



SafeTalk



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Health & Safety Everyone Must Play A Role



Speaking at the recent SAFER conference in Vancouver District 3 Director Steve Hunt said, “that health and safety doesn’t have to be complicated. In fact it should be quite simple as long as workers, management and regulators all play their respective roles in ensuring our workplaces are healthy and safe. To me there are three basic tenets of health and safety: worker participation, management leadership and regulatory enforcement.”

Hunt added, “Workers need to feel that they have the ability to refuse to do unsafe work without repercussion. Workers we talk to tell us time and time again that if they refuse to do certain things they become targets or they do not get hired on the next contract-this is reality.”

Hunt is especially concerned that we are seeing an increase in workplace injuries at a time when there are less workers working. “In the economic times we are in today it is more important than ever that workplace parties all do their part. Workers need to participate in decisions which affect workplace safety. Workers input must be taken into account right from the planning stages through to the production phase,” Hunt added.

Speaking on management leadership Hunt said, “management has the legal responsibility to ensure workers safety, we see some companies where their leaders put safety on par with production - unfortunately we see others where safety is seen as an impediment to production. It is my view that you cannot have a productive workplace unless you have a safe workplace.”

In regards to regulatory enforcement Hunt said, “The third leg of the stool is the continuing role for the public regulator as an important contributor to health and safety in the workplace. Regulators need to step up their enforcement activities.”

Coming Events

February 4 BC Fed Basic H&S, Powell River BC

February 12 BC Fed Investigation, Elkford, BC

March 22-25 District 3 HS&E Conference, Vancouver BC

38 USW Members Killed On The Job In 2008



Wood Council Chair Bob Matters is asking why there are so many workplace deaths when we are seeing less and less workers. In particular, “why are we having faller fatalities when there are far fewer fallers working,” said Matters. He added, “Obviously what is being done to prevent fallers deaths isn’t working.”

In 2008 three of the five District 3 members killed were tree fallers. In fact there were 8 fallers killed in British Columbia in 2008. Union wide there were 56 work related deaths reported in 2008 in USW represented operations.

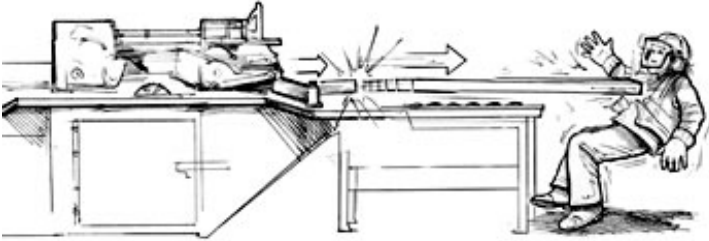
Thirty-eight of the 56 victims were USW members. Ten were contractors. Two were supervisors. Two were probationary employees. (One was on his third day at work.) Four were members of other unions which also have bargaining units at USW workplaces. Nine were in Canada; two were women. The youngest was 19; the oldest, 67.

The distribution by industry is: steel: 16; paper: 10; oil: 7 (including 4 in a single accident); forestry: 4; nonferrous metals: 3; mining: 2; utilities: 2; cement: 2; transport: 3; pipe: 2; shipbuilding, containers, chemical, services: 1 each. One member was killed by the police outside the tire plant where he worked.

Forty-three people died from occupational injuries at USW-represented workplaces in 2007, compared to 56 in 2008. Thirty-nine of the 2007 fatalities were USW members, compared to 38 in 2008. USW fatality reports rarely contain information on deaths from occupational disease. These deaths often occur after retirement; many are not recognized as being caused by a condition at work. However, research has shown that for every worker who dies in an industrial accident, eight to ten die from long-term occupational disease.

HAZARD ALERT

Worker dies when struck by board after kickback



A worker at a wood-processing plant was feeding rough lumber into a stripsaw. The boards were 2 inches thick, 8 inches wide, and 5 feet long. The employer had instructed workers to feed the lumber into the stripsaw from the side. The employer's written job safety analysis also requires workers to load lumber from the side. However, to push the boards into the machine with enough force, the worker stood at the end of the infeed table. A board kicked back out of the stripsaw, breaking into 3 pieces. One of these pieces struck another board on the infeed table. That board shot back down the table, striking the worker and causing fatal injuries.

Safe work practices:

- Perform a risk assessment for each machine and reduce the risk of injury through safeguarding. The hierarchy of safeguarding, from most effective to least effective, is as follows:
 - Elimination or substitution (e.g., eliminate human interaction)
 - Engineering controls (e.g., effective kickback fingers, barrier guards, two-hand controls, presence-sensing devices)
 - Awareness (e.g., warning signs and labels, computer warnings)
 - Training and procedures (e.g., safe work procedures, lockout)
 - Personal protective equipment (e.g., safety eyewear, hearing protection)

Always start at the top of the hierarchy and choose a less effective safeguard only when the more effective solution is impracticable. However, the type of safeguarding chosen must always be appropriate for the level of risk.

- Provide workers with the supervision necessary to ensure their health and safety when operating machines.
- Instruct workers to report any unsafe acts or conditions. Take corrective action without delay.
- Follow the employer's established safe work procedures

SAFER Conference Held At Truck Loggers Convention



USW District 3 HSE Coordinator Ron Corbeil (far right) and SAFER (Safety Advisory Foundation for Education and Research) Council co-chair introduces panelists who made suggestions on what needs to be done to improve health and safety in the forest industry. L to R Reynold Hert, former CEO Western Forest products, Tom Bailey, WorkSafe BC, Monty Hussey, Truck Loggers

Association and USW District 3 Director, Steve Hunt. Workshops at the conference included: human factors in accident investigations,



Conference participants work on an investigation

effective health and safety committees and a presentation on dangerous and physically demanding work. The research is a by-product of a Letter of Understanding between the USW and Forest Industrial Relations after the bitter 13 week strike of



Doug Mosher a Registered Professional Forester and a past co-chairperson of SAFER and Al Lundgren a past local union safety council member presented their findings on dangerous and physically demanding work

2007 which saw over 6,000 Coastal workers walk out largely over the issue of alternate shift scheduling and its impacts on physically demanding and dangerous work.

Former local 1-80 activist Al Lundgren said he was surprised that nearly one-third of workers surveyed have not been given written safe-work procedures.

"We've got a lot of work to do in this area as people are being put at risk," he said.

Twenty-six percent said they have been asked to perform "unsafe work" while 11 per cent said they did not know.

While surveying 17 jobs categories for both hourly and salaried employees, the survey noted the workers report a jump in both physical and mental stress after 9 hours and a definite increase in stress during alternate shift arrangements.