

Employer Properly Fired Worker for Intimidating Statements to Manager



A worker with prior discipline was suspended for five days for carelessly packing defective product. She got very upset and told the plant manager, “The first element to attack is water—the next is fire,” referring to a burst pipe that had previously flooded the plant. The worker, who was religious, also said the manager was wicked and wicked things happened to wicked people. The manager, who knew the worker smoked, took these statements as threats and called the police. The worker refused to apologize and was fired. In the grievance proceeding, the worker denied intending to start a fire but refused to apologize. The arbitrator concluded that her statements were intended to intimidate the manager into rescinding the suspension. And given her lack of remorse, firing her was appropriate [*Plastipak Industries Inc. United Steelworkers Union (Jemison Grievance)*, [2012] O.L.A.A. No. 282, June 7, 2012].