

# Safety Buzz. . . . .



## SEIU-West Worker Safety Committee Newsletter

March 2010

### APRIL 28<sup>th</sup>

#### National Day of Mourning

April 28<sup>th</sup>, has been designated as the Day of Mourning across Canada. There are now 20 countries that have designated April 28<sup>th</sup> for this very important occasion.

The Day of Mourning serves the prime purpose for which it was instituted: to create safer workplaces so workers can end their working lives in dignity and health – not premature death, disease and disfigurement.

Please watch for posters and plan to recognize April 28<sup>th</sup> in your facility. There are various ways to commemorate this, if you have something planned please let us know. As well, look for events in your community. Check with your Labour Council, as they may be planning an event.

#### Bob Sass Award

In the next month or so, the SFL OH&S Committee will be sending out the call for nominations for the 'Bob Sass' Safe Worker Award. This is an award that is presented annually to a union member or representative that has made a significant contribution to the health and safety of workers. Do you know a SEIU-West member that fits this description? Please watch for posters and get your nominations in!

### DID YOU KNOW?

*The significance of the canary in a cage... Early coal mines did not feature ventilation systems, so miners would routinely bring a caged canary into new coal seams. Canaries are especially sensitive to methane and carbon monoxide and this made them ideal for detecting any dangerous gas build-ups. As long as the canary in a coal mine kept singing, the miners knew their air supply was safe. A dead canary in a coal mine signalled an immediate evacuation.*

### OH&S COMMITTEES

Did you know that SEIU-West members on these committees are to be selected by their union peers at a Unit meeting?

**OH&S Act** Part III, section 15, 4 b) *has been appointed from the place of employment in accordance with the constitution of the Trade Union of which the workers are members;*

Being active on your committee is a vital part of the health and safety of yourself and your co-workers. Although, it is a huge responsibility, it is important to remain on the side of workers and fight to keep our workplaces safe. **Thanks** to all the SEIU West members on committees.

## **RIGHT TO KNOW**

- the safety hazards at work
- the precautions needed to reduce or eliminate the hazard
- all safety training

## **RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE**

- in the day-to-day detection, evaluation and reduction of workplace hazards
- on your Occupational Health and Safety Committee, as elected by your peers or appointed by your trade union

## **RIGHT TO REFUSE**

- unsafe or unusually dangerous work without fear of repercussions

## **The Green Corner**

Did you know that wasting water contributes to green house gases? When you waste water you are using electricity, chemicals (both in treating the water coming in and the waste water you are producing) and in fuel and labour to get the treatment chemicals to your town. Try to do one thing each day that will result in a savings of water. Don't worry if the savings are minimal. Every drop counts and every person can make a difference.

Here are a few tips that we can all use to reduce our water waste:

The first is to store your drinking water in the refrigerator rather than letting the tap run every time you want a cool glass of water.

Install a low-flow faucet aerator in the kitchen, this can cut water use in half.

Don't use running water to thaw meat or other frozen foods.

Defrost food overnight in the refrigerator or by using the defrost setting on your microwave.

Fill the sink or a pan with water to wash fruits and vegetables.

Only operate your automatic dishwashers and clothes washers when they are fully loaded or at

least properly set the water level for the size of load you are using.

Don't let the water run while shaving or washing your face.

Brush your teeth first while waiting for water to get hot, then wash or shave after half filling your sink.

Take a five-minute shower, rather than a bath.

Install a low-flow showerhead. It can save about half the amount of water you typically use in the shower, while still providing a refreshing, cleansing shower.

Make sure your faucets are in good working order, repair dripping ones by replacing washers. If your faucet is dripping at the rate of one drop per second, you can expect to waste over 12,000 litres per year, even at 10 drops per minute you can expect to waste 2400 litres in a year.

We should all conserve water because it is the right thing to do. Don't waste water just because someone else is footing the bill such as when you are staying at a hotel.

Create an awareness of the need for water conservation among your children. After all, it is the water we save today that they will use tomorrow.

### **Websites to check out:**

[www.ccohs.ca](http://www.ccohs.ca) (online newsletter)

[www.sfl.sk.ca](http://www.sfl.sk.ca)

[www.seiuwest.ca](http://www.seiuwest.ca) (Worker's Safety link)



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