



USW LOCAL 9346 Your monthly news & updates

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Visit our Website

We have re-vamped our website. Please check it out!! Find out who your Executive, Shop Stewards and Safety Reps are, find your benefits booklet and Sunlife forms, read past newsletters, find out meeting dates, and more!!

Upcoming Events

General Membership Meeting - Our next scheduled meeting is on Tuesday, June 20, 2023 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.

Safety Rep Meeting - June 15, 2023 at 4:30pm at the Union Hall

Shop Steward Meeting - September 14, 2023 at 4:30pm at the Union Hall

Women of Steel Meeting - Coming in late August. Date yet to be determined.



Women of Steel - Bus Stop BBQ's Coming in June

The Women of Steel will be hosting Bus Stop BBQ's in June in the main parking lot. We will be selling burgers, chips, pop, and water to raise money for our Annual Back To School Backpacks Campaign. This campaign supplies backpacks with all the needed school supplies to kids in need in Sparwood, Fernie, Elkford, and the Crowsnest Pass. BBQ schedule will be as follows:

June 13 - from 4:00pm to 8:45pm ish (once the last bus is down and everyone has gotten their food; or we sell out)
June 15 - from 6:00pm to 8:45pm ish
June 17 - from 6:00pm to 8:45pm ish
June 19 - from 6:00pm to 8:45pm ish



Please keep an eye out for posters with more details coming

shortly. Everyone is welcome to attend these BBQ's including Staff and Contractors. We thank everyone for their support.

Union Assistance Plan - Beneficiary Cards

The Union Assistance Plan is a program run out of our United Steelworkers District 3. If you belong to this program, a benefit of \$2500 is paid out to your beneficiary immediately upon your death. If you see \$0.70 coming off your paycheck once a month called Union Dues USW Assist Vol. then you belong to this program. (If you do not belong and want to sign up, please come see Sarah at the Union Hall.) You will have also signed a yellow beneficiary card and we keep these at the Union Hall.



A lot of our members forget about this benefit and forget to keep their beneficiary cards current. We can only pay out to the beneficiary listed on your beneficiary card. If your life situations change over the years, please make sure you are also coming in to the Union Hall to update your beneficiary cards.

Scholarships Available - Students of Members

The USW 9346 Scholarship for a grade 12 student of a member has been awarded and will be announced at the Sparwood Grad Ceremonies this weekend. Congratulations to the recipient!!



The USW National Office does still have scholarships available for grade 12 students - deadline for these is June 30, 2023.

Details on these can be found at <https://usw.ca/education-training/#usw-scholarships>

Specifically the ones for students of members are called:

1. USW Indigenous Scholarship
2. USW Post Secondary Scholarship and
3. David Ellis Scholarship

Please view each of those on the website listed above for eligibility and application forms.

If you have any questions, please give our office a call at 250-425-0131.

Training Opportunity Scholarship for Members

We also have a scholarship available for our members who would like to get more active in our union.

Our District of the United Steelworkers - District 3 - every year, holds a school near Kimberley/Cranbrook. This year the USW District 3 Fall School is being held on September 17-22 and will be at the St. Eugene.



In memory of our Brother, Troy Cook, we will be offering a scholarship for one of our members to attend this school and it will cover the cost of any lost time wages (time off is subject to Company approval), registration fees, accommodations, meals, and authorized expenses related to attending this school e.g. mileage.

In order to apply for this scholarship, please submit a 500-word essay on "**Why is the Union Important to me?**"

Please email your essay to admin@usw9346.ca by **JUNE 15**,

2023 along with what course you would like to attend. The courses offered at this school are below. The Executive will select the successful recipient at their June 20 Executive meeting.

COURSES OFFERED:

- Unionism on Turtle Island
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Facing Management
- Leadership for Action

If you have any questions, please give our office a call at 250-425-0131.

Shop Stewards and Safety Reps Needed

Shop Stewards and Safety Reps are needed on all Crews in Maintenance and on D Crew at the Plant.

If you are interested please call the Union Hall at 250-425-0131 to put your name forward.



Messages from your Local Union Executive

President's Message

Brothers and Sisters:

We have been getting numerous calls regarding the possible purchase of Teck by Glencore. What would this mean to you as a member? Well, nothing really, BC Labour Laws state that our CBA would have to be honoured until October 31, 2026, no matter when or who purchases Teck. On Tuesday May 9, 2023, Pierre Lassonde, chair emeritus of Franco-Nevada Mining Corp told the Financial Times he had assembled a consortium to bid for Teck's entire Coal business.

So, there are a lot of moving parts here and we control none of them. Teck will sell to whomever has the deepest pockets and once again we will be under a new owner, this has happened many times in the past and will most likely happen again in the future.

On March 9, 2023, the Province of BC passed legislation to make September 30 National Day for Truth and Reconciliation a statutory holiday.

Early in April the Apprenticeship Committee sat down and awarded 2 Heavy Duty Mechanic and 1 Electrical apprenticeship. We would like to congratulate the following Brothers on their apprenticeship awards:

- Russ McRae
- Nick Leonard
- Ryan Andres

Pre-apprenticeship testing dates are posted around the site and at the Union Hall.

Mental Health Awareness Month takes place across Canada every May. During this month, we can learn about mental illness and how it affects people's lives in different ways.

If you or a family member need help please contact the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) 1-844-880-9137

In Solidarity,

Scott Liddle
President
scottl@usw9346.ca

Interim Safety Chair's Message

Dear Members,

Air Quality Management & Your Health

There are some big changes happening on site regarding Air Quality Management including but not limited to the fitted masks that have been provided. Your JOHSC committee has been working together to help emphasize the importance of protecting oneself from dust and fine particles. These changes are being introduced for one reason, the reason being your health and safety in the workplace. Stats indicate that in British Columbia alone there were 181 workplace deaths last year, 107 of those deaths were due to occupational diseases.



Some changes you may have seen already are the new BreatheSafe Cat D11 cab air filtration systems. These systems are designed to maximize your protection from dust in the cab. These systems will also be introduced in all water trucks by the end of June, then continuing with other auxiliary equipment. Also, many of us have had the opportunity to listen to last month's speaker, Dr. Joshua Tepper regarding dust exposure. Hopefully, we all had some key takeaways during that meeting.

The company is also providing medical assessments in Sparwood which includes a hearing test, lung function testing and a chest x-ray (you will be provided with a requisition to take to the health center for the x-ray). This will only take 1 hour and is in Sparwood. More information on how to access this will be available onsite shortly, in the meantime one can simply scan this QR Code, located at the top of this article, with your phone for more information.

Moving forward, I would like to encourage everyone to communicate with Supervision, Safety Reps or myself if you have any concerns or questions regarding the Air Quality Management program or dust in your workplace area. Having that communication will enable everyone to help improve the process needed to make all of our working conditions better.

In solidarity,

Frank Roesger
Interim H&S Chair
Interim JOHSEC - Co-Chair
250-278-0224
frankr@usw9346.ca

Grievance Chair's Message

Right To Manage

ARTICLE 2 MANAGERMENTS RIGHTS

2.01 the company shall retain, maintain and exercise all managerial rights, authorities, and prerogatives, subject only to the express terms and provisions of the agreement

We've all heard it, that blanket statement that management uses that can make us feel like they are saying "we can do whatever we want". Now, while we do have to exercise "work now, grieve later," management being able to do whatever they want with the workforce just isn't true. We have a CBA, these are our rights, as a unit we bargained for them, as a unit we voted for them, and together with the company we decided to work under the agreements of the CBA.

Now while this term loves getting thrown around, the last part usually gets left out: **subject only to the express terms and provisions of the agreement.** This is very important because what this means is that it only falls to management rights if there isn't a term or provision for the issue in question stated in the CBA.

The CBA is your lifeline to know what has been agreed to between the company and your bargaining committee. While no one is expected to have it memorized word for word, do yourself a favor and read through it, learn how to navigate the language, discuss it with other members, and don't be scared to ask questions. I am here full time at the Union Hall and would be happy to discuss this with you or ask to see your Shop Steward on your crew.

We all have a job to do whether its management, supervisors, hourly employees, and the CBA was made to promote a "harmonious work relationship". It is not "OUR weapon against THEM" it is what the majority of people involved agreed upon through bargaining and popular vote, both on the company side and union side. It is a tool to be used so we can all get our respective jobs done under the umbrella of the agreed upon articles of the CBA.

So take some time, to read *your* CBA, know your rights and the provisions that don't allow the "because I said so" attitude.

In Solidarity,

Dave Puszkar
Grievance Chair
250-425-0131
davep@usw9346.ca

WCB Chair's Message

The last few months have been challenging, exciting, and extremely busy. I currently have 10 WCB cases on the go at different stages. I am happy that I can help the membership greater in my new role as WCB Chair.

On April 27 I attended via Zoom an update on Bill 41 which was facilitated by Harrison O'Leary, a law firm out of Vancouver who deals with a lot of compensation claims. This course was offered through the Vancouver District Labour Council.

Bill 41 for the Worker's Compensation Act passed into law on November 24, 2022. The Bill contains significant amendments to the Act that are coming out in four stages, some of which have yet to be rolled out. Below is an excerpt from the materials we received in that course.

Effective November 24, 2022:

- Changes how WCB benefits are now indexed for inflation each year notably by eliminating the automatic 1% per year reduction from the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This is only for new claims after November 24, 2022.
- Increases the maximum compensation for non-traumatic hearing loss
- Expands the WCB's ability to prohibit employers from suppressing worker's compensation claims.

Effective April 3, 2023:

- Expands the ability of workers and employers to ask the WCAT to obtain an independent health professional (IHP)
- Allows the WCB to pay interest on a portion of denied benefits where they are won on review or appeal.

Effective May 1, 2023:

- Creates a fair practices commissioner position at the Board

Effective at a future date TBD (target date: January 1, 2024)

- Adds a duty in the Act for workers and employers to cooperate in the worker's early return to work
- Adds an obligation for employers to return injured workers to work and maintain employment, similar to duty to accommodate.

I am anxious to see the new Policies around the Duty to Cooperate and the Duty to Maintain Employment. There is some mixed feelings coming out of this new legislation. The draft policies should be out for consultation this summer.

With the new training scholarship out that members can apply for - I asked myself - "**Why is the Union Important to me?**" I have many answers for this question but one of the most important reasons for me is job security. Non-Union workers in BC fall under the Employment Standards Act (ESA). The ESA allows employers to terminate workers employment WITHOUT JUST CAUSE. Employer's under ESA can terminate workers at any time for any reason - they just need to give notice or pay severance in lieu of notice. If your length of service is longer than three years - then the employer only needs to give three weeks of notice and/or pay, plus one week of notice/pay after each additional year of employment (to a maximum of eight weeks). Under our CBA - Article 15 does not allow our employer to terminate without just cause and in turn gives us job security. This is one of the many reasons on why the union is important to me.

I would like to thank Chelsey Neufeld for stepping up and helping with the Women of Steel Committee. Keep an eye out for information for the Bus Stop BBQ's at the main parking lot coming in June. These BBQ's raise money for our Back to School Backpacks Campaign. Thanks to Teck for supporting us with these. If any sister out there is interested in joining the Women of Steel, please contact Chelsey on D Crew in Operations or give me a shout at the hall. Jen Riley on C/D Crew in the Warehouse is also our Women of Steel Co-Chair. She is off currently, but we hope to see her back at work soon!

I can be reached at the Union hall at 250-425-0131 for all of your administrative and WCB needs.

In Solidarity,

Sarah Thompson
Office Admin/WCB Chair/WOS Co-Chair
admin@usw9346.ca
