

PLEASE REMEMBER KYLE HICKEY

22 year-old killed in auto body shop explosion

A well-known Nova Scotia car dealership was fined \$38,750 this week for failing to ensure a safe workplace in connection with an explosion and fire that killed an employee in 2008.

Kyle Hickey, age 22, a one-year employee of the car dealership's body shop was in charge of preparing cars for painting in the spray booth. An explosion and fire occurred in an area containing barrels of solvent and paint materials on March 13, 2008, burning Kyle significantly and he died in hospital the next day.

A 15-month investigation of the Dartmouth shop by the provincial Labour Department followed and the shop was charged with five offences under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. The dealership pleaded guilty to one charge of failing to take every reasonable precaution to ensure the health and safety of people in a workplace.

According to an agreed statement of facts reported on by the Halifax Chronicle Herald, the explosion and fire started in barrel holding solvents used to wash paint guns. The exact cause was "indiscernible", but was originally suggested as a paint fumes explosion.

The dealership admitted that barrels containing the chemicals were not properly labeled and grounded and that it failed to provide Hickey with any "site-specific safety training".

According to the news agency, the judge, Pam Williams, said there was no evidence that the company's infractions caused the death of Kyle Hickey.

The Crown requested a \$150,000 fine, which would have been the largest ever for a health and safety violation in Nova Scotia, while the defense recommended a \$30,000 fine.

The judge identified that the dealership spent about \$19,000 on safety improvements after the incident and another \$9,000 on services for the Hickey family and their employees, and a commemorative plaque and bench on a walking trail.

Judge Williams said "It is important to stress the potential is ever-present for harm to occur when employee hazard-awareness training is not undertaken or refreshed and when flammable liquids are not properly labeled or stored in the workplace."

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT SAFETY TRAINING OR HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IN YOUR SHOP, PLEASE CALL YOUR ASSOCIATION AT 1 866 309 4272 OR GO TO www.autobodyhelp.ca

