

# WORKSAFE!

A California Coalition for Worker Occupational Safety & Health Protection

## WORKSAFE! FACT SHEET

### WHAT CAN YOU DO? A UNION ACTIVIST'S ROLE

#### WORK for SAFETY and HEALTH BY BEING INVOLVED WITH CAL/OSHA

- ➔ **PARTICIPATE** in Advisory Committees to set standards. Labor needs representation because often votes are taken. **TESTIFY** at Standards Board hearings.
  - ➔ **PARTICIPATE** in Cal/OSHA Advisory Committee monthly meetings and follow their day to day operations. Meetings are held in SF, LA, San Diego, Sacramento, etc. Call Cal/OSHA to get on their mailing list to find out the exact dates, times, and locations.
  - ➔ **PARTICIPATE** in the inspection process from opening conference thru any appeal.
- GOVERNMENT RESPONDS BEST WHEN YOU PARTICIPATE.  
IF YOU DO NOTHING, VERY LITTLE WILL BE DONE.  
BUT GOVERNMENT MAY BE INEFFECTIVE AND SLOW.**

#### WORK for SAFETY and HEALTH through YOUR UNION

- ➔ **BE ACTIVE IN YOUR UNION:** set up a union safety and health committee.
  - ➔ **ORGANIZE:** Discuss safety and health with co-workers and your union rep.
- Work with coalitions such as WORKSAFE! to fight for effective occupational safety and health protection for all California workers. Contact WORKSAFE! c/o San Francisco Labor Council, 1188 Franklin Street #203, San Francisco, CA 94109, or contact WORKSAFE! at 510-302-1071. Visit our website at [www.worksafe.org](http://www.worksafe.org) or e-mail [worksafe@worksafe-cosh.org](mailto:worksafe@worksafe-cosh.org). WORKSAFE! meets regularly for lunch after the monthly Cal/OSHA Advisory Committee meeting when they meet in SF, and has specially called meetings as well.

#### SOMETIMES IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO ACT DIRECTLY

- ➔ **WORKERS HAVE A RIGHT TO REFUSE UNSAFE WORK**  
Don't be forced to choose between your life and your job, remember that you don't go to work to die. If you see something wrong, speak out. You may want to do this despite the fact that enforcement under Labor Code § 6311 by the California Division of Labor Standards Enforcement is not very effective, and despite the fact that the law in this area constantly changes.
- ➔ **IF YOU REFUSE UNSAFE WORK, FOLLOW PROPER PROCEDURES**  
Do everything in the presence of other employees, if possible.
  1. Inform supervisor on site of the unsafe or unhealthful condition. Ask for correction.
  2. State you are refusing to work because:
    - a. you believe your health or safety is in danger if you do the work, and
    - b. you believe there is a violation of osh laws, regulations or orders.
  3. State you will return to work as soon as the condition is corrected, and that you will do other appropriate work that is safe in the meantime.
  4. Finally, call Cal/OSHA to file a complaint. You must give your name to protect yourself. Find out to whom you are talking; write it down, note the date and time.