

# News Release

For Immediate Release  
October 22, 2012

## **LOCAL 793 RESPONDS TO ANNOUNCEMENT ON DRILL RIG TRAINING**

**OAKVILLE** — Mike Gallagher, business manager of Local 793 of the International Union of Operating Engineers, says the province's decision to introduce mandatory training for rotary drill rig operators will make construction worksites safer.

"Mandatory training of rotary drill rig operators will provide better protection for both the operators of the equipment and also for the workers on construction sites in Ontario," he said. "Under existing rules, anybody who says they are competent can operate a drill rig. However, drill rigs are dangerous pieces of equipment and those who operate them must be properly trained."

Provincial Training, Colleges and Universities Minister Glen Murray announced on Oct. 20 that the mandatory training will be implemented. He made the announcement to more than 200 delegates at a meeting of the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario in Toronto.

Gallagher had been working on the issue since Local 793 apprentice Kyle Knox lost his life and member Dan DeLuca was injured when a drill rig collapsed at a subway construction site at York University in Toronto on Oct. 11, 2011.

The union had produced a video to show why operators of rotary drill rigs need to be properly trained. The video featured Local 793 drill rig operator Edward Christensen. Birmingham co-operated with the union on the venture. Gallagher showed the video to Training Minister Murray during a meeting earlier this year. Patrick Dillon, business manager of the provincial building trades, also wrote to Murray, requesting action be taken.

Gallagher said mandatory training will go a long way towards protecting workers on construction sites.

"I'm confident that mandatory training of drill rig operators will help to prevent another tragic loss like we had last year," he said. "Construction jobsites will be safer as a result of this announcement."

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