



GOOD NEWS:

# CAREER REDEFINED THROUGH HARD WORK AND DETERMINATION

A positive attitude is as essential to any return-to-work action plan as surgery or physiotherapy, says a person who knows first hand.

If you had asked Shane Strong five years ago if he could picture himself working in an office setting, the answer would have been “Not a chance.”



Shane Strong

At the time, Strong worked in Moncton as an aluminum fabricator for an American-based construction company. It was laborious in nature, but it was a union position that paid well and Strong knew his craft.

But everything changed in 2005, when a seemingly benign job task became a life-altering incident. Strong’s assignment was to introduce thermal units to aluminum frames to form a curtain wall, a process that would take weeks. To reach each section, Strong had to awkwardly tilt his head to the side. Before long, he realized he had a problem.

“I started to experience a numbing sensation in my arm so I went to the doctor. They gave me an

MRI and I learned it wasn’t my arm, but my neck,” he said.

The diagnosis was a herniated disc, a type of musculoskeletal injury (MSI), which accounts for 36% of all lost-time injuries received every year at WorkSafeNB.

Strong attempted to gradually return to his job more than once, but each time the position proved too much to accommodate his injury.

He was placed on a long surgical wait list, where candidates can typically expect to wait two years before treatment. That was two years Strong didn’t want to sit around at home doing nothing.

He was referred to WorkSafeNB’s Vocational Rehabilitation Program, where staff recognized Strong’s motivation and willingness to learn new skills to resume working. His case manager, Lynn Hébert, said his attitude was exceptional.

“Shane is the type of person who is not afraid of change and moving forward. He didn’t want to be stuck in the past and dwell on his injury and limitations. The key factors of his success were definitely his motivation, drive for change and great sense of humour,” Hébert said.

His attitude prompted WorkSafeNB to sponsor him for a long-distance education program with the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology in January 2008. He juggled his schoolwork with a position he found at an automatic door manufacturer through WorkSafeNB’s On-the-Job Training Program.

“I didn’t want to reinvent the wheel,” he said. “It was easier getting into something I was already

familiar with, where I knew or knew of other people in the field,” Strong said. Strong graduated with a Construction Management Certificate of Achievement on January 21, 2009. A day later, his employer hired him as the permanent Construction Project Manager.

“It’s a bit different than what I was used to. I’m in charge of purchasing, small project management and some estimating. I do lots of different things – it’s never tedious.”

At 52, Strong has redefined himself through hard work and determination. His message for other injured workers who find themselves in a similar situation?

“Go for it! It’s a lot better than staying at home feeling sorry. Look into it and take advantage of every program available to you. The people who helped me were great and if I had to do it all over again, I would.” •

WorkSafeNB wishes you a happy, healthy and safe holiday season.

# BOARD MEMBER PROFILE



Danny King

Looking back, Danny King can't remember exactly how or when he became a labour activist, but as a man known for never mincing his words, he is sure of one thing – he loves it. "It's working for the people, and I come from a hard working family who have always done that," King said.

Looking at King's career history, it seems the people he's worked with in his community have helped him become the advocate he is today. King joined WorkSafeNB's

board of directors in October 2008 as a worker representative, bringing with him years of experience as a health and safety promoter and union representative. He was nominated by the New

Brunswick Federation of Labour (NBFL) where he has served as vice-president, first vice-president, and, currently, as secretary-treasurer.

A life-long Miramichi resident, King knows first hand how decisions at the top of an organization can impact workers. After earning a BA from St. Thomas University in Fredericton, King returned home to work full-time at the mill where he worked as a summer student. That early experience developed his keen interest in health and safety, laying the foundation for the vocal, grassroots individual he is today.

"I learned early on that the health and safety of workers is essential to the economic sustainability of any company. Workers need to know their rights and employers need to know their responsibilities. These are the nuts and bolts, because preventing accidents is the best way to reduce the dollars spent and, more importantly, the human costs of accidents."

In the 1980s, King joined UPM-Kymmene, one of the world's leading forest products companies

where he worked various positions and co-chaired its Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC). In 1995, he became the president of the Miramichi and District Labour Council and until the local 689 of the Communication, Energy & Paperworkers Union closed its doors last year, he shared his knowledge of pension benefits to educate its members and executive team. "We were involved in a major campaign for retirement which involved doubling CPP and old age security. It benefits everyone, so people don't have to live in poverty when they retire. There's a misconception out there that union members aren't well educated, but it's simply not the case."

Today, King is proud to represent workers on a board that works hard to balance the needs of both employer and worker stakeholders through a sustainable system. "People expect fairness and justice from WorkSafeNB, and that's why we have a tripartite board where our parties get together to deliver on those expectations. That said, there is always room for improvement, and that's what I hope we achieve through my involvement." •

# WORKSAFE NB ANNOUNCES NEW CHAIRPERSON



Sharon Tucker

WorkSafeNB is pleased to welcome its new chairperson, Sharon Tucker, to its board of directors. Tucker was appointed on November 19, and previously served on the board from February 2007-February 2010 as a worker representative. She is a health care professional with 20 years of management experience in nursing, and is the facility administrator of the Charlotte County Hospital in St. Stephen, a position she's held since July 2009. Before

taking on that role she spent 18 years as a nurse manager at the Saint John Regional Hospital.

Tucker has served as chair for both Family Medicine Quality Improvement, and the Family Medicine Accreditation Team for Region 2. She is active in the New Brunswick Nurses' Association, and is a member of Physician Recruitment and Retention for Eastern Charlotte. She has been an active member of provincial and federal politics for 25 years, and is the current mayor of St. George, where she's also served as deputy mayor, councillor, and chair of various committees. •

## WORKSAFE NB ANNOUNCES 2011 ASSESSMENT RATES

Effective January 1, most businesses in New Brunswick with three or more employees will see a decrease in their provisional average assessment rate. Improved investment returns and reduced accident frequency and costs warranted an average rate reduction of 4%, from \$2.08 per \$100 of payroll in 2010 to \$2. The minimum assessment rate will also be reduced, from \$0.35 per \$100 of payroll to \$0.32. Of New Brunswick's 14,100 employers, 84% will see their rate decrease.

"This is good news for all New Brunswickers. Injury costs play the largest part in determining assessment rates, so it means that New Brunswick's workplace safety is improving," said Doug Stanley, WorkSafeNB's president and CEO. •

# LOST YOUTH TOUR

Young advocates share personal tragedies to promote safety to 12,000 students



Nick Perry



Jonathan Plante

In the fall of 2009, WorkSafeNB launched the Lost Youth Tour to help raise awareness and educate New Brunswickers on the importance of workplace safety training for young and new workers. The tour featured Nick Perry, who, at the age of 19, broke his back in a lumberyard accident in B.C. Perry's doctors told him he would never walk again, but he beat the odds and after a year of intense rehabilitation and physiotherapy began to walk again. Perry became a passionate advocate for workplace safety, and throughout three weeks during the 2009 Lost Youth Tour, shared his story with thousands of students.

Given the success of this tour, WorkSafeNB hosted a second Lost Youth Tour in 2010.

On September 27, Jonathan Plante, a young worker from Quebec, kicked off the tour by sharing his

story with 11 Francophone high schools and community colleges, reaching 2,800 students. Since breaking his spine in 2007 in a three-storey fall at a construction site, Plante must use a wheelchair to get around. Following Plante's weeklong tour, Nick Perry joined us once again and visited 31 high schools, community colleges and workplaces, spreading his safety message to 9,200 young New Brunswickers.

WorkSafeNB thanks the many schools, community colleges and employers for participating in the Lost Youth Tour 2010, as well as the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour and the Department of Education for supporting WorkSafeNB's safety initiatives.

The Lost Youth Tour has come to an end, but WorkSafeNB hopes its life-saving message will never be forgotten. •

# CAMPAIGN REMINDS DRIVERS OF MOTORIZED VEHICLES TO BUCKLE UP

**B**uckle up and stay alive – because you're not the only one along for the ride!

This is the message WorkSafeNB is promoting in a new campaign targeted at operators of motorized vehicles, such as forklifts, tractors, and backhoes. The campaign was launched November 15 with radio ads, and is supplemented with materials such as a hazard alert, poster, and decals.

"Since 2005, three workers have died because they were not wearing their seatbelts. On top of that, several near-misses and serious injuries have occurred," said Richard Blais, chief compliance officer with WorkSafeNB. "We've launched this campaign to remind both workers and employers that seatbelts must be worn not only in cars and trucks, but in heavy equipment and other motorized vehicles, and that the law will be enforced."

Blais said that many workers who wear seatbelts in their personal vehicles do not wear them in the powered mobile equipment they use at work. The



motorized vehicles are equipped with two different types of roll over protective structures (ROPS) – those with a cab and those without, he explains. "We don't know why they don't wear their seatbelts – whether they feel these vehicles go too slow to pose a risk or that they believe the ROPS will keep them safe. But speed isn't a factor. Collisions at low speeds can result in injuries, and in vehicles with ROPS, the deaths are occurring when drivers are ejected and the machine rolls over on top of them. And in one instance, a worker in a vehicle with a cab was ejected through the cab's open door."

Others find them "uncomfortable", but there are things much more uncomfortable, he adds, things

such as losing work or ending up with some type of disability. "It brings to mind a poster I saw once that said 'Seatbelts are not as confining as a wheelchair,'" Blais said.

"Whatever the reason, we must change the culture around powered mobile equipment. Operators must be made aware of the risks of not wearing a seatbelt, not only from being ejected outside the vehicle but to minimize the risk of injury within an enclosed cab."

While the campaign's message is an emotional one, asking workers to think about family (they're not the only ones along for the ride), WorkSafeNB will take a hard approach to enforcement of seatbelt use.

Our health and safety officers will ensure not only use, but that seatbelts are present and in proper working condition. "In some instances, we've found seatbelts were actually removed." Violations can result in written orders, fines, and even stop-work orders, he said. •

# WORKSAFENB HOSTS ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL H&S CONFERENCE

**W**orkSafeNB's Annual Health and Safety Conference held in Moncton October 17-19, attracted 700 participants, representing one of the highest attendance rates in the conference's 30-year history. In addition to the high numbers, the conference garnered high praise. Of those delegates who responded to a general evaluation survey, 81.7% rated overall satisfaction with the conference as excellent or very good.

Highlights of the conference include two plenary sessions, featuring Richard Hawk and Dan Comiskey. Hawk's presentation drew upon the 10 years he spent as a safety engineer and management trainer

in the nuclear industry as well as on his musical talents and oratory skills from his theatre background.

A passionate advocate for workplace health and safety, Canadian Football League personality Dan Comiskey delivered a moving and motivating presentation, drawing on close personal experience. Comiskey's stepbrother died in an industrial accident, and his father-in-law suffered a permanent brain injury in an industrial accident less than one year from retirement.

"The plenary speakers were excellent," said one delegate. "I left the presentation with information

that I can use." The majority of delegates echoed this statement. "I enjoyed both plenary sessions with Richard and Dan – excellent, excellent speakers," said another.

In addition to the plenary sessions, 26 workshops offered a variety of topics, including electrical safety for non-electricians, substance abuse in the workplace, compensation fraud, radon testing, interviewing skills for incident reports, scaffolding, and new worker orientation featuring Nick Perry. More than 75% of survey respondents rated the workshops as very good or excellent.

WorkSafeNB thanks all those who attended our 30th Annual Health and Safety Conference, proving your commitment to workplace health and safety. We hope to see you in October 2011, when WorkSafeNB's 31st Annual Health and Safety Conference will be held in Fredericton. •



# NORTHEASTERN CONFERENCE TARGETS MUNICIPALITIES

**W**orkSafeNB's northeast region recently hosted health and safety workshops for more than 110 municipal employees and construction contractors in Bathurst, covering topics such as due diligence, zero tolerance and building a health and safety structure. After reviewing audit results, injuries and fatalities within the municipal sector, WorkSafeNB identified a need

for municipalities to expand the knowledge of occupational health and safety management programs and legislative requirements.

The workshops provided specific health and safety education for elected officials, directors, engineers, supervisors with health and safety responsibilities and contractors performing

work for municipalities "We focused these sessions on municipalities because they provide such a diverse range of services with high-risk activities –trenching, working with heavy equipment and machinery, and working from heights, for example," said Pauline Roy, WorkSafeNB's regional director for the northeast.

# WORKSAFENB RECOGNIZES COMPANIES FOR IMPRESSIVE EFFORTS

**A**t the Company Recognition Awards Breakfast on October 18, WorkSafeNB recognized DEW Engineering and Development and the Canadian Red Cross for their impressive efforts in improving workplace health and safety.

Located in Miramichi, DEW Engineering manufactures armoured systems for military vehicles. DEW engineers have designed, tested, manufactured and installed thousands of armoured systems that have protected our soldiers in places such as the former Yugoslavia, Africa, Afghanistan and Iraq. Initially, the company dealt with a troubling number of lost-time claims resulting from soft tissue injuries, because of the strenuous physical nature of the job. But after adopting WorkSafeNB's 5\*22 program, DEW reduced their lost-time frequency by 89% and cut their no-lost claims in half.

The Canadian Red Cross in Saint John was also recognized for its commitment to workplace health and safety. Since its creation in 1909, the

Canadian Red Cross has been dedicated to helping the most vulnerable citizens in Canada and throughout the world. Among its many services, the Red Cross provides New Brunswickers with in-home support to help them live as independently as possible. While these homecare services greatly enhance the well-being and dignity of the frail, the elderly, children at risk, people with disabilities and palliative patients, they can also result in a high incidence of sprains, strains and other workplace injuries, as experienced by the homecare workers. But by adopting WorkSafeNB's 5\*22 program, the Canadian Red Cross reduced lost-time claims by 70% and claim costs by 88%.

"These employees and employers both have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to safe work practices

and to a safe workplace," said Shelly Dauphinee, vice-president of WorkSafeNB's WorkSafe Services Division.

"They have also shown exceptional leadership and innovation in promoting a safety culture, and, in doing so, they've not only significantly reduced workplace injuries but they've significantly reduced their premiums and improved their bottom line. We appreciate their commitment to the health and safety of workers and hope this example will inspire improvement in other employers." •



From L to R: Doug Stanley, President and CEO, WorkSafeNB; Roberta Dugas, Chairperson, WorkSafeNB; Louise Castonguay, Regional Director for New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, Canadian Red Cross; Melody Mladineo, Southwest Regional Director, WorkSafeNB; Cynthia McLachlin, Home Support Worker, Canadian Red Cross; Wanda Hayes, Manager of Operations, Canadian Red Cross; Patricia Burgess, Senior Advisor, Canadian Red Cross.



From L to R: Doug Stanley, President and CEO, WorkSafeNB; Roberta Dugas, Chairperson, WorkSafeNB; Bill Brewer, VP Business Development (Armour), DEW Engineering and Development; Kevin Creamer, Joint Health and Safety Committee Member, DEW Engineering and Development; Fidèle Cormier, Northeast Assistant Regional Director, WorkSafeNB; Paula Murphy, Human Resources & Administration Manager, DEW Engineering and Development; Mike Despres, Health & Safety Co-ordinator, DEW Engineering and Development; Star Anderson, Joint Health and Safety Committee Member, DEW Engineering and Development; Michael Harris, Director of Production, DEW Engineering and Development; Pauline Roy, Northeast Regional Director, WorkSafeNB.

## NORTHEASTERN WORKSHOPS: *Continued from page 4*

While health and safety professionals and WorkSafeNB staff delivered most of the sessions, the mayor of Caraquet, Antoine Landry, gave a workshop on due diligence. Landry shared how a workplace fatality affected his municipality and how this tragedy renewed Caraquet's commitment to health and safety prevention.

"New Brunswick's municipalities form the roots of not only our culture but our economy, and are thereby so important to our province's health. By improving our province's health and safety infrastructure from the roots up we will continue to maintain and improve on our status as one of the safest provinces in Canada in which to work," Roy said. •

# IN THE COURTS



On November 15, 2010, **DONALD LAVOIE** pleaded guilty for failing to provide the required protective equipment for employees working from heights. He was fined \$500.

Lavoie was charged as a supervisor, when an employee of a roofing crew he had been supervising was found working approximately 8 metres above the nearest safe level without fall-protection equipment.

Lavoie's son, **DONALD LAVOIE JR.**, was charged as the employee in the same incident. Lavoie Jr. was charged with failing to use the required protective equipment for employees working from heights. He pleaded guilty and was fined \$300.

**HARTWOOD TWO INC.** pleaded guilty to three charges under the *OHS Act* and Regulations. The employer was charged under paragraph 9(2)(c) of the *OHS Act* for failing to provide instruction, training and supervision to ensure an employee's health & safety; under subsection 239(3) of Regulation 91-191 for failing to establish a written lock out procedure and ensure employees are adequately trained; and, under subsection 239(4) of Regulation 91-191 for failing to ensure that a machine which is to be cleaned ... is put into zero energy state by a competent person before an employee works on the machine. Hartwood Two Inc. was fined \$1,500, \$1,500, and \$2,000 for each charge respectively, for a total of \$5,000.

## AMENDMENTS TO FALL PROTECTION LEGISLATION WILL IMPROVE SAFETY

On January 1, 2011 amendments to fall protection legislation under General Regulation (91-191) of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* will come into effect. The amendments will improve the protection of employees working at heights, and are the result of several years of research, analysis, consultation and evaluation by WorkSafeNB and industry stakeholders.

Falls from heights cause serious injuries to New Brunswick workers, and are one of the most frequent causes of workplace deaths in the province. While no dollar amount can be attached to the toll borne by injured workers and their families, injuries from falls account for as much as \$5 million in workers' compensation costs each year. These costs are borne by employers, who may face increasing insurance premiums

under the *Workers' Compensation Act*.

The new legislation recognizes significant advances in fall protection equipment and training. In past years, fall protection meant protecting workers from injury once a fall had occurred by using equipment to stop the fall before the worker hit the ground. Workplaces now seek the most effective means to prevent falls before they occur and only recognize mechanisms to arrest falls in progress as a last resort. This new thinking forms the foundation of the new legislation.

The amendments include:

- Implementing an intervention hierarchy, where systems that do not allow employees to fall, such as guardrails and travel restraints, are preferred because there is no longer a risk of

minor injury from stopping a fall or the need for an employee to be rescued.

- Instruction and training requirements.
- Requirement for a *Fall Protection Code of Practice* for working from a height of 7.5 metres or more and when working within a control zone with a safety monitor.
- New provisions for roofing and weatherproofing.
- Reference to new and updated CSA Standards.
- Additional responsibilities for building owners to ensure anyone conducting work on their behalf comply with the fall protection legislation.

WorkSafeNB will host information sessions throughout the province to help employers and workers better understand the new legislation. For more information, contact WorkSafeNB at **1 800 222-9775** or visit the website at [www.worksafenb.ca](http://www.worksafenb.ca).