**APRIL 28 — WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY**

In 1989, April 28 was designated Workers Memorial Day to direct attention to workers who have been killed or injured on the job. This day was chosen because it is the anniversary of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act). Today, OSHA, employers, labor unions, community groups and others around the world now mark April 28 as an International Day of Mourning.

The goal of Workers Memorial Day is to give us occasion to remember those who have suffered and died on the job. As we remember those who have died in workplace catastrophes, suffered diseases due to exposure to toxic substances or been injured because of dangerous conditions, it is also an opportunity to reflect on the need to revitalize our commitment to improving health and safety in the workplace.

For this reason, the day has special significance to those who are dedicated to addressing occupational health and safety issues. Despite the difficulties and challenges we face in realizing the goal of reducing and eliminating workplace hazards, we must remain ever vigilant. Since the passage of the OSH Act, the number of worker deaths per year has been reduced from approximately 14,000 in 1970 to 4,836 in 2015. This is a substantial achievement in a workforce that has doubled in size; however, too many workers still remain at risk.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, fatal work injuries in construction increased to 937 in 2015 from 899 in 2014. This increase in construction fatalities represents the highest total since 2008 (975). Hispanic or Latino workers incurred 903 fatal injuries in 2015—the highest number since 2007. Fatal injuries involving Hispanic or Latino workers rose 12 percent in just one year, with an increase in the rate from 3.7 in 2014 to 4.0 per 100,000 full time employees (FTE) in 2015. This is quite significant, as it was the highest rate among all racial/ethnic groups for which rates are calculated. Overall, fatal injuries involving foreign-born workers, who came from over 100 different countries, were at the highest level since 2007. Fatalities among contracted workers rose to 829 in 2015 from 802 in 2014 and accounted for 17 percent of all fatalities in 2015. These are some of the reasons that employers, workers, unions, community leaders, city council, state legislative representatives, OSHA, and others commemorate and publicize this important day.

OSHA’s past efforts have demonstrated that worker safety and health is directly linked to the existence and effectiveness of a safety and health program in a workplace.

Join OSHA this year in reflecting on the successes we have had in addressing workplace hazards and work with us on the challenges that we face ahead.

**The Plan**

**By Sue Waltz**

(A poem for two voices - female & male, dedicated to all workers

who have gone before us, and who we remember on Worker Memorial Day.)

***I am your....***

***Mother. . . . . . . . . . Father***

***Sister . . . . . . . . . . . Brother***

***Child . . . . . . . . . . . Partner***

***Lover . . . . . . . . . . . Friend***

***Today, I planned to....***

***Take a walk . . . . . . See a friend***

***Tell a joke . . . . . . . . Give a smile***

***Pay a bill . . . . . . . . . Play a game***

***Take a ride . . . . . . . . Kiss a cheek***

***Hug a child . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .***

***I didn’t plan to . . . Die today***

***. . . but I did***

***I planned to....***

***Go to work . . . . . . . . . Build a bridge***

***Pave a road . . . . . . . . . Fix a pipe***

***Teach a class . . . . . . . . Save a life***

***Paint a room . . . . . . . . Write reports***

***Enter data . . . . . . . . . . .Work the line***

***Wire buildings . . . . . . . Walk the iron***

***Erect the steel . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .***

***I didn’t plan to . . . Die today***

***. . . but I did***

***Please think of me...***

***Just once today . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . When you***

***Fulfill your plans***

***I am your....***

***Mother . . . . . . . . . . . . . Father***

***Sister . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Brother***

***Child . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Partner***

***Lover . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Friend***

***I didn’t plan to . . . Die today***

***BUT I DID ...***