

# BABINE/LAKELAND SAWMILL EXPLOSIONS PUBLIC INQUIRY



Dear Premier Clark,

When the Babine and Lakeland sawmills exploded, killing 4 workers, injuring 44 and leaving lasting scars on family and community members, you promised answers to ensure such a tragedy never happened again.

It is now clear that only a public inquiry into both sawmill explosions will provide the answers that everyone affected by this horrific event deserves.

I ask that you honour your commitment to family members of those who were killed or injured, and all British Columbians by calling a public inquiry into the Babine and Lakeland sawmill explosions, and the botched investigations by Worksafe BC.

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A fireball shot into the air at the Babine Sawmill in Burns Lake on January 20, 2012. Two workers were killed, dozens more suffered severe physical and emotional trauma three months later, with no answers to why the first explosion happened, another two workers were killed by an explosion at the Lakeland Sawmill in Prince George, B.C. Today workers are still looking for answers.

Christy Clark decided against calling a Public Inquiry, preferring instead a Coroner's Inquest. But the Coroner's Inquest is a disaster. The former head of WorkSafeBC declined to testify and answer questions. WorkSafeBC also turned down access to a private investigation by one of the mills' owners and then did not tell an ongoing inquest about the existence of this extensive hidden evidence. The Coroner's Inquest promptly adjourned indefinitely because as explained by the lead government lawyer it will take weeks to review the new evidence and arrange for the new witnesses to testify.

We created the petition because the public deserves the full facts of the case. Workers and their families deserve answers, not a cover-up.



**“The inquest has heard how WorkSafeBC’s failure to carry out its mandate to ensure the health and safety of workers resulted in a complete mishandling of sawmill safety both before and after the explosion,”** said Stephen Hunt, Director, USW District 3 **“Despite this tragic failure to do its job, the agency is not being held accountable.”**

Now that the Coroner's Inquest proved to be a mess, it is time for the people of B.C. to call for a Public Inquiry so that families can get the closure they need and that policies change to stop any future deadly explosions.

Only a Public Inquiry will compel WorkSafe BC, the owners of the sawmill and everyone involved with this tragic explosion to answer the important questions of why this happened and how the investigations were so badly botched.

To date Christy Clark and her BC Liberal government have refused to call a Public Inquiry. Our hope is that with enough public pressure we can collect thousands of signatures on this petition, and convince Christy Clark to keep her promise to the workers and families of Babine Lake and Lakeland sawmills. Please sign it today and pass it along through your networks.

