



SafeTalk



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SAWMILL DISASTER IN BURNS LAKE



The blast killed two members of Local 1-424, Carl Charlie age 42 and Robert Luggi age 45 and injured another 19 workers.

People across British Columbia are in shock following an explosion at the Babine Forest Products sawmill in Burns Lake. "We express the deepest solidarity with those who have been injured, their families and all the workers of Babine Forest Products, as well as for the community. We offer our deep condolences to those families who may have lost loved ones," said United Steelworkers Western Canada director Steve Hunt. Workers at Babine Forest Products are members of Steelworkers Local 1-424. "During this difficult time all members of our union are coming together to offer their full support to our brothers and sisters at Babine Forest Products," Hunt added.

Local 1-424 represents employees at Babine Forest Products and is offering support to families of injured workers to ensure they can be there while they receive medical care in hospital. Two workers were killed and several were flown to hospitals in Vancouver, Prince George, Edmonton and Victoria following the explosion.

Steelworkers immediately dispatched an Emergency Response Team to Burns Lake. The union's ERT coordinator Al McDougall is in Burns Lake this week to provide assistance and support to Babine Forest Products workers, their families, and the local community. Police are currently still investigating the site.

The mill is about 220 kilometres west of Prince George and employs about 250 people. The explosion and fire occurred on Friday evening. The facility is jointly owned by Burns Lake Native Development Corp. and Hampton Affiliates, a forest-products company based in Portland, Oregon.

The USW has launched a fundraising campaign and the creation of a trust account to provide support to the workers of Babine Forest Products and their families.

"Since the tragedy at Babine Forest Products, we have been inundated with offers of support and assistance from other unions

Coming Events

January 25-26 USW Local 7619 Level 2 H&S, Kamloops BC

January 30-31 USW Local 7619 Level 2 H&S, Kamloops BC

January 31 USW Local 1-423 Investigation Workshop, Kelowna BC

and union members all over the province and right across the country. The labour movement is a family, and union members join all British Columbians in mourning the loss of life and injuries to our brothers and sisters in Burns Lake," says Steve Hunt, USW Director for Western Canada.

"At the very heart of the labour movement is the notion of solidarity. Simply put, it means that when you're a union member, you'll never walk alone. And we are sending that message to the workers at Babine Forest Products, to their families and to the community of Burns Lake; we will stand with you, we will support you and you will not have to face this alone," Hunt says.

There are several ways to make a donation payable to the "USW Burns Lake Fund".

To donate in person:

Attend any branch of Community Savings Credit Union:

5108 Joyce Street, Vancouver B.C.

1188 8th Avenue, New Westminster, B.C.

#900-7380 King George Blvd, Surrey, B.C.

#100-1125 Nicola Avenue, Port Coquitlam, B.C.

#205-4333 Ledger Avenue, Burnaby, B.C.

#103-2750 Quadra Street, Victoria, B.C.

or

Drop off a sealed envelope containing your cheque at any B.C. credit union addressed to:

Community Savings Credit Union, 5108 Joyce Street, Vancouver B.C. V5R 4H1, Transit #11740

To donate by mail:

Community Savings Credit Union, 5108 Joyce Street, Vancouver, B.C. V5R 4H1

Or

USW District 3 Office, #300-3920 Norland Avenue, Burnaby, B.C. V5G 4K7

Fatality 4th in less than a year at Vale mines

Vale's general manager for Ontario says operations at all five mines in the Sudbury area will be suspended indefinitely while the death of a miner — 47-year-old Stephen Perry — is investigated.

Kelly Strong said this is the first time he can remember this happening in his 11 years with company. The move affects close to 1,600 workers.

The president of the Steelworkers union local in Sudbury is calling Sunday's mining fatality "unacceptable."

Perry was killed January 29th while he was underground at Vale's Coleman Mine in Levack, Ont., northwest of Sudbury.

[More](#)

Tribute to Roger Stanyer



Roger Stanyer—July 24, 1944 - Dec. 29, 2011

It is with much regret that we acknowledge the recent passing of Roger Stanyer in Duncan, British Columbia.

Following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather working in BC's forest industry, Roger early on dedicated his life to the improvement of working conditions – whether it was through better health and safety or compensation – for individuals working in the industry. He rose through the ranks of the IWA – now the United Steelworkers – from business agent to ultimately becoming a National Vice-President before being appointed to increasingly senior executive positions in the Governments of Premiers Mike Harcourt, Glen Clark and Dan Miller in the 1990's.

As a reflection of Roger's commitment not only to improved health and safety standards and rules but also to better outcomes for disabled workers, and recognizing the history of frequent fatalities and serious injuries in the industry, was his immediate contribution in 1987 to the development of the video "Every Twelve Seconds", a national documentary chronicling the impact of severe forest industry accidents which focused on five individuals.

His participation in this development marked the beginning of a 25-year professional and personal friendship with Wolfgang Zimmermann, Executive Director, of NIDMAR, highlighted in 1995 when, during his tenure as CEO and Chair of Forest Renewal BC, through his leadership, the FRBC Board of Directors agreed to contribute \$2 million to an endowment fund supporting the then fledgling National Institute of Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR) for which he was a founding member of its International Advisory

Council. This contribution was pivotal in advancing NIDMAR's goals to identify creative, consensus-based strategies, programs and policies designed to reduce the impact of disabling accidents and injuries on workers.

Trevor James and Ken Neumann, NIDMAR's current employer and labour co-chairs, have both had a long-term professional and personal friendship with Roger. "While I used to sit opposite Roger during many negotiating sessions in BC Forest Industry bargaining, and these were invariably often heated and challenging", said Trevor James (a life-long senior HR executive in BC's Forest Industry), "Roger could always be counted on to take a highly disciplined and principled approach to the discussions. I also had the opportunity later on to work with him at FRBC and found him to be a CEO who could easily balance the diverse needs of employers, workers and other stakeholders in the forest industry."

Ken Neumann, Canadian National Director of the United Steelworkers, with whom Roger's union, the IWA, merged a few years ago, had extensive links with Roger in a variety of forums, especially when Ken was Western Director for the Steelworkers. "For both of us representing different parts of the resource sector during often difficult economic times, Roger could always be counted on to defend the interests of his membership in the forest industry with convincing passion, knowledge and vision," emphasized Ken. "I, and many others, have always seen Roger Stanyer as a balanced and committed social democratic leader and his untimely passing reflects not only the loss of a great trade unionist but is an equally great loss for all British Columbians."

Legendary IWA boss, Jack Munro, agreed.

"Roger was a remarkable person," he said of golfer and cowboy-music fan Stanyer, who headed Cowichan's IWA Local 1-80 from 1976 to 1990.

"First and foremost, Roger was a logger who understood how complicated (the industry) can be.

"Roger was really connected to the workers, and was a great spokesman.

"Later, I appointed him vice-president of IWA Canada, and he excelled at it during a tough 1986 strike that ran for 107 days across B.C."

Cowichan MLA, and former 1-80 boss, Bill Routley remembered Stanyer's patience that earned Duncan timber-baron Herb Doman's support in '86.

"Roger was the voice of reason at the table.

"Things got quite interesting but he stood his ground. When in doubt, Roger always said, 'Put it to a (member) ballot.'"

Stanyer was raised in Caycuse's Camp Six, served as IWA's national president, B.C.'s assistant-deputy minister of forests, deputy-minister of labour, and CEO of Forest Renewal B.C. Stanyer always maintained an innate sense of forestry issues among workers and employers, Munro noted.

Routley concurred with Munro

"He said, 'We have only one thing to offer our membership: integrity.'"