April 26, 2024 |

Releases

The Day of Mourning is about action as well as remembrance: BCFED

The BC Federation of Labour released the following statement on the Day of Mourning for Persons Killed or Injured in the Workplace:

> April 28 is about grief and remembering — honouring the workers we've lost, or who've been made sick or been injured, because of the work they do.
>
> The pain of a single death is overwhelming: the loss of a parent, friend, co-worker, sibling or adult child. How, then, can we endure the loss of the 201 workers who died last year simply because of their jobs? And why does that number stay so stubbornly high?
>
> Workers face a rising tide of dangers in the workplace beyond those that come to mind when we think of occupational health and safety: the drug poisoning crisis; climate disruptions that subject workplaces and communities to wildfire smoke, heat wave and flooding; an epidemic of workplace violence; and ongoing dangers to workers' psychological health and safety.
>
> So while this is a day of grieving and remembrance, it must also be a day of resolution and action.
>
> Thankfully, we have a foundation of important recent progress to build on. The BC government has taken important steps such as licensing and regulating employers whose workers handle

asbestos — still the leading workplace killer — and making long-awaited changes to Workers' Compensation, such as new legislation requiring employers to accommodate an injured worker's return to work.

That progress also includes measures like trades certification — a well-trained workforce is closely related with a safer workplace — and paid sick leave, keeping our workplaces freer of contagious disease.

But we must keep pushing forward. We must increase prevention and enforcement, ensuring employers are accountable for the safety of their workplaces. We must treat psychological injury with the same dignity and standards that we do physical injury. We need standards and worker protection that reflect the dangers of our changing climate, and we must address workplace violence.

So today, let's commit ourselves to that action, with the urgency that this crisis of worker death and injury demands of all of us. Let's be bold in both speed and scope of action.

That is how we remember the dead, and fight — with all our will and resources — for the living.