

December 1, 2009

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

RE: **DOE NJOHSPC Meeting of November 23, 2009**

The DOE National Joint Occupational Health and Safety Policy Committee met on November 23, 2009. Brother Todd Panas, Regional Vice-President, Prairie and Northern Region, and Sister Manon Desormeaux, Service Officer, attended. Below is a summary of the discussions that took place during this meeting.

Action Items from the Previous Meeting:

Violence in the Workplace and Lock-Down: An update will be provided at the next meeting.

UEW-STE commented that the Directive states that the employer is responsible for providing a violence-free workplace. However, there is a step missing regarding notification or advance warning to all employees (i.e.: lockdown procedures). UEW-STE advised that this is both an OHS and Security issue. Also, many managers are off-site which is not helpful in emergency situations.

The Department will go back to the author of the document and will update the Committee at the next meeting. The Committee agreed that it would have substantive discussions in the Fall with a face-to-face meeting.

OHS Audit: Approved on November 20, 2009. It will become public on the website on December 4, 2009.

H1N1 Flu Pandemic: UEW-STE enquired about why co-chairs in the Local Health and Safety Committees are not involved in participating on the Regional Pandemic Planning Committees as Health and Safety for members and employees is one common ground that both the bargaining agents and management have. Management will raise the point with the Committee.

Hand Sanitizers: UEW-STE voiced concerns that the alcohol content in the hand sanitizers is over 60% which is a flammable substance and therefore becomes a fire hazard when stored in a large quantity. When the Department acquires more than 5 litres of hand sanitizers, they have to be stored safely.

UEW-STE also expressed concerns about the strong smell of alcohol or perfume added to the sanitizers which can be an irritant to the members. UEW-STE recommended that the Department buy alcohol and scent-free hand sanitizers.

The Department advised that it was aware of the storage accommodation issues and is taking the right precautions, i.e., Storage in a safe cabinet. The process to fill the bottles procedures is mainly the responsibility of the cleaning staff.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the DOE NJOHSPC will be scheduled in February/March 2010.

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.