg. We are very proud of them." Mike Hutton, Great Northern Midstream director of operations, and Dan Smith, Watco chief operating officer, thanked the team members at Fryburg for their safe and efficient service.

The team members at Fryburg, North Dakota celebrated safety and efficiency milestones with a luncheon at the facility.

**Wisconsin celebrates rail safety week**

Train traffic in Wisconsin continues to increase and unfortunately, the number of train fatalities is also increasing. In 2014, ten people in Wisconsin died in train accidents, compared with just four in 2013. Governor Scott Walker declared the week of June 1st - 6th as ‘Rail Safety Week’ to increase awareness about the importance of watching out for trains.

On June 4th, local law enforcement agencies in Dane County teamed up to help drivers, pedestrians and cyclists recognize the importance of railroad safety. Dane County Sheriff Dave Mahoney rode in a Wisconsin and Southern Railroad (WSOR) locomotive to see the close calls an engineer sees when driving the locomotive. WSOR engineer Matt Koser said he sees “close calls” regularly with people or cars darting across the tracks in front of him. It can be a helpless feeling for him, since a train can take up to a mile to stop, depending on the speed.

"People take a chance with their lives to gain a second or two," Koser said.

While riding in the locomotive the sheriff radioed to officers on the ground who issued a total of seven citations and 11 warnings.

"It’s mostly just to educate the public, by stopping them or giving them a warning and pointing out the importance of abiding by the rules of the road," said Sheriff Mahoney.

In 2014, there were 52 collisions involving trains. Jeff Plale, Wisconsin Railroad Commissioner, said train traffic now is much more frequent than it used to be, largely because of the increased transportation of frac sand.

"When you compare the Wisconsin rail network now to what it was five years ago, it’s just dramatically different. The frequency is up, the length is up, the speeds are up," Plale said.

Even if you think you can make it across before the train gets there, Susie Klinger with Operation Lifesaver says it’s not worth the risk.

“It’s like if I was to crush a soda can with my foot, that’s what my locomotive is going to do to your vehicle,” Plale said.

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"It’s like if I was to crush a soda can with my foot, that’s what my locomotive is going to do to your vehicle," Klinger said.

The speed of a train is determined by many factors but not even a slow moving train can stop quickly and people need to put more of an emphasis on safety vs. getting somewhere a little faster.
More than 400 railroaders, vendors and customers converged in Washington, D.C. for Railroad Day on the Hill on June 4th. Once a year this group invades the Capitol to bring to attention the issues that are facing the railroad industry. This year’s four key points included the continuation of 45G Tax Credit, opposition to larger truck sizes and weights on our nation’s highways, the necessity of an extension of the PTC implementation timeline due to the complexities of the technology, and the need to preserve balanced regulation for our industry.

Watco Customer Matt Ritchie with Sherwood Construction attended the event to provide a shipper’s perspective on the issues.

Ritchie said, “I was appreciative of the opportunity to go to DC to participate in the political process by helping to emphasize parts of the Short Line Association’s political agenda. The event was well organized, the talking points were well received by the Senators and Congressmen that we met with, and the experience highlighted for me the importance for members of the industry to actively engage their political representatives with regards to the issues. Don’t be shy – write a letter or send an e-mail, place a phone call; your elected officials need to know where you stand.”

The Section 45G tax credit is used by short lines to make costly improvements to the infrastructure. As of June 25th, support for the bill reached a historic threshold with 218 Representatives, a majority of the U.S. House, signed on as cosponsors and supporters. Section 45G expired on December 31, 2014, and if passed it would be continued through 2016.

The opposition to bigger and heavier trucks exists because despite the fact that the big trucks cause significant damage to our roads and bridges, they only pay a part of the cost of the damage they cause to the nation’s highways each year. Increasing the allowable truck size and weight would put an even larger tax burden on consumers and federal, state, and local governments at a time when none can afford it. Safety issues are another concern, along with congestion issues in many areas across the country.

Another issue facing railroads is the implementation of Positive Train Control. This needs to be extended because there were issues with the FCC that delayed the process for the railroads, preventing them from meeting the target dates. Railroads are willing to add PTC, they just need more time.

The last issue, preserving the regulations that are in place that currently govern the railroads, is one of common sense. When more regulations were in place, there were more bankruptcies and problems. Railroads have proven that they can manage their own business and do it successfully with limited government regulations.

Watco hosts Railroad Liability Seminar

The Watco Legal Team recently rounded up some experts on railroads, safety, insurance, and technology and headed to Oklahoma City for the 22nd Annual Railroad Liability Seminar. Each year a different Class 2 or 3 railroad hosts the event, and this year it was Watco’s turn.

“The goal of the seminars are to educate our peers on topics relative to the liability side of the railroad business,” said Craig Richey, Watco executive vice president and general counsel. “This year our topics focused on steps to take before, during, and after an incident takes place.”

Tom Hayes, Watco general counsel added, “The presenters did a tremendous job covering topics ranging from insurance renewals, NTSB investigations, cutting edge safety technology, and mitigation.”

More than 100 people attended the seminar with guests coming in from as far as Boston and Alaska. The three day seminar started off with a golfing event that ended in a four-way tie. The tie breaker was a putt-off that was held in the great room of the convention hall. A welcome reception was held following the golfing and then guests had the evening free for dinner.

Day two of the event featured presentations until 5:30 pm, followed by a reception and dinner on their own. On day three, the seminar lasted until 12:30 pm, and then break out sessions were held for individuals with specific needs or questions. The attendees regrouped that evening at the Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark to cheer on the Triple-A Oklahoma City Dodgers in their 4-3 win over the Colorado Springs Sky Sox.

Turner Williams, a partner at Burr & Forman LLP, said, “Thanks for a wonderful meeting and even better hospitality. I thought we southern- ers were pretty good at it until you hosted us this week.”
Dan Smith, COO, in his days as a Montreal Expo.

Watco’s Dan Smith is featured in the July/August issue of Cowcatcher Magazine. The following is based on the article exploring Smith’s Major League baseball career and rise among the ranks at Watco Companies, as written by Cowcatcher Magazine Publisher Tim Blackwell.

For several years following his retirement from professional baseball, Dan Smith tried not to think about his time on the mound. A series of shoulder problems had cut his big-league pitching journey short just when it was getting started. With six years of minor league ball under his belt, Smith had ascended to the Major Leagues and was living a dream that millions never realize. But nagging injuries made it impossible to maintain his repertoire of fastballs, sliders, curves, and sinkers that got him 13 years in the pros with Texas, Montreal, Boston, Cleveland, and Washington. At 30, with his shoulder scarred from four surgeries, Smith retired in 2005.

He tried his hand at real estate after returning to his roots in southeast Kansas, but he tired of that game. Too many people were out for their own good, he thought. Smith was used to playing with eight other men who had to work together to win.

Through his real estate dealings, he came to know Watco Companies CEO Rick Webb. Watco was no stranger to Smith, who had remained friends with several team members since leaving Girard, Kansas to play for Texas. Before long, Smith took a job as vice president of real estate, a role in which he was largely responsible for developing Greens Port Industrial Park, the largest private multi-tenant industrial park in the Gulf Coast market.

Now, as chief operating officer, he keeps tabs on operational performance, organizational development and process improvements of Watco’s operating divisions. He oversees the transportation, terminal and port, human resource, and safety divisions, which is no small task. The terminal division has more than doubled after the recent acquisition of 29 terminals from Kinder Morgan. Smith also develops programs that ensure Watco team members keep their eye on the ball when it comes to safety.

At 39, he seems confident and grounded. Just as before a big game, he feels the excitement of launching initiatives and closing deals. He doesn’t view himself as a cut above because he’s pitched in Yankee Stadium. The cama-raderie he has with his Watco teammates before jesting with Smith. That was the last thing Smith, who was fighting the flu, probably wanted to hear.

Gwynn had swatted No. 2,999 the night before in St. Louis, and Smith didn’t want to be the guy who coughed up the next one.

“So I said, ‘Mike, I think you could have caught that,’” Smith said.

“Smitty, you didn’t want me to catch it. Someday you’ll thank me.”

Mordecai was right. The next evening, Gwynn chatted with Smith around the batting cage and told Smith that he was now a part of baseball history whether he liked it or not.

Today the ball rests in Cooperstown, New York, at the Baseball Hall of Fame. A football remind that Dan Smith gave up the historic hit, perhaps one that he would rather forget about. Not so.

“I got to see a lot of cool things during my career. That was one I was thrilled to be a part of.”

During his playing days at the big league level, Smith never felt he deserved star treatment. Every day meant he had to prove his worth to keep his job.

Today, Smith’s mantra is much the same as it was when he rolled the dice and gave up a full ride to play college baseball for powerhouse Wichita State University. At Watco, Smith is helping to instill a culture where team members must work together at the company’s railroad, terminal, mechanical, and switching operations.

“From that very first day, I felt exactly the same coming in here as I felt when I walked into Port Charlotte in rookie ball with the Texas Rangers. I’d better figure out a way to create value. I’d better figure out a way to prove I belong, and I’d better make sure that I don’t disappoint the Watco Team for their decision to have faith in me, much like the team that drafted me. You want to make them look good.”

Now, it’s easier to reflect on his career. The camaraderie he has with his Watco teammates is much the same as it was in baseball. Just as it is on the field, in railroading it takes everyone to be successful.

“Really, in the last few years as my role changed here, there are ways to use that experience in a very positive way,” he said. “It’s getting up and getting out the door and wanting to be better than you were yesterday. That really transcends anything. The work we’re doing here, it has me reinvigorated, like how I felt in the clubhouse and how that can exist in a team on the mound.”

The importance of individuals working together in all facets of the operation is always stressed. Players who want to play as a team are rewarded. Those who do not are asked to leave. Some decisions are harder than others.

“When I think about being on our Watco Team today, I think about how I wanted to be valued as a member of any baseball team I was ever on. I wanted my manager and teammates’ trust and respect. Not because I was entitled to it, but because I had earned it. I didn’t want to be treated like the laziest player on the team. I wanted to be treated how I deserved to be treated by my own actions. It is easy to feel like having blanket policy or mission statements should make you sleep better at night, but the truth is you have to focus on the individual player to encourage greatness. Every great Profit Center we have at Watco is simply the sum of many talented individuals working together towards a common goal. Everybody has their role to play. And they have to own it.”

Meanwhile, service units have been restructured and team members take ownership of their work. Some management layers have been eliminated and team members are now more accountable than ever. Profit center managers are charged with running their operations as if they are their own.

“Every great manager I played for during my baseball career embraced the idea that nobody bought a ticket to watch Managers manage. They understood that people paid to watch players play, and that the most important people were those on the field. That didn’t mean the umpire, the scorekeeper, the hot dog vendors and ticket takers weren’t important; it just meant that without the team on the field there was no game. You ever watch someone try to hit a baseball by having their Manager tell them when to swing the bat? Trust me, by the time you hear you yell swing, it is too late. You will never swing in time to hit the ball. So why would we ever think we need to make every decision for our Watco Team? By the time we yell swing, it will be too late.”

“Dan is one of those people who has the special gift of knowing what it takes to be a winner,” Webb said. “He showed that with his career in baseball. The Watco Team is very lucky to have him show us how to win through his commitment to our people and our Customers. Dan has, in a short time, made a big difference for us and we look forward to learning and working together for many years to come.”

Smith says Watco needs to celebrate its victories and realize that not every pitch will be a strike. It’s something two of Smith’s mentors – Hall of Famer Frank Robinson and Rangers pitching coach Oscar Acosta – instilled in him.

“You’ve got to be able to handle adversity,” he said. “You can’t panic. Two guys on, nobody out. The teams that get through that are the teams that don’t panic. Stay with your guys. It’s a long season. Teach your people to win, and they’ve got to want to win.”

That’s not just clubhouse chatter.

“If people want to call that locker room talk, I’m fine with it. I don’t think about it. What I think about is this organization being successful. It’s been successful for a long time. I want it to be even more successful, and I know our people feel the same way.”
Alabama sister railroads partner to provide repairs

by Michaela Kinyon
Communications Intern

Everyone understands the importance of lending a hand when it comes to making a team the best that it is capable of being. So when the members of Alabama Warrior Railway’s (ABWR) repair crew were in need of assistance, the guys just 10 miles away over at sister railroad Birmingham Terminal Railway (BHRR) were eager to step in.

“Terminal Railway (BHRR) were eager to step in. Assistance, the guys just 10 miles away over at sister railroad Birmingham Terminal Railway (BHRR) were eager to step in.

The people over at ABWR were so busy putting fires with all the day-to-day repairs, that they weren’t able to get to some of their more long-term maintenance repairs. What we’ve done is send some people over there to help free them up and save the company money by not having to hire outside contractors to do the work,” stated BHRR truckmaster Kris Moland. In fact, there was no much to do, that the ABWR was unable to make repairs on some cars for ABC Coke in the time desired. In light of this, Steve Coomes, who was at that time the CMO of car repair in the East Region, set up a partnership between ABWR and BHRR in order for them to help each other. BHRR did the repairs for ABC Coke, and the company was very happy with the work done. Looking to renew the repair contract, they will be sending two test cars to BHRR in the next month.

“The synergies between the two companies are just outstanding,” stated David Tarwater, BHRR general manager. “ABWR and BHRR have really come together to get the Customer taken care of. We are working great as a team and are able to accomplish so much more because of it. We have guys going over there every day. It’s like we’re one railroad.”

Long-time team member retires

To say that Barry Karlberg is now a retired member of the Safety Team would be leaving out so much of what he has been a part of for 50 years. A better definition is that he’s a retired railroader.

Barry came to the Kansas and Oklahoma Railroad (KO) in 2003 from Progressive Rail. He served as an engineer for three years and when the position of Regional Safety Manager opened up he applied for the job and was hired.

The Safety Team and the KO Team held a retirement dinner for Barry on June 30. Cake was eaten and gifts were given as Barry, his wife Chris, and the team members reflected on the memories they built together. Barry is not known for his ability to adjust to change but he said, “Change is good, we look forward to spending time with our children and grandchildren and God blesses us as we lean on Him to lead us every day.”

He added, “Thanks for the wonderful gifts, the warm friendships, and the good times I won’t ever forget.”

Barry has taught all the way up to the Corporate office. His guidance and stories will not be forgotten. Anyone that has ever visited very long with Barry has learned at least one thing to make them a better ‘railroader’. Help me wish Barry the very best in his new journey in life.”

The KC Switching Team celebrated ten-years injury free on June 25th. Pictured from left to right on bottom: General Manager Mark McClellan, Rob Bailey, Jonathan Randall, Jonathan Morefield, Aaron Byke, Timothy Joyce, Sean Jameson, Justin Ray, Adam Zink, Mathew Hayes, Robbie Carder, David Dawson, Hunter Seawood, Keith Schlottman, Lance Williams, Central Region QA Bradley Walker, Central Region Marketing Manager Shellee Currier, Central Region RSM Tim Lewis, and, Sharon Sexson. Pictured from left to right on top: Austin Norris, Doug Fleming, Zach Pumphrey, Laura Bolt, and Joe Mercer. Not Pictured- Trainmaster Robert Sullivan, Austin Atchison, Tyler Adkinson, and Rick Carter.
Watco Healthcare plan offers Tobacco Cessation Coaching

If you’re a tobacco user, you know that it’s a costly habit. Not only does the price of the products keep going up, the cost of insurance and health care is higher as well. The highest price is your life. It’s important to know that, on average, smokers die twelve years sooner than non-smokers. This is according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. That’s more than a decade. It means life for smokers is more than ten years shorter than for non-smokers. These are big numbers to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. That’s more than life. It’s important to know that, on average, smokers die twelve years sooner than non-smokers. This is according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. That’s more than a decade. It means life for smokers is more than ten percent shorter than for non-smokers. These are big numbers and a big reason to quit.

So, whether it’s your first try or your fiftieth, Watco’s health care coordinator wants to help you make it your last. Watco is offering free tobacco cessation coaching through their health care provider to all healthcare plan members. You and your coach will create a personalized plan to help you meet your goals and set a quit date. You will participate in at least five phone calls with your coach and your coach can review important information with you and provide resources you need to succeed. You will also be informed of prescription tobacco cessation aids that are covered by your pharmacy plan.

To qualify for the 2015 Tobacco Incentive, which will apply toward your 2016 premiums, you need to complete the following by December 31, 2015:

- Complete all five tobacco cessation coaching calls

Schedule your first call today to ensure you complete all five calls by the end of the year. Call Care Coordinators at 1-877-498-1382 or visit www.watcomanagementshealthplan.com.
Excessive rains have posed flooding and safety issues throughout the country and the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad (BLU) in North Carolina has experienced issues as well. Thanks to Conductor Ethen Green, a possible safety risk on the BLU was spotted and corrected.

Ethen was pulling cars out of the Bookmill location for Evergreen Packaging in Canton, North Carolina, and was concerned about the water level and the amount of trash surrounding the track. He felt this needed to be addressed to prevent harm to his fellow team members and the Customer.

Trainmaster Jonathan Thompson said, “We acted immediately to assess the situation and applaud Ethen for taking the safe course. I notified Evergreen and they took action to ensure the safety of the entire team (Evergreen and the BLU).”

After the water receded, Evergreen went to work to resolve the situation. They cleaned up the trash that floated in with the water and they are pumping out the drain to prevent this from happening in the future.

"Ethen did an excellent job valuing our Customers and Team Members above all else," said Thompson. "This is a perfect example of building a tremendous future by making decisions that protect our Customers, Team, Community, and Environment.”

Water and debris on a Customer track caused by excessive rains in Canton, North Carolina.