



# SafeTalk



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## Four Recent Forestry Fatalities in BC Prompt Forest Sector Meeting



USW Local 1-1937 president Brian Butler, left and local safety director Jack Miller investigate the incident that took the life of local 1-1937 member Jeremy Tanaka near Holberg BC. This is one of four forestry fatalities that occurred in the month of July prompting a stakeholder meeting

As a result of the four fatalities in July, 23 forest sector representatives and 13 representatives from WorkSafeBC got together to look at initiatives to prevent further fatalities. As a result WorkSafeBC committed to be moving forward with the following ideas that were suggested during the meeting:

### 1. Face to Face Meetings

WorkSafeBC will schedule face-to-face meetings with the forestry sector every year (with a format similar to the Aug. 6th meeting). We will schedule four of these meeting each year; two with Harvesting and two with Manufacturing. WorkSafeBC's senior staff will attend.

These meetings will be an opportunity to talk candidly about what is working and what is not. The attendees will be there to listen, share information, and exchange ideas with the objective of working together collaboratively to make working in the forests safer for all workers.

### 2. Toolkit for Harvesting Sector

WorkSafeBC will create a "toolkit" resource for the Harvesting sector focused on the Right to Refuse Unsafe Work. This toolkit will be distributed to the BCFSC, forestry employers, and the Steelworkers with the intent that it be used during JOSH committee meetings or at workplace tailgate meetings – wherever this important message can best be communicated widely. We will also look to industry partners and employer associations to help to ensure that these resources are as widely distributed as possible and that the message is conveyed to workers with the visible support of employers.

Continued next page

## Coming Events

September 8 Emergency Preparedness BCFED, Cranbrook, BC

September 9 - 10 Local 7619 USW Level 2, Kamloops BC

September 9 - 11 SFL Health & Safety Conference, Saskatoon Sask.

September 18 Women's H&S in the Workplace BCFED, Kitimat, BC

## Workers Overcome by Gases at Paper Mill, 7 die, in China's Latest Industrial Accident

The Associated Press

BEIJING, China – Workers were overcome with toxic gas from a paper mill's waste pool and seven of them died, authorities said Saturday, in China's latest deadly accident involving dangerous chemicals.

A worker who was cleaning the pool filled with pulp paper waste fell in and his co-workers rushed to help but were overcome with the noxious gas themselves, a statement from the Anxiang county government in Hunan province said. Seven workers died and two were injured.

The statement on Friday's accident didn't say what type of toxic gas was involved.

Separately, firefighters and environmental response crews were rushing to clean up about 15 tons of sulfuric acid spilled early Saturday from a crashed tanker truck in the eastern province of Zhejiang.

The driver and a passenger in the truck were killed when it veered off the road into farm land near the resort city of Hangzhou and about 10 kilometres (6 miles) from major waterways.

The pair of incidents follows China's worst industrial accident in recent years, a massive explosion at a warehouse storing toxic chemicals in the port of Tianjin that killed at least 147. Police have arrested 11 local officials and company executives in that incident along with a dozen employees of the firm involved. Nationwide safety checks were ordered after the Aug. 12 disaster, focusing especially on the storage of dangerous chemicals.

All the government officials are accused of dereliction of duty and abusing their positions, pointing to major gaps in China's regulation of industrial safety and management of toxic substances.

Investigators are looking into how the Tianjin warehouse gained permission to handle sodium cyanide and other dangerous chemicals despite being located inside a legally-mandated 1,000-meter (1,000-yard) buffer zone from homes and roads. The investigation has also found that the warehouse was storing vastly more chemicals than it was equipped to handle and had kept some in a loading zone rather than storing them securely.

Another worker was killed and nine injured in an explosion at a chemical plant in the eastern city of Zibo on Aug. 22.

# HAZARD ALERT

## Awareness and Control of Static Electricity

Industrial and manufacturing processes can generate and store static electricity (also known as electrostatic energy). In a flammable or explosive atmosphere, a discharge of static electricity can become an ignition source. A fire or explosion resulting from such a discharge could have devastating consequences for your workers and your business.



A worker was draining paint and residue from an aerosol can into a drum when an explosion occurred. The worker was badly burned. The equipment was not bonded and grounded, and static electricity may have ignited flammable gases and vapours.

### How to recognize the hazard

Static electricity is an electric charge generated when two surfaces in close proximity are moved relative to each other. Common scenarios where static electricity can be generated in industrial and manufacturing operations include:

- Liquid flowing through a hose or pipe (or its opening)
- Containers being filled with liquids
- Liquids being mixed or blended
- Sprays or coatings being applied
- Dust being conveyed in a pneumatic tube
- Non-conductive material moving across rollers

### How to control static electricity

#### Bonding and grounding

Good installation practices to safely discharge static electricity involve bonding and then grounding the conductive equipment that produces static electricity.

Bonding means permanently or temporarily joining all metal parts together. This helps keep the bonded objects at the same level of potential energy, eliminating the risk of static sparks between them.

Grounding means establishing a conductive path between a bonded object and the earth. The conductive path to the earth discharges the built-up static electricity to ground.

[For more information](#)

## Guilty Verdicts in Fatal Scaffolding Collapse

The Canadian Press

A project manager who oversaw a construction crew involved in a fatal scaffolding collapse in 2009 was convicted Friday in the deaths of four workers under his charge.

An Ontario Superior Court judge found Vadim Kazenelson guilty of four counts of criminal negligence causing death and one count of criminal negligence causing bodily harm.

Kazenelson was aware that fall protections were not in place, but he nevertheless allowed his workers to board the swing stage, the judge said.

"In his failure to act, he showed wanton and reckless disregard," Judge Ian MacDonnell said.

Kazenelson sat quietly as his judgment was delivered. Family members of the victims gave each other sombre high-fives and pats on the back as they left the courtroom Friday.

The crew was 13 storeys up when the stage split in two on Christmas Eve in 2009. Kazenelson managed to hold onto a 13th-floor balcony but five men plummeted to the ground. Four died and one suffered serious injuries, while another worker -- the only one properly secured to a safety lifeline -- was left suspended in mid-air.

That worker, Shohruh Tojiddinov, testified Kazenelson didn't insist crew members be attached to lifelines.

He also said Kazenelson asked him to lie about the incident afterward.

Aleksandr Bondarevs, Aleksey Blumberg, Vladimir Korostin and site supervisor Fayzullo Fazilov fell 13 floors to their deaths. The men ranged from 25 to 40 years old and were from Latvia, Uzbekistan and Ukraine.

The construction company involved in the case, Metron Construction Corp., pleaded to criminal negligence causing death and was eventually fined \$750,000 plus a victim surcharge -- the first time in Ontario that the Criminal Code had been used to hold a company responsible for a worker's death.

The company that supplied the swing stage, Ottawa-based Swing N Scaff Inc., was fined \$350,000 for failing to ensure the platform was in good condition. [Kazenelson Decision](#)

Continued from page 1

#### 3. FallSafe Presentations/Meetings

WorkSafeBC will begin work on re-activating and revising the FallSafe presentation/meetings (originally offered in 2003). These meetings will be offered throughout the province and will focus on critical issues and significant concerns around faller and related worker health and safety.

#### 4. Focus Groups

WorkSafeBC will facilitate a number of focus groups over the next year with fallers and supervisors in the logging sector -- with the goal of getting a better understanding of the safety culture and the critical industry safety issues from the perspective of the workers. What we learn will be shared with all stakeholders.