

Unite

A newsletter for United Steelworkers in District 3 – Western Canada and the Territories

UNITED STEELWORKERS
USW
DISTRICT 3

JUNE 2024



Celebrate solidarity with Pride

USW District 3 proudly joins 2SLGBTQIA+ communities in celebrating Pride Month this June.

Pride was born out of protest in the United States where it started led by trans women and queer gender-non-conforming people. It was a time of defiance of persecution and an expression of both individual courage and community strength. Pride is a time to celebrate the 2SLGBTQIA+ members of our community, reflect on the history of queer struggle and liberation and renew our commitment to solidarity.

Solidarity and celebration have always been intertwined in Pride and this remains just as important today as it was during the days of the Stonewall riots (New York City, 1969). In recent years, we have seen a rise in hate acts across Canada influenced by right-wing special interest groups and political parties. Well-organized voices of hate are inciting acts of violence and intimidation worldwide.

USW is proud to have taken significant steps towards building greater inclusivity by strengthening human rights protections for our membership to build a diverse and inclusive environment. Our union is dedicated to ensuring that

every member feels safe, respected and valued.

Steelworker bargaining committees have been advocating for protections for 2SLGBTQIA+ workers. We actively negotiate anti-harassment contract language and programs to create safer and more-inclusive workplaces. We are also working to negotiate accommodations for members undergoing gender transition, ensuring they receive the support they need, when they need it.

This past year, the union also created a Steel Pride Working group with staff and members appointed from all districts. This group has an ambitious agenda to create stronger visibility of 2SLGBTQIA+ Steelworkers, more education and awareness among members and break down the isolation that many 2SLGBTQIA+ Steelworkers experience.

Throughout the summer, Steelworkers will participate in various Pride events and activities to celebrate and support the rainbow community. We encourage you to get involved to show your solidarity and Steel Pride!

Happy Pride!

Manitoba's NDP introduces card check and anti-scab legislation

USW District 3 celebrates the passing of anti-scab legislation and commends the Manitoba government for this step in strengthening workers' rights in the province.

“The passing of anti-scab legislation in Manitoba marks a monumental victory for workers' rights,” said USW Western Canada Director Scott Lunny. “This legislation reflects the Manitoba NDP government's commitment to promoting fairer labour laws, workers' rights and dignity.”

Anti-scab legislation already exists in Quebec and British Columbia and was recently introduced at the federal level, which will begin its study in committee later this week. It has been clearly demonstrated that such legislation reduces the intensity and duration of labour disputes, increases workplace stability, and restores balance in collective bargaining.

“There are politicians who talk about supporting workers and then there are those who take real action to support workers – Premier Wab Kinew is this kind of champion for workers in Manitoba,” said Lunny.



Upcoming events

usw.ca/district-3-events

Aug. 18-23, 2024

USW International Health, Safety and Environment Conference
Pittsburgh, PA

Sept. 2, 2024
Labour Day

Sept. 15-20, 2024

USW District 3 School
Cranbrook, B.C.

Sept. 23-27, 2024

B.C. Advanced SWV Outreach
Vancouver Island & Interior, B.C.

Oct. 2-4, 2024

USW National Health, Safety and Environment & Justice Conference
Gatineau, QC

Oct. 7-11, 2024

Sask. SWV Activist Training
Regina, Sask.

Oct. 15-19, 2024

B.C. SWV Activist Training
Langley & Burnaby, B.C.

Oct. 19, 2024
B.C. Election

Oct. 21-25, 2024

Sask. SWV Activist Training
Saskatoon, Sask.

Oct. 28, 2024
Sask. Election

Oct. 28-31, 2024

USW District 3 Conference
Winnipeg, MB

Kamloops Bay workers ratify new contract following 165-day strike

After a hard-fought 165-day strike, members of USW Local 1-417 have achieved a significant victory by ratifying a new collective agreement with Hudson's Bay in Kamloops, B.C.

USW members walked off the job on Dec. 10, 2023, after reaching an impasse with the department store.

This achievement follows a relentless campaign for fairness, resulting in improvements to contract language, protections for union positions, wage hikes and lump-sum payments. Additionally, Hudson's Bay has pledged substantial financial assistance for members choosing not to return to the store following the strike.



Members from USW Local 1-417 leafleting Bay stores.

“This milestone was made possible by the unwavering solidarity of striking USW 1-417 members and the steadfast leadership of key individuals,” said Marty Gibbons, USW Local 1-417 President. “It has been a privilege to stand alongside these courageous members in their fight to better their working lives.”

Forestry Workers' Summit unites workers in effort to strengthen sector

Earlier this year, USW District 3 joined the other unions in the forest sector, Unifor and PPWC, to hold an unprecedented B.C. Forestry Workers' Summit. Together with these unions, forest workers have prepared a series

of recommendations they have shared with the B.C. government to ensure forestry remains a viable, sustainable industry into the future.

Learn more at fightingforourfuture.ca.



Brian Butler
USW Local 1-1937 president



David Eby
Premier of British Columbia



Andrew Mercier, Minister of State for Sustainable Forestry Innovation



Bruce Ralston
Minister of Forests

USW DISTRICT 3

STRONG AS STEEL PODCAST

WITH DIRECTOR SCOTT LUNNY

EPISODE #10

Susanne Skidmore, Catie Jones and Brandon Nicholson

Listen at usw.ca/d3podcast

Canfor's decision to not invest in Houston: a political move or economics?

Forestry company Canfor announced it was reneging on the corporation's commitment to rebuild sawmill operations in Houston, B.C. Canfor also took the opportunity to announce that the indefinite closure of Polar Sawmill in Bear Lake, B.C., was now permanent and that hundreds more jobs were ending as it closed a line at its Northwood Pulp operations in Prince George, B.C. All in all, this is another gut punch to B.C. forestry workers and communities, especially in Northern B.C.

Canfor cites "access to economically available fibre." The decline in timber supply, whether it was pine-beetle infestations, climate change or even an earlier start to fire season, it's something many knew was coming. It worries us that another mill or pulp operation – or maybe more than one – would close in the Prince George Timber Supply Area (TSA).

But by reneging on the Houston rebuild—just eight months after Canfor promised workers in Houston a \$200 million investment in "a new state-of-the-art manufacturing facility" it's fair for workers to ask Canfor for some answers.

Eight months ago, the corporation's CEO claimed the decision to rebuild followed "a careful evaluation of the availability of economic fibre in the region to support a successful investment." The provincial government provided the necessary fibre supply assurances. In fact, Canfor was so excited to proceed they proclaimed, "Work will begin immediately on detailed project engineering and permitting requirements.... with

demolition and site preparation scheduled for the spring."

Fast forward to today: no details, no site prep, and the company offers a vague referral in their decision to abandon Houston, B.C., to "the result of the cumulative impact of policy changes and increased regulatory complexity." Workers are owed a better answer.

Behind closed doors, some claim it might be concerned about now-tabled Land Act changes, along with fearmongering about First Nations' rights. We support First Nations rights and reconciliation, and surely so does Canfor. The fibre supply that the government all but guaranteed is still there under the same conditions that existed eight months ago. The only change is that Canfor plans to log it, not mill it. Again, workers deserve a better answer.

It's the same old story for B.C. forestry workers: companies run flat out when prices are high and then invest south of the border when prices fall. Last quarter, Canfor acquired manufacturing operations in Arkansas, and earlier this month, it confirmed that its plan to build a new sawmill in Alabama was still a go.

To add insult to injury for B.C. forest workers, Canfor is still logging in the same tenure that once fueled these shuttered mills. Over decades and governments of different stripes, Canfor and other forest companies have successfully lobbied to eliminate most regulatory requirements that once informed and enforced the social contract that tied local trees to local jobs.

Without any threat of losing access to that timber, there's no motivation to invest or re-invest to keep workers employed, to support rural communities or to rebuild B.C.'s forest industry. Or is this about politics? Something about an election in the fall in B.C.? Would Canfor invest if the B.C. United Party were in power?

Maybe it's not politics and it's just business. Business pages might even



Scott Lunny
USW District 3 Director

say Canfor's doing a fine job by its shareholders but not its stakeholders. In community after community, it's failing in its commitment to forestry workers and the people of B.C. A company that cared would sit down with all of us, including workers, First Nations and the government.

B.C. forest workers and their communities are facing a crisis for their futures. Although forestry remains a significant contributor to the province's economy, since 2001, the industry has witnessed a 45% decline in employment, and jobs have been lost for nearly 35,000 workers.

The challenges facing rural B.C. and the forest industry go hand in hand. Often the largest employer in a small town, the impact of job loss is significant. When forestry struggles, communities struggle, from recruitment and retention challenges in health care to maintaining basic infrastructure.

But in the short term, it's time for the provincial government to invite Canfor into a room, along with labour, First Nations and the communities, and fix this. And if Canfor won't do that, let's find someone who will.

Our communities, our jobs, depend on it.



Jeff Bromley
USW Wood Council Chair

Bill 25 and “Rising Tide” Haida Title Lands Agreement a major step forward

USW District 3 is committed to reconciliation with B.C. First Nations and supports Bill 25, Haida Nation Recognition Amendment Act, 2024. The “Rising Tide” Haida Title Lands Agreement is a major step forward.

“We acknowledge our role in addressing the legacy of colonialism and we support the B.C. government doing the same,” said USW District 3 Director, Scott Lunny.

Specifically, USW Local 1-1937 represents members working within the Haida Nation, primarily in the forest sector.

USW District 3 is confident that, through respectful discussion, any changes and policies flowing from this legislation, agreement and nation-to-nation negotiations will not negatively impact those members and their families and, indeed, can result in more certainty and security for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who live and work in the Haida territory.

“Our union is, throughout its history in this province, about human rights and dignity,” added Lunny,

“Unionization, freedom of association and collective bargaining can be used as tools for reconciliation and, from an intersectional perspective, assist in addressing the dignity of Indigenous workers.”

Steelworkers mourn the death of Nutrien potash mine worker in Rocanville, Sask.

USW District 3 announced with great sadness the fatality of a member working at the Nutrien potash mine in Rocanville, Sask. on Sunday. The potash mine facility, located approximately 250 kilometres east of Regina, was temporarily closed.

The USW extends heartfelt condolences to the member’s

family, friends and colleagues during this difficult time.

“Our community is in mourning over this tragic incident at our mine site and our thoughts go out to the family, friends and our union family who are deeply impacted,” said Derek Palmer, USW Local 7916 president.

Steelworkers mourn the tragic loss of CN Rail worker

USW Local 2004 is heartbroken to announce the tragic loss of our brother, Juver Balmores, who was fatally injured early while on duty.

Juver, born in 1987, joined CN Rail in 2022 and quickly became a cherished member of our USW Local 2004 family.

He leaves behind a loving wife and three young children.

Juver was beloved by all his co-workers, known for his kindness and dedication.

Rest in peace, brother Juver. You will be deeply missed but never forgotten.

Welcome

to our new members from

Securitas Technology

Port Coquitlam, B.C.

Victoria, B.C.



When workplace tragedy occurs, the USW is here to help

The union’s Emergency Response Team (ERT) relies on notification from our local unions as quickly as possible following a fatality or catastrophic incident.

In the event of a workplace fatality or life-altering injury to any Steelworker, the local should notify its staff representative and the ERT as soon as possible.

24-hour Emergency Response Team hotline:
1-866-526-3480

Have the victim’s name and the USW local number available, as well as the employer’s name.

During emergencies call 911.

For more info and resources, visit usw.ca/ert.

Sharing our pronouns: *Solidarity in action*

Creating safer work environments is core to what we do as a union. Safety and well-being also include freedom from harassment and discrimination. Steelworker members bring a variety of life experiences and identities to their jobs and it is our duty to create positive, respectful work and union environments.

At USW union events and meetings, we encourage everyone who is comfortable to share their pronouns because it lets others know that we are not going to



assume someone's gender. It makes our events and meetings more inclusive and helps people bring their whole self and know they will be respected for it. It tells others that we see them as they are and they are safe in this environment.

You should always use the pronouns people ask you to use.

Learn more at

usw.ca/sharing-our-pronouns-solidarity-in-action



Jason Prokopchuk, USW 7689 continues to do excellent work for not just his members, but in the community as a whole volunteering with the Days of Caring Pancake Breakfast.



USW members attend the 2024 MFL Convention in Brandon, Man.



Proud to support pride in our communities

Steelworks were proud to march with the Manitoba Federation of Labour in the Winnipeg Pride Parade on June 2, 2024.

Find pride events in your province: usw.ca/2024-pride-events



The bargaining committees for USW Evraz locals join together to prepare for their upcoming round of negotiations.

Saskatchewan local leadership meeting

Saskatchewan Federation of Labour president Lori Johb and Saskatchewan NDP leader Carla Beck joined our June Saskatchewan local union leadership meeting.



Welcome

to our new members from
Prisoners' Legal Services

Burnaby, B.C.

UNITED STEELWORKERS
USW
DISTRICT 3

**BETTER
WORK
NOW.**

STEELWORKERS VOTE 2024 ELECTIONS

This past year, Steelworkers played an important role in electing Wab Kinew as the Premier of Manitoba, winning two by-elections in Saskatchewan and two by-elections in B.C., and helping elect the largest NDP opposition caucus in Alberta's history.

Now, we have two important provincial elections taking place in British Columbia and Saskatchewan. Elections matter and Steelworker involvement can make a difference.

In support of our political action and education programs in District 3, USW is scheduling the following Steelworkers Vote training sessions. USW District 3 will reimburse local unions for participant lost time, per diems, travel, mileage, and accommodations.

Sept 23-27: **B.C. Advanced SWV Member Outreach**

Oct 7-11: **Regina SWV Activist Training**

Oct 15-19: **Langley/Fraser Valley SWV Activist Training & Burnaby/Vancouver SWV Activist Training**

Oct 21-25: **Saskatoon SWV Activist Training**

Alberta members are invited to attend SWV trainings in B.C. or Saskatchewan, and Manitoba members are invited to attend SWV training in Saskatchewan.

Interested members should discuss their participation with their local union president before applying.

usw.ca/2024steelvotest/

B.C. Legislative Action Conference

Earlier this spring, nearly 30 Steelworkers attended a two-day B.C. Legislative Action Conference in Victoria, B.C.

Steelworkers presented the MLAs with thoughtful recommendations to build a better future for workers in the province.

Steelworkers discussed:

- Sectoral bargaining
- Mining and advanced processing
- Buy better: supporting workers, the economy and the environment through procurement
- Presumptive coverage for all workers
- Seniors' issues
- Recommendations from the 2024 B.C. Forestry Workers' Summit

Thank you to all the BC NDP government MLAs who took time to meet with our members about the important issues impacting their working lives.



Ratified!

City of Kimberley

USW Local 1-405

- ✓ 4-year deal
- ✓ 17% wage increases over contract
- ✓ Added vacation days
- ✓ Increases to the health spending account
- ✓ Added union orientation time to the CBA
- ✓ Reduced probation period for new hires



Ratified!

Miratech

USW Local 174B

- ✓ 3-year deal
- ✓ Wage increases of 4.5%, 3.0% and 2.5%
- ✓ DC Pension matched increase to 5%
- ✓ Vision increase to \$330
- ✓ Boots increased to \$255
- ✓ New Humanity Fund language + more!





May Day is OUR day!

Q Gaehring from USW Local 1-207 (Starbucks) was invited to speak about the challenges and opportunities in organizing young workers following the Edmonton and District Labour Council's May Day Rally.

"Two years ago when we reached out to USW I didn't know anything. Labour boards? Staff reps? Bargaining committees? All of these things were not only a daunting learning curve of folk expressions and legal language but worse it was blurred together with the mish mash of very American content I had consumed up to that point. Fortunately, the Steelworkers were ready for us. Their organizers were very quick to parse out the specific complications of our less than labour friendly government, while also leaving us room to "retranslate" that information into ways that worked for our folks."

Labourhood BBQ supports United Way's Period Promise Campaign

Thank you to everyone who joined USW District 3 for our "Labourhood BBQ" supporting the United Way's Period Promise Campaign and Menstrual Hygiene Day.

The lack of access to menstrual products is a pervasive issue in our communities. By supporting the Period Promise campaign, we are striving to increase access to these essential products. This will enable everyone who menstruates to attend school, work, access services, and maintain their connection to the community.

Please support the Period Promise campaign.

Visit uwbc.ca/program/period-promise for more information.



USW member to run in B.C. election

Congratulations to USW 2009 member Reah Arora on winning the BC NDP nomination in Burnaby East. We wish you all the best in this upcoming B.C. provincial election in October.



Banking Bonus for Members of
UNITED STEELWORKERS
DISTRICT 3

**\$2,500 Interest Free*
Line of Credit**

**Free* Premium
Chequing Account**

Community Savings
the united credit union

Banking bonus for B.C. USW members

USW District 3 is pleased to partner with Community Savings Credit Union to offer our B.C. members an exclusive banking package.

USW & Community Savings banking package:

- A 3-year, interest-free, line of credit, up to \$2,500*
- and 3 years of free banking*

Community Savings is offering a 3-year interest free line of credit, and 3 years of free banking for B.C. USW members. This package creates savings of over \$2700 over three years.

To sign up, visit unionmember.comsavings.com.

**Terms and conditions apply.
Limited time offer.*





Steelworkers Stand Up for Steel in Ottawa

More than 60 USW national and local union leaders, staff and activists descended on Ottawa for the union's Stand Up for Steel Conference on June 3 and 4.

Conference participants heard the union's policy and lobby priorities when it comes to the sector:

1. Use Canadian-made steel in infrastructure projects.
2. Implement a border carbon adjustment.
3. Expand the capacity of the CBSA to identify unfairly traded steel.

"Governments don't always think logically when it comes to procurement," said Mike Duhra, assistant to the District 3 Director. "The federal government needs to lead the way and the provinces can follow."

The conference's first day included regional, local union and workplace updates, presentations on union priorities, industrial policy, trade, global trends, trade law and lobbying.

The second day of the conference saw delegates engage in more than 30 strategic lobby meetings with elected officials including Members of Parliament from Western Canada: Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning), Richard Cannings (South Okanagan—West Kootenay), Greg McLean (Calgary Centre), Michael Kram (Regina—Wascana), Laurel Collins (Victoria), Randy Hoback (Prince Albert), Jagmeet Singh (Burnaby South), Warren Steinley (Regina—Lewvan) and Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot).



USW Local 2009 members at MoveUp went on strike on June 10. Movement was made by both sides and a tentative agreement was reached late in the evening on June 12.



Director Scott Lunny attended meetings to swear in the new officers of USW Local 360 and 7226.



Winnipeg Steelworkers were proud to join with the Manitoba Federation of Labour, Malaya Marcelino (Minister of Labour and Immigration) and Federal NDP leader Jagmeet Singh to kick off Pride Month by raising the Progress Pride Flag at the Union Centre.



The United Way Public Policy Institute kicked off its fifth session of the year with a welcome address by Scott Lunny, USW District 3 Director.

Get your USW District 3 merchandise!

USW District 3 has partnered with One Movement Threads to launch our USW District 3 pop-up shop!

PRE-ORDER BY JULY 1!

USW DISTRICT 3 POP-UP SHOP

WELCOME TO THE USW DISTRICT 3 POP-UP SHOP

[STORES.ONEMVMT.COM/USWD3/](https://stores.onemvmt.com/uswd3/)

Local unions and members can explore our unique collection of limited-edition USW District 3 clothing, exclusively available for pre-order until July 1st.

Pick your favourite USW D3 merch, check out easily and opt for shipping to your nearest USW location.

Check out the store at stores.onemvmt.com/uswd3/

Act fast as these items are only available for pre-order until July 1!

For custom local gear, please contact info@onemvmt.com.