

YOUR UNION

Local 480



Trail, B. C.

September 2023

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Level II – Health & Safety School (R/S) October 31st & November 1st

Deadline for signup is October 11th, 2023.

If you are interested in becoming a part of our Safety team, please contact Kyle at Local 480 Hall at 250.368.9131 or email to safetychair@usw480.com

Health & Safety Committee members:

Colin Gurnett - Leaching

Matt Thomson - Roasters

Tyler Bell - Pb North

Will McKenzie - Property Support

Jill Kinahan - Pb South

Jordan Reid - E&M

Phil Fraikin - TFO

VACANT - ISR & Shops

Joel Pearson - Fire Hall

Trevor Allegretto - Office & Technical Chair

Kyle Jorgensen - Jay Walters - Dean Johnson - Local 480

Local 480 is looking for Health and Safety Reps. to join their Health and Safety Committee.

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YOUR UNION

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The editors reserve the right to edit any or all material submitted



“Your Union” is a member of the United Steelworkers Press Association and abides by the constitution of the organization.

Come check out our Local 480 merchandise! Items may be purchased at the hall. All items are proudly union made!



**LOCAL 480
MEMBERSHIP MEETING
September 21 , 2023 3:45 PM & 5:30 PM
480 STEELWORKER HALL**

- CWS
- Local 480 Holding Society AGM

President's Report

Chris Walker, President

Calendar of Events And CWS for Trades



Hello everyone,

Welcome back from the summer. I hope you were all able to enjoy some of the summer and some time away from work.

At our last membership meeting in June, one of the things we discussed was hosting a second membership meeting. This is something we did for about 2 years, and the turnout was very poor. We are going to try this again for September – December meetings.

I realize people are busy, and sometimes it's difficult to get to these meetings, but these meetings are for you. It's a way for you to get information and also have a say. So please try your best to attend as many of these meetings as you can.

I want to share with you some of the events that Local 480 will be volunteering/hosting over the next few months.

- September 26th – United Way Park with Us. Local 480 will be barbecuing and serving. All proceeds will go to the United Way.
- September 30th – National Day of Truth &

Reconciliation. Local 480 will be barbecuing and taking part in the events. All proceeds go to the Gord Downey/Chanie Wenjack fund.

- October 28th – Spook-tacular. Local 480 will be barbecuing for the event, all proceeds going to the Gordy Steep Sick Children Fund.
- December 7th – Local 480 Extended Care dinner.
- December 9th – Local 480 Kids Christmas party.
- December 15th – Local 480's open house. We will be having raffles to raise money for the Gordy Steep Sick Children Fund.

I would also like to talk about the ongoing CWS review for the Trades. I'll start by saying both sides are not too far apart on most things, but we are stuck on some important work being added to the job descriptions.

It's really about job duties that only a few tradespeople do within any given trade. This cre-

ates several problems including seniority based issues. We have no interest in creating pay tiers within a trades group when they have all the same qualifications within their trade.

We are prepared to take this through the next stage of the CWS process, which is a 'referee' and then potentially arbitration if we can't come to an agreement. We are very comfortable with our argument, and we would do the same thing if we were reviewing an operators job.

This has the potential to slow the process even more, and this has implications for many, if not all of the trade groups, but I'll remind you that it's important we take as much time as possible to make no mistakes.

These jobs haven't been reviewed since the 90s, so if it takes us another year to do it right, then that's what we will do. Any increases will come with retro pay for the time it takes to complete these reviews.

I want to be clear about something, this is the same process we do when we review operations jobs. It's getting frustrating hearing things like we

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are so focused on the trades group and ignoring operations.

We most certainly are not doing that; we are trying to

do something for our trades that I believe is long overdue. We all need to stand behind them and the work they do.

The next membership meetings this month are on September 21st @ 3:45 and 5:30. Please try and find some time to attend one of the meetings.

In solidarity,
Chris Walker



**USW LOCAL 480
HOLDING SOCIETY ANNUAL
MEETING**

Please note that the annual Holding Society meeting will be held at the Local 480 Hall on October 4th, 2023 @ 4:00pm.

Benefits Co-ordinator Report

Leigh Creegan, Benefits Co-ordinator

Maximize Your Coverage

To the members of Local 480,

I hope everyone had a good summer and were able to enjoy some time away with friends, family and loved ones. It was a steady summer in the benefits office. We had three WCB cases at the Review Division and I am happy to report that all of the 3 cases were overturned with our members to receive proper and fair compensation for their injuries.

If you are hurt at work be sure to report the incident and go to first aid. After first aid or hospital treatment, be sure to follow the doctor's restrictions and make a claim with WCB (1-888-967-5377). If modified work is offered that fits your restrictions it must be attempted. If while doing the modified work your injury becomes re-aggravated then report back to first aid and follow up with your doctor to update any necessary restrictions. During that time, contact me and we will track your claim together and take the necessary steps. Please, if injured report your injury to WCB as soon as possible. You have 1 year from the date of injury to

make your claim, after that it is very difficult to get WCB to accept a claim.

Our benefits have a lifetime maximum of \$100,000.00 that is affected by our extended health care including medications. With that being said, depending on your health that lifetime maximum can last a long time or it can disappear fairly quickly.

If you are on medication for a given illness, have the conversation with your doctor to see if there is a generic version of the drug(s) you take. Generics often do the exact same as any big named brand pharmaceutical but at a fraction of the cost. Also ask the question if government programs will cover the cost of certain medications. Lastly, if you haven't already, sign up for BC PharmaCare. If you take the following steps you can maximize your benefit plan to your advantage; however, if you do exhaust your lifetime maximum please let me know. It was agreed in bargaining that additional funds will be discussed on a case by case basis.



Sun Life continues to give us issues. As we are all aware this year's Healthy Lifestyle Account funds were not loaded in a timely fashion. Conversations were had to hopefully rectify this from happening again. That being said, we will be tracking this for the remainder of the contract and if the issue continues it will be addressed in bargaining. Just to be aware if you run into an issue with Sun Life regarding coverage, it may take some time to rectify the issue as Sun Life is painfully slow to respond.

If you are off on a sick leave or WCB claim keep me informed about on your progress and if there is anything we can do for you. Our next union meeting will be held on September 21st at 3:45pm and 5:30pm at the Union Hall. It was decided during our June executive meeting that for the months of September, October, November, and December we would hold two meetings then re-evaluate. Hope to see you then.

In solidarity,
Leigh Creegan



Grievance Committee Report

Jesse Nicoll, Grievance Chair

Grievance's Won

Hello, Fellow United Steelworkers of Local 480.

The grievance committee had a great month in regards to grievances that have been won or settled to our satisfaction. Two of the grievances were for unjust discipline. One grievance, the discipline was reduced from a step two to a step one. In the other grievance the discipline was completely removed from the individual's record.

A few months ago we filed a grievance against the employer for a violation of your plant seniority rights. I was contacted at the Union Hall by a number of employees regarding their seniority status in their plant. Specifically it looked like the employer had not properly tracked when some of our members had taken temporary transfers. Under Article 11.11 of our collective agreement, your seniority is protected when you are temporarily moved out of your seniority unit for a number of reasons defined in that article. We managed to get the employer to agree to our interpretation of that article and adjustments have been made to the seniority lists. Your plant and company seniority are important for a number of reasons, one of them is for pro-

motional opportunities. Another is in the event of crew reductions or layoffs.

We filed a grievance on behalf of one of our members regarding an interaction with management. We argued that the behavior of the manager was out of line and needed to be addressed. Steps were taken to rectify the event and the Grievance Committee is glad that the issue is moving in a more positive direction. The grievance has been filed as won.

An employer communication was discovered a few months ago regarding how management would treat people who were on or going to be placed on the attendance improvement plan. What was listed in the communication was on its face very concerning and the Grievance Committee believed it was in violation of the collective agreement, as well as human rights legislation. We submitted a grievance to the employer. The employer corrected the communication to where the Grievance Committee was satisfied that discriminatory elements were removed.

We filed a grievance for one of our Operator Instructors

who had been performing the duties of that role on a temporary basis prior to getting the role permanently. We argued that you get paid accurately for the work you perform on site. The employer agreed to back pay and the grievance was filed as won.

In June we filed a grievance for one of our members whose employment was terminated. We booked a three day arbitration hearing with Arbitrator Chris Sullivan. A few weeks before the Arbitration we received new evidence and after a legal review with Craig Bavis from Victory Square Law Office, we decided to try to mediate a reinstatement to employment with Arbitrator Sullivan. Ultimately the Union and employer agreed to a monetary settlement and a resignation instead of termination.

There are a couple more grievances that we are waiting answers on from the employer. I believe the employer has agreed to our position on them as well. I will update you on those grievances in next article when they are officially won.

In Solidarity,
Jesse Nicoll.

Health & Safety Committee

Kyle Jorgensen, Safety Chair



Qualified

It seems like every so often there is a struggle with what it means to be trained and qualified. There is a difference between the two and it is an important difference. Once again according to WorksafeBC, which is the regulatory body for workplaces here in BC (the Standards that all workplaces in BC have to follow):

"qualified" means being knowledgeable of the work, the hazards involved and the means to control the hazards, by reason of education, training, experience or a combination thereof;

This definition is the minimum that must be met by all workplaces in BC. So, at minimum in order to be "qualified" to perform a particular task, you must have knowledge of the work, knowledge of the hazards involved and knowledge and the ability to control the hazards. That is achieved through education (book work, classroom work), training (being with

someone and observing them), experience (actually performing the task with someone observing that you can safely do the job) or a combination of all of them.

So, the difference between being trained and being qualified is quite simply, someone showing you something, either in a class setting with a picture or out in the field is training. Someone physically observing you to make sure you understand and can do the task that you were shown would be qualifying. We do not all learn the same way and at the same speed so the qualification process is key to ensure that we understand what we are being asked to do. Do not ever feel the need to rush through training, it is the most important step to set everyone up for success and if you do feel like you are getting rushed, please speak with your supervisor and if that is not working please give us a call at 368-9131.

With that in mind, Verifiable Learner Objectives (VLO's) are the tools that are used at

Teck. These VLO's, are the documented way that training is confirmed to be adequate and therefore are used to qualify. These make up training records and are always asked for if something ever goes wrong. Thus, it is vital to make sure we follow the intent of what each step is. Training is the first step, with classroom, observing out in the field and performing work with someone beside you.

The next step is qualifying, where someone, usually an operator instructor or for tradespersons, a journeyman or trainer, observe to make sure you understand and can do the task that you are performing. After that, it is written down on the VLO, to prove that training occurred and you are qualified. The essential part of that is the qualification process is more than just someone reading a line in a VLO and asking if you can do that. It needs to be verified like it says in the term "Verifiable Learner Objective."

In Solidarity,
Kyle





Safety Co-ordinators

Dean Johnson & Jay Walters

Training On New Jobs



Local 480 Members

I hope everyone had an enjoyable and safe summer and that vacations were a nice break from work.

As we head into fall, we find the summer students have gone back to school and we usually do a bit of a shuffle back into jobs that they were filling. This often involves refreshers on those jobs and in some cases, training for new operators moving into these positions.

In either case, for anyone in any position, thoroughly completed and verified training is the first step to your safety. For the past while a large amount of our safety issues and incidents have

been traced back to training. Training should not only prepare you how to complete your tasks, it should make you well aware of all of the hazards around those tasks and how to mitigate those hazards.

This information is crucial to be efficient, successful and **SAFE** in your jobs. It is a fact that everyone learns and understands in their own unique way and at different paces.

ALWAYS ask questions to get the understanding you need.

Operator instructors and peer trainers should always be willing to help and to clarify. If you do not have the information, clarification or confidence you need to do your job safely do not

go out there alone. You need to have a full understating of the job.

Also, do not sign any VLO that confirms you comprehend a task if you do not have full understanding.

If any specific safety questions come that need to be answered we are always available and willing to help no matter how small it may seem. Give us a call at the hall (250-368-9131) and we will be there.

"Your job provides the paycheck, safety brings you home."

Take care out there,
DEAN

Incident Report

To the members of Local 480,

I am writing to remind you that we all need to speak up and report unsafe conditions as soon as we find them. Recently I've had a few issues brought to my attention that required us pushing to find a resolution. One of the concerns was brought to me through a phone call, and the rest were a result of me asking for concerns while I was touring around. While it's good that we were able to help in these situations, in all these cases some time had passed before we found out.

If you see anything unsafe in the field, whether it's a condi-

tion or an action, control the hazard and let your supervisor know right away so it can be corrected, as this is one of our responsibilities as workers. If possible, try to get the work order number from your supervisor so you can track the progress. If for any reason you are uncomfortable approaching your supervisor about a particular issue, reach out to your area vice-chair or safety rep, or give us a call at the union hall. The number for the union hall is 250-368-9131, and my work cell is 250-231-4421.

With all of that being said, I want to thank everyone for making us aware of these issues. You

are truly our eyes and ears out there. We can spot a lot of things on our own, but all of us need to work together for a safe workplace.

Most of the issues brought to my attention lately were ones that I would not have discovered without your help. In a perfect world, these things get dealt with in a timely manner, but as we all know that is not always the case. We will continue to make sure that these concerns do not get lost.

In Solidarity,
Jay Walters

Office and Technical Chair, Report

Ron McKenzie, Unit Chair

Human Rights And Solidarity



To everyone,

I hope you all had a great summer and got some time to recharge and really enjoy some of it, I know I did, and I am thankful for that!

Keep an eye out for notice of our next general Office and Technical Unit meeting in October, (Date: **TBD**).

In this article, I want to address an increasing trend at work, regarding respect and solidarity.

The Steelworkers, “Yellow Sheet”, which is read out at USW conferences and schools, outlines expectations for respectful conduct at Steelworker events. It starts out with a statement, “There are two principles fundamental to the labour movement, Human Rights and Solidarity. Harassment strikes at the heart of both”.

I am disappointed because both seem to be under attack or worse, forgotten.

Unions fight to protect both contract rights and basic human rights and freedoms, with the second also written into acts, codes, laws, and constitutions. We need to remember that these rights were not just given to us all, they were built over generations, people fought, sacrificed, and even died to get them. If we don’t protect them, they can be lost.

One of the most important is the right to freedom from discrimination or harassment. We are a workplace and a country made up of people from all walks of life, with different lifestyles, beliefs, and life experience. This makes us adaptable, and resilient, but it also means there are different opinions on how people should exercise their rights. What holds it all together is an understanding that, to have our own rights protected, we must not harm others in exercising them, and we all must respect each other’s rights.

Unfortunately, I have seen more people, undermining each other, pointing fingers, bending rules, stepping on others to get what they want, and not caring about what affect their words and actions have. While this isn’t outright harassment or discrimination, it shows a lack of respect and empathy for each other; often people seem only focused on themselves. Sometimes, I see people refusing to work together, being intolerant and disrespectful, and getting close or even over the line into actual harassment or discrimination.

This needs to stop now, because it strikes directly at solidarity, which is what makes a Union, a Union.

Solidarity is an understanding that everyone deserves

to be treated with equal respect and that our lives are better when the lives of those around us are better.

It is also the understanding that anyone can get sick, or injured, or have something out of our control affect our lives. We all may need help from others one day, so we all need to look out for each other and be willing to help, even if there is no immediate gain for ourselves.

I truly believe that, if we are going to improve our quality of life, then we need to respect each other and work together to benefit everyone, not just ourselves.

We need to stand together, and support each other, because we all want the same things: to provide for ourselves and our families, to work a job where we can feel safe and fulfilled, and to happily live our lives how we want to. We need to stand in solidarity with each other to get there, because that is half the battle, and because a united group will always be more able to make longer lasting improvements than one person standing alone.

In Solidarity,
Ron McKenzie

OBEY LOCKOUT/TAGOUT



PROTECT your coworkers