

Aware, safe and healthy



By Nate Smelle

ALL OF US HAVE HEARD horror stories from our fellow workers around the lunch table about the dangers they have encountered in the workplace. Many of us have also faced such hazards putting our personal health and safety at risk just to get the job done. It's so important that those of us who are in a dangerous environment whilst at work make use of a [Work health and safety course Melbourne](#) based, or wherever you're located, to prevent an unnecessary injury. Utility and construction workers are examples of workers who have a dangerous job and are at risk most days. After all, not many people need to put on steel toe or composite toe boots each morning as a way to keep themselves safe (find out more at [standingshoes.net](#)). This type of workwear and other safety measures help to keep them safe and avoid trips to the ER. Most of the time these little compromises to our safety come to pass without incident, however, this is not always the case. For those affected by workplace neglect of health and safety, it might be useful to talk to someone similar to a [Las Vegas Workers Compensation Lawyer](#) to have useful legal advice if you decide to legally pursue a case.

Sharing our work experiences with each other makes for more than just an entertaining lunch hour. It also makes for a safer work environment. When we take the time to listen and learn to the mistakes made by our friends and fellow workers, we also make ourselves more aware of the potentially harmful aspects of our employment. From my experience, these discussions always end in one of two ways. Basically the stories of the fortunate end in laughter while the record of the misfortunate end in silence.

Workers gathered in 49 communities across Ontario on April 28 in honour of the women and men injured or killed on the job. Learning of this provincial Day of Mourning I began to think about some of the stories I had heard or told over the years.

Immediately I thought of an old friend of mine named Andy from Niagara. At the time we met Andy worked as a "Steeler" at a factory in Hamilton. Meeting up at the pub after a long day at work or around a campfire on the weekend we would often talk about the struggles and successes of our workweek. On more than one occasion I remember him describing to me in detail the massive weight and power behind many of the machines that surrounded him on a daily basis. A caring father and a generous friend Andy would always be there ready to lend a hand when anyone needed help. An all-around "good guy" if there ever was one.

The last time we crossed paths he was walking with his daughter through a pumpkin patch in Pelham. Smiling, the two held hands as they climbed through the vines searching for the perfect Jack-o-lantern. Recognizing his grin from across the field I went over to say hello. Comparing a few of the pumpkins under consideration we made plans to get together again a few weeks later to celebrate at the annual Grape and Wine Festival in St.Catharines.

Before we could meet up again I received a call informing me that Andy had been killed in an accident at work. While operating the same press he usually worked on, one of the massive machines he had described to me in the past malfunctioned shooting a piece of steel across the room; striking Andy in the head and killing him instantly. Doing his job properly and wearing the safety gear that he

was required to wear there was nothing that he personally could have done differently to prevent this tragedy. What caused the machine that took Andy's life to fail remains an unsolved mystery of the mechanics who serviced it. Now Andy's story serves as a reminder for workers everywhere to stay aware of the potential health and safety hazards that exist in their workplace. It is also a big reminder to businesses that health and safety is important and that perhaps they need to use a [Health & Safety Consultant](#) to ensure their risk assessments, policies, site inspections, and training requirements are all up to standard.