

Health Surveillance

For Whom?

Why?

By whom?

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CAW Health & Safety Department

Epidemiology

- Study of epidemics
- Study of groups of people with similar diseases
- Ensure sick people are treated and receive benefits
- We can find out what causes the diseases
- Then, we can prevent them

NFL Health Surveillance Regulation , S. 43

- Employer shall follow two guidelines of the:
- ILO (International Labour Organization)
- ICOH(International Commission on Occupational Health)




OCCUPATIONAL
SAFETY **72** AND HEALTH
SERIES

**TECHNICAL AND
ETHICAL GUIDELINES
FOR WORKERS' HEALTH
SURVEILLANCE**



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE · GENEVA



International Code of Ethics For Occupational Health Professionals

- Adopted by the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH)
- Updated 2002

Key Points of both Guidelines

- Purpose: to protect workers' health and workers' interests
- Must protect workers' privacy and confidentiality of individual health information
- Must ensure professional independence and impartiality of the relevant health professionals
- Health surveillance programs: prevention purpose

Guidelines from the internet

- Type in the exact names from Section 43 into Google
- Download and keep them

How do they work?

- How and why did we get guidelines like this?
- Workers and unions mobilized around the world and fought for them

Foundry industry

- Used to heat the sand to make the moulds
- In 1970s, companies began experimenting with new chemicals that could set the sand cold – much faster
- But these experiments had an effect on workers' health
- Our union plant chair collapsed at work, rushed to the hospital, heart attack? No.
- What was it? He figured it was work-related

Barefoot epidemiology

- Union plant chair took around a survey
- In the past 6 months have you had:
- Cough?
- Colds?
- Shortness of breath?
- Symptoms of a heart attack?
- Many did
- Asked the union for help to investigate further

Read the MSDSs

- We read the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs)
- Found out that many of these new chemicals contained isocyanates
- Read up on isocyanates – found they caused occupational asthma

University of British Columbia

- Occupational lung disease expert
- Dr. Moira Chan-Yeung
- Measured the workplace air for isocyanates
- She did lung function tests for our members
- Found 11 out of 80 workers had occupational asthma
- You can die of occupational asthma

Foundry was cleaned up

- Union insisted the foundry had local exhaust ventilation installed and the problem was mostly resolved

Key points

- Union chose the doctor. We trusted her.
- She reported back to the union and the workers and as well the company.
- Individual workers received their results and individual advice.
- Union and the company got the statistical results.
- Individual workers' confidentiality protected.
- Results of the study drove workplace change.

Workers in aerospace industry also exposed to isocyanates and other chemicals

- CAW members collectively refused unsafe work in the aerospace plants in Ontario in 1986-87
- Chose the doctors to examine them
- Drove workplace changes and cleaned up the plants



WHMIS Legislation all across Canada

- Labelling of hazardous materials
- Material Safety Data Sheets
- Worker education and training



Asbestos harms human health

- Breathing in asbestos dust makes workers sick from lung disease and cancer
- Many members of our union have died from asbestos

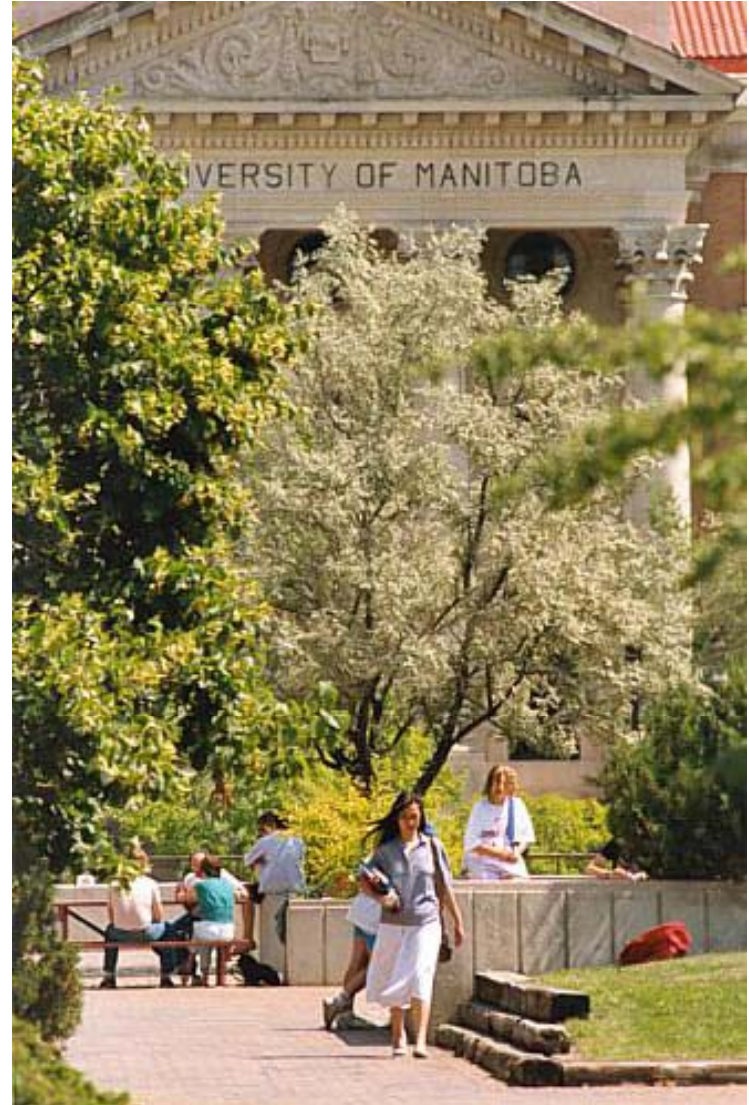


So we met with our members to get their stories, get them examined by occupational health clinic doctors



Even university professors have died from asbestos disease

- University of Manitoba ,
3 anthropology professors died from cancer caused by asbestos
- MFL Occ Health Clinic
- Doctors' evidence
- Established their claims
- Asbestos removal



Prevent Cancer Campaign

- Cleaned up many workplaces
- Collective bargaining to ban carcinogens such as asbestos
- Drove regulatory change
- Dramatic lowering of occupational exposure limits for hazardous chemicals, first time in 20 years

We Canadians are still mining asbestos

- Why?



Our Canadian federal government

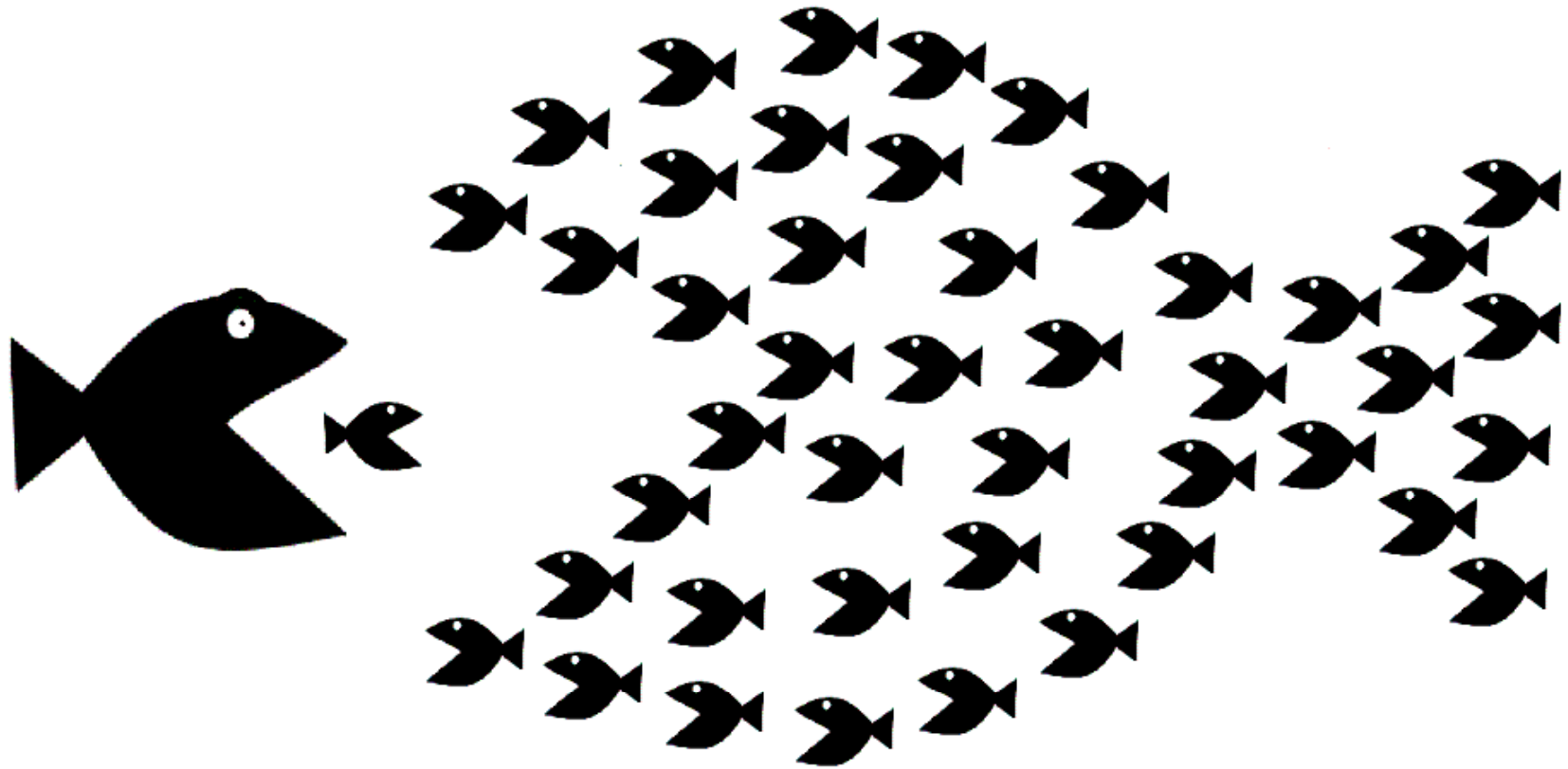
- Still allows and indeed actively promotes the mining and export of asbestos to developing countries, such as India.
- Many unions have fought hard against this. We think it is immoral and shameful that we export this deadly product.



Health Surveillance can help to tip the balance towards workers' health



By uniting as workers through our union,
we can force employers to make our
workplaces healthier





Thanks very much!