

# A mask is not enough!



**NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING  
2020**

**On April 28  
and every day**

**C**oronavirus has emerged as a global threat to worker and public health and safety. It is changing the way we work and live. Let's ensure this change is ultimately for the better.

**Let's take every reasonable precaution  
to prevent worker disability, disease and death**

COVID-19 has laid bare the shocking lack of preparation for this deadly health threat in many of the workplaces that remain open. This is unacceptable.

## **Lessons lost**

Less than 20 years ago Ontario was the epicentre of the SARS outbreak. Health care workers made up almost half of those infected. Two nurses and a doctor died. The independent SARS Commission issued many recommendations the most important being a call to adopt the precautionary principle throughout Ontario's health care, public health and worker safety systems. In other words, do not wait for scientific certainty, or the next inevitable pandemic, before preparing reasonable precautions for workers and others. In some quarters this hard lesson appears lost.

## **Remember and recommit**

This April 28 we will mourn for those who have been killed by the COVID-19 virus. We will not forget the many workers who have suffered or died as a result of other workplace hazards that have been allowed to go unchecked. And we will recommit to the fight for the

living. It is never too late to do the right thing. Physical distancing directives and bans on group gatherings will prevent us from coming together in person this Day of Mourning. But being apart doesn't mean we can't come together. Our collective efforts were never more needed.

## **Engaging workers**

Workers still working outside the safety of their homes need proper physical distancing in the workplace too. Personal hygiene and thorough workplace cleaning must be supported. Joint health and safety committees and worker representatives need to be fully engaged in workplace hazard assessments, exploring prevention measures and more. And when all reasonable precautions have been exhausted, and workers are still put in harm's way, then great care in the selection, training and use of personal protective equipment must be implemented. Workers cannot be left undefended against this deadly virus.

## On April 28

### Let's take action. Consider:

- using digital tools such as to create online communities;
- hosting virtual candlelight vigils;
- posting meaningful photos and messages (including workplace prevention success stories) to social media using relevant hashtags such as #WorkersDayofMourning #StopthePandemicAtWork #MakeWorkSafe; and
- updating our health and safety knowledge through virtual training and webinars.



## Every day of the year

### Let's insist upon:

- Full employer accountability
- Meaningful worker participation
- Properly functioning joint health and safety committees and workplace representatives
- Quality training focused on workplace hazards, not worker behaviours
- Precautionary hazard controls that protect workers, their families and their communities
- Adequate personal protective equipment when and where needed and training in its selection and use
- Robust enforcement of health and safety laws and public health directives.

Download and share our listing of 2020 Day of Mourning virtual events hosted in Ontario communities.

## WORKERS HEALTH & SAFETY CENTRE CAN HELP

We are Ontario's only labour-endorsed, government-designated training centre.

We help ensure you get the training you need — hazard-based, prevention-focused, worker-to-worker — where and when you need it.

Share your health and safety experiences at [#MakeWorkSafe](#).



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## TRAINING

► THE RIGHT THING. THE RIGHT WAY.



Follow us on social media for news about occupational health and safety in Ontario and tips on how to keep your workplace safe.

