



April 28: National Day of Mourning for workers killed and injured on the job

April 25, 2013

On April 28, workers and their families are invited to pay tribute to those who have been injured or killed on the job, or stricken with occupational disease.

Every day in Canada, three workers are killed on the job and 685 workers suffer work-related injuries or occupational diseases. Last year in British Columbia, 181 workers died as a result of workplace accidents or diseases and more than 17,000 BC workers were injured.

Increasing injury rates for health workers

According to WorkSafeBC, the total number of workplace injury claims in BC has declined by about 15 per cent over the past 10 years. In the health sector, however, over the same period of time, injury claims have increased by nearly 20 per cent – from 4600 claims in 2002 to more than 5500 health sector injury claims received by WorkSafeBC in 2011.

HSA President Reid Johnson said injury and fatality rates in BC continue to be far too high. "On the Day of Mourning, we honour workers who have died -- and we re-commit to the fight to improve workplace health and safety," he said.

Earlier this month, at HSAs annual convention, Johnson presented an occupational health and safety award commemorating a union member killed on the job.

"HSA member David Bland was a vocational counsellor who worked at Richmond Mental Health Services," he said. "At the end of an otherwise ordinary workday in January of 2005, as David left his workplace and walked to his car, a former client was waiting in the parking lot -- and murdered David.

"The events of that day sent shockwaves throughout health care and social services, and exposed the reality of our work," he said. "Ever since, in David's memory, the union has presented an award to honour the important work that union members and stewards undertake as advocates for their colleagues in ensuring we all work in a safe environment," he said.

The union awarded this year's [David Bland Memorial Award](#) to Larry Bryan, a Registered Psychiatric Nurse at Haro Park Centre in Vancouver.

Larry recognized the role of worker education in reducing injuries caused by violence and became an active contributor in the development of a province wide anti violence curriculum that is now used across the province in all Health Authorities.

Attend an event in your area

On April 28, 2013 we observe the National Day of Mourning for workers killed or injured on the job. Plan to attend a ceremony in your area.

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[History of the Day of Mourning](#)

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