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For Immediate Release  
February 16, 2006

## **MURRAY BROS. LUMBER COMPANY LIMITED FINED \$150,000 FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY VIOLATION**

OTTAWA – Murray Bros. Lumber Company, a producer of hardwood and softwood lumber, with a sawmill in Madawaska, Ont., was fined \$150,000 today for a violation of the Occupational Health and Safety Act that resulted in the death of an employee.

On February 2, 2004, a worker was found deceased in a restricted area underneath an in-feed conveyor belt at a “hog mill” (a building that receives waste material and reduces it in size through a series of conveyor belts, chutes and machines). The worker, a long-time employee, had been working alone in the hog mill and was found by a co-worker entangled in the conveyor’s take-up rolls. The incident occurred at the company’s sawmill on Highway 60 West in Madawaska, a village located on an eastern gate of Algonquin Park.

A Ministry of Labour investigation found the main feed belt switch on the conveyor’s control panel was turned to the fast position although it’s unknown if this switch was moved after the incident. The fast belt speed is estimated to be about 110 feet per minute. There were no witnesses to the incident, but it is believed the worker removed safety chains inside the conveyor to enter the restricted area in order to clean up or to try to remove something that may have become caught in the conveyor. It was the worker’s job to ensure the hog mill’s system ran smoothly. The worker’s duties included clearing jams and cleaning up sawdust.

Murray Bros. Lumber Company Limited pleaded guilty, as an employer, to failing to take the reasonable precaution of ensuring the hog mill’s in-feed conveyor was stopped and locked out before the worker entered the area below the conveyor. This was contrary to Section 25(2)(h) of the act.

The fine was imposed by Justice of the Peace Louissette Girault of the Ontario Court of Justice in Ottawa. In addition, the court imposed a 25-per-cent victim fine surcharge, as required by the Provincial Offences Act. The surcharge is credited to a special provincial government fund to assist victims of crime.

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Court Information at a Glance

**Location:** Ontario Court of Justice  
100 Constellation Court, Courtroom 101  
Ottawa, Ontario

**Judge:** Justice of the Peace Louise Girault

**Date / Time:** February 16, 2006, 1:30 p.m.

**Defendant:** Murray Bros. Lumber Company Limited

**Matter:** Occupational Health & Safety

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