

A MAGAZINE FOR MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STEELWORKERS

USW@Work

SUMMER 2024

Exigeons
**une loi
anti-scabs**
au Canada

*Historic victory
for workers:
federal ban
on scabs*



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ON THE COVER:

When we organize, we can win! Building on decades of activism on anti-scab legislation and the NDP-Liberal Supply and Confidence Agreement, the federal Liberal government has introduced Bill C-58, to ban replacement workers in the case of labour disputes.

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MÉTALLOS

YES to our pro-worker agenda

After years of Conservative rule in many parts of the country, workers have pushed back and are now advancing policies that make their lives better.

In November, as a result of the NDP-Liberal Supply and Confidence Agreement, the federal Liberal government introduced anti-scab legislation – Bill C-58. At the time of writing, this was being heard by the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, to where our union emphasized both the legislation's importance and the need to shorten the timeline around when it will come into effect.

Similarly, thanks to the advocacy of the NDP and the labour movement, the federal government has introduced the framework for a national, universal pharmacare plan – a longtime missing piece from the medicare promise. This is one of the single most significant national program creations of our lifetime.

We are also working hard to support the Sustainable Jobs Act, Bill C-50, which would create a framework for unions to participate in planning for an economy that will create well-paying jobs in communities across the country by ensuring workers have a role in any economic transition as a result of climate change.

Provincially, there are many crucial wins. In Manitoba, as of this writing, NDP Premier Wab Kinew has announced plans to introduce both anti-scab legislation and card-check certification – taking meaningful action on his commitment to workers and their families. The first-ever Indigenous Premier of Manitoba, Kinew and his government were elected in October 2023, unseating a two-term, right-wing, anti-worker Progressive Conservative government – with the help of members in District 3.



In the fall, there will be general elections in both Saskatchewan and British Columbia, where we plan to elect and re-elect pro-worker NDP provincial governments.

In Ontario, where citizens are suffering drastic cuts to health care and fees for basic services, workers had a vital win when the Ontario Superior Court of Justice recently struck down an appeal by the anti-worker Ontario provincial government of its wage suppression legislation, which was found to be unconstitutional in a charter challenge by labour organizations, such as the USW. Now our public sector bargaining units are busy winning stronger collective agreements, with better compensation as contracts open up.

'No thanks' to false friends

Steelworkers, we know there are those who increasingly claim to represent us, claim to have our interests and our jobs at heart and claim to be friends of working people. But I encourage all of us to be skeptical of these false friends.

For long-time politicians like Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre, his own commitment to voting against worker-friendly legislation tells a wildly different story. He held several minister positions under the Stephen Harper Conservative government and voted with the Harper government in every single attack on workers. With 19 years as an MP, Poilievre has spent his working life developing and supporting anti-worker policies, voting against anti-scab legislation, pension protections and minimum wage increases on numerous occasions and voting for delaying the age of retirement to 67, supporting back-to-work legislation and much more. Pierre Poilievre and those who seek to mimic him or his policies are no friends of Steelworkers.

I am thrilled by the changes that we are winning and what is possible in the future, but we will continue to face many challenges to ensure our members' voices are heard at the bargaining table, in workplaces, in legislation and government policies. As Steelworkers, with the strength, courage and power of our members, local union leaders and USW staff, we will continue our ambitious agenda to win the changes that members, their families and communities need and deserve.

In solidarity,



Marty Warren
USW National Director

Photo:
Assistant to the USW National
Director Meg Gingrich and
USW National Director Marty
Warren appearing at Bill
C-58 hearings in Ottawa.

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Steel Pride on the job

The new Steel Pride Working group kicked off its first meeting in December 2023, bringing together Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual + (2SLGBTQIA+) Steelworkers from across the three Canadian districts. The initiative was born out of a resolution to the National Policy Conference in April 2023, which called on the union to create a national working group for 2SLGBTQIA+ Steelworkers.

The new group has an ambitious agenda, working to develop educational materials and resources for members, locals and staff, considering how to increase visibility of 2SLGBTQIA+ Steelworkers and help break down the isolation many rainbow community members feel, especially outside large urban centres.

With the goal of breaking down isolation and bringing people together across the country, the working group has already hosted two online Steel Pride Network meetings – in February and May, open to all Steelworkers who identify as part of the rainbow community. The next network meeting will be in November.

There will be other sessions over the next few months for allies and those who wish to better



On screen: Brandon Nicolson, USW Local 1-184. In the room: Jordan Rego, USW Local 5296; Johanne Richard, USW Local 8922; Shannon Devine, USW staff; Mayson Fulk, USW Local 2859 and District 6 Trans Liaison; Catie Jones, USW Local 5220; Izzy Adachi, USW staff; Lindsay Kellin, USW staff; Brett Barden, USW staff; Cindy Lee, USW staff; Emmanuelle Gadoury, USW Local 9700.

Missing from the photo: Anita Bryan, USW staff; Janet Moffat, USW Local 9042; Tomy Bezeau, USW Local 9706; Guillaume Charbonneau, USW staff.

understand issues like sharing pronouns and why it's important for solidarity, as well as how to be a good ally to members of equity-seeking groups. The group has also helped create two new postcards aimed at educating members about homophobia and transphobia and what it means to be an ally.

Excitingly, the working group will also help support locals who want to get involved in their local pride, launching a seasonal USW Pride store online.



Want to know more about 2SLGBTQIA+ Steelworkers?
Visit: usw.ca/steelpride

Check out our new glossary with helpful definitions,
along with new and updated resources.



ELEVATING ACTION

AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Gender-based violence in the workplace can have severe consequences for those affected, including physical and mental health issues, decreased productivity and career setbacks. It also undermines efforts to promote gender equality and create inclusive work environments.

Challenging gender-based violence and promoting a safe workplace for everyone is a core commitment of the United Steelworkers (USW). The union strives to provide members with the training and education necessary to be allies who actively challenge sexism and gender-based violence and take responsibility for creating an environment where everyone feels safe.

Last year, the USW joined an initiative along with the Canadian



Football League Players' Association (CFLPA) and White Ribbon, named Elevating Action on Gender-Based Violence. The initiative aims to train male spokespeople from the USW and CFLPA to be leaders in changing workplace cultures and to challenge gender-based violence in workplaces and communities. Elevating Action is the new iteration of the work previously done by the union, building on programs like Men Speak Up and Be More Than a Bystander.

Earlier this year, the partnership between the three organizations took the next step by organizing the inaugural training session

in Jasper, Alta. Members of the USW and CFLPA participated in a workshop conducted by White Ribbon to become spokespeople and leaders in changing workplace culture. The training focused on issues including promoting gender equality, consent, allyship, healthy relationships, emotional intelligence, safe and inclusive spaces and new visions of masculinity to create lasting, lifelong changes.

In March 2024, USW District 6 organized another Elevating Action event at the Living Water Resort in Collingwood, Ont. (where staff are USW members). Members of USW Districts 3 and 6 and the CFLPA were trained to become spokespeople.

Locals can book presentations – for either 90 minutes or three hours – in their locals and workplaces. There will be a cost for this presentation and the USW will work with locals and employers to set this up. If you are interested in booking a presentation, please reach out to Dayna Sykes at dsykes@usw.ca.



USW members attending an Elevating Action training in Collingwood, Ont.



Pharmacare:

*A generational step forward
in Canadian health care*

The historic agreement on pharmacare between the federal Liberal government and the New Democrats marks a monumental step forward in Canadian health care. The introduction of pharmacare legislation (Bill C-64 - An Act respecting pharmacare) in the House of Commons gives a beacon of hope to millions of people across the country.

“This is an important step in delivering real help to people who need it,” said Marty Warren, USW National Director “For too long, too many Canadians have been forced to make the heartbreaking choice between access to essential medicines and meeting other basic needs, like food, shelter and heat. No one should have to choose between their health and their financial stability.”

The alarming number of people who have to make major sacrifices or borrow money to be able to afford their medication testifies to the pressing need for such a program. Canadians are currently saddled

with the exorbitant costs associated with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, or the recurring expense of essential drugs. A pharmacare program promises to eliminate these barriers, making health care truly accessible to the entire population.

The benefits of this program extend beyond individual households and will have positive repercussions on a wider scale. By consolidating drug coverage under a universal, single-payer program, both workers and employers will benefit from its establishment.

“As we celebrate this historic moment, let's recognize the collective efforts that have brought us here,” said Warren. “The implementation of a pharmacare program is well on its way to becoming a generational change and a means of improving the quality of life for the population as a whole.”

A historic vote in the House of Commons advances anti-scab legislation

A historic, unanimous vote in the House of Commons on the proposed anti-scab bill (officially known as Bill C-58, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code and the Canada Industrial Relations Board Regulations) has taken it a significant step further, by allowing it to be studied in committee. While this type of legislation, designed to protect the rights of federally regulated workers during a labour dispute, has been proposed several times in the federal Parliament, this is the first time it has taken this step.

“The United Steelworkers union has known for a long time that anti-scab legislation would help restore the balance of bargaining power while protecting workers' constitutional right to strike and reducing the duration of labour disputes,” said Marty Warren, USW National Director. “That's why we've been involved for decades in the fight to see this legislation finally passed at the federal level.”

It is at the committee stage that a bill undergoes in-depth analysis. Committee members receive

briefs and have the opportunity to hear from expert witnesses. They then study the bill in detail, proposing amendments to improve it and finally report back to the House, for a final vote on the amended bill before it goes to the Senate.

“The Steelworkers are obviously following this process very closely,” added Warren. “We're keeping up the pressure to close loopholes and eliminate unnecessary delays in the implementation of this bill and let it serve as an example for jurisdictions that have yet to adopt this type of legislation.”

Since the introduction of this bill in the House of Commons, which followed the example of Quebec and British Columbia, the newly elected New Democratic Party (NDP) government in Manitoba has announced that it will introduce similar legislation for workers in that province. Opposition parties in other provinces have also proposed similar bills in their own jurisdictions.



Steelworkers activists rally on Parliament Hill as part of the USW's decades-long advocacy for federal anti-scab legislation.

STOP THE KILLING

The USW's campaign to enforce the Westray law and end workplace deaths and injuries

"The most important thing to come out of mines is the miner." – Frederic LePlay, quoted by Dr. James Ham in the preface to the Ham Commission Report, 1976

2024 marks two important anniversaries in USW advocacy to end workplace injuries and death.

Fifty years ago, in 1974, Steelworkers at the Denison uranium mine in Elliot Lake, Ont., staged a wildcat strike for health and safety. That strike led to the Ham Commission, which ushered in basic health and safety protections we all rely on today: the right to know about workplace hazards, the right to refuse unsafe work and the right to be involved.

2024 is also the 20th anniversary of the Westray Law, which amended the Criminal Code of Canada to make it easier to impose criminal liability on corporations for serious workplace injuries and fatalities.

Workplace deaths claim the lives of 1,000 Canadians every year. Tens of thousands more

workers suffer horrible workplace injuries annually. The overwhelming majority of these tragedies are preventable and should never happen.

In the 20 years since the Westray Law was enacted, there have been few criminal prosecutions and even fewer convictions.

That's where the USW's national campaign, Stop the Killing, Enforce the Law, comes in, using worker power to confront the appalling rates of workplace deaths and injuries across Canada and demanding justice.

Our message is getting through

Through USW member advocacy, hundreds of municipalities as well as law-enforcement agencies support the Stop the Killing campaign's demands for federal, provincial and territorial governments to implement crucial measures to ensure the Westray Law is enforced.



Steelworkers re-enact the 1974 wildcat strike in Elliot Lake, Ont., during the forum to mark the strike's 40th anniversary in 2014.



Attending the ceremony marking the Westray Law's 20th anniversary at Their Light Shall Always Shine Memorial Park in New Glasgow, N.S. (l-r): USW National Director Marty Warren, USW Health, Safety and Environment Department Leader Sylvia Boyce, Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) President Bea Bruske, USW District 6 Director Myles Sullivan, Nova Scotia Federation of Labour President Danny Cavanagh and CLC Nova Scotia Regional Representative Mat Whyntott.

The campaign continues because preventable workplace deaths keep happening:

Quoc Le, 51; Collin Grayley, 35; Fraser Cowan, 51; USW Local 7135, National Steel Car, Hamilton

On June 6, 2022, National Steel Car worker Quoc Le, died in a preventable workplace accident. He was the third worker killed in 21 months at National Steel Car. Collin Grayley, 35, died on April 23, 2021, and Fraser Cowan, 51, died on September 2, 2020. This equates to one death every seven months at National Steel Car. The USW believes it is the worst health and safety record of any workplace in Ontario.

Mario Morin, 57; Jean Lachance, 51; and Martin Roy, 50; USW Local 9531, Bois ouvré Beauceville, Beauceville, Que.

On the morning of Sept. 20, 2021, Mario Morin, Jean Lachance and Martin Roy were trying to extinguish a fire that broke out while work was being done on the roof of the Bois ouvré Beauceville wood-processing facility. An explosion occurred, taking their lives and injuring five other workers. Beauceville is located approximately 85 km south of Quebec City.

Workplace deaths must be stopped! They are tragic and life-changing for families and communities. No one should be killed by going to work.

What we're asking for

The USW's Stop the Killing campaign is about ensuring that:

- Crown attorneys are educated, trained and directed to apply the Westray amendments.
- mandatory training is provided for police and health and safety regulators to know how the Westray amendments apply.
- resources are allocated to ensure training takes place at all necessary levels – training must not be voluntary.
- mandatory procedures and protocols are instituted in every jurisdiction for police, crown prosecutors and health and safety regulators.
- dedicated prosecutors are assigned in each jurisdiction and given the responsibility for health and safety fatalities.
- there is greater co-ordination among regulators, police and crown attorneys so that health and safety regulators are trained to reach out to police when there is a possibility that criminal charges are warranted.

The federal, provincial and territorial governments must better fulfill their mandates to enforce the Criminal Code to its full extent. Only by doing so can we honour the memories of all those killed at work, provide a measure of justice to families and better protect workers.

Get involved – endorse the USW's Stop the Killing, Enforce the Law campaign.



Organizing successes

Welcome to the Steelworkers!

Starbucks workers in Ontario turning to USW

Following in the footsteps of their colleagues in British Columbia and Alberta, Starbucks workers in Ontario are increasingly looking to join the labour movement, and the United Steelworkers in particular.

Recently, employees at Starbucks locations at the Conestoga Mall in Waterloo, Ont., the Fairway Plaza in Kitchener, Ont., and the Pape and Danforth store in Toronto voted to join the Steelworkers. The USW now represents workers at five Starbucks locations in Ontario and several others in Western Canada.

Other recent USW organizing successes across the country include:

Edmonton People In Need Shelter Society

In March, the USW welcomed over 100 workers from the Edmonton People In Need Shelter Society who voted overwhelmingly to join the union. These new members work in facilities dedicated to improving the well-being and quality of life of individuals suffering from severe and persistent chronic mental illness.

Garderie Cafalaga

Workers at Garderie Cafalaga, a child-care centre in Montreal, voted to join USW Local 9291. The local union already represents other child-care workers in Quebec and is expanding its membership.

Bridges of Canada

Prison chaplains working at federal correctional facilities in Alberta voted to join the Steelworkers, following similar decisions taken by federal prison chaplains across Canada. The USW is proud to represent some 200 prison chaplains of various faiths and spiritual practices who provide essential chaplaincy services and spiritual care to inmates.

Andersen Pacific Forest Products

Representing tens of thousands of forestry-sector workers in Canada, the USW recently welcomed into the fold some 40 new members employed at Andersen Pacific Forest Products in Maple Ridge, B.C. The new members have joined Local 2009.

Leggett & Platt Canada

Acting on several unresolved issues and concerns, 275 workers at the Windsor, Ont., operations of auto components manufacturer Leggett & Platt Canada voted to join the USW. The Windsor workers join their colleagues at the Leggett & Platt facility in London, Ont., who have been USW members for many years.

ConocoPhillips

The USW welcomed more than 30 workers from ConocoPhillips in Montney, B.C., a small town north of Fort St. John, who chose to join the union to strengthen their voice in the workplace through collective bargaining. ConocoPhillips operates an unconventional gas field development in Montney.



Precarious jobs on the rise

Temporary Foreign Worker Program

Ronald Carvajal, USW Local 9599; Michel Pilon, Réseau d'aide aux travailleuses et travailleurs migrants agricoles du Québec; Sarah R. Champagne, journalist at *Le Devoir*; and Nicolas Lapierre, Assistant to the USW District 5 Director.

The number of temporary foreign workers (TFWs) in Quebec has increased eight-fold since 2017, from 7,180 to 59,000 in June 2023.

Previously concentrated in seasonal, agricultural work, TFWs now occupy year-round jobs across numerous sectors. Their permits are tied to a single employer and they often live apart from their families back home. Most dream of settling in Quebec, but the pathway to permanent immigration is difficult.

"In theory, they have the same rights, but that's not their reality," points out Sarah R. Champagne, a journalist with *Le Devoir* newspaper. A TFW's work permit is tied to a single employer, and must be regularly renewed, noted Champagne, who spoke on this issue during a roundtable discussion at the last annual meeting of USW District 5 activists.

Another major issue for TFWs is the shortcomings of the

francization process, which is essential for immigration in Quebec, USW delegates heard.

"French courses should be given to workers on the job, and the government should pay for the wages," said Michel Pilon, director of a non-profit agency providing support to TFWs.

The level of French fluency required for immigration is extremely difficult for many TFWs to achieve, said delegate Ronald Carvajal, a USW Local 9599 activist.

"I know a worker who took the test eight times before passing, at a cost of \$300 each time," Carvajal said.

Such daunting challenges are facing some 200 Filipino TFWs working at the Chantiers Chibougamau sawmill and wood manufacturing operations in the Nord-du-Québec region, said USW local union activist David Morin.

"The Filipinos understand the path to immigration requires clearing the hurdle of francization," which is overwhelming, said Morin. "Are they to remain temporary workers until retirement – is that the plan?" he asked.

Kamil Nounes, a temporary foreign worker at the Exo-S manufacturing plant in the Sherbrooke area, spoke of the extreme precariousness in which his family lives. His engineer wife is not allowed to work due to her visitor status and his family does not have full health-care coverage.

"If my daughter is sick, I can't take her to hospital unless I pay. If there's no overtime available, I'm really squeezed. And if I get laid off, I don't know if I'll be eligible for employment insurance," said the Algerian-born worker.

New Indigenous engagement guide for USW locals

USW local unions and activists have a new tool to help build relationships and engage with Indigenous Steelworkers and communities.

Developed from interviews with dozens of Indigenous Steelworkers, local unions, staff and members of the USW National Indigenous Committee, *Building Trust, Becoming Allies* is a new guide with resource sheets, examples of ways locals are building relationships with local Indigenous communities, how they are using the *USW Bargaining Guide for Advancing Indigenous Rights* and educating employers on Indigenous issues.

Success story

An example in the guide comes from USW Local 6500 in Sudbury, Ont. During the 2021 strike against Vale, members realized that picket lines could affect the daily routines of members of the Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation. Local union members spoke with these workers to explain the strike and what could happen on the road by the mine site. Steelworkers made a lane so that Sagamok band members could get in and out of their community and not be held up by the picket line.

“For as big as the USW is in Canada, there are a lot more stories and more learning we can do from our Indigenous membership. There is so much we can learn and continue building on,” said Josh George, USW District 6 Indigenous Engagement Co-ordinator. George is one of the guide authors along with District 3 Indigenous Engagement

Co-ordinator Julia McKay and USW Education and Equality Department Leader Adriane Paavo.

“We started by presenting the guide to USW staff in both districts 3 and 6, and soon we’ll be presenting it to local unions in both District 3 and District 6 to increase engagement. Local unions are busy, so doing the presentations is important to draw attention to this resource,” said McKay.

Local unions wanting to make connections with Indigenous communities can contact the USW’s Indigenous Engagement Co-ordinators to plan first steps.

Building Trust, Becoming Allies will be available on the website soon. In the meantime, get resources and support for connecting with Indigenous communities at usw.ca/trc-action.

Josh George, USW District 6 Indigenous Engagement Co-ordinator, facilitating the Unionism on Turtle Island course.



JUSTICE 2024

The USW Health, Safety, Environment and Human Rights Conference

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SAVE THE DATE

District 3 Conference

Oct. 28-31, 2024
Winnipeg, Man.



The USW District 3 Conference agenda is packed with inspiring and educational highlights to empower and unite members.

Through workshops and panels, delegates will learn more about workplace safety, bargaining, human rights and political and legislative action, while gaining practical knowledge and resources.

usw.ca/d3conference

Each year, tens of thousands of USW members across Canada negotiate strong collective agreements that protect health and safety, improve wages, benefits and working conditions and ensure more-respectful workplaces. Recent settlements include:



Local 1976 • Airline members leave all others at the gate, soar to industry-leading pay rates

A three-year collective agreement for Delta Airlines workers provides industry-leading compensation levels as well as improved benefits and pensions. The deal includes 12% wage increases over the term, a new retirement benefit valued at a further 2% of wages, and additional adjustments bringing total wage increases for many members up to 17.5%. The contract covers some 300 tickets and gate agents, baggage handlers and ramp workers at Delta operations in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto and Montreal.



Local 1-207 • Home builders raise the roof – and their wages

A large majority of the 138 members at SRI Homes in Lethbridge, Alta., will earn wage increases of 10.7% over the term of a three-year contract, including 5.2% in the first year. The agreement includes an 8.5% wage hike over the term, a 2.2% adjustment for 90% of the membership, a \$1,250 ratification bonus and improved benefits. Members build manufactured homes and modular homes.



Local 9996 • Iron ore miners strike mother lode of contract gains

Wage increases ranging from 26.25% to 30.6% over five years are among 60-plus contract gains won by 700 members at Minerai de fer Québec (Quebec Iron Ore) operations in Fermont. Wage increases in the first year range from 13.25% to 17.6%. The collective agreement improves provisions in dozens of areas, including bonuses, benefits, training, job postings and access to permanent positions for seasonal workers.



Local 6565-02 • Not pulp fiction: paper industry workers wrap up impressive contract

Workers at the Voith Canada manufacturing plant in Hawkesbury, Ont., ratified a three-year agreement providing total wage increases of 19% and a signing bonus. Improvements also were made on shift premiums, overtime and vacation pay, RRSP contributions, and benefits. Members refurbish rolls used for paper manufacturing and work as machinists, maintenance mechanics, shippers and receivers, and grinder, drill, covering and lathe operators.



Local 1-207 • Cool beans! Starbucks members' first contract is grounds for celebration

Members at a Starbucks store at Beaver Brook Square in Sherwood Park, Alta., overcame big challenges to win their first collective agreement – a three-year contract that is only the third of its kind in Canada. Members achieved improvements in working conditions, job security, dispute resolution and total wage increases of 10%, including 5% on ratification. The deal helps pave the way for USW members at several other Starbucks locations who are seeking their first collective agreements.



Local 9399 • Steel wire producers strand strong, wind up good contract

Members who manufacture steel wire at the ArcelorMittal Saint-Patrick plant in Montreal achieved gains in a six-year contract. General increases of 37.5% will boost wages by \$10.25 an hour over the term and many workers will receive additional adjustments ranging from \$2.37 and \$3.22 an hour and a revised pay grid will increase wages for new hires. Improvements also were made to premiums, vacations, pensions, benefits and health and safety provisions.



Local 6946 • Tape makers stick together, seal the deal

The 147 USW members working at tape manufacturer Mativ in Renfrew, Ont., will see wages increase by 13% over three years after ratifying a 39-month agreement. The contract also improves benefits, premiums, safety boot allowances, vacations and bereavement leave. Members manufacture adhesive products for industrial and commercial applications, including the famous Renfrew brand hockey tape.



Locals 189, 7458, 7689 • Fertilizer producers enrich collective agreement

Members working at Saskatchewan potash/fertilizer giant Nutrien reached a three-year agreement providing general wage increases of 10.5% among numerous gains. The deal includes an hourly wage adjustment of \$7.48 for second-class power engineers, while the base wage rate for trades rose to \$59.92 this spring. Improvements were made on pensions, premiums, benefits, boot allowances and maternity and military leaves. Members work at Nutrien's Patience Lake, Cory and Allan operations.



Local 6486 • Zinc refinery workers show their mettle in upgrading contract

Members at the CEZinc zinc refinery in Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Que., negotiated a three-year contract with total wage hikes of 18%, including 8% up-front. Other gains include an increase in overtime pay to double time, rather than time-and-a-half, as well as improvements to pensions and benefits. The deal was reached shortly after resource giant Glencore assumed full ownership of the plant and announced plans for major investments.



Local 7580 • Gold miners' ore-dacity extracts a nugget of a deal

A five-year agreement reached by 225 members at Newmont Corporation's gold mining operations in Timmins, Ont., includes total wage hikes ranging from 20% to 26%, not including additional adjustments based on job classifications and cost-of-living provisions. The contract provided signing bonuses of \$4,000 for operations workers and \$1,000 for trades people, as well as improvements to premiums, pensions, disability benefits, parental and bereavement leaves and personal protective equipment.



Local 174B • A precision drill: machinists retool contract

Some 40 members of amalgamated Local 174B, working at Pritchard MetalFab Inc. in Winnipeg, reached a four-year contract providing improvements that include total wage increases of 12% and expanded paid sick leave. Members include machinists and welders who provide custom metal fabrication for mining and other industrial equipment.



Local 9291 • Hotel workers find room for improvement

Members at the Comfort Inn in Rouyn-Noranda, Que., negotiated a five-year agreement with total wage increases that will range from 20% to 32% over the term, including a range of 8% to 20% in the first year. The contract also provides a seniority premium, two additional paid floating days off, vacation improvements and a guaranteed 40-hour work week for all members.



Local 1976-27 • Ferry workers navigate concessionary currents, sail into port with good deal

The 277 members working for the Marine Atlantic ferry service between North Sydney, N.S., and Port aux Basques, N.L., resisted the employer's concession demands and reached a three-year contract with notable improvements including total wage increases of 11%, with a 7% increase in the first year.

NEXTGEN 2024



EMPOWERING TOMORROW'S LEADERS

In early March 2024, a vibrant gathering of over 1,300 young Steelworkers, including more than 100 Canadians, descended on Pittsburgh, Penn., for the USW International NextGen Conference.

Delegates engaged in a variety of activities, including caucus meetings, panels, workshops and community service work, all aimed at equipping new and young activists with knowledge and skills to further develop as trade unionists and leaders in the union and their communities. Particularly cherished were the informal hallway meetings between sessions, providing delegates with the opportunity to share experiences and learn from one another, in addition to networking with union leaders and labour activists.

The conference offered a diverse and comprehensive program catering to the needs of young unionists. Each day featured two panels, focusing on topics such as "Making the future: the next generation of organizing," "The power of collective agreements," and "Showing up for community." Between panels, delegates could choose from a range of workshops led by experienced facilitators and activists, allowing them to expand their knowledge and strengthen solidarity among members.

The International NextGen Conference concluded its eventful week in Pittsburgh in a most rewarding manner, designating the fourth and final day as a day of action and community service. Delegates from various districts volunteered across the city, contributing to local initiatives and expressing gratitude to the hosting community.

Young Canadian activists played a significant role in the conference, contributing to organizing and managing the day-to-day activities and events, sharing inspiring success stories and tales of resilience in overcoming workplace challenges, actively engaging and contributing to workshops as both attendees and facilitators and demonstrating a deep commitment to volunteering and supporting vulnerable communities during the community service day.

As the conference concluded, delegates departed with renewed motivation to apply their learning in their communities, committed to making a positive impact and empowering others.

View photos from the NextGen 2024 Conference: usw.ca/photos.

Pay Equity Committees: activate!

Despite all our gains for workers, a gender pay gap persists. The labour movement, feminist activists and those who care about human rights are advocates for strong pay equity laws to fix the systemic undervaluing of women's work.

The USW's collective agreements ensure women working in male-dominated jobs earn the same as their male counterparts. That is the legal right to equal pay for equal work.

Pay equity is different; it's equal pay for work of equal value. It means comparing different jobs to equalize women's pay.

For USW members working in federally regulated sectors, such as transportation, banking, communications and others, the new federal Pay Equity Act has imminent deadlines. USW locals should be involved in their workplace Pay Equity Committee to ensure the union's interests are represented.

If you work in a federally regulated sector, you should be hearing from your USW union representatives about a Pay Equity Committee and plan for your workplace. The employer has to post a draft pay equity plan by **July 3, 2024**.

And what's in it for men? Men working in undervalued female-dominated roles will see a boost from pay equity adjustments. And workers of all genders deserve a workplace that pays everyone fairly.



Photo: Canadian Human Rights Commission video on pay equity

Pay equity benefit: local union connections

The USW represents workers at uranium mining company Cameco in Ontario and Saskatchewan in four separate union locals: 8562, 8914, 13173 and 14193.

"Because the Pay Equity Act requires one pay equity plan per employer, the locals have collaborated in a way they haven't previously," said USW Area Co-ordinator for Alberta and Saskatchewan Darrin Kruger, who works with Local 8914, representing Saskatchewan Cameco workers who live all over: in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario.

"Pay Equity Committee work involves getting everyone up to speed, training USW local representatives, and it can feel overwhelming," said Jan Borowy, lawyer and USW Pay Equity Administrator.

That's why the union is here to help. Learn more, participate and support your local's pay equity efforts.

usw.ca/payequity



District 3 Update



Building momentum: better work for everybody

A union card and good union contract are the best tools to make life more affordable. Across Western Canada, workers are coming together to join our union and USW members are coming together to bargain good collective agreements. That makes work and life better for everybody.

We have welcomed new members who are prison chaplains, workers in health care and workers doing mine remediation in the Yukon. We are signing up more Starbucks baristas and have active organizing drives at mines, mills and numerous other workplaces.

Members are bargaining for better working conditions, wages and benefits, but not without hard work and sometimes a fight. Members at Hudson's Bay in Kamloops, B.C., went on strike in December 2023, demanding more than the 17 cents per hour increase the employer had offered. Starbucks members in Edmonton and Metro Vancouver are battling for first contracts while members in Victoria are bargaining their second contract, working to build a better future for all baristas. Locals in Calgary and Regina are united, heading into negotiations with the steel company, EVRAZ. And over 10,000 forest workers in six locals in B.C. will soon be in contract talks.

The USW is making life better for workers everywhere. Members engage in these efforts, using tools and skills gained from union education, including shop steward, health and safety, bargaining and organizing classes and through new programs like Unionism on Turtle Island and Elevating Action against gender-based violence. In B.C., our Forest Workers Summit advanced worker and union-centred solutions to industry challenges.

Workers make gains when we elect politicians who share our values – remember that at the ballot box this fall in B.C. and Saskatchewan. In Manitoba, Premier Wab Kinew is introducing anti-scab laws and card-check certification.

I'm excited about this momentum heading into the District 3 Conference in Winnipeg, Oct. 28-31, 2024. This is our opportunity to come together to learn, network, build solidarity and chart the course for District 3.

Thank you for all you do to improve the lives of your colleagues and families and to build a stronger USW.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott".

Scott Lunny
USW District 3 Director

District 5 Update



In Quebec, working in French is a right

Temporary foreign workers (TFWs) are becoming increasingly numerous in Quebec workplaces. While some come from countries and regions where French is already spoken and/or taught, such as the Maghreb, for others learning the French language presents a huge challenge.

Speaking the common language should not be a luxury in the workplace, it's an important health and safety issue. It's a necessity in performing one's job and in communicating with colleagues. In the longer term, it's also a necessity if you want to settle in Quebec permanently, as all immigration programs require a good knowledge of French. The government has even announced that a certain level of French will soon be required when renewing a TFW permit.

Temporary foreign workers are often left to learn French on their own. Courses offered by school boards are often difficult to access without a car, schedules are not compatible with work hours, and content is unfortunately poorly adapted to the reality of language in our workplaces. Sometimes, it's employers who sabotage francization efforts by requesting that TFWs work overtime.

Addressing this issue requires a much more integrated approach. It can't be left solely on the shoulders of individual temporary foreign workers, who are already in a very precarious situation.

As a union, we must pressure employers to assume their responsibilities and offer paid French courses in the workplace. After all, it's the responsibility of employers to ensure the workers hired are fully capable of doing the job and speaking the common language is an essential work skill.

Quebec's Charter of the French Language guarantees the right to work in French, and employers are responsible for ensuring this right is upheld. Nevertheless, employers seem to take this obligation somewhat lightly when it comes to hiring temporary foreign workers. Therefore, we must insist on French-language courses in our workplaces and we must demand that governments make francization in the workplace a mandatory condition for employers using the Temporary Foreign Worker Program.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Lemieux'.

Dominic Lemieux
USW District 5 Director

District 6 Update



This year is a big year for District 6. We are busy preparing for the District 6 Conference in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, happening July 8-12, 2024.

We are excited to welcome special guests during our plenary sessions and provide union education during our workshops. What I am most looking forward to though is the chance to offer members the special conference experience featuring the USW's rich history at the underground mine on Bell Island, the beauty of St. John's and learning more about the Newfoundland and Labrador way of life.

It is indeed a conference to look forward to and I hope to see many District 6 members in St. John's this summer. Registration is open at usw.ca/d6conf2024.

Building up our union through organizing

Since the beginning of the year, our new member organizers in District 6 have been engaged in numerous organizing drives. In the first couple of months into 2024, we have seen several victories from these efforts, including workers in hardwood and plywood manufacturing, hospital security guards, bridge security guards and three Starbucks locations, resulting in five unionized locations in District 6. We now turn our focus to collective bargaining and training at all of the newly organized workplaces.

As we continue to build up our union through organizing, the union in Canada has engaged in a new member organizing program. We want to develop a team of skilled member organizers, with opportunities to participate in training and working with staff organizers. The goal is for our members to develop organizing leads and work on campaigns, starting in your home area.

This program is a great opportunity for Steelworkers to participate in. Just like the manufacturing, security and service workers, the Steelworkers union is always ready to support workers when they want to form their unions. Organizing has always been part of the Steelworkers DNA – we can't forget that and help continue to grow our union.

In solidarity,

Myles Sullivan
USW District 6 Director