



The Conciliator

UNIFOR Local594 | Canada

204 Hodsman Road, Regina, SK.
<http://cep594.sasktelwebsite.net/>

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• EXECUTIVE

President:

Kevin Bittman

Recording Secretary:

Carla McCrie

Treasurer:

Kaleena Baulin

Negotiating Chairperson:

Dan Josephson

Maintenance V.P.:

Abe Mejia

Process V.P.:

George Brailean

Administration V.P.:

Angela Smart

PDD V.P.:

(vacant)

Chief Shop Steward:

Richard Exner

Information Officer:

Abe Mejia

Guide:

Vivian Molnar

Sergeant at Arms:

Brandon Klatt

Trustees:

Daryl Watch (15)

Daryl Schwartz (16)

Amy Wisniewski (17)

Local Update

I thought I would use this space to update everyone about on-going Union business as there are some important issues being dealt with everyday. The Company has made sure to keep the Union Executive very busy.

First some good news...the new UniFor 594 website is finished! Mishayla Kapell worked tirelessly in her spare time to finish the website for us and it is a vast improvement over our previous website. Visit www.unifor594.com for all the information you need about your local, calendar of events and contact information for your Union Executive.

On the Labour Relations front...we have met with the Company for Joint Labour Relations Meetings twice now. These meetings are scheduled to take place every month on the Thursday after our Executive Meetings. The Executive then reports to the membership at the General Meeting the next week. The JLR meeting minutes will soon be available on the CRC Portal for all to see.

Grievances...Currently we have eleven outstanding grievances dealing with a wide range of issues; Sick Leave pay denial, Letter #61, Article 2, and Progressive Discipline. The Law and Grievance Committees continue to spend countless hours dealing with these issues and ensuring the rights of our members are not infringed upon.

Canteen...Still sucks. It is a far cry from what we were promised when the switch was made.

Local Bargaining...As you all know we have entered in to the last year of our Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Company. Our CBA officially expires on January 31st of 2016. Shortly after the first Turnaround of 2015 the membership surveys will be distributed and collected by your department's shop steward. These surveys will ask you to outline your personal priorities going in to bargaining and things you would like to see. The bargaining committee will then take all your suggestions and develop our bargaining package based on your ideas and proposals.

National Bargaining...For those that are unaware or new to the bargaining process you may not know how the National factors in to our bargaining process. The Energy Sector of Unifor Canada bargains together in a sense. The Energy Sector convenes and determines, based on several industry factors, the contract length and an appropriate wage increase to negotiate for with the respective companies in our industry. There are a few other pieces to the National Package as well, but wages and contract term hold the most significance with our members. We are sending two members to Edmonton when the Energy and Chemical Bargaining Program meets in April for the Pre-Bargaining Conference.

“The New Unifor 594 website is finished.”

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• SHOP STEWARDS

Section IA:

Nathan Kraemer

Section IB:

Charles Brittner

Section II:

Billy Hamilton

Section III:

Curtis Baht

Section IV:

Travis Parker

Section V:

Chad Thompson

Scott Girard

Building Maintenance:

Garth Wendel

MRP:

Rob Jenkins

Ryan Fox

Pipefitters:

Wayne Globisch

Mechanics:

Derek Kups

Stores:

Brenda Curtis

Electrical:

Les Bonkowski

Jason Kelly

Instrumentation:

John Tyler

Inspection:

Keith Britton

Fire & Safety:

Daryl Watch

Administration:

Charlene Rae

Lab:

Mike Fink

Ray Strueby

Pumpers:

Ryan Dzioba

Decokers:

Jon Javorik

Welders:

Jim Milton

Scaffolders:

Nelson Wagman

Construction:

Mike Pelzer

Boilerhouse:

Ricky Nygaard

Insulators:

Kris Atkinson

Accommodation Update

Many moons ago I was a member of the Rehab Committee. After a brief hiatus, I have rejoined the more appropriately titled, Accommodation Committee. This is a joint Company-Union committee in which both sides each have three representatives. Richard Exner and Sharlene Stanley also sit on the committee as representatives for the Union.

In the early years, our sole purpose was to assist members who were permanently no longer physically capable of performing the duties of their current job, and find them a new position within the company. This remains our main objective. Recently, the three Union members of the committee met to evaluate, and develop strategies to better serve the membership. We decided to expand our scope to include being involved in any kind of accommodation a member may require. This could be something as simple as a new ergonomic chair, changes to a work station, or as complex as a new position in a different department. We recognize that many accommodations are currently made within departments, without assistance from the committee and this is great. We just want to be sure there are no members slipping through the cracks and suffering or struggling through their work days when they don't have to.

I think there may be a misconception about accommodation. Unfortunately, human nature sometimes leads us to believe a person who is moved into another position is getting preferential treatment. This is not true, any member requiring this sort of assistance will be treated the very same. Being "accommodated" is not always the "great deal" some members believe it to be. When an individual is accommodated they may have to take a pay cut and/or be moved out of their department or shop to a less desirable position. The upside to this is that the member maintains employment and has a fulfilling job they are capable of performing without further anguish or suffering.

The accommodation may require input from a member's physician, this is not to say that information needs to be divulged to the committee or the company. The committee simply needs to know the tasks a member can and cannot perform. Confidentiality and the member's privacy will be the committee's priority.

For an accommodation to be deemed successful it is crucial for the member to be completely involved and committed to the process.

Our local is proud to have negotiated language in to our CBA that helps protect members who may suffer from an injury or illness that prevents them from performing their regular duties. Take time to review Letter #35 of our CBA as it talks exclusively about the Accommodation Committee and how the Accommodation process works. It is your right as a worker to a healthy work environment. And if you have any questions please feel free to contact any member of committee.

Denise Hersikorn, Accommodation Committee



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Know Your CBA - Letter of Understanding #61

Utilization of Temporary Employees, Construction Section Employees and Contractors - Maint Department

It is agreed that in high work load periods (i.e. turnarounds or unscheduled or scheduled shutdowns) that the above categories of employees and contractors may be used on all classes of building and Refinery/Upgrader construction work and maintenance work. It is understood that such right will not be used to displace any permanent employees currently employed in classifications covered by this Agreement.

In the performance of Refinery maintenance activities the normal order of priority work assignments will be; a) Permanent Staff, b) Temporary employees and/or Construction Section, and c) Contractors to the extent possible and practical as determined by the Company.

For further clarification of the above and as an integral part of this letter, the following is also agreed to:

1. Maintenance activities that may be performed by Contractors will be by unionized contractors to the extent practical and possible (i.e. assuming unionized contractors are available). Exceptions may include catalyst contractors and others such as equipment suppliers personnel or specialty maintenance personnel (eg. compressor or gas engine maintenance).
2. The term of this letter shall be for the duration of the Agreement.

Staying Connected

Our Communication Committee has options for you to stay connected to news and information regarding our local.

Website. www.unifor594.com *new website has launched*

Email. unifor594webmaster@sasktel.net

Twitter. @Unifor594

Facebook. Unifor Fiveninefour

General Meetings. Fourth Tuesday of every month at the Union Hall.

Last Laugh



GRJ Labour Law Review

This year your local sent seven members to the GRJ Labour Law Review in Regina, where we discussed four hot topics currently facing unions; Workers Compensation Board (WCB) claims and mental health, last chance agreements, social media and the new Saskatchewan Employment Act.

The second annual conference has increased in popularity since last year, with close to 250 people attending this year. Unions from both public and private sectors were represented extremely well.

Our first presenter discussed WCB Claims regarding mental health. We learned that it is next to impossible for someone to make a successful claim for WCB benefits for a mental illness induced by workplace situations. With the stress levels that are forever increasing and the demand for us to be more and more efficient at our workplace, it will only be a matter of time before one of our members encounters this situation.

It's a good thing that we have bargained programs (EFAP, Personal days, etc.) in to our CBA to help our members. There are a great deal of working people in our society that don't have access to these benefits and WCB will not be there to help them as it is not an injury in their eyes.

The second topic we covered was Last Chance Agreements. Our local has not had to deal with this issue often. So the information we received about Last Chance Agreements was insightful and very useful. We don't want to ever have to deal with something like this but with the information we received we will be more prepared in the future to help our members.

The most important topic we covered was the new Saskatchewan Employment Act (SEA) and how it's going to affect us, and all Saskatchewan workers, in the future dealings with the company. The rules have changed and definitely not in the favour of unions. The Brad Wall Government has made sure of that.

This new legislation was developed not for the "worker" but for the "companies". The SEA makes it easier for Companies to increase profits off the backs of the unprotected and uninformed worker. Our children, who are just starting out in the work force, are the ones that will be taken advantage of as the companies learn how to manipulate worker's rights under these new laws.

Temporary foreign workers, with no idea of their legal rights in Canada, are already being taken advantage of because of the fear they have from their employers and the possibility of being sent home.

This is not what I saw for the future of Saskatchewan. I believe we wanted to evolve and grow as a productive workforce in our province, not be forced back to a time where the work force had very little rights and greedy companies thrived. The goal should be to prosper together. In order to make that a reality we need to stand together against this government. Last time I checked, it was the people of this great province that made it what it is, not "big business" and their friend Brad Wall.

Jim Milton, Strike Committee

*“The rules
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**WORKERS' HUMAN
RIGHTS RE RIGHTS**