



Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Vernon observes National Day of Mourning

The City of Vernon is asking residents to join it in a moment of silence at 10:30 am on Tuesday, April 28, to observe the National Day of Mourning. This day honours the memory of workers who have been killed, injured, or suffered illness as a result of work-related incidents.

“Tomorrow, we will take a moment to pause and pay tribute,” said Mayor Victor Cumming. “Collectively, we will honour those whose lives have changed – both the workers and their families and loved ones. This year in particular, we grieve as we think of the tragedy that took place in Nova Scotia last week and the loss of Const. Heidi Stevenson, among many others. We stand with each of you in support and with thanks for the sacrifices that have been made in order to serve others.”

He continued, “We are unable to physically be together at this time, but in our own spaces, we also take this time to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the health and safety of our current and future workers as we continue to take proactive steps to maintain safe workspaces.”

The Canadian Labour Congress first recognized the Day of Mourning in 1984. In 1990, this day became a national observance with the passing of the Workers Mourning Day Act, and on April 28, 1991, the federal government officially proclaimed the National Day of Mourning.

“CUPE 626 is proud to partner with the City of Vernon, through the Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee to promote a safe work environment that gives workers a voice to address safety concerns as they arise,” said Bryce de Dood, President, CUPE Local 626. “Today, we remember those that have been seriously injured and mourn with the families who have lost loved ones in a workplace accident.”

Canada was the first nation to recognize the Day of Mourning and it is now observed around the world. In 2019, 140 workers in BC died due to a workplace injury or illness.

“This year, the Day of Mourning takes on even more meaning as our First Responders, frontline workers and healthcare professionals respond to a global pandemic,” said Fire Chief David Lind. “There are a lot of uncertainties facing workers in all sectors right now, so we’d like to take a moment to say ‘thank you’ for what each of them do every day. I am encouraged as I witness

workers from every sector adapt and overcome these new challenges. We are truly blessed to live in one of the most agile and resilient countries in the world.”

“On behalf of Local 1517 and the firefighters of Vernon Fire Rescue, I would like to acknowledge all emergency service workers whose memories we honour on the Day of Mourning,” said Doug Imrich, President, IAFF Local 1517. “With heavy hearts we are thinking of Heidi Stevenson’s family and the RCMP. We will never forget those we have lost, and in their memory, strive to bring every employee home safe at the end of their shift.”

Although the City is unable to have its usual commemoration ceremony, due to physical distancing and social gathering restrictions, the day will be observed by staff and the importance of the effort to end workplace injury and death will be recognized.