



## USW LOCAL 9346

### Your monthly news & updates

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Visit our Website

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### Upcoming Events

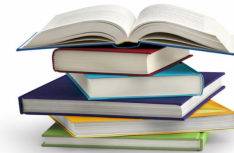
**General Membership Meeting** - Our next scheduled meeting will be Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at 5:30pm via Zoom. If you are interested in participating please email [admin@usw9346.ca](mailto:admin@usw9346.ca) with your name and badge number by Thursday, March 10 to receive an invite for this meeting.



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### New Collective Agreement

We received the electronic copy of our CBA from HR last week. It can be found on our website under the menu heading Contract and then choose CBA's from the list or by clicking the link here <http://www.usw9346.ca/cbas/>



We hope to have the books from the printers very soon.

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### Safety Reps Needed for Specific Crews

We are recruiting **Safety Reps** on the following crews:  
Please note that these are all 2x2 day/night shifts

**Maintenance:**

- A Crew (days and nights)
- C Crew (days and nights)

**Operations:**

- A Crew (days and nights)
- C Crew (days and nights)

**Plant:**

- C Crew (days and nights)

If you are on one of the above shifts and are interested in becoming a Safety Rep, please reply to this email to express your interest and be considered.



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## USW Local 9346 Scholarship

USW Local 9346 offers a \$1000 scholarship to a son or daughter of one of our member's, who is graduating grade 12 this year and will be enrolling into post secondary this fall. The applicant with the highest average mark - based on their supplied transcript - will be the successful applicant. Deadline to apply is May 2, 2022.



Please click the link below for the application form.

[USW 9346 Scholarship Application Form](#)

The USW - out of our District and National Offices also offer scholarships. For details on those please visit their website at <https://usw.ca/members/scholarships>  
For reference we are in District 3.

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## International Women's Day Webinar

The BC Federation of Labour is offering a free webinar on IWD March 8 on Women's Health and Safety in the Workplace. This webinar takes place noon - 1:30 Pacific Time - so it will be from 1-2:30pm our time.



Topics include:

- Understand gender-based inequities in health & safety and how they impact women
- Discuss workplace hazards that put women at risk to their physical and psychological health and safety
- Explore actions that webinar participants can take to address inequities

To Register for this please click the link below.

[Event Management \(microsoftcrmportal.com\)](https://microsoftcrmportal.com)

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## Retiree's

Congratulations to all of our recent retiree's.

Rick Nadeau retired as an Electrician on September 8, 2021.



Paul Wheeler retired as a serviceperson on November 30, 2021. He started on the claim in July of 2000.



James Otteson retired as a shovel operator on January 10, 2022. He started on the claim in March of 1979.



Bill Dobra retired as a loader operator on February 1, 2022. He started on the claim May of 2005.

## Messages from Your Local Union Executive

### President's Message

Brothers and Sisters,

Almost everyone has now heard about the new Respiratory Protection program that will be rolled out on site March 15. This is a valley wide program and will ensure that most people working for Teck will be Fit Tested for a respirator (not a KN95 paper mask).

With several cases of silicosis across the valley which has mainly been caused by working outside in dusty conditions, Teck has now decided to start this program to ensure the health of its employees.

So, what does this mean for you?

It means that yes, you may have to be clean shaven at least once for the Fit Test of your mask which you will have to do once every 2 years - depending on your classification. You will also need to be prepared to shave if you are required to wear your respirator while at work.

The Union was also told that Teck will start working on fixing their equipment to ensure positive air pressure in all the cabs of the equipment. The Union was also told that these fixes could take up to 2 years to complete.

The Union was also told that all employees will be broken down into groups depending on their job and depending on whatever category you fall into will decide when you will be required to wear a respirator. You can view the breakdown [here...](#)

The three categories go as follows:

**Frequent:** Come clean shaven every day. Fit test every two years

**Occasional:** Do not need to come clean shaven every day but must be willing to if needed. Fit test every two years

**Infrequent:** Do not need to be clean shaven or fit tested.

No matter what classification you fall into, if you end up needing to wear respiratory protection due to the task or area, you need to make sure it's worn properly. I.e. clean shave per the attachment/guideline that the Company is presenting. The Company is telling us that there is still more to work out for the day to day implementation of this, especially in the Ops areas where people are qualified on multiple pieces of equipment.

At the time of the meeting with the company about this program Teck was still unsure if equipment operators would have to wear a respirator in the cab while operating the equipment or if it would just be while they are outside doing their circle checks or walking coal seams, etc.

Now don't get me wrong wearing a respirator all day long is zero fun inside the equipment. But this is a legitimate safety concern and could very well stop you from getting silicosis, COPD, workplace pneumonia, or other respiratory diseases. We will continue to monitor whether this program is effective or not but the Union will not fight to keep you unsafe at work.

As always, I can be reached by email [scottl@usw9346.ca](mailto:scottl@usw9346.ca) or on my cell at 250-425-4147 anytime if you have any questions or concerns.

Scott Liddle  
President  
USW Local 9346

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## Safety Chair's Message

### January Overview

A quick look at the reported incidents in January shows that approximately 16 injuries were reported ranging from ankle and knee injuries to back injuries to debris in individuals' eyes. December brought us extreme weather conditions complete with snow and freezing temperatures, making every walking surface a hazard. It will take some time for the ice to melt so make sure you're not leaving hazardous areas for someone else to possibly injure themselves and report them so they can be addressed. In the parking lot, make sure you're continuing to park in the proper areas to allow Road Crew and maintenance to keep that area clear and safe.

Along with injuries we saw around 12 incidents of equipment damage reported, a grid box fire, some smoldering coal at the plant, and two lockout infractions at the plant. We lost a haul truck tire in the fog that was previously being used as a barrier and was in the process of being moved. An autonomous truck was kind enough to find the tire for us and drag it to the stockpile it was dumping on. Questions were raised around how the tire was missed by radar; investigation into this incident is suggesting that the tire had found its way into a low area of the road.

We also had two Dangerous Occurrences reported during January.

-The first involved MacKay Contracting on the old 6 Mile below the Bodie. A Mackay truck was marshalled and waiting to load, a second truck made its swing above the marshalling area and proceeded downhill to queue behind the marshalled truck when the driver started to slide and was unable to stop, sliding into the back of the marshalled truck. Luckily, the operator of the truck and their trainee were uninjured.

-The second DO occurred when a blast guard was placed in the incorrect location and two contractors were allowed to enter the 900m blast circle when a blast in BR2 was shot. Both of these incidents are undergoing the ICAM process to hopefully flush out the "root" cause.

## Medical Assessments

Teck now offers access to a registered nurse for the purpose of testing for some common workplace conditions. These tests include: an audiometric (hearing) test, a spirometry (lung function) test, and a chest x-ray. These tests are all voluntary and completely confidential. You should have received an information sheet explaining the process and how to book an appointment. If you haven't, please contact your supervisor or me. The audio and spirometry take approximately 45 minutes to complete followed by a quick trip to Sparwood or Fernie hospital to complete the chest x-ray. Under article 4.09 of the CBA, you are entitled to... "four (4) hours pay at straight time...." to attend this examination.

## Exhaust in Cab

I have received complaints about the "new to us" 830 fleet having issues with excessive exhaust in the cabs. If you come across this issue as an operator or maintenance person, please report it to your supervisor and DO NOT RUN if you feel this is unsafe. Workers who are exposed to diesel exhaust can have effects ranging from irritation of the eyes and nose, headaches and nausea, to respiratory disease and lung cancer for excessive and prolonged exposure. Do not allow yourself or your Brothers or Sisters to be exposed to this hazard. Contact me if you have any concerns!

Be safe out there everyone!!

Julia McKay OH&SC Chair  
[juliam@usw9346.ca](mailto:juliam@usw9346.ca)  
**250-603-9555**

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## Grievance/WCB Chair's Message

### Corporate Understanding of Workplace Mental Health

Industrial work has long been recognized as being a source of worker stress and a cause for mental health issues. While there are efforts to address the outcomes from industrial exposure in terms of mental health on employees, employer based engagement is currently the area lacking and point of concern from mental health professionals.

An article in the Australasian Mine Journal states in part:

*"Without an evidence-based understanding about the real dynamics and impact of mental stress, however, there is a risk that valuable programs addressing the health and safety of workers will be overlooked. Safeguarding the health and safety of employees by mitigating the risk factor of work stressors alone, is not enough."*

The issue of workplace stress is complex and requires a multi-level approach to reach a level of worker and corporate understanding. The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety have developed strategies and programs to address workplace mental issues.

The CCOHS states in part:

"A process to identify, assess and control psychosocial hazards proactively and on an ongoing basis must be established in the workplace. Employees must also be trained to report unhealthy psychosocial situations to their supervisor or manager, who will investigate and take corrective action, if required. The results of the assessments will help to set objectives and targets when developing programs or policies.

Sources of information for hazard and risk evaluation for the psychosocial work environment include:

- health and safety committee reports, minutes, and/or recommendations
- workplace health/well-being committee reports, minutes, and/or recommendations
- worker concerns and complaints during workplace inspections or other times
- worker exit interviews
- previous workplace risk assessments
- incident investigations (investigations should examine the psychological factors, as it would factors such as chemical, physical, ergonomic, environmental, etc.)
- absenteeism, short- and long-term disability claim data



- employee surveys such as perception surveys, employee engagement surveys
- data regarding the use of health benefit claims and Employee Assistance Program (EAP), if available

Note: Because psychosocial hazards are non-physical, they generally cannot be seen during inspections or audits. It is necessary to ask employees about the stressors they experience at work. This process must be confidential and anonymous whenever possible.”

With 30% of disability claims in Canada being related to mental health problems and mental illness, and with laws protecting workers mental health in the workplace, corporate entities need to develop programs and strategies to help workers deal with mental health issues as they arise.

The Government of Canada recommends practices to better employee mental health. They state in part:

**“Top 8 practices—What can you do to help**

1. Support employee participation and decision-making
2. Define employees' duties and responsibilities
3. Promote work-life balance
4. Encourage and model respectful behaviours
5. Manage workloads
6. Provide training and learning opportunities
7. Have conflict resolution practices in place
8. Recognize employees' contributions effectively”

They also outline the psychological benefits of a healthy workplace:

**“Benefits of a psychologically healthy workplace**

As an employer, there are many ways in which you can help create a psychologically healthy and safe workplace. Building a supportive work environment that promotes mental well-being has benefits for everyone and keeps your workforce strong and competitive.

**Better:**

- engagement
- morale
- satisfaction
- retention and recruitment
- productivity

**Reduces:**

- absenteeism
- grievances
- health costs
- medical leave/disability
- workplace injuries”

With many resources being developed one can only hope corporations will take advantage of these programs and recognize the value in employees mental health and the benefits of a healthy workforce.

As always I can be reached by email at [troyc@usw9346.ca](mailto:troyc@usw9346.ca) and my phone is always on 250-423-8742. Call anytime. Stay safe, stay awesome.

Troy Cook  
Grievance/Compensation Chairman  
USW Local 9346

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