



USW LOCAL 9346 Your monthly news & updates

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Visit our Website

**Our website is currently under a revamp - and some parts are not functioning properly. We hope the new improved website will be up and running properly in the next few weeks. **

Upcoming Events

General Membership Meeting - Our next scheduled meeting is on Tuesday, May 17, 2022 at 5:30pm at the Union Hall located at 111 Centennial Square, Sparwood.

If you would prefer to join this meeting virtually, please email admin@usw9346.ca to get a link.

CONSTRUCTION in Centennial Square - Centennial Square in Sparwood will be under construction soon. The town has assured us that sidewalk access in the front will be maintained for pedestrian traffic. You can also park in the Green Hall parking lot and come through our back door as well.



Scholarships

CONGRATULATIONS - to Maya Delaire who was the successful applicant of our \$1000 Local Union Scholarship this year.

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



Westray 30th Anniversary

May 9 marked 30 years since the devastating disaster where an

entire shift of workers perished, and 11 bodies were never recovered. Those miners remain entombed in the underground wreckage of the mine, now covered by a memorial park where a monument stands as a lasting tribute.

Leaders and members of the USW union were in Pictou County, N.S., to mark the 30th anniversary of the Westray disaster, joining the families and community to remember the miners who were killed.

Today, the struggle continues as the union fights to have the Westray Law better enforced across the country. Too many employers still get away with practices and negligence that result in workers being killed.

Read more: [United Steelworkers honour Westray disaster 30 years later, push for enforcement of law](#)



Retirees

CONGRATULATIONS to Paul Lafreniere.

Paul retired on April 12, 2022 after working at Elkview for 14 years. Paul retired as a Heavy Duty Mechanic.

All the best to you Paul in your retirement.



Messages from your Local Union Executive

President's Message

Shift Schedules

During our last Labour Management meeting, the Company brought up the work schedule in Article 7.04 (c) of the CBA. This clause has been in the CBA for as long as anyone can remember and states:

7.04(c) Twelve (12) hours per day based on a work cycle which is eight (8) consecutive weeks four (4) shifts on, four (4) shifts off, averaging forty two (42) hours per week.

This clause can mean:

1. 4 days and 4 off (4x4) or
2. 2 days, 2 nights and then 4 off (2x2) or it could even mean
3. 4 days, 4 off, 4 nights, 4 off.

The Company has never chosen to implement option 3 even though they have the right to do so. Well until now that is.

It sounds like from the discussion at Labour/Management, the Company is going to be canvassing the Maintenance group (2x2 and running repair) looking for volunteers to see if they can get the 4 days, 4 off, 4 nights, 4 off, shift schedule up and running for a "trial period".

Now, the Company putting this shift in place or not is not the concern, as the CBA does allow for it, it's the fact that they only wish to canvass Maintenance at this time and not all brothers and sisters on site. We have had several members come down to the hall expressing their desire to work the 4 days, 4 off, 4 nights, 4 off schedule instead of the 2x2 over the years and we are not opposed to that schedule. We do realize however that housing and childcare issues, etc. do come into play in all of this though, as that is what we got back from our membership when this was discussed about 5 years ago.

The Union has asked Management that EVERYONE be included in this discussion, not just the

Maintenance group. The Company did say that Maintenance is a smaller group and potentially easier to manage a trial like this. They did not say though that if things went well, it would be offered to other departments.

Since the Union does not set the schedule, should you wish to voice your opinion on it, you should get in contact with your Superintendent.

Sick Days

Let's talk about the 5 paid sick days and how to access them and how we ended up receiving them.

- We get 5 days per year at an average day's rate of pay
- You cannot carry them over or get them paid out if you don't use them
- Follow the call-in procedure as per the Policy and tell your supervisor that you wish to use a paid sick day
- Teck can ask for Reasonable Proof

When we found out that the newly implemented government legislation did not apply to some workers that are covered under a CBA, the USW Locals got together to lobby the BC Government to bring amendments to the legislation to address the issues. With the help of Hon. Harry Bains, Minister of Labour, we were able to achieve this goal for our members.

New Pay Stubs and Dues

There has been some concern raised over a change of wording on our paystubs. It seems that the USW 0.02 Dues = \$0.02/hr has been changed by the company to read "Union Dues USW added Dues" This deduction is nothing new. The \$ 0.02/hr is mandatory and always has been that way along with the 1.45% Union Dues as per our Constitution. The USW Union Assistance and USW Humanity Fund remain Voluntary. We have not added any new deductions to your pay.

Mines Code Review

For those of you that don't know - your VP/Safety Chair, Julia McKay has accepted the daunting task of sitting on the Mines Code Review Board so we finally have actual boots on the ground helping make changes to the Mines code in favour of your safety.

In Solidarity,

Scott Liddle
President
USW Local 9346
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Safety Chair's Message

Blasting

While participating in an ICAM involving 11 unfired holes in a pattern and the subsequent exposure of personnel and equipment to unknown misfires, I was informed that the entire valley has seen an uptick in misfires. Although the process of blasting might seem like a simple one, there are many moving parts, and we can never underestimate or downplay the destructive power of the products we work with.

On January 20th of this year, a tragic accident involving a Maxam bulk truck in Ghana nearly leveled a village and claimed the lives of 17 people. Please click on the link below to see the fall out of this incident.

This is a stark reminder of the volatility of the products we work with everyday. Although this was a larger amount of product, a small amount has the potential to cause injury and death if not handled properly.

From the time a pattern is prepped for drilling, to the time the button is pressed to initiate a blast, to equipment digging the muck, we all need to work together to make sure it is done safely.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/ghana-explosion-least-17-killed-dozens-injured-mining-truck-crash-blas-rcna13033>

In Solidarity,

Julia McKay
VP and H&S Chair
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