



The UNION ECHO

USWA 4-2995 UNION ADVANTAGE L'AVANTAGE SYNDICAL OPEIU 166

Serving the workers of Northern Ontario



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In Union find strength

Summer 2008

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

LOCAL FACING TOUGH DECISIONS AS MEMBERS GET LAID-OFF EVERYWHERE



Guy Bourgoquin, President

In the wake of the difficult times endured by our membership, the local has had to make changes to its workforce to ensure its very survival. It was a difficult decision to make but we had to permanently let go one secretary. Sister Chantal Roy, our

receptionist, had been a devoted employee of the local for close to 7 years. I personally thank Chantal for the good work she has done for us over these years; her warm and friendly greetings and sunny personality will be missed by all who had occasion to meet or work with her. Please join me in wishing her good luck in her new job.

Your representatives will also bear the brunt of these cut backs as they will be laid off in alternation for 3 weeks each. It was decided to stagger their lay-offs in order to ensure that service to the

membership will not be negatively impacted. The Local will designate a representative to assist you should urgent issues arise.

With these measures we believe that we will be able to weather the storm that is currently rocking the industry so that we may survive and continue defending the rights of our membership.

On a brighter note, summer vacation time is just around the corner. Let's make the most of it; as we well know, we definitely all deserve time away from the worries of work. Have fun but keep safe to avoid injuries to yourself or friends and family.

In solidarity;
Guy Bourgoquin



Sister Chantal Roy

THE WSIB AND YOU What is a Non-Economic Loss (NEL) Award?

A NEL award is a benefit intended to recognize the permanent effects of your injury on your life outside of work. The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (W.S.I.B) calls this "permanent impairment." You will be considered for a NEL award if you were injured after January 1, 1990, and you have recovered as much as possible from your injury (maximum medical recovery), but still have

some impairment.

How much is a NEL award?

The amount of your NEL award will depend on how serious your injury is and how old you were at the time you were injured. First, the W.S.I.B will arrange for a medical examination (assessment) to find out the degree of your impairment will be fixed as a percentage. The

WSIB multiplies this percentage by an amount that varies according to your age. This is the amount of your award.

The medical assesment:

The WSIB will ask you to choose a doctor from a list to examine you. These doctors are not WSIB employees. They should be in your local area and be experience in treating your type of injury. If you

do not choose a doctor within 30 days, the WSIB will choose for you. If your injury is complicated, the WSIB may choose the doctor without sending a list.

You will be examined by the doctor who will then write a report The doctor's report will be sent to you, your employer and WSIB.

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TOUGH TIMES IN COCHRANE AND KAP

LAY-OFFS AND LATE STARTS CAUSE UNCERTAINTY AS MEMBERS' U.I. BENEFITS ABOUT TO COME TO AN END

Cochrane;

In early March, upper management of the Tembec-Cochrane sawmill and planing mill informed the employees that the mill would only start up sometime in April. The Company also stated that the volume of wood in the yard would normally have been sufficient to allow them to start earlier and run for a longer period save for the fact that a sizeable portion of this wood is already affected by bugs meaning that it will be good only for chips and will be processed in the yard.

The Company alleges that it may be possible to operate the mill for a longer period, but only if it is able to procure round wood delivered in the yard at \$45 per cubic

meter. A longer run would allow the members an opportunity to extent their UI claims.

The Local, together with the employee committee, has held several meetings with Tembec's upper management, Town Council, the Ministers from both the federal and provincial levels and will continue to explore various solutions to allow the mill to keep running for the longest possible time.

In the mean time, a Labor Adjustment Committee is being put in place to help the employees who have not yet been recalled to work.

As for the North Cochrane Addiction Services, the membership voted at 100% in favor of their new Collective

Agreement on January 17, 2008. This new 3 year agreement brings increases to weekly indemnity from 75% to 80%. A new statutory holiday (family day) has been introduced as well as increases in out of town expenses, a wage increase of 2% or equal to the NELHIN (North Eastern Local Integrated Health Network) base budget whichever is greater, and a \$1000.00 signing bonus.

Kapuskasing;

At Spruce Falls' woodlands, most of our members have been laid off from late March to mid May where they were recalled either for the tree planting or the wood haul operations.

Furthermore, the Local has just been informed

that the harvest operations will not start-up until mid November.

As for our office workers at Spruce Falls, everyone, including those on the spare list, has been lucky enough to keep working full time in spite of the announcement of the permanent closure of paper machine #3.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all the brothers and sisters a great summer and good vacations.



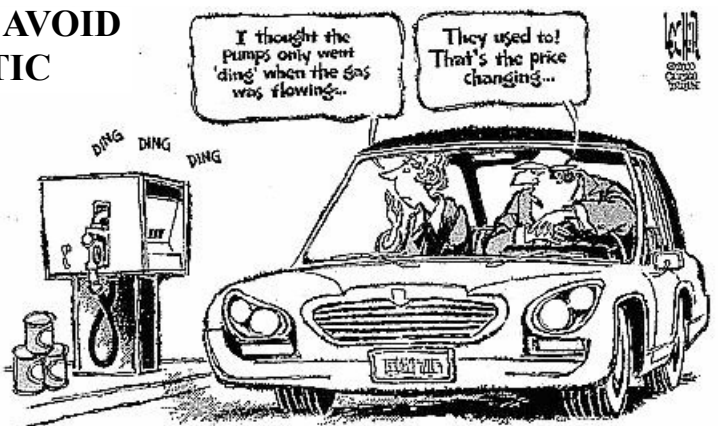
Eric Carroll

In solidarity;
Eric Carroll

USE EXTRA CARE THIS SUMMER AND AVOID BECOMING AN ACCIDENT STATISTIC

A few words to let you know that we are approaching a critical time of the year for job related accidents. The months of June, July, August and September are the months where we see a significant increase in job related accidents every year since quite a few years. This may be explained by the fact that there are a lot of people

relieving on new jobs for those on vacation. Or maybe because of mental fatigue at the approach of vacations or coming back from vacations. It may also be pure coincidence but whatever the cause, it is very important that we keep our focus during those four months so that everyone may enjoy their vacations and keep all their body parts



intact.

This trend is not particular to us (CFP-Hearst); every CFP site seems to

show the same kind of trend year after year. It would be nice if we could break this trend here and now

KIRKLAND LAKE & TIMMINS SUFFERING LAY-OFFS AND CONCESSIONS

CHAPLEAU SPARED AS MILL STILL RUNNING AT FULL CAPACITY



Roland Laurin

Kirkland Lake; Up to 5, and sometimes 6, members have returned to work at the Tembec-Kirkland Lake finger jointing plant on a temporary basis. They operate the remanufacturing saws where they transform 2" x 4" x 16 random lengths that come from other sawmills into 2" x 4" x 8' studs. The Company has also approached the Union to look at different scenarios aimed at lowering operation costs which would allow them to run the finger jointing and remanufacturing machine on a one shift basis. At the time of writing this article the Union is awaiting for some dates to meet. This could possibly mean bringing approximately 20 employees back to work which would be greatly appreciated by some of the members and their families as their E.I. benefits have expired and alternate employment is

non-existent. **Timmins;** No changes are to be reported for the Tembec-Timmins operations. The Company at Domtar-Timmins approached us to consider some concessions due to difficult times following which, negotiations were held with the full approval of the membership. The end result was the removal of the production bonus, elimination of the 2% wage increase that was due September 1st, 2008, removal of the shift differential and running the sawmill and planer for 44 hours per week at straight time on day shift only. This means that employees working weekends will receive time and one half on Saturday after 44 hours on his regular work week and time and one half on Sundays. The

weekend crew will be working 36 hours for 44 instead of 32.

All of these concessions will apply as long as the operation goes on one shift. Should the Company maintain a two shift operation, a 3% roll back on wages would then also apply. All of the above will be in effect until August 30, 2009 since August 31, 2009 is the last day of the current Collective Agreement and everything has to be re-negotiated. This was voted at 68% in favor by the membership.

Members will remember that a similar agreement was implemented at Columbia in Hearst about 2 1/2 years ago. The particleboard plant there has since ceased operations and the plywood is still struggling with adverse market conditions.

Chapleau;

As for Tembec-Chapleau it seems that the mill there is one of the few that is not either loosing money or barely breaking even at this point. They are still running on 3 shifts and the future keeps looking fairly good. So let's hope for the best and keep up the good work guys; for some reason you are making it work! Would you consider trading recipes with the rest of the local?

I would like to wish a great summer to all the brothers and sisters and do take advantage of your vacation time off as it is essential for physical and mental health.

In solidarity;
Roland Laurin

USE EXTRA CARE...
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If everyone works at it, we will be successful in having zero accidents for those few months. One thing that we believe is very important to help in reaching this goal; when you have to work on a new job or assume new

tasks, make sure to have the adequate training and know your SOP's and lockout procedures before starting the work. When in doubt, don't be afraid to ask your supervisor and/or co-workers for help. It's much better to lose a few minutes than a few body parts.

May you have a great summer and enjoy your vacations.

Editor's note: This text is adapted from volume 8 of the IMPAC bulletin, CFP-Hearst worker's safety newsletter; author: Brother Réal Brulé. We

chose to reprint it here because we believe that this phenomenon exists in varying degree at all workplaces within our local. Our thanks to Réal and the IMPAC group for their implication in health & safety.

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THE WSIB AND YOU...

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It is a good idea to take the report to your doctor or a specialist to see whether your doctor agrees with it. The doctor who did the assessment might have missed something and you can point this out to WSIB.

Only the WSIB can request a second assessment if it disagrees with the first report. WSIB policy creates an exception to this rule for workers who were "referred for a NEL determination/re-determination" before January 1, 1998. You should speak to a representative if

you want to request a second assessment and are not sure if you are covered by the exception.

For more information on this and other WSIB issues contact Guy Bourgouin at your Local office.

**HORNEPAYNE MILL GETS NEW DDM12
HEARST STRUGGLING WITH LAY-OFFS**

Olav Haavaldsrud;

Members at Olav in Hornepayne are operating their plant with a new DDM12 that has just been installed, and is now being tested. With some final adjustments to be done this machine should get into full operation very soon. This is great news for the employees at Olav Haavaldsrud Timber as we believe this machine is a must for the success of this plant in the future.

Hornepayne Roman Catholic Separate School Board;

Demands for the next rounds of negotiations were taken at the last membership meeting since the Collective Agreement comes to an end on August 31st, 2008. We hope to enter negotiations in early fall.

Lecours Lumber;

Some of the members at Lecours Lumber sawmill have been laid off since the Company announced a curtailment of its Calstock operations. Again, all the same reasons that our members have faced in many other plants are being evoked here; the high Canadian dollar, the poor market, the high costs, etc... Our members of the bush operations have been hit there also. Since the sawmill requires less wood, the harvest operations have been shortened this winter. This affects our members to the highest degree as they are not sure if they have accumulated the minimum hours needed to qualify under the E.I. benefits.

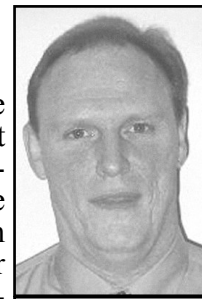
Tembec-Hearst;

The Company has announced that they would not be

starting the third shift that was supposed to be reopening in the spring or early summer. This

again puts the future of some of our members in question as they do not know if they will ever be working there again and alternate work is scarce in Hearst as in all area towns.

And for those of us who are lucky to still be at work, have a nice summer and please take full advantage of your vacations; the brothers and sisters who may be called in to replace you really need the work.



Jacques Jean

In solidarity;
Jacques Jean

SAFETY COUNCIL MEETS IN KAP

The Union co-chairs of the joint health & safety committees across the local met on May 23rd to attend the yearly meeting of the Local's Safety Council. Brother Wayne Glibbery of the Workers' H&S Center was on hand to facilitate a workshop on due diligence.



The usual suspects at the Safety Council meeting in Kapusksing.