

October 8, 2009

To: Locals- DOE
National Executive
National and Regional E.O. Representatives

RE: **DOE NJOHSPC Meeting of September 14, 2009**

The DOE National Joint Occupational Health and Safety Policy Committee met on September 14, 2009. Brother Todd Panas, Regional Vice-President, Prairie and Northern Region, and Sister Manon Desormeaux, Service Officer, participated. Below is a summary of the discussions that took place during this meeting.

Action Items from the Previous Meeting:

Firearms Policy: The 2nd draft of the policy is currently circulating and will soon be finalized. Training in the use of the Guideline is to tentatively take place in October.

Winter Tires: A memo on behalf of the NJOHSPC will be sent to all Regional OHS Committees. The memo is to encourage the managers to analyze their specific needs and take into account their local weather and operating conditions in order to make informed choices regarding the use of winter tires on DOE vehicles.

Violence in the Workplace and Lock-Down Procedure: There is an active working group. Bargaining Agents were asked to submit any comments they might have with respect to the Draft Policy which should be completed in October 2009.

AED Memo Update: Corporate OHS is to ensure a memo is finalized and investigate whether DOE employees can use AEDs in leased building. It was completed in August 2009.

Business Continuity Plan – Flu Pandemic: Management presented the DOE Pandemic Influenza Planning Business Continuity Plan. A normal level of infection should increase again during the December to April influenza season but a recent US report suggests a peak in October. A low virulence of 2009-H1N1 virus is still expected to put a strain on the health system and result in a “relatively higher level of absenteeism”. Systematic testing for H1N1 has ceased in all Provinces.

The Department is advising employees that they are to stay home if they are sick. Further, the Department issued multiple communications to employees and managers.

Personnel Protective Equipment such as N95 Masks was procured to limit the risk of exposure to and from employees at higher risk.

Finally, the installation of a hand sanitizer station is underway and the cleaning protocols are currently under revision with service providers (elevator buttons, door knobs, etc). The next version of the Plan (guidelines) will be available at the end of September 2009 for comments.

Next meeting: November 23, 2009.

Should you have any questions or concerns relating to the above, please do not hesitate to communicate with the national office.

Yours fraternally,

William Pynn,
National President,
Union of Environment Workers.