



# POWERWORKS

September 2015 **POWER WORKERS' UNION NEWSLETTER**

## IN THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER...

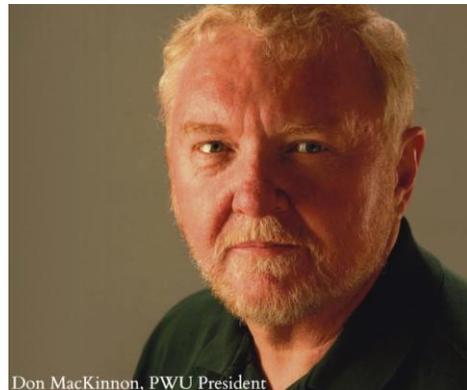
- Don MacKinnon Named Leader of the Year by Electricity Human Resources Canada
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## Don MacKinnon Named Leader of the Year by Electricity Human Resources Canada

*Media release from Electricity Human Resources Canada:*

“Mr. MacKinnon has been a leading figure in Ontario's electricity industry for almost 30 years. A Powerline Technician by trade, he began his apprenticeship with Ontario Hydro in 1971 and in 2012 was awarded the Order of Ontario, the highest honour in the province for his achievements as a life-long advocate for Ontario's energy industry. Known throughout the electricity industry as an honest, innovative, intelligent and tireless proponent of the industry and



Don MacKinnon, PWU President

the people that work in it, Don inspires a shared vision by creating for others an ideal and unique image of what is possible.

“Speaking on behalf of Electricity Human Resources Canada (EHRC), Norm Fraser, Chair, congratulated Mr. MacKinnon: ‘We are delighted to recognize Don as this year’s winner. He is one of the most respected and hard-working individuals in the industry today, and widely recognized as an innovator, a problem solver, and a steady influence in the industry.’

“The Leader of the Year award was established by EHRC in 2013 to recognize and celebrate an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to their organization within the Canadian electricity industry through visionary people management strategies and leadership. The successful nominee is an individual who has affected positive change and is dedicated to ensuring that their workforce has the opportunity and skills to contribute to the business’ overall strategy and success.”

Don will be presented with his award at a special ceremony on December 9.

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### **Inside Workers at Great Lakes Power Transmission Join PWU**

In August, the inside workers at Great Lakes Power Transmission (GLPT) in Sault Ste. Marie voted to join the PWU. The outside workers at GLPT already belong to the



Union. The positions include information technology, administration, purchasing, accounting, engineering technician and operations technician. The new PWU members have elected their Principal Steward, Kevin Grant, and will enter into bargaining for a first contract in the fall.

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### **Private Sector Consortium to Operate Canadian Nuclear Laboratories**

In late June, the federal government announced the selection of Canadian National



Energy Alliance (CNEA) as the operator of Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL), formerly known as Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL). Members of the consortium are SNC Lavalin, CH2M HILL Canada Ltd., Fluor Government Group Canada Inc., EnergySolutions Canada Group Ltd. and Rolls-Royce

Civil Nuclear Canada Ltd. There were three other corporate consortiums who submitted bids.

*\*Above photo provided courtesy of Canadian Nuclear Laboratories*

For PWU members and other employees at CNL, a key issue that will have to be addressed is pension arrangements since, as employees of a private company, they will not be permitted to remain in the federal government pension plan.

These developments represent the culmination of the federal government's restructuring of AECL under a Government-owned, Contractor-operated model.



The share transfer to CNEA took place on September 15 and the PWU will be meeting with the company in early October to begin talks regarding the transition of employees' collective agreements, pensions and working conditions.

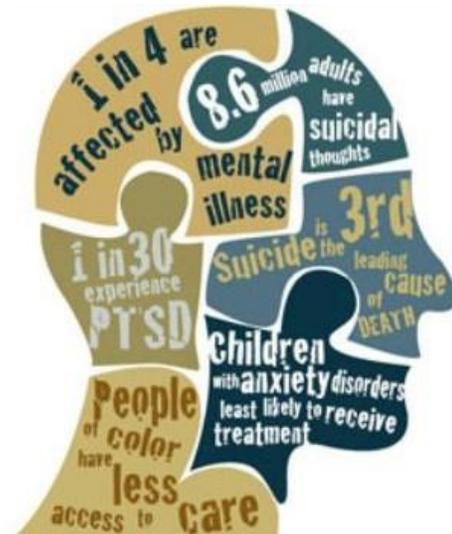
CNL is responsible for managing the radioactive waste and decommissioning activities associated with more than 60 years of operation; providing nuclear science and technology capabilities in support of federal responsibilities; and providing nuclear science and technology facilities and expertise on a commercial basis to Canada's nuclear industry. CNL operates the NRU (National Research Universal) reactor, (pictured below) which is one of the largest producers of medical isotopes in the world. The reactor located in Chalk River is slated to be decommissioned in 2018.

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## **Mental Health – Everyone's Responsibility**

The PWU is leading the way with an aggressive program to establish mental health as

a significant issue requiring the attention and action of leaders and members alike. With mounting evidence that mental health related challenges affect at least 1 in 4 adults in their lifetimes, programs to assist members when needed are critical, not only to the individual's well-being, but to the safe and efficient operation of the companies where our members work.



The PWU has structured a Mental Health Committee (MHC), comprised of elected representatives and staff to coordinate the union's efforts in addressing the challenge. The Committee operates on several important levels:

- *Understanding and managing personal mental health challenges.* PWU elected representatives have tough jobs. They must do their best to manage both the needs of members and the actions of employers. Sometimes, that can mean isolation from usual friendships that typically develop in the workplace. The MHC will be tackling this issue through workshops at the upcoming Council of Chief Stewards with resiliency training workshops for all attendees.
- *Reaching out to members who show signs of compromised mental health.* Last year at the Council of Chief Stewards, staff and observers attended workshops about identifying and acting on members' mental health challenges. The sessions emphasized the need for compassionate inquiry and outlined different methods of offering assistance that were not judgmental or intrusive. Watch future issues of *PowerWorks* for suggestions and links to resources that can help us help each other.
- *Engaging employers in the development of effective mental health policies and programs.* Employers need to work with union representatives to establish policy frameworks that address mental health issues. Identifying and addressing work practices and management behaviours that are unnecessarily stressful is a good place for joint efforts to start. The MHC will be increasing its working skills and knowledge of the National Standard for Psychological Health

and Safety in the Workplace, championed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada as a comprehensive approach to establishing effective policies and procedures in the workplace. Since each company has a unique approach to addressing health concerns, the MHC hopes to provide assistance to local union representatives in tailoring programs in workplaces through facilitated discussion with employer representatives.

Although the MHC's activities are in early stages, there has been considerable progress to date with more expected as the Committee develops skills and the union develops and adopts action plans.

Expect regular progress reports in *PowerWorks*.

Your PWU Mental Health Committee:

Linda Crombeen, Sector 1

Jeff Parnell, Sector 2

Sandra Bress, Sector 3

Brad Carnduff, Executive Committee Sponsor

Bob Menard, Staff Officer

Daniele Fleming, Staff Officer

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## **PWU Continues to Lead on Environmental Issues**

Over the years, the PWU has become a leading advocate on environmental issues related to Ontario's electricity industry. According to Sector 1 Vice President Bob Walker, "the PWU takes very public stands on the issues of energy policy and climate change. We believe that ensuring clean and reliable electricity requires decisive action by our governments and the PWU can help inform decision-makers on the merits and sustainability of the possible options."

Among its campaigns, the PWU has pushed for the conversion of Ontario Power Generation's (OPG) conventional fossil fuel generating stations to carbon-neutral biomass. The Union has seen some success in this area with the conversion of the

Atikokan and Thunder Bay Generating Stations to biomass and advanced biomass respectively. The PWU continues to urge the Ontario government to repurpose the mothballed Lambton and Nanticoke Generating Stations to use a combination of natural gas and biomass. Unlike wind and solar generation, biomass is a renewable resource that can produce electricity



whenever it is needed – not just when the wind blows or the sun shines. Converting these stations is a very low-cost option that would contribute to further decreases in climate changing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, recycle existing publicly-owned assets and create good, high-skilled jobs.

The PWU has been an unabashed promoter of the refurbishment of all ten CANDU reactors at OPG’s Darlington site and Bruce Power. As Bob Walker indicates, “the refurbishment investments will provide clean, affordable base-load power, tens of thousands of high value jobs and billions of dollars in economic benefits. These valuable assets will have their operating lives extended for several more decades.”

The Union has combined an extended newspaper and radio advertising campaign with an active and visible presence at public consultation sessions and regulatory hearings. PWU President Don MacKinnon spends a great deal of his time meeting with senior government officials to promote the advantages of nuclear refurbishments, nuclear new-build and fuel conversion at Lambton and Nanticoke both in the interests of the Union and the broader public.

The PWU has also commissioned studies that explore Ontario’s energy options and the impact of various energy mixes on the production of GHG emissions. A large portion of the PWU website labelled “Better Energy Choices” sets out the Union’s views on the best of Ontario’s energy policy options.

The PWU is a strong proponent of electric vehicles and has representatives on the boards of Plug ‘N Drive Ontario and Electric Mobility Canada. It is now clear that Ontario can only reach its GHG emission reduction targets by tackling the emissions from the province’s largest emitter – transportation. Powering electric vehicles with

low-GHG nuclear, hydroelectric and biomass electricity will reduce GHG emissions in Ontario and support our 400,000 job auto-manufacturing sector.

The Union also keeps the environment in mind as it conducts its business. More and more internal communications are by electronic means and the Executive Board has adopted paperless meetings via tablet computers. The PWU office in Toronto and its training facility in Bruce County are equipped with video conferencing technology to reduce unnecessary travel.



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## **PWU Member Part of Medal Winning Team at Dragon Boat Pan American Championships**

Taras Kuzminski, who works in People and Culture at Ontario Power Generation's headquarters on University Avenue in Toronto, helped his dragon boat team paddle to two gold medals and one silver at the Pan American Club Crew Championship in mid-August. Kuzminski is one of five partially sighted paddlers and the only deaf member of the ten-person Rusty Dragons team that competed at the Welland International Flatwater Centre. The team scored gold in the 200 and 500 metre races and silver in the 2,000 metre event. Kuzminski has been paddling for three years and hopes to compete at the Club Crew World Championship in Australia next April.



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