

**Proclamation 8963 of April 24, 2013****Honoring the Victims of the Explosion in West, Texas**

*By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

As a mark of respect for the memory of those who perished in the explosion in West, Texas, on April 17, 2013, I hereby order, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, that the flag of the United States shall be flown at half-staff at all public buildings and grounds and at all military facilities and naval stations of the Federal Government in the State of Texas on April 25, 2013.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand thirteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-seventh.

BARACK OBAMA

**Proclamation 8964 of April 26, 2013****Workers Memorial Day, 2013**

*By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

Our country boasts the world's most talented, driven, effective labor force. American workers power our homes and feed our families. They raise skyscrapers, transport goods to market, and manufacture products that are the envy of the world. Together, they form the backbone of our economy. As a Nation, we have an obligation to protect the men and women who perform these vital tasks. Yet tragically, thousands of American workers die on the job each year, and millions more suffer work-related injuries or illnesses. On Workers Memorial Day, we honor them, and we reaffirm that no one should have to put their life on the line to bring home a paycheck.

At the turn of the 20th century, laborers faced hazardous conditions. Factory doors were locked from the outside, which prevented quick evacuation in emergencies. A combination of shoddy equipment and fatigue from long shifts made serious injury and death all too common. Career-ending injuries often led to poverty and starvation.

From mine shafts to railroads to factory floors, workers began to speak out. Thanks to generations of union organizers and advocates, conditions slowly improved. But it was not until decades later that our laws assured the right to a safe workplace. The Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969 established comprehensive health and safety standards for the mining industry, and the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 enacted similar standards for all workers. These statutes remain the cornerstone of our protections today, and my Administration remains committed to enforcing