

Six Day Suspension for Violating Smoking & PPE Policies Reduced



A sawmill suspended a worker for six days for smoking near a propane tank and not in a designated smoking area and for not wearing a hardhat or safety glasses in an area where such PPE was required. The union challenged the discipline. The arbitrator noted that the worker was clearly in violation of several company safety policies. He'd also been warned before about similar conduct, although he wasn't formally disciplined. And he didn't immediately acknowledge that he was wrong. But given how the mill had treated other workers who'd violated these policies, a six-day suspension was excessive. So the arbitrator reduced it to three and a half days [*Tolko Industries Ltd. (Kelowna Division) v. United Steelworkers, Local 1-423 (Holmes Grievance)*, [2012] B.C.C.A.A.A. No. 130, Oct. 22, 2012].