



July 2008

## Notice to Members

As we reach the halfway point of 2008 the executive thought it would be good time to update the membership on the topics that we have been dealing with to date. The topics that we would like to touch on are: 2009 benefits, recent terminations, increasing WSIB claims and reporting of injuries and smoking on site.

We as an executive have been trying, with little success, to discuss with the company the benefit plan for 2009. The company is adamant that the “meat of the plan” will not change. This is to say that there will be no change to 24hour wait period, as it was added to the collective agreement, and voted on. However the company is willing to discuss administration around the plan. We would like to hear from the membership any questions you may have around this plan, so we may raise them to the company. The questions we have raised are: “what happens if I am sent home sick? Do I still get paid for the rest of that day?” “What if I am forced to go to the hospital? Does the 24hour wait still apply?” These are the type of questions we need to have answered. The company feels that this is a competitive benefit plan that will be in place to attract and retain their valued employees.

In the first half of the year we have had 10 terminations or retirements before termination. We must remember that in doing our job we must take the time necessary to do the job right, even if it means a loss of production. If you are not sure you are doing the job right ask someone for clarification. Be aware that if you credit a VTA, it is saying that you fully understand what you have read and that you are responsible for following it. If you don't understand what you are reading DON'T just credit it, get a trainer to clarify it for you. If you are having trouble keeping up with VTA's ask your FLS for relief so you can give the proper attention to the training required.

As the demands of the job change and increase we are seeing a growing number of injuries and WSIB claims. If you are required to fill out paperwork for a WSIB claim the union has several trained stewards to assist you in this process. It is the simplest part of the process, but the most important, if there are errors or discrepancies in the information on the form the claim will be initially denied, then you will have to go through the frustration of appealing the claim. As a union we are trying to cut legal fees by having employees deal with their own claims as much as possible before involving our lawyers. It is important to bring to light any concerns around safety and ergonomic issues to either your FLS or a member of the Joint Health and Safety Committee. Through this process we may be able to implement change to our work environment.

Finally, we would like to put out a reminder around the hazards of smoking on site. We have been informed that there have been cigarette butt's found on site and it is a concern to the company. It should also be a concern to every member of the site as the potential for a major fire is increased. The company is aware that there are still a few people smoking on site, and will look at ways of policing this. Just remember that if caught it could be a \$50,000 cigarette. ASK YOURSELF THIS before engaging in smoking or for that matter any other unsafe act.

- 1 Do I want to be the example?
- 2 Can I afford to be terminated while maybe waiting for an arbitration case?
- 3 Do I want to put other my co-workers at risk?

Please note the next General Membership meeting will be September 25, 2008.  
Have a great summer!

*Thank you,  
Your Executive Committee*

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