

YOUNION

Local 480



Trail, B. C.

November 2024

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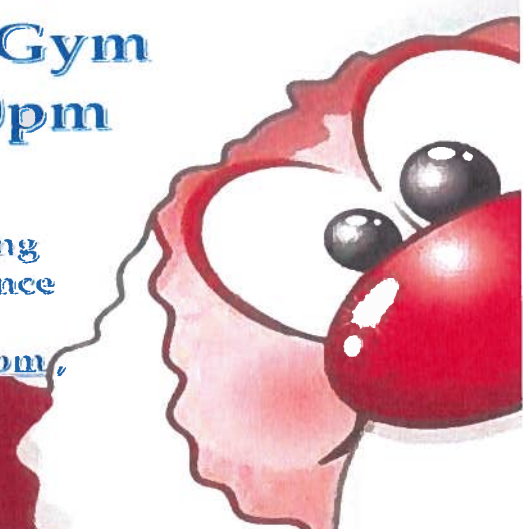
Local 480

*Will be hosting their
Annual Kids Christmas Party!*

Snacks and entertainment will be provided.
Santa will be stopping by for a visit and to
hand out gifts to all Local 480 members'
kids who have registered.

Saturday, Dec. 7th
@ the Cominco Gym
12:00pm - 3:00pm

Must pre-register by emailing
the name, age & gender preference
of your child(ren) to
Jo-Lynne at jo-lynnne@usw480.com,
no later than Nov. 29th.



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We are Online and Live!



www.facebook.com/usw480

You can also find us at: www.uswlocal480.com

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
November 21, 2024 3:45 PM & 5:30 PM
480 STEELWORKER HALL**

- Kids Christmas Party
- Open House

President's Report

Chris Walker, President

The Tides Of Change

Hello everyone,

As you all know, we are facing some significant changes here at Teck Trail, and I won't waste time rehashing the obvious. Instead, I want to give you an honest update on what we, the Union, know so far.

First, let me be clear; I'm not here to debate whether or not "Trail hides its profits" or entertain the idea that "this place is too big to fail." Everyone is entitled to their own opinions, but I prefer to focus on the facts.

Since Matt Parrilla came on board, he's done a terrific job of communicating that Trail needs to turn things around and that drastic changes are necessary to ensure our long-term success. One thing Matt has remained firm on is that this all begins with safety — and that making safety our #1 priority is key.

This is music to our ears at the Hall. Although I felt like safety was always the top priority at the Fire Department, I know from talking to many of you that this hasn't always been the shared experience on-site. Hopefully, in time, we can change the culture and make safety a top priority for everyone. But for that to happen, it

has to start at the top and be reinforced across the board.

Now, I know the big concern on everyone's mind isn't safety — it's layoffs and job losses. So let me be as transparent as I can with the information I have.

Matt officially started on October 1st, and the following day (October 2nd), he had his first meeting with the Union. Since then, he's been consistent in his messaging. He has committed to making Trail profitable again, and as part of that process, there will likely be a reduction in the number of people on-site. These changes are already underway with contractors and management staff, and it sounds like more adjustments will be made throughout the year.

As for the 480/hourly employees, as of now, we will continue as we are, with the full-time workers on-site. There are some areas under review, but until changes happen, we are to carry on in our roles as usual. Matt has assured us that we will be the first to know if and when any changes are coming.

I also want to address the rumors about a hiring freeze — these are just that, rumors.



While it's true that labor requisitions are taking a little longer to process, there is no official hiring freeze in place.

My hope is that we can turn things around here and never have to face layoffs. But if that time does come, we will turn to our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), particularly Article 11, which covers Promotions, Demotions, Transfers, and Layoffs.

We have this language in place, and we've navigated layoffs before — most notably in the '90s. Our job, as always, is to ensure that the Company adheres to the terms of the CBA. That said, we have made it clear to Matt that if there is a need to explore something outside of the CBA that benefits both parties, we are open to discussions. We would take any such proposal to the Membership, but our goal will always be to minimize disruption and protect the interests of our hourly workers.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that I've had several conversations with people in special assignments who are understandably worried about their positions. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't worried as well.

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But right now, the best thing we can do is focus on making this place successful, so that we don't have to worry about job losses. While we may not always see eye-to-eye with the new leadership, I am confident

that the new leadership will make Trail profitable again.

Whether you've been here for 1 year or 30 years, let's work together respectfully during these challenging times. We all have legitimate concerns,

and it's important we approach this period with understanding and collaboration, as we continue to look out for each other.

In solidarity,
Chris Walker

NOVEMBER 29TH

● The USW Local 480 Hall - 910 Portland Street, Trail

OPEN TO ALL USW LOCAL 480 MEMBERS & SPOUSES

TICKETS AT THE DOOR

\$10 ENTRY FEE INCLUDES

PIZZA

1 DRINK TICKET

3 PLAYING CARDS

ADDITIONAL
BINGO CARDS
3 FOR \$5



2ND ANNUAL



DOORS OPEN AT 5:30 PM

BINGO STARTS AT 6:00 PM

SAFE RIDE HOME AVAILABLE

HOSTED BY THE USW LOCAL 480



**WOMEN
of STEEL**



Benefits Co-ordinator Report

Leigh Creegan, Benefits Co-ordinator

How Basic Sick Leave Works

To the members of Local 480,

It's been a steady couple of months regarding sick leave claims, accommodations, WCB reviews and of course Sun Life. Two appeals have been submitted with the Review Division with another two to be filed in the new year. We will continue to work through the issues and concerns as they come up.

In my last article I mentioned I would be travelling to Vancouver for a labour law conference hosted by Victory Square Law Office. It was an informative event that was well attended. There was good information that was shared and discussed; even though not all the topics discussed affected us as a local, it was nice to be informed of the other struggles happening in the workforce. You never know when that information could become beneficial. These conferences are held every year and I'm excited to see what will be shared and discussed next year. Education is what helps us grow as a local to help better support our membership. That being said, I do urge anybody who has thought about becoming more involved with the Union to take that plunge. It's a good opportunity to not only educate yourself on your rights, but the rights of your fellow union members to help support each

other. Education is the best tool we have to maintain and uphold our rights as workers.

I would like to take this time to explain our Basic Sick Leave (BSL) language and how the process works. First, we will discuss eligibility. A member becomes eligible for BSL after completing 3 months of continuous service with the Company. There are waiting periods for BSL benefits depending on the situation. The waiting period is waved if you've been in an accident, have a day surgery (even if you're an outpatient or have dental surgery) or are confined to a hospital for a period of at least 18 hours. For all other situations there are wait periods. If a member has less than a year of service, benefits commence on the fourth day of sickness. For members with over a year of service benefits commence on the second day. If you've had a claim in the last twelve months, then benefits commence on the third day of sickness. BSL lasts for 26 weeks at a pay rate of 70 1/3% of your standard hourly rate. Once 26 weeks have occurred and you are not back at work then LTD would kick in after an application process.

Two forms need to be filled out for BSL an Employee Statement and a Physicians Form. If you are under the care



of a doctor following a treatment plan, then the requirements have been fulfilled. Be sure that your doctor sends in the appropriate paperwork to the Company after each visit so there aren't gaps in the medical. Now we will discuss Interrupted Periods of Disability. If you return to work before the 26 weeks are up, but the return isn't going well and you need to go off again for the same illness there are two scenarios that can occur. If on your return you are performing the duties of an occupation other than your own, you need to complete 3 months of continuous work in that role for your BSL time to restart or you continue from where you were in that 26-week BSL schedule. If you're performing the duties of your own occupation, then it is 2 consecutive weeks. If the reason for BSL is an unrelated cause, then it is only 1 day. This information can be found in your CBA under Addendum E on page 169.

Remember to report all injuries and go to first aid, followed by starting a WCB claim. If you need help with that process, give me a call at the Hall (250-368-9131) and I am happy to help. Our next membership meeting is on November 21st, see you then.
In Solidarity,
Leigh



Grievance Committee Report

Jesse Nicoll, Grievance Chair

Arbitration Schedule and Family Leave

Hello Brothers, Sisters and fellow Steelworkers,

We recently concluded a 3-day arbitration hearing in October. The arbitration was for a grievance involving 3 of our heavy-duty mechanics who were forced out of their 5x2 day shift, to a 4x4 steady day shift. We argued that the employer had violated their rights, particularly under Article 13.03 of the collective agreement. The article states that *"The Company agrees to use its best endeavors to place as many employees as possible on schedules which provide for five (5) consecutive days of work, Monday to Friday, followed by two (2) days of rest."*

The 3 mechanics had been on 5x2 day shift for 10 years before they were forced out of that shift.

Our legal counsel did a great job throughout the hearing. I hope to get a decision from arbitrator Cathy Knapp within the next few months.

There was an arbitration scheduled for early December for a grievance involving a breach of the "acting boss" Letter of Understanding, as well as, Article 11.21 and the associated Letter of Understanding. The Arbitrator for that hearing has had a medical issue transpire so we will

have to reschedule for a later date.

Due to a recent upshift in grievances, we have decided to secure arbitration dates into 2025. We have 3 termination grievances to work through first.

The dates of 2025 are as follows:

- February 27th and 28th.
- March 3rd to the 5th.
- June 3rd to the 5th.
- October 7th and 8th.
- November 18th to the 21st.

I will update you all on which grievances will be attached to those dates as we get a clearer picture. There may be a few grievances that get settled which would affect the order in which we go to arbitration.

We have been fielding a few concerns around "Family Responsibility Leave". This is Article 25.03 and outlined in detail in the Employment Standards Act Part 6 Section 52. There seems to be some confusion out there about how this Act works and what your rights are.

I will keep this explanation simple. These 5 days are yours.

If you meet the requirements for family leave. The following is pulled from the Act and describes the intent:

Family responsibility leave is an employee-initiated unpaid leave of up to 5 days in an employee's employment year, based on their starting date. This leave is designed to help employees deal with family problems that conflict with job responsibilities. This leave is a statutory entitlement, not something that may or may not be granted at the discretion of the employer.

The company does not have the right to deny you upfront when you notify them that you are taking family leave. The act does allow the employer to inquire for "reasonable proof" about the reasons after the family leave has transpired. It is encouraged that you give the company as much notice as possible.

Last of all I'd like to comment on the organizational changes that are currently and going to be happening. These changes do not come at the expense of your rights! Most of us have been around enough to know where the problems are and its not the Local 480 membership.

In Solidarity,
Jesse Nicoll.

Health & Safety Committee

Kyle Jorgensen, Safety Chair

Safety Vice-Chair Elections



We have now concluded our Safety Vice-Chair Elections. Thank you to everyone who put their name forward to stay on in the existing Vice-Chair positions and to everyone who put their name forward for the open Vice-Chair positions. Congratulations to Jeremy Whaley and Kyle Robertson, who are the new co-

Vice-Chairs in Property Services. Also, congratulations to Mike Pisacreta, who, after a week-long of voting at the E&M gates, from October 7-11, has been elected to the E&M Vice-Chair position. Also, thank you to everyone who helped out with the voting at the gates, at the Hall and with the vote counting.

Now, our Safety Committee is complete for another 3 years, as our Vice-Chair terms run for 3 years just like our executive positions. With that being said, if you need to get a hold of anyone on our Safety Committee, here are all of our reps in all of the areas:

HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE LOCALS 480 & O&T, USW

NAME	POSITION	AREA	WORK PHONE
<u>UNION REPS:</u>			
JORGENSEN, Kyle	CHAIR		368-9131
WALTERS, Jay	COORDINATOR		368-9131
JOHNSON, Dean	COORDINATOR		368-9131
KINIHAN, Jill	VICE CHAIR	Lead South (T)	364-4819
ROBERTSON, Kyle WHALEY, Jeremy	VICE CHAIRS	Property Services (S/Q) (R/S)	364-4947
BELL, Tyler	VICE CHAIR	Lead North (E)	364-4196
FRAIKIN, Phil	VICE CHAIR	Warfield (E)	364-4771
THOMPSON, Matt	VICE CHAIR	RA/ZPL (Q)	364-4610
PISACRETA, Mike	VICE CHAIR	E&M	
GURNETT, Colin	VICE CHAIR	Leaching (E)	364-4459
LORD, Adam	VICE CHAIR	ISR	
HILL-RABBITTE, Kieran	VICE CHAIR	Fire Hall (Q)	364-4901
ALLEGRETTO, Trevor	VICE CHAIR	Environment (E)	364-4382



Safety Co-ordinators

Dean Johnson & Jay Walters

Shutdowns



Local 480 Members...

Back in October I was part of the Roaster Shutdown.

Like any shutdown, it had its share of challenges. Dropped objects were some concerns that came up more than once during the duration. There were no injuries, and in most cases, control zones were in place.

Just a quick reminder when working at heights to consider the items you may have with you when you are working at higher levels. They could become a dropped object if you lose control of them. If unsure about dropped objects or control

zones, Con Doc # 8084 has the information you need. There are checklists, a consequence calculator and other useful tools to help you assess any elevated work zone that could result in a dropped object.

As often happens during shutdowns, there were also some unforeseen circumstances and scope changes that crept up. I will say, in the situations I witnessed, the response was handled very well and the communication was good.

There were 'step back' and assessment conversations had. This resulted in a good path

forward and the necessary tasks were completed safely. These were completely positive examples of what is asked of us when faced with situations like this. If we can apply this to our everyday tasks when something just isn't going according to plan or something has changed, we can reduce risks and injuries.

If you need support with anything out there or have any questions, be sure to give us call (250-368-9131)

Take care,
DEAN

Don't Forget the Hidden Hazards

In our heavy industry environment, it can be easy to spot the obvious physical hazards that come with the job. However, it's important to recognize that not all dangers are immediately visible. Some of the threats to our health and safety are those we can't easily detect, or worse, have grown to accept. Let's shed light on these less obvious hazards and work to identify and mitigate them.

Chemical Hazards

One of the primary concerns in our workplace is expo-

sure to harmful chemicals. Fumes and dust from metals such as lead, cadmium, thallium and others can pose significant health risks. These particles can be inhaled or absorbed through the skin, leading to serious long-term health issues. SO₂, arsine, ammonia, and chlorine are among the toxic gases on site as well and can cause respiratory problems, while arsine is highly toxic and can lead to severe poisoning.

We are surrounded by a potpourri of toxins in our workplace, and it's critical that we protect ourselves. As a lead

products operator, I know that we can sometimes become complacent and lower our guard on some of these toxic hazards. While it is essential that we use the appropriate PPE for hygiene hazards, it is even more important that the plant maintain and improve systems (such as ventilation, hygiene monitors, etc.) to mitigate the hazard as much as possible. We are getting better at maintaining guards and devices that protect from physical injury, but it seems that there isn't the same level of respect for hygiene hazards at the moment.

We must also allow time for housekeeping to prevent the buildup of toxic materials in our work areas. Please report all deficiencies in hygiene safety to your supervisor and bring them to your monthly safety meeting to get them on the action log if you think it will not be immediately addressed. We can help with this as well, just let us know.

Ergonomic Hazards

This is another category of less obvious threats. Poor workstation design, repetitive motions, and improper lifting techniques can lead to musculo-skeletal disorders. These issues might not be immediately apparent but can cause chronic pain and long-term disability if not addressed.

To mitigate ergonomic risks, we should focus on proper workstation setup, use of ergonomic tools, and regular breaks to reduce strain. If you need to take a minute to get help with something, please do it. In the past few weeks, I've talked with more than one injured worker who said it was a task they do

often, but post-injury they knew they should have got help. In other words, they got away with it until they didn't.

Psychological Hazards

Psychological safety is just as important as physical safety but is much less talked about. These hazards (so far) are not included in workplace inspections and do not show up on audits. Stress, harassment, and poor working conditions can lead to mental health issues, which in turn affects overall job performance and safety. It also increases absenteeism, which in turn puts more pressure on crews that are already running short-handed and relying on overtime. It's important to foster a supportive work environment where employees feel safe to voice their concerns and seek help when needed.

Please treat and report these conditions like you would any other hazard on the job. WorkSafe BC outlines the H&S Roles and Responsibilities of the worker, supervisor, employer, and owner. When it talks about reporting and investigating haz-

ards, it makes no exception for psychological hazards.

Opportunity for Change

We have a new general manager who seems committed to improving our workplace safety standards. Mr. Parilla met with union safety shortly after arriving and made it clear that things will be changing. He said that everything starts with safety, that nothing is more important than safe work, and that it's a non-negotiable expectation.

Obviously, we agree 100% with this stance and will continue to work towards a safety-first culture. There is a lot of work to do in this regard. We all know it, and we all need to be part of changing it. Now is the perfect time to advocate for better safety measures and ensure that our workplace is as safe as possible for everyone.

Assess *all* the risks of your job, report all deficiencies, work safe, and watch out for each other.

In Solidarity,
Jay Walters

Important Contact information for Reporting!

Doing what's right line # 1-888-494-0274

WCB Reporting line 1-888-621-7233 or report online at:
<https://prevruw.online.worksafebc.com/>

Sign-up For Text Alerts by Texting 480 to 32323



Office and Technical Chair, Report

Ron McKenzie, Unit Chair

Learning From the Past

“Those who forget their history are condemned to repeat it.”

George Santayana

I have been thinking about our history quite a bit lately, because I have spent a lot of time digging through dusty old notes lately. One thing that has been quite clear is that compared to our past, we have been on a relatively easy run lately. We have had, little in the way of layoffs, relatively easy bargaining and few major disputes compared to the past.

It seems clear to me however, that this is coming to an end.

I say this for a few reasons.

The most obvious is the messages communicated directly to us all by the new GM - Matt Parilla, “Trail Ops is not making money, and this can’t continue”. He has also said that he will do, “whatever is necessary to make this place profitable again”.

We have heard this before, but there is a noticeable change in tone now and I can say that the new management group has followed through with what they have said they would do so far. So, I think we all need to take this seriously this time.

As I said above, I have been reading the Union’s history books. There have been several difficult periods since our group unionized in 1974:

- The 70’s and 80’s were a revolving door of hiring when the profits were up and lay offs when they were down. It was made worse by even higher interest rates and inflation than we’ve seen lately and instability in the economy. All of this had direct impacts on smelter profits and our members lives. We haven’t got there yet, but I can see the current conditions making it a possibility again. We don’t want to go back to the roller-coaster ride of the 70’s and 80’s.
- In the 1990’s we had the QSL furnace failure, that nearly bankrupted Cominco. Then, the Company asked the government and the Union to help bail them out with tax breaks and major contract concessions, both of which they got. The Union had to do this to keep the smelter from shutting down completely. It led to a massive reduction of about half the workforce within 5 years, and was the origin of many of our contract language issues that still cause us headaches today.
- The Union made significant sacrifices then and are still doing our part to help make the Smelter profitable. Much like with the QSL failure of the 1990’s, I believe the problems lie with choices made well above the level of any unionized employee. We all need to do what we can day to day to help turn this place around, but the company also needs to remember everything that the Union already gave up and we hope they are not expecting a repeat because the well is already pretty dry.
- Leading into the 2005 bargaining cycle, there was a significant increase in disciplines and contract violations and more asks for concessions from the Union. Intentional or not, this almost always leads to labour disputes and did then. I read in the margin of the bargaining notes from 2005 a note that said, “are they (the Company) trying to force us out on strike?!” In the end, bargaining did fall apart and

the members had to strike, but they stood together and they were successful in protecting our pension plan and many other important pieces of our contract.

- In 2007-2009, the global financial bubble burst. Teck's stock crashed and metal prices went haywire. This led to a hiring freeze and even some layoffs. It was relatively short lived, but for most of us working here now, it is the closest we have seen to what was normal in the 70's, 80's and 90's.
- In 2020, we had the covid lockdown. We saw around the world, many knee jerk reactions, polarized opinions and beliefs, and an unwillingness from most people to find any compromises at all. I am afraid that we're now much more

fractured, distrustful and selfish than ever and people seem better at blaming others, than taking it upon themselves to find solutions to their problems.

This is the opposite of what makes a Union strong. Unions work best when all of us come together to find solutions from the shop floor, and everyone focusses on the common goal of making all our lives better at the same time. This is what we need to get back to or we risk losing the rights and benefits that we have now.

With all of this in mind, I see a problem in the O&T group.

There are only about 6 employees that worked here in the 1990's, all of whom could retire at any time and we only have about a dozen more who were here for the 2005 strike.

More than half of us have been here 15 years or less, so did not even see the effect that the global financial crisis in the early 2000's, and fully a quarter have 5 years or less and have only seen how Teck has run since the lockdowns.

This is a problem because, soon there will be very few, if anyone, that has lived through rough times at the Smelter, and unfortunately, also very few that understand that Teck has no interest in giving us anything more than the absolute minimum necessary, to continue to make their share holders money. This makes our Union ripe for taking advantage of, if we don't remember what it took to get us here, so we need to do as much as possible to remember how we got what we have.

We all need to remember that: it has always taken all of us working together to make things better, things have been worse and could always go backward, and those who came before us made many sacrifices like loss of income through strikes and lockouts to win us what we have now. They got through it all and won, by standing together.

I believe if we remember how we got here, we can avoid making the same mistakes, and we won't be doomed to repeat the worst.

Yours in Solidarity,
Ron



Local 480 invites you to their

ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE

Please come and join us @ the Union Hall for snacks
& refreshments on:

Friday, December 13th
from 3:30pm - 8:00pm.

NO MINORS ALLOWED

*Non-perishable food items
are greatly appreciated*

A designated driver will be available.