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Statements

Statement on the workplace death of 3 workers in Fernie

Vancouver – The following is a statement from Irene Lanzinger, president of the BC Federation of Labour, regarding the workplace death of 3 workers in Fernie:

“Today our thoughts are with the families, friends and community of the three workers who were killed yesterday while working at an ice rink in Fernie.

While information is still being gathered on what happened, it is my expectation that the Workers’ Compensation Board will spare no resource in carrying out a comprehensive investigation to determine the cause of the leak and why safety measures did not prevent these fatalities. We expect the RCMP to perform a thorough investigation to determine whether criminal negligence was a factor in this tragedy.

In our view, every workplace accident and death is preventable.

The health and safety of workers must be paramount at every workplace. And if health and safety regulatory requirements are ignored or poorly implemented, there must be serious, even criminal, consequences.

Further, the WCB must increase their enforcement of workplace health and safety protections and training for workers and employers. Prevention is the only way to end workplace injuries and fatalities.

We look forward to working with the government and the Workers' Compensation Board to improve workplace health and safety to ensure that everyone goes home from work healthy and safe."