



SafeTalk



ISSUE: SPRING 2017

April 28, 2017 Day of Mourning

“Fight for the Living, Mourn for the Dead”

Dying isn't part of the job. Exercise your right to come home alive - take time on April 28th to Mourn for the Dead, but commit to help yourself and others by Fighting for the Living everyday.

More than 1,000 workers each year are killed at work, but police and prosecutors are not utilizing the Westray amendments that hold corporations, their directors and executives criminally accountable for the health and safety of workers.

Check with your local Federation of Labour for events happening in or near your area.

Each and Every Worker in Canada has Three Basic Rights

THE RIGHT TO KNOW: As a worker, you have the legal right to know about all hazards and dangers in your workplace and how they can affect you, including unsafe machinery or hazardous working conditions (like a greasy, slippery floor). An important way to exercise your right to know is through WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System). This Canada-wide system provides information to users of hazardous materials by means of: warning labels on containers, Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), and worker training on how to use this information. WHMIS sets out six classes of chemicals: compressed gas; flammable and combustible material; oxidizing material; poisonous and infectious material; corrosive material; and dangerously reactive material. Each class has an identifying hazard symbol. As a worker you must trained on procedures for safe handling, storage and disposal of the hazardous materials used or made in the workplace and emergency procedures to follow for all situations involving hazardous materials.

THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE: Workers chosen by other workers, or where there is a union in the workplace by their union, have the right to participate as a worker member of the joint health and safety committee (JHSC) or worker health and safety representative. The joint committee is made up of an equal number of worker and employer representatives. They have the right to inspect the workplace, identify hazards and make recommendations to the employer about training and control measures to name a few. By law, the employer must respond to the joint committee's recommendations within a specified time. You don't have to be a member of the joint health and safety committee to exercise your right to participate. There are many ways to help. You can create awareness by helping to organize a Day of Mourning ceremony or Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) Awareness Day event in your school, workplace or community. You can also submit health and safety suggestions to the joint committee. The choice is yours. Just remember participation is a good form of exercise.

THE RIGHT TO REFUSE: Perhaps the most important tool to ensure your health and safety is your worker right to refuse unsafe work you believe could endanger you. By law, you cannot be fired for refusing unsafe work, but if you refuse to work, you must follow specific procedures. These procedures can be found on special "work refusal" cards provided by the Steelworkers union or by visiting the websites of the Steelworkers, Workers Health & Safety Centre or Ministry of Labour



25 YEARS SINCE WESTRAY

2017 marks a sad milestone.

As of May 9th it will be exactly 25 years since the early morning explosion that ripped through the Westray Coal Mine in Pictou County, Nova Scotia, killing an entire shift of 26 men, 11 of whose bodies were never recovered. They remain entombed in the underground wreckage of the mine, now covered by a memorial park where a monument stands as a lasting tribute to all 26

sons, fathers, brothers, uncles and friends. Many of them had signed USW union cards.

As you know, the USW has never stopped fighting for justice for the Westray families, and for the thousands of families across Canada whose loved ones have been killed at work. Since 2004, we have had the Westray Law, which amended the Criminal Code of Canada to hold corporations criminally accountable for causing preventable death and injury on the job.

Today, the struggle continues as we fight to have that law better enforced across the country. Too many employers still get away with practices and negligence that result in workers being killed. Thanks to our activists, we will never give up.

www.stopthekilling.ca/

When your contract comes up for Bargaining, we ask you to make obtaining better Health, Safety and Environment Language a priority.

We shouldn't accept minimums for Safety. Some of the things we can bargain on are:

- specific work conditions
- Prep time
- Mental Health language that supports
- Family Benefits continued after a members death
- Union committee time
- Right to Refuse Language

Justice 2017 – National Conference

Calling all: Health and Safety Activists, Environmental Justice Activists, Human Rights Activists and Disability Rights Activists



You're invited to JUSTICE 2017

Our joint national conference on Health, Safety, Environment and Human Rights

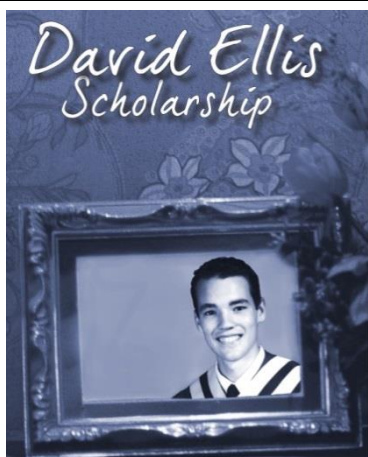
October 2-5, 2017 * Vancouver

Save the dates! Don't miss it!

Join fellow Steelworkers for this exciting four-day combined conference*networking*plenary sessions*inspiring speakers*productive workshops

Plan to send members of your local.

Online registration: <http://www.usw.ca/events/justice2017>



Why do we remember David Ellis -

Every year in Canada, 30 Young workers are killed on the job.

David Ellis was killed on his second day of work.

He was 18.

Every year in Canada 30 young workers are killed on the job. Another 40,000 are injured, many of them seriously.

David Ellis didn't get the chance to fulfil his dreams.

But in his memory and in honour of all the other young workers killed or injured on the job—the United Steelworkers is making sure young workers know the risks and know their rights on the job. And that's why we've established the David Ellis Scholarship for the sons, daughters and grandchildren of any Steelworkers member. The David Ellis Scholarship will make five \$500 scholarships available to selected high school students to help continue their education at university, community college or another educational organization. Submissions can be either a written essay of 750 - 1000 words approximately or get creative and develop your own personal three to five minute health & safety YouTube video. Students may choose between two themes for an essay or video to be posted on 'You Tube':

- **Spreading the word:** How I would make high school students aware of their risks and their rights in the workplace.
- **How to be a workplace survivor:** My personal experience with health and safety on the job.

Full details on how to submit entries are included in the pamphlet. <http://www.usw.ca/members/scholarships/david-ellis>

The deadline for submissions is June 30, 2017.

New Worker Awareness Program

The United Steelworkers is the health and safety union. Many workplace injuries and illnesses happen because a worker is new to a job and unaware of the hazards. Most injuries happen to new workers in their first three months on the job. Help new and young workers by sharing your knowledge and experience.

By law, your employer is responsible for your health and safety.

Employers must:

- Prevent hazards.
- Eliminate dangerous conditions.
- Provide training.

Top 5 causes of injury:

- Slipping and falling
- Over-exertion
- Being struck by an object
- Suffering toxic effects from chemicals
- Burns

HANG UP ON ABUSE

Our Mission: Make Life Better For Call Centre Workers

We know firsthand what it is like to be on the other side of the phone, how dehumanizing it can be, the lack of support from management and the stress this abuse causes. You are not alone. [We are fellow call centre workers](#) and together we are holding employers accountable for ensuring that you have the power to stop taking abuse at work.

We are calling on all Canadian call centre employers to adopt the Hang Up on Abuse Policy, empowering their workers to end or pass on abusive calls - without fear of losing their jobs.

HANG UP ON ABUSE POLICY

- Give call centre workers the ability to hang up on abusive calls.
- Train managers on how to support call centre workers who had a bad client.
- Issue a warning and flag callers who have a history of harassing staff.
- Deny repeat abusers use of your service.
- Create a zero tolerance policy that reports all violent and/or sexual threats to the police.
- Ensure that there will be no retribution against or disciplining of call centre workers who report abuse.

To sign the petition go to:

<http://www.hanguponabuse.ca/petition>

HAZARD ALERT

A Young Worker Tragedy - Eighteen-year old college student Lindsay Santos worked at the West Fraser Sawmill in northern B.C. She was sweeping up the planer (equipment used to dress or size rough-sawed lumber) when the broom handle caught in a conveyer belt, pulling Lindsay towards open rollers. Frantic efforts to revive her were too late. Lindsay Santos died just days after returning to college.

Learning from Tragedy through the USW's New Worker Awareness Program:

"I knew absolutely nothing about health and safety. When the Steelworkers came into our Careers classroom and did a presentation on it, I was astonished that something like this happened in the workplace and that it could happen to me one day."