

Dana worker slips and slams head on concrete working in unsafe conditions at Fort Wayne, Indiana plant

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On Thursday, a production worker handling parts inside a robot cage at Dana's Fort Wayne, Indiana plant stepped on a loose controller cord, fell, and slammed her head twice on the concrete floor. Workers who witnessed the injury contacted the *World Socialist Web Site* to report that an ambulance came to the plant after she was taken to the factory infirmary. The worker returned to work Friday out of fear for being docked for poor attendance.

The injury comes as workers in the plant are angry over unsafe conditions that subordinate workers' lives and safety to corporate profit. At the same plant, workers report that the company sprayed down workers with dangerous disinfectant and then forced them to keep working when they got sick.

Workers on the same production line are furious that the injury took place. It is just another example of the type of sweatshop conditions against which Dana workers nationwide are rebelling.

One worker told the WSWWS that machines in the plant routinely "leak fluids all over the place." Workers say the line is never shut down when oil leakage becomes a hazard because the company and the union, the United Steelworkers, are only concerned with meeting quotas. Management reportedly purchased a floor scrubber but workers say the scrubber is hardly used. Another worker reported to the *World Socialist Web Site* that the floors are often covered in oil or rainwater and that injuries are common in the plant.

The injured worker was forced to return to work today, despite the fact that she may have a concussion. She apparently feared losing her job, despite the risk to her long-term health. It appears that the worker was so symptomatic at work Friday that Dana instructed her to

seek additional medical help.

One coworker said, "If she called off from work, it would've gone against attendance, and she would've been unpaid. With the holiday mandate, they [Dana] take away your holiday pay." The worker continued, "Workers have raised hell when the gassing occurred and about oil spills in the plant. But Dana, the company just likes and does nothing because, once again, the whole money thing."

Like most Dana plants, Fort Wayne workers voted down the sweatshop contract, 362 votes to 39. Many workers believe due to the voting down of the contract workers were mandated to work through the Labor Day holiday. Like all Dana plants, Fort Wayne workers are expected to keep up with Big Three automotive demands regardless of their health and safety.

A group of workers who saw the aftermath of the fall said, "Numerous employees have lost fingers or parts of fingers in accidents in the last 10 years. After the shutdown [March-May 2020] employees were called back to work without a choice, in danger of their lives. We were then completely shut out of profit-sharing for 2020! I understand that management *did* receive bonuses though for 2020!"

Injuries and death are reportedly common at Dana. Workers say that three production workers and one skilled tradesman died from cancer after working in an area where materials are buffed and machine repairs take place. One worker who had inhaled smoke from a smoldering fire at work later became ill with cancer and passed away.

Workers at this plant were sprayed with a powerful chemical disinfectant, Aspen One Step, that is dangerous if ingested or inhaled or if it comes in

contact with eyes or skin. One worker revealed that initially management blamed cleaning workers for spraying the incorrect chemical while stating to others that it was just hand sanitizer that was sprayed. He continued, “I saw this Aspen One Step on my shift. You see these people spray this with a container and an air hose. It’s similar to spraying insecticide. They don’t even have PPE for the people that spray it, they don’t have masks.”

The worker explained that with the way the cleaning crew sprays, “Most of the time they will spray down equipment or the air. I have trouble breathing after they do that. It’s an everyday process, you see them spraying. Sometimes they will clear the line for an hour or two, then have people back on the line. The infected person could’ve been all around the plant, cleaning one area wouldn’t do anything. For the amount of time they spray the plant it should be shut down for months.”

An injury to one is an injury to all! To contact the DWRFC about organizing a new leadership for the struggle at Dana and to make the workplace safe for all workers, email danawrfc@gmail.com or text at (248) 602-0936.



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact