

## TODAY IS WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY

Each year on April 28<sup>th</sup> we observe Workers' Memorial Day to remember and honor workers who have been killed or seriously injured the job as well as to promote action, demand stronger enforcement of existing health & safety laws, and rededicate ourselves to the effort to create safer and healthier workplaces for all workers.

Today, let us all take a moment to remember and mourn for the 14 workers who die each and every day in this country on the job as a result of workplace injuries.

A few short weeks ago, 29 miners were killed in an explosion at the Massey Upper Big Branch coal mine in West Virginia. Just a few days prior to that, an explosion at the Tesoro Refinery in Anacortes, Washington resulted in the deaths of seven workers. And in February, a gas explosion at the Kleen Energy Plant in Middletown, Connecticut claimed an additional six lives. Finally, only three days ago, an explosion at an offshore oil drilling platform off the coast of Louisiana left seven workers badly hurt and 11 missing. **These are the cases that make the news, but we know that each day, many others silently lose their lives or the ability to provide for their families due to incidents that could have been prevented and are many times not reported.**

This year marks the 40th Anniversary of the enactment of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. The Act—which guarantees every American worker a safe and healthful working environment—created the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to set and enforce standards, and the National Institute for Occupational Health (NIOSH) to conduct research and investigations. But many workers remain in serious danger; according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) there were 5,071 workplace deaths due to traumatic injuries in 2008.

For more information and to support the passage of the Protecting American Workers Act (PAWA), which would amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, please visit:

- <http://edlabor.house.gov/blog/2009/04/protecting-americas-workers-ac.shtml>
- <http://www.opencongress.org/bill/111-h2067/show>

Also, powerful websites exist to provide statistics and remembrances of those who we honor today both in the U.S. and worldwide as it is also International Workers' Memorial Day. Please take a minute to visit:

- The United Support and Memorial for Workplace Fatalities; (USMWF) at <http://usmwf.org/>
- 28 April: International Workers Memorial Day hosted by Hazards Magazine at <http://www.hazards.org/wmd/>

With warm wishes,

***The Staff of UCLA-LOSH***

