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Releases

On-the-job deaths of two Okanagan workers a sign government, employers need to do more to make workplaces safe

Vancouver - The BC Federation of Labour is renewing its call for the BC government to make workplaces safer after two more workers were killed in fatal incidents at Okanagan timber facilities in the past five days.

On Friday, a worker at a log sorting facility in Lumby was killed on the job. Yesterday, an employee at a mill in Kelowna also died in a workplace accident. The RCMP and Workers' Compensation Board are investigating both tragedies.

"We extend our condolences to the family, friends and co-workers of the two workers who died on the job," says Lanzinger.

"All workers must enjoy the basic right to be safe on the job and to come home safely to their families at the end of their shift. But these two deaths—along with a third involving a Victoria construction workers two weeks ago—are a sign that more needs to be done to protect workers," she says.

"Our view is that government and employers aren't doing enough to keep workers safe on the job," Lanzinger says. "Health and safety protections are weak and not always rigorously enforced. Worker safety is being compromised. Injured workers aren't fairly compensated, and employers whose

negligence kills or seriously injures workers are let off with a slap on the wrist.”

Lanzinger says the BCFED will continue to press the provincial government and Opposition NDP for more stringent laws and rules, more frequent workplace safety inspections, tougher enforcement, more stringent penalties for employers who commit violations, and for greater balance and fairness at the WCB.