

Beat: Health

Black bear kills oil sands worker in Canada

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USPA News - An oil sands worker was killed Wednesday when she was attacked by a large black bear at a site in northeastern Alberta, Canadian authorities and her employer said on early Thursday. The bear was later shot dead by police officers.

The incident happened at around 2 p.m. local time on Wednesday when a large, male black bear attacked a worker at an Oil Sands base plant north of Fort McMurray, about 400 kilometers (248 miles) northeast of Edmonton in Alberta. The female employee was pronounced deceased at the scene. The attack took place at a site belonging to Suncor Energy, one of Canada's leading integrated energy companies, which specializes in oil sands development and conventional and offshore oil and gas production. The black bear was shot dead by Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers who responded to the call for help. The identity of the victim was not immediately released pending notification of next of kin. "We are shocked by this very unusual incident and there are no words to express the tragedy of this situation. Our thoughts and prayers go out to family, friends and co-workers," said Mark Little, executive vice president of Upstream at Suncor. "All of us need to focus on personal safety and I would urge everyone to be extremely vigilant in dealing with wildlife." Fatal bear attacks are rare, though they have increased in parts of North America due to human population growth. According to research published in the Journal of Wildlife Management in May 2011, at least 63 people in Canada and the United States were killed by non-captive black bears between 1900 and 2009.

Article online:

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