

Grant's Law

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Grant's Law

Many community members remember the tragic story of what happened to Grant De Patie.

In March of 2005 24-year-old Grant was working alone as a gas station attendant.

He worked at a gas station at the corner of Dewdney and 248th here in Maple Ridge. Late one night a young man came to the gas station in a stolen vehicle and attempted a gas-and-dash over \$12 of fuel.

Grant was an upstanding young person, loyal to his employer.

When he saw the vehicle attempt to speed away, he



ran outside to record the license plate number as he had been instructed to do by his employer.

Grant was hit by the stolen vehicle and dragged to his death.

Grant's death shook the community.

Following Grant's death, the De Patie family fought for new rules that would keep workers like Grant, safe in the future.

The De Patie's worked with the BC Federation of Labour to lobby the then BC Liberal government for changes including pay at the pump and better safety procedures for late night workers.

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Grant's Law was the first of its kind in Canada. It included a requirement to pay before you pump, eliminating the hazard of gas and dash incidents. It also required employers to have better safety protocols for all late-night retail workers – those who work at gas stations, convenience stores etc.

In 2012...the government of the day watered down some of the protections in Grant's Law.

Grant's law required training and orientation for new and young workers, hazard assessment elimination and control.

It also required two staff on night shifts or a physical barrier between the clerk and customers.

All these measures would have helped to prevent Grant's death.

In 2012, facing pressure from some large convenience store companies and other employers, the government of the day watered down some of the protections in Grant's Law.



Grant de Patie's family continues to advocate for the adoption of "Grant's Law" in other provinces. [Joshua Berson photo]

Additional options were put in place. Instead of having two workers on site or a protective barrier, employers could have a time lock safe, cameras, a panic button and other measures that focused on keeping money and products safe, but not enough to provide protection to workers.

For young workers, Grant's death symbolized the pressures and challenges that young workers face on worksites.

Young and new workers have the highest risk of injury at work. Young people are vulnerable due to a lack of orientation and training, inexperience, and pressure to get the job done at any cost. But these tragedies, like all workplace deaths are preventable.

We can and must do more to keep young workers safe.

When Grant's Law was watered down, the BCFED young workers' committee knew they needed to act. The committee started the first Grant's Law sit-in. Young workers set up outside local convenience stores and spent the whole overnight shift talking to customers about the risks to late night workers and collecting petition signatures calling for the reinstatement of the full force of Grant's law.



Grant's Law sit-ins by young workers are held in Victoria and Vancouver.

Events have been held in Vancouver and Victoria.

Grant's memory has inspired so many young people to stand up and fight for their rights.

Grant's family continues to advocate for other provinces to adopt "Grant's Law" and they are succeeding. In 2017, following the death of a worker in Alberta during a gas and dash incident, the Notley government brought in pay at the pump legislation.

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In 2005, 24-year-old Grant De Patie was working alone at a gas station when he was killed following his employer's instructions to collect a license plate number during a gas and dash incident. His death shone a spotlight on the vulnerability of late-night workers, working alone.

In 2008, efforts by the De Patie family and the BC Federation of Labour resulted in the creation of Grant's Law, a BC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation that better protected late-night workers. It was the first of its kind in Canada.

Grant De Patie's story continues to inspire young workers to take up the fight for better workplace safety.

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The BC Labour Heritage Centre and the following groups contributed to this project:

- BC Federation of Labour, Young Workers Committee
 - WorksafeBC
 - The Boag Foundation

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