



Workers Health & Safety Centre films

Reclaiming our work, our communities, our health



Can we build an economy that channels our talents in ways that leave our bodies and dignity intact? The following video productions explore this central question? To secure your copy, be sure to contact a WHSC Training Services representative at 1.888.869.7950.

- ✓ Working Green
- ✓ Before Their Time
- ✓ Lessons from Elliot Lake
- ✓ Never Walk Alone
- ✓ They Speak in Whispers
- ✓ The Poison Mist

Working Green

Confronted by a rising tide of disease and disorders, many workers, their unions, scientists, environmentalists, enlightened entrepreneurs and governments are joining forces creating products and services that attempt to do no harm to the earth or its inhabitants. Similarly exciting alliances are mounting all important information campaigns to educate citizens in workplaces and communities about the need for collective action and the heart-breaking consequences of inaction. The best of these go one step further, rekindling our sense of community, with each other and all living things.

Developed as an educational aid for worker health and safety training programs and a very unique set of high school Earth Day presentations, Working Green surveys significant advances in the green economy. Renewable energy co-operatives and their wind turbines, wind-powered public transportation, the 100 per cent recyclable vehicle, innovative waste diversion programs and sustainable building renovation and construction projects – each demonstrates the art of the possible. But our confidence in these seeds for a green economy also grows with the film's profiles of cancer prevention coalitions, efforts to encourage government standards and investment for clean production, courageous policies taken by workers seeking to ensure the transition to a green economy is a fair one, and finally, courageous contributions by individuals who have perhaps suffered most.

Danny Steinke Jr., a 17-year-old Windsor native, is one such individual. His story frames the film at its open and close. His is the embodiment of the double-edged proposition that we need only look inside ourselves to discover both the extent of environmental degradation and our own courage to help make a difference. Diagnosed with leukemia at eight years, Danny now cancer-free, is convinced his suffering came from a childhood spent in the shadow of smoke stacks. Today he is a tireless activist educating his peers, and in fact anyone who will listen, about the links between our health, ecological health, and alternative pursuits that promote both. Danny concludes, "I can see myself working in like a green type of job," he says, "but it's going to take some time." Producers of this film would add, we will achieve our vision for the future when each of us recognizes what's of fundamental importance in our lives. Hopefully, our journey to this truth isn't as painful as Danny's has been.

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TRAINING ▶ **THE RIGHT THING. THE RIGHT WAY.**



Before Their Time

Cancer has become the second leading cause of death for Canadians and is expected to become number one in the next few decades. Just how many of these cancers are caused by hazardous workplace exposures has long been a topic of debate. Never debated though, are the tragic consequences of this disease.

“Before Their Time” is the story of workers and the families of workers afflicted with cancer who believe their disease is caused by the workplace. Through these stories we can begin to appreciate the horror of the disease and how it impacts workers, their families and their communities. We also witness the tremendous determination of workers, their families and other activists to have these diseases recognized by compensation systems and to focus more attention on prevention. The film features testimony from Jim Brophy, Dr. Samuel Epstein, Dr. Peter Infante and Dr. Sandra Steingraber, all leading voices in the field of occupational cancer.

Lessons from Elliot Lake

On April 18, 1974, the uranium miners of Elliot Lake staged a wildcat strike in response to the high incidence of cancer experienced by the miners and the lack of action by the employer. A bold and unprecedented action, it was the first time workers struck specifically for health and safety reasons. “Lessons from Elliot Lake” is the story of how the miners mobilized, won public support and ultimately achieved recognition for their work-related cancers. Their action also sparked debate about health and safety that led to a royal commission on health and safety in the mines and ultimately to the introduction of Ontario’s Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The film features interviews with Homer Seguin, a representative of the United Steelworkers of America, who helped coordinate the miners’ efforts as well as Stephen Lewis and Eli Martel of the New Democratic Party, who were instrumental in forcing the government to act. Activists have much to gain from this historical look at the miners’ and their struggle for change.

Never Walk Alone

This film makes the clear connection between the work of health and safety activists and that of community environmental groups. Documented is the tragedy experienced by former Holmes Foundry workers and their families in Sarnia; the occupation of Ministry of Labour offices by the Widows of Chemical Valley; the struggle to clean up the tar ponds in Sydney, Nova Scotia; and the campaign to stop polluting the harbour in Victoria, British Columbia with sewage.

“Never Walk Alone” shows us how workplace health and safety and a clean environment are two sides of the same coin. It focuses on the need for continued work between these two groups as we struggle to achieve safer and healthier workplaces and communities.

They Speak in Whispers

“They Speak in Whispers” explores the tremendous impact childhood cancer has on the lives of its victims and their families. At the same time, we witness their courage and determination to fight and conquer this horrendous disease. The film also looks at why we are seeing increased rates of childhood cancer. Specifically, it points to workplace and environmental pollution.

Ultimately, “They Speak in Whispers” challenges each of us to promote action to prevent the continued pollution of our workplaces and communities. It challenges us to speak out, not in whispers, but with a collective voice and demand action.

The Poison Mist

Pesticides — they’re designed to kill, injure, repel and neuter living organisms that some have determined to be pests. So what makes us think they are safe for humans?

Some 40 years ago Rachel Carson asked this same question in her groundbreaking book, *Silent Spring*. Today health, safety and environmental activists continue to raise the issue. In support of their efforts the Workers Health and Safety Centre has produced a new film entitled, *Poison Mist – The hazards and consequences of pesticides*. The film is intended to help raise awareness of the hazards of pesticides, their potential impact on the health of exposed workers, families and the environment. The need for a more effective regulatory framework and consideration of safe alternatives are also discussed.

To learn more

visit www.whsc.on.ca or call toll free from anywhere in Ontario **1.888.869.7950**.