



Impact

MARCH 2010

COMPENSATION EMPLOYEES' UNION

Equal rights, equal opportunities: Progress for all

International Women's Day (March 8th) is marked by women's groups around the world. The idea for an International Women's Day (IWD) first arose at the turn of the 20th century. For the industrialized world, it was a period of expansion, turbulence, booming population growth and radical ideologies.

IWD is a day when women are recognized for their achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political. It is a time for looking back on past struggles and accomplishments, and more importantly, for looking ahead to the untapped potential and opportunities that await future generations of women.

In 1975, during International Women's Year, the United Nations (UN) began celebrating International Women's Day on March 8th. Two years later, in December 1977, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming a United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace. The day is to be observed on any day of the year by Member States, in accordance with their historical and national traditions.

"IWD is a day to celebrate and recognize the role women play in peace efforts and community development around the world. It is a day to

remember we need to end discrimination of all types. We also need to increase our support for women's full and equal participation in society," said Rachel Barbour, CEU Director.

"...gender equality is critical to the development and peace of every nation"

~ Kofi Annan

Women's groups across BC will be holding events to celebrate IWD on March

6-8th; check your local newspapers for information.



International Women's Day

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Risk is everywhere; but is the consequence of that risk just part of the job?

During the recent CEU regional meetings, newly elected shop steward Cliff Fournier raised the issue of risk for Board officers doing employer visits. As a prevention officer, Fournier is responsible for visiting job sites and, when necessary, writing orders to address safety issues at those worksites. But what about the safety of prevention officers and other Board employees when they are out in the field?

The WCB regulations require employers to conduct risk assessments to protect their employees. However, that responsibility seems to fall on the employee when it comes to Board officers. The purpose of the risk assessment is to determine the likelihood of violence and the nature and type of violence that could occur.

The most common issues that have come to the CEU's attention are abusive claimants and abusive employers. We have not always been satisfied with the Board's response to these issues but now the employer appears to be making significant changes to address these concerns.

There is a difference between an employer trying to obstruct a Board officer while s/he is in the process of doing their job and an employer directing abusive, threatening or actual physical violence at the officer. The latter behaviours cross the line and must be handled differently by the Board's management.

Acts of verbal abuse, threatening behaviour or actual violence may be grounds for criminal action and these acts are different than when an employer is trying to obstruct the officer in the conduct of her/his job. Obstruction can be dealt with under the legislation while threats of violence must be considered as criminal acts.

Many CEU members report the incidence of telephone verbal abuse and threats of violence are on the rise. However, some CEU members have become frustrated with the Board's process for reporting these threats. The union

has recently learned some of our members are no longer filling out the reports.

From a health and safety standpoint, it is very important that CEU members fill out these reports immediately after an incident, and that they include as much information as possible. Once the form is filled out, the Board has a legal obligation to complete an investigation. A failure to take such action is a violation of the regulations.

In fact, Board officers frequently write orders on employers outside of the Board when they fail to conduct timely incident investigations. That is why it is very important for CEU members to ensure they not only take the time to fill in as much detail about the incident as possible, but they also need to submit it to the employer immediately. A timely investigation is crucial when it comes to preventing further threats.

According to David Farrell, CEU Treasurer and Co-Chair of the Corporate Health & Safety Committee, there has been a long history of slow but gradual change when it comes to dealing with abusive or violent episodes directed at Board employees.

"One of the things we're trying to change is making sure the employer goes out and conducts a timely investigation via the safety committee. That means a union representative is part of that process. We'd also like to make sure that when an employee files a complaint with the RCMP, that the RCMP and

Corporate security involve the employee in the decisions on further actions," said Farrell.

Other workers are also affected by violence in the workplace. For example, transit and health care workers. In the health care sector, it took many, many years for employees and management to

change the culture when it comes to abusive episodes and violence. For years and years, violence directed at workers was seen as just part of the job.



Today when you enter a health care facility there are signs posted warning patients and visitors that any verbal abuse, threats or acts of violence will not be tolerated. And employers in health care support their employees to press criminal charges when threats of or actual violence occur in the workplace.

“This notion that violence is part of the job needs to change. When members receive phone calls where the caller is abusive and swearing, that is not acceptable. It needs to be reported and managers need to recognize it is not acceptable. Or when an employer shows up at an officer’s home because he’s upset about the sanctions that officer imposed, that’s unacceptable.

“Maybe it’s time for the Board to post signs about verbal abuse and violence in all work locations; similar to transit and health care. Maybe that’s what it

will take to start a cultural shift and raise the awareness that abusive behaviour, threats of violence or actual acts of violence are not acceptable,” said Farrell.

Although abusive calls don’t typically fall under the regulations, the Board has policies stating employees need to be treated with respect by customers. These policies give employees the right to end contact with abusive callers. However, some callers do threaten Board employees, triggering the regulations and action must be taken to protect the employee and their family.

If you have a question about how to deal with angry callers or expressions of violence, or if you need help to report a violent episode, contact a CEU representative on your local health and safety committee.

Economic crisis taking toll on worker health

CAW Health, Safety & Environment Newsletter/CALM

WORKERS WHO deal with long hours of unpaid overtime, low wages and no raises year after year steadily report worse health.

“The economic crisis may exacerbate these types of insecurities, as cutbacks in organizations are frequently manifested at the level of workers’ jobs,” says Heather Scott-Marshall, researcher for the Institute for Work and Health.

Scott-Marshall looked at how work-related insecurity affected the health of more than 2,300 workers over five years from 1999 to 2004. Work-related insecurity included low pay, no annual pay increases or job promotions, lack of pension coverage or union protection, and working long overtime hours.

Using information collected through Statistics Canada’s Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, she began with a group of workers who rated their health as good to excellent in 1999. She also broke down her findings to look at patterns among several groups: women, workers aged 45 to 54, and visible minorities, all of whom make up an increasing percentage of the work force.

The most striking finding concerned the effect of overtime on health. For workers working more unpaid overtime hours than the average for a given year, their self-reported health declined more rapidly, over time, than the self-reported health of workers who reported fewer unpaid overtime hours (the average number of overtime hours per week ranged from 6.8 to 8.7 hours).

The health of older workers who had no pension coverage also declined more rapidly over time than the health of older workers with pension benefits. So, too, did the health of workers earning low wages or having no annual pay increases compared to that of workers with higher wages or annual pay increases.

“Workplace policies and practices matter to the health of employees, particularly in relation to how these policies and practices affect job quality,” says Scott-Marshall.

Interestingly, she did not find any significant differences between men and women, although women were more likely to be in insecure work situations. Indeed, compared to men, women experienced less rapid declines in health over time.

New CEU stewards ready to take action

A small group of newly elected stewards attended a two-day shop steward orientation at the CEU office January 11 – 12, 2010. The ten stewards were eager to learn the ins and outs of unionism as they asked questions and participated in role plays.

“This group of stewards was very engaged, and I look forward to working with them over the next year. It’s exciting to have so many new people wanting to represent the members,” noted Kathy Saul, Chair of the Shop Stewards.

During the two-day orientation stewards also met with CEU Vice President, Frank Lanzarotta, to discuss the top issues facing the union. “The stewards really appreciated the opportunity to talk to Frank about the issues in their area. It was also a great way for them to find out what the union expects of them,” said Saul.

New shop steward Chris Reid has been a CEU member since joining the Board in July 2003. Reid works as a case manager in the Nelson office and has a background in kinesiology. His previous work required him to do functional capacity evaluations and return to work coaching.

In his spare time, Reid enjoys spending time with his two young children, hiking and snowboarding.

“Members in my jurisdiction are concerned about the cessation of the security guard in our area office. So I will be watching that issue closely,” noted Reid.

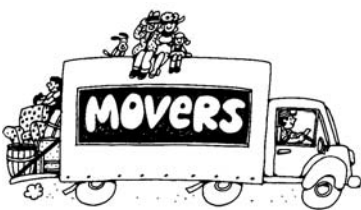


Another recently elected steward, Joan Field, has a background in data entry and accounts receivable with accounting firm KPMG. After leaving KPMG, Field worked in the hospitality industry becoming a shop steward, and in 2006 she joined the Board. Field works in the janitorial services area.

“We’ve had our fair share of management changes. My goal is to serve those in my jurisdiction with respect, fairness and equality for all,” said Field.

Other newly elected stewards attending January’s orientation were Lee Anonvuevo, Shelley Baldry, Lyn Bickley, Clayton Chmelik, Ed Dergousoff, Cliff Fournier, Mary Gale, Patrick Major and Adrienne Michaels.

“These new stewards are ready to take up the challenge of serving the membership. Some of them have been with the Board for a long time and others are fairly new. We also have a steward advisor system to help our new stewards and that, along with the orientation and the April shop steward school, will be a great boost for everyone,” said Saul.



Have you changed your address or name lately?



If you have moved recently or had a change of name, the CEU office needs to know. The WCB Human Resources department does not update the Union with personal information, and we need you to inform us if you have had a change. Please contact the Union office via info@ceu.bc.ca, or contact our office at 604-278-4050, so we can keep our membership database up to date.

Know Your Collective Agreement

Can “A” Type employees change their hours of work?

Employees working under this designation cannot change their hours of work. The schedule is set by management but that does not mean management can simply change the schedule. The work schedule must include a start and finish time.

Can my manager tell me to change my hours of work?

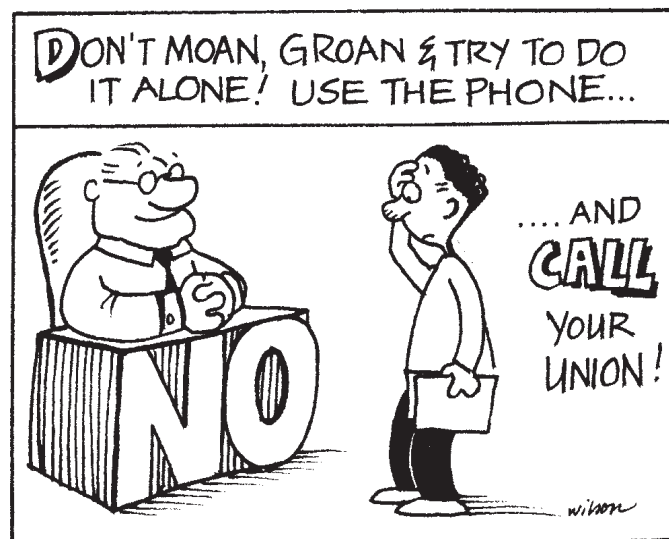
Sub-clause 26.01 (b) (iii) requires a manager to give an employee twenty (20) working days’ notice of a change. That means a manager cannot tell you to change your hours of work. In fact, when a manager wishes to make a change to a work schedule under sub-clause 26.01 (b) (iii) and the employee does not agree with the change, the employee can refer the issue to the Hours of Work Committee for resolution.

If I travel, can my manager tell me to change my hours of work?

The normal work schedule continues to apply to “A” type employees even if they are required to travel to a different work location. The only exception would be if the manager activated sub-clause 26.01 (b) (iii) and the employee did not object. However, notice under this clause requires a minimum notice period of twenty (20) work days.

Am I entitled to overtime when I travel?

Any work done outside of your normal hours of work, as per your schedule, constitutes overtime. For example, if you normally work 8:30 – 4:40 and while you are out of town you are required to work until 8 p.m., then all hours worked after 4:40 are paid at the applicable overtime rate. For “A” type employees, there are no exceptions. Overtime must be paid. Overtime also applies if you are required to work longer than your normal work schedule and you do not travel to another work location.



Can I take time off instead of getting paid for my overtime?

Yes, employees can get time off instead of being paid for overtime. It is important to note the time off must be calculated at overtime rates. For example, if you work one hour of overtime and the appropriate rate of overtime is one and

one-half (1½) then you are entitled to 1½ hours off as per 26.01 (d) (i).

What can I do if my manager insists that I change my WRAPS and work at straight time?

Advise your manager that is a violation of the collective agreement. If the manager insists or says you will not receive overtime, make arrangements to see your shop steward and then file a grievance.

BC Labour Movement News

A small delegation of CEU representatives attended the B.C. Federation of Labour's 53rd convention November 23 - 25, 2009. The convention's theme was "Confronting the Crisis: An Economy That Works for BC".

More than nine hundred union delegate representatives from across the province gathered to hear speakers, attend workshops and debate resolutions on a variety of issues affecting workers in British Columbia.

CEU members joined discussions examining the importance of public and private sector industries, and their respective unions, and the crucial balance between the two sectors in our economy. Delegates also explored ideas to ensure a just transition from a heavily industrialized private sector economy towards a sustainable "green" economy.

This discussion encouraged delegates to generate ideas for protecting public services and creating new jobs during the transition of our economy, but ultimately delegates recognized it is not just about union jobs, it is about creating a just and fair society for everyone.

The discussions on the economy were a kind of "back-to-the-future" experience for Executive member Colleen Glynn, who would have preferred to see more

novel ideas proposed to build a true workers' democracy.

One of the highlights of the convention occurred when BCGEU President, Darrel Walker, asked CEU President, Sandra Wright, to speak to BCGEU and its affiliate delegates about CMS. Wright used the opportunity to describe the issues facing CEU members.

She also told delegates about our "Give us the Tools" campaign which led to a loud round of applause. The broader labour movement also expressed their support for our members and our demands for the training, staffing and the tools we need to do the quality work we believe in. And in late November, the BC Federation of Labour met with the Board of Directors to discuss Labour's concerns about claims related issues.

"The overall experience was very educational. I found the workshops to be a great opportunity to introduce a northern perspective to the issues being discussed. The solidarity demonstrated during the rally for our union brothers and sisters involved in the paramedic crisis was a fine example of why the B.C. Federation of Labour is so important for workers throughout our province," said Prince George steward Jami Fowlie.

Your Executive Members

Sandra Wright, President
Frank Lanzarotta, Vice-President
David Farrell, Treasurer
Colleen Glynn, Secretary
Kathy Saul, Chair - Shop Stewards

Rachel Barbour, Director
David Clarabut, Director
Bill Bucci, Director
Chris Lundquist, Director
Adele Peters, Director

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