

May, 2007

TRAINING UPDATE

Asbestos Removal Training/Day of Mourning

Beginning November of this year, all workers in Ontario involved in Type 3 Asbestos Removal will be required to have documentation that they have passed the test designed by working group from the industry supervised by the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities. This means that dozens, perhaps hundreds, of Local 506 members will have to pass the test. Many of them, if not most, will require training.

The training will take between two and five days. Experienced workers in asbestos removal will be able to pass the test after the shorter training, provided they can pass the knowledge- (as opposed to skill-) based test. Others will require at least some hands-on training and some training in other types of asbestos removal.

Type 3 Removal is a major part of demolition and, sometimes, renovation. It includes removal of drywall if the drywall was made prior to the early 1980's – and drywall installed up to the mid-80's was often manufactured earlier and, therefore, included or may have included, asbestos.

We expect to be conducting several Asbestos Removal training programs this summer and fall – and will be prepared to do so.

Day of Mourning

Friday, April 27 was the day chosen Day of Mourning for workers killed and injured on the job. There were a number of ceremonies in several locations, including one attended by Construction Craft Worker apprentices, other Labourers including many Local 506 pensioners, and representatives of several other unions at the memorial for Fallen Workers in Woodbridge.

The event was especially poignant this year in view of the death of TTC worker Antonio Almeida on the Yonge line of the subway. Antonio and his colleagues had been involved in asbestos removal and, while the accident was not specifically related to asbestos, the job they were doing was required because of the need to remove friable asbestos (Type 3 removal) from the subway system. TTC staff were involved in the development of the training program and the test mentioned above.

Many construction workers have died in recent decades from mesothelioma (cancer caused by exposure to asbestos). Comparable numbers to those who died in construction accidents. We mourn them all – those who died in accidents; those who contracted diseases (like mesothelioma) from their work; and those whose lives were shortened or just diminished in quality due injuries from work.