

April 14, 2015

## National Day of Mourning – April 28, 2015

April 28 is recognized as a National Day of Mourning to remember workers who have been injured or killed on the job. This annual event was initiated by the labour movement 31 years ago to increase awareness of on-the-job injuries and fatal workplace accidents. This day of remembrance was officially recognized by the Canadian government more than 8 years after it was adopted, in 1985, by the Canadian Labour Congress.

While it is now recognized in over 80 countries, including Canada, and is observed each year, the National Day of Mourning has not yet improved workers' safety. While a number of Canadian legislative provisions dealing with occupational health and safety are considered a model internationally, most Canadian governments have not provided the necessary resources to ensure they are applied. Over the past year, we have seen a marked erosion of the occupational health and safety provisions at the federal level.

The numbers speak for themselves. In 2014, 902 workplace deaths were reported in Canada, slightly less than in 2013, when 977 workplace deaths occurred. This is still 2.47 deaths per day. Statistics published by the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada for 1993 to 2014 show that, during this 21-year period, more than 18,941 people died as a result of a workplace accident, i.e. an average of 902 deaths per year. In 2014, there were also 241,933 workplace injuries severe enough to force people to stop working, slightly less than in 2013. All employers are to blame. However, no workplace deaths occurred at Canada Post in the past year. Nevertheless, let's do our best to always remember those workers who have died in the past and the suffering of those they left behind.

On April 28, let us all take time to remember those who died or were killed by a workplace accident or illness. We must all commit to continuing the struggle to force employers and governments to fulfill their obligation and make every workplace a safe and healthy one. We must also continue seeking stronger health and safety protection and standards, and better enforcement in our workplaces.

On Tuesday, April 28, the Union is asking you to observe a minute of silence in your workplace to remember our sisters and brothers who have died as a result of workplace injuries or illnesses.

*An injury to one is an injury to all.*

In Solidarity,

Serge Champoux  
National Union Representative  
Health and Safety

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