

June 8, 2009

To: Locals – NRCan
National Executive
National and Regional E.O. Representatives

RE: **NRCan National Policy Committee on Health and Safety**

The NRCan National Policy Committee on Health & Safety met on May 19, 2009. Brothers Nick Humphreys, Regional Vice-President, B.C./Yukon Region, Chuck Davis, Regional Vice-President, Ontario Region, Daryl Hoelke, Executive Assistant, and Manon Desormeaux, Service Officer, attended. Below is a brief summary of discussions that took place.

Updates:

Prevention of Violence in the Workplace Policy:

The Working Group will incorporate training requirements into existing mandatory Harassment training. The target date for the training is October 2009. UEW will be in further communication with the Locals once additional information becomes available.

Radon Testing:

Six buildings at the Booth Street Complex have been tested. One building was deemed to be “abnormal” and will be re-tested.

As a result of the Radon Testing Program, a total of 15,000 buildings across Canada will be tested over the next three years.

UEW requested that this issue remain on the agenda for any future health and safety meetings so that bargaining agents are able to note the progress and results of the other tests. The Department advised that UEW would receive updates as the testing continues.

New Business:

H1N1 Flu Update:

The Pandemic Contingency Plan was completed. There were several communiques via the website, e-mails and posters (e.g., how to wash your hands). As a result, the Travel Advisory was lifted. There were no reported cases at the workplace.

Mental Health Issues and Return to Work Strategies:

There was a discussion about the importance of both Management and employees understanding mental illness. There is a lack of education and prevention at the workplace as it relates to mental illness. UEW will be in further communication with the Locals once more details are provided as to how training will be provided and when forums will be scheduled.

Committee Members Attending Meetings:

The Department advised that the costs of having a Co-chair attend meetings in person on a yearly basis will be assumed by the Sector in which the Co-chair works. The Department stated that the travel costs of other Committee members will not be paid.

UEW noted that the costs relating to members attending a meeting are covered in the Canada Labour Code and also noted that it believed that the Terms of Reference of the National Policy Committee on Health and Safety reflected membership attendance. UEW also questioned the rationale behind the decision and asked who would assume the fees for the other Committee members. The Department stated that it would review the Terms of Reference and bring the issue back to the next meeting.

Next meeting:

September 21st 2009.

Should you have any comments or concerns regarding the foregoing, please do not hesitate to communicate with the national office.

Yours fraternally,

William Pynn,
National President,
Union of Environment Workers.