



# SafeTalk



## USW Local 1944 in H&S Training



As part of the merger agreement between the TWU and the USW there was a commitment to train 75 TWU health and safety committee Co-Chairs. Recently 15 Local 1944 members attended a 3 day workshop at the local 1-423 office in Kelowna

The newly formed Local 1944 (the year the TWU was formed) puts a huge emphasis on the health and safety of their members as witnessed in the negotiating of training for health and safety co-chairs in the merger agreement between the then TWU and the USW. Local 1944 members, who all work for Telus, participated in a number of subjects such as identifying hazards (below) through hazard mapping.

Other topics covered were:

- The Committee's Role
- Attitudes on H&S
- Hazard Identification
- Hazard Controls
- Legislation and Regulations
- Accident Investigation
- Meeting with Management
- Strategizing for Change



Local 480's Gord Menelaws shared with the group his years of knowledge

Thanks to Dave DiMaria, Bruce Kennedy, Gord Menelaws, Ron Corbeil and Local 1-423 president Pat McGregor for helping to ensure the workshop was successful.



## Coming Events

November 16-17 USW H&S Level 1, Winnipeg, MB

November 23-24 MFL Health and Safety Conference, Winnipeg, MB

## John Phare Awarded B.C.'s First Citizenship Medal



John's fiancée, Kimi Hawkes, accepted the medal at a ceremony at the B.C. legislature from Premier Christy Clark.

Local 1-1937 member John Phare, who died fighting wildfire on British Columbia's Sunshine Coast last July, has been named the first recipient of the province's Medal of Good Citizenship. Premier Christy Clark said that 60-year-old John Phare exemplifies the purpose of the new medal, which recognizes exemplary contributions to community life.

John's fiancée, Kimi Hawkes said "It was an honour to receive this, it's a very special way to remember John and I think that I, and his friends and the community, really appreciate this and really take it to heart."

## Halloween Safety Tips for Parents

- Add bright to their fright. No matter what children dress up as this Halloween, they also need to dress to be seen. Include something bright on their outfit or add some reflective tape to their costume so they are visible to drivers when trick-or-treating.
- Check little monsters' masks. The best costumes don't obscure the vision of little ghosts and goblins. Try on your child's mask ahead of time to check visibility. If you can't see out of it, modify it or find another way to complete the costume.
- Gather ghouls together. Walk in groups to help drivers and others see you and your children. Be sure to have an appropriate number of adults to accompany the children.
- Create a candy route. If your children will be trick-or-treating without you, go over their route with them before they go out. Choose one that avoids busy streets and remind them to only cross the street at designated crossing points.....[More](#)

## HAZARD ALERT

**Injury Type:** Headache, difficulty breathing, sore throat, respiratory irritation, dizziness (13 workers)

**Core Activity:** Vegetable farming / Farm labour supply / Greenhouse

Thirteen workers, including one young worker, told first aid that they were having difficulty breathing, had sore throats, and respiratory irritation. The employer was using a helicopter to spray the greenhouse roof with a dilute sodium hydroxide solution. Spraying operations were suspended when the workers' respiratory irritation was reported.

**Injury Type:** Serious burns

**Core Activity:** Log hauling

A log transport truck experienced mechanical difficulties while driving up a steep hill on a main highway. The truck quit running, and the driver got out to investigate the cause. While he was investigating, a flash fire occurred, apparently after he removed the diesel tank fuel cap. The driver sustained serious burns.

**Injury Type:** Fatal

**Core Activity:** Cable or hi-lead logging

A skidder operator had exited a skidder on the uphill side of the machine. Above him, a runaway log about 5 inches in diameter and 40 feet long was dislodged during a cable yarding operation from a harvest area with a 75 percent slope. The log struck and fatally injured the worker.

**Injury Type:** Close call

**Core Activity:** Sawmill

During sawmill operations, a fire occurred in the sawdust/shavings bunker. No injuries occurred as a result of the fire.

**Injury Type:** Bruising and lacerations; possible upper-body fractures

**Core Activity:** Veneer or plywood manufacture

While a plywood press was travelling up through its cycle, the operator reached between the middle and bottom guardrails to adjust a swamp cooler that had been secured to the outside of the railing. While his torso was outside of the railing, the worker was caught between the guardrail and a structural beam and wall. The machine travelled to the top of its cycle dragging the worker between the wall and the guardrail.

**Injury Type:** Exposure to unknown airborne chemical (11 workers)

**Core Activity:** Modular or prefabricated building manufacture  
Eleven workers, including five young workers, were transported to hospital by ambulance following an exposure to an unknown airborne chemical. The workers were released from hospital the same day.

**Injury Type:** Fractured vertebrae

**Core Activity:** Bridge, overpass, or viaduct construction or repair  
A young worker was setting decking material on a forestry bridge under construction. While walking backwards, the worker fell off the open end panel of the bridge to a rocky creek 18 feet below.

## Personal Coping Not the Solution for Deadly Work-related Stress, Says New Study

Workplace stressors increase health risks to the same extent as second hand smoke and yet employers are not targeting their prevention, according to a recent study.

Researchers from the Harvard Business School and Stanford University who performed this scientific review of more than 200 studies found that job insecurity, long working hours, job control and other workplace stressors can damage workers health and even lead to death. Specific examples cited included:

- long work hours increased the chance of early death by 20 per cent,
- high job demands raise the odds of having a physician-diagnosed illness by 35 per cent, and
- job insecurity increased the odds of reporting poor health by 50 per cent.

Anxiety, sleep disorders, depression and other mental illnesses/injuries are just a few examples of illness and poor health caused by stress. Research also suggests stress is a significant contributing factor to other health impacts ranging from the common cold and musculoskeletal disorders to heart disease and cancer.

In this report, entitled "Workplace Stressors and Health Outcomes: Health Policy for the Workplace", the authors' note many employers continue to focus almost exclusively on behavioural lifestyle and health choices as a means of coping with stress. Little attention, they say, is paid to prevention through identifying and eliminating workplace causes of stress. "Wellness programs are great at doing what they're designed to do. But they're targeting employee behavior, not targeting the cause of stress," says Joel Goh, co-author of the report and assistant professor, business administration, Harvard Business School. "There are two sides of the equation and right now we focus on one side. We're trying to call attention to the other side [of the equation], which is the effect of managerial practices." The researchers offered insight in terms of workplace stress prevention including job redesigns that limit work hours, reducing unpredictable work hours and shift work, along with the use of flexible work schedules designed to help achieve a better work-life balance.

Further recommendations highlight the need for government regulatory action addressing work stressors. They also cite non-regulatory efforts to help raise awareness among employers and workers about the link between workplace stressors and health impacts to help further prompt prevention efforts. They referenced current European Union efforts through the European Framework Agreement on Work-Related Stress.

In conclusion, the researchers suggest "Unless and until companies and governments more rigorously measure and intervene to reduce harmful workplace stressors, efforts to improve people's health—and lives—and reduce health care costs will be limited in their effectiveness."

[Measure Workplace Stress App](#)

