

# WorkSafe Saskatchewan and frontline workers cooperate to create safety messages

The beep and hum of a forklift, the shrill zinging of a table saw, the erratic and insistent beeping of a heart monitor, and then the screams. These are the sounds of the three **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** video safety messages created in 2008 and 2009.

WCB CEO Peter Federko explained the philosophy behind their origin. “Three or four years ago, in thinking about our prevention strategy, we knew broad-based social marketing was important, but to really affect the number of injuries in the province, we determined we needed to narrow our focus to injury types and industries. These were the things driving injuries in the province.”

**WorkSafe** chose warehousing, construction, and health care as its first three focus sectors due to the high risk of the occupations. Working with professionals in those sectors, **WorkSafe** and Partners in Motion created scenarios that could happen within those workplaces, but that could also happen in everyday life.

The messages were directed by Chris Triffo, President of Partners in Motion, who conducted walkabouts with health and safety professionals and frontline staff at workplaces to brainstorm storylines. The challenge

was to portray a realistic incident without being too graphic, but still create impact and emotion – all within a 30-second scene.

All three scenarios were designed by actual workers in the workplaces. Chris Triffo explained, “Doing these **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** messages, the thing that stands out for me is the cooperation we got from workers in every workplace. Wherever we went, doors opened for us because it was **WorkSafe**.”

Once the storyline was created, workers remained involved. The videos were filmed on location at a construction site, a building supply warehouse, and in the Regina General Hospital. For the health care message, real health care workers were cast as the emergency room staff, and an RN was hired as the technical director to ensure every element was accurate.

A secondary goal was to create a scenario that would have applicability beyond the industry. Triffo said, “With the table saw, we wanted people who are doing projects at home to watch it and relate ‘that could happen to me – I’m going to keep that guard on. I’m going to stay focused.’ Or anywhere a person sees water on the floor, to realize even a small thing like that could cause an injury and have a big impact on another person’s life.”

David Eberle, WCB Chairman agreed. “When I first saw the health care ad, that’s what struck me. It demonstrated for me how a simple thing like water on the floor can create a very severe hazard. If I spill coffee on my way from the coffee room to my office, I might be creating a severe hazard for someone else. I hope we all come away from that video with the message that we need to

work together to be sure our workplaces and our homes are hazard-free. It takes all of us looking out for each other.”

Eberle is one year into his appointment as WCB Chairman and his *Mission: Zero* initiative has just celebrated its one year anniversary. “It’s going to take time to get to zero, but we can get there if we all work together,” said Eberle. “I’m passionate for us to move along that road, eliminate injuries, and the suffering that goes along with them. That’s what **WorkSafe Saskatchewan** is all about.”

