

# POWERWORKS

*summer* NEWSLETTER





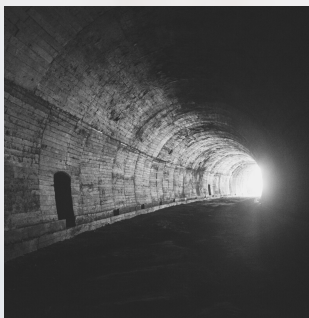
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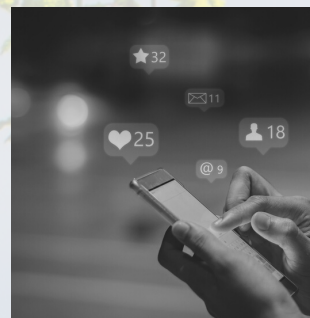
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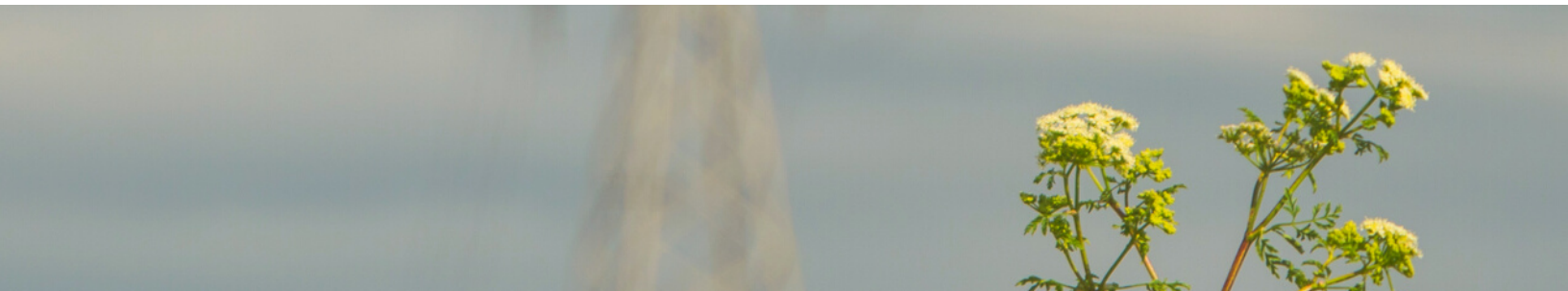
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# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The PWU is continuing to look to the future, protecting and creating opportunities for PWU Members while advocating for energy reform in Ontario that strengthens and modernizes Ontario's electricity system. The PWU is committed to the following principles: Create opportunities for sustainable, high-pay, high-skill jobs; ensure reliable, affordable, environmentally responsible electricity; build economic growth for Ontario's communities; and promote intelligent reform of Ontario's energy policy.

The Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) released the long-awaited Pathways to Decarbonization Study in December 2022. The study confirms the need for vast amounts of new emissions free electricity generation required to meet emissions targets accepted by the federal and provincial governments.

In a series of six opinion editorials placed in the Globe and Mail and Toronto Star newspapers over the course of the winter, the PWU highlighted the upcoming shortage of emissions free electricity and provided nuclear generation as the logical solution to the Base load shortage. These opinion editorials were followed up by meetings and discussions with various political and industry representatives, who are listening.



It is clear to all stakeholders that nuclear power has been the backbone of Ontario's Base load electricity supply for over 50 years, providing safe, emissions free electricity. It is also clear that all sources of electricity Generation will be needed to ensure a flexible peak demand supply, including all existing generation while expanding the capability of Hydroelectric Generation, Biomass, wind, and solar coupled with storage solutions. A robust natural Gas Generation supply will be required to supply back up to the grid supply while ensuring a smooth transition to a net zero carbon neutral Generation supply mix.

The Study confirms the only viable source of new electricity for Base Load is from nuclear generation and the country and province should be on the verge of embarking on the largest nuclear new build seen in Ontario. Various studies show that 18 GW of new nuclear generation is required to meet the increased demand by 2050 if Canada and Ontario are to meet their Paris Accord climate commitments through electrification. This means five (5) new nuclear stations the size of the existing Darlington Generating Station must be built. The issue has now evolved from "do we need new nuclear generation" to "what is the technology of the needed nuclear generation". Discussions are currently underway with Canada's CANDU technology being considered along with other technologies.



# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Although there is no steadfast commitment to a Large Nuclear New Build, locations and sites where new nuclear can be sited is part of the discussions, with Bruce, Darlington and Wesleyville being among the locations being considered. All locations have ready access to existing Transmission Lines that allow for easy connection to Ontario's electricity grid. There is a need to streamline the current Environmental assessments and regulatory requirements for new generation, as it continues to be a stumbling block that the employers and governments are trying to address.

Another major concern that requires addressing is the workforce requirement for the construction of the new facilities. Both federal and provincial governments are investigating how the skilled labour can be trained and ready to meet this ambitious goal.

As we continue to work on creating opportunities for PWU Members, we cannot forget that safety is a core value of the Union and its importance to all workers cannot be understated. On April 28th, we take a moment to pay our respects to those who have lost their lives, sustained injuries, or have become ill while in the workplace. The National Day of Mourning is observed by workers all over Canada, with hundreds of thousands of workers taking a moment of silence at 11:00 AM to mourn the lives lost, and those forever changed.

This year, I attended the Hydro One memorial event at Hawthorne Transformer Station in Ottawa with the families and co-workers of victims who have been killed or injured on the job, this included families of the catastrophic helicopter accident in 2017. The event was a reminder to everyone that safety is not guaranteed and that we must all remain vigilant and look out for ourselves and each other in the workplace.

We must work together and do what is right when work, for whatever reason, becomes unsafe. This means saying NO to a bad job plan, and then working together to put a safe workplan in place. Everyone working in Ontario has the right to know about hazards in our workplaces and to be trained in how to protect ourselves and co-workers from hazards. As with the right to know, we each have the right to refuse unsafe work.

Entrenched in Ontario is also the right to participate in identifying and resolving workplace health and safety concerns. As you enter the workplace every day, there is one thing to remember, you are not alone, and you must not shy away from exercising your rights. "No work is so important nor is an emergency so great that we cannot take the time to do our work safely."

Please continue to work safely with the knowledge that the PWU will stand with you and ensure safety continues to be a priority.



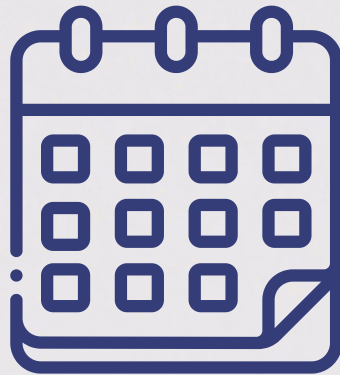
*Jeff Parnell*

President  
Power Workers' Union

**"No work is so important nor is an emergency so great that we cannot take the time to do our work safely."**



# 2024 PWU CALENDAR CONTEST IS STILL OPEN!!



All PWU members, Retired Workers' Chapter (RWC) members and their immediate families are eligible to submit their sketches, drawings, paintings or photographs for the 2024 PWU Calendar.

A group of representatives from each Sector and the RWC will choose thirteen images, one for each month and the cover.

Each individual whose image is selected for the calendar will receive \$500 and have their name included with their winning entry.

**DEADLINE: JUNE 30TH**



# THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE 2-YEAR OPG NEGOTIATION TUNNEL

The OPG Collective Agreement expired on March 31st 2022, with the PWU commencing the bargaining process in February of 2022 in Toronto. After many months of negotiations, the PWU is now able to reflect back on the bargaining process, knowing we were able to negotiate a contract that contained no concessions and a number of improvements.

OPG Collective Bargaining was marked with several significant issues:

- The impending closure of Pickering with the loss of a substantial number of jobs.
- The subsequent announcement in September regarding its possible refurbishment.
- Bill 124, which imposed limits to wage increases.
- Superior Court Decision rendering the Bill null and void and the government's insistence to OPG that a 1% per year wage increase was a hard cap on wages.

The Bargaining Committee persevered over the course of the past year. With the support of the Membership, who gave the Committee an overwhelming Strike Mandate in early February, we were able to convince OPG and the government that a 1% wage increase was unacceptable, a negotiated agreement was possible and that the issues at bargaining could be resolved.

The 1% wage increase from the one (1) year collective agreement rollover for 2021 remains subject of the government's appeal of the Bill 124 decision making the Bill "null and void". The Superior Court Decision has left the issue of remedy (including the imposed wage increase) open. If the government's appeal is unsuccessful, the Superior Court Justice will hear arguments from the parties and rule on any payments or wage increases associated with his previous decision, including the one (1) year rollover.



**"We were able to negotiate a contract that contained no concessions and a number of improvements."**



# THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE 2-YEAR OPG NEGOTIATION TUNNEL

The MOS contains the following highlights:

- An 8.25% wage increase over 2 years.
- A payment of \$5,000 to active Regular and Term employees.
- Employment security for Regular employees through the end of the Pickering transition, expected to be in 2029.
- A voluntary separation package for eligible Members in both nuclear and non-nuclear Memberships through the Pickering Transition Agreement.
- Renewal of the Nuclear Staffing Agreement and the Corporate Staffing Agreement with a minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) Terms being converted to Regular positions.
- A bonus payment for all nuclear Members, including Appendix A Members, who volunteer to work an XYZ Shift Schedule for outages.
- Increases in vacation and training allowances for Term employees.
- Re-opener language for the Nuclear Staffing Agreement and the Corporate Staffing Agreement should the Pickering Refurbishment be announced.

On April 11th 2023, the MOS was ratified by the Membership. The PWU would like to thank the Members at OPG for bearing with us as we endured the lengthy bout of negotiations and curve balls from the government. We'd also like to thank the bargaining committee for persevering through one of the most tumultuous rounds of bargaining had by the PWU to date.

Although glad to see bargaining completed and in our rearview mirrors, the PWU will commence bargaining for the next Collective Agreement period in early 2024.



# COUNCIL OF CHIEF STEWARDS

The PWU's Annual Council of Chief Stewards (Council) takes place every year during the last week of September. Here, all PWU Elected Representatives and Staff reflect and discuss the year that has passed, address any significant issues, receive training, and most importantly, vote to make changes to the Constitution, through Constitutional Amendments.

In addition to the above, Council also provides us with the opportunity to acknowledge extraordinary Members who are making a difference in their workplaces, as well as their communities through our two awards.

## HEALTH & SAFETY ACTIVIST AWARDS

The Health & Safety Activist Award recognizes and celebrates the outstanding contributions Members make to enhance the health, safety and well-being of the people in workplaces and communities all across Ontario.

We encourage you to take a moment to nominate someone in your workgroup who has made a difference to the Health & Safety culture in your workplace or in your community.

## COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER AWARD

The Community Volunteer Award recognizes PWU Members who contribute to their communities through volunteer work. The PWU Volunteer Award Selection Committee will then choose the winners using selection process, which includes reviewing each nominee's submission for the organizations they have served, hours and years they've contributed, as well as the impact their efforts have had on their community.

## NOMINATIONS FOR BOTH AWARDS CLOSE ON WED. AUGUST 9TH.

To nominate a PWU Member for either award, please reach out to your Chief Steward, or the Communications Department for a nomination form. One Member from each Sector and one Member from the RWC, for both awards (A total of 10 winners) will be recognized at our Annual Council of Chief Stewards with a cheque for \$1000, made payable to a charity of their choice.

Recipients will also be invited to attend, with a guest, the Council of Chief Stewards Dinner and Dance on Thursday, September 28th, 2023.



# A LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING FOR STABILITY

In October of 2022, Hydro One began feeling mounting pressure from the government's new mandate for the Building Broadband Fast Act with the large increase to the Distribution (DX) Operation Capital Work Program. This placed a strenuous, and quite honestly, disproportionate demand on Hydro One workers of Ontario. Considering this, the PWU and Hydro One worked together to produce a Letter of Understanding (LOU) that would provide Members stability in a time of instability.

## Building Broadband Fast Act

In April of 2021, the Ontario legislature passed the Supporting Broadband and Infrastructure Expansion Act, whose purpose as defined within the act "is to expedite the delivery of broadband projects of provincial significance." A key outcome of this legislation was that it enacted the Building Broadband Fast Act (BBFA) where the government contributed a total of \$3.8 billion dollars of funding.

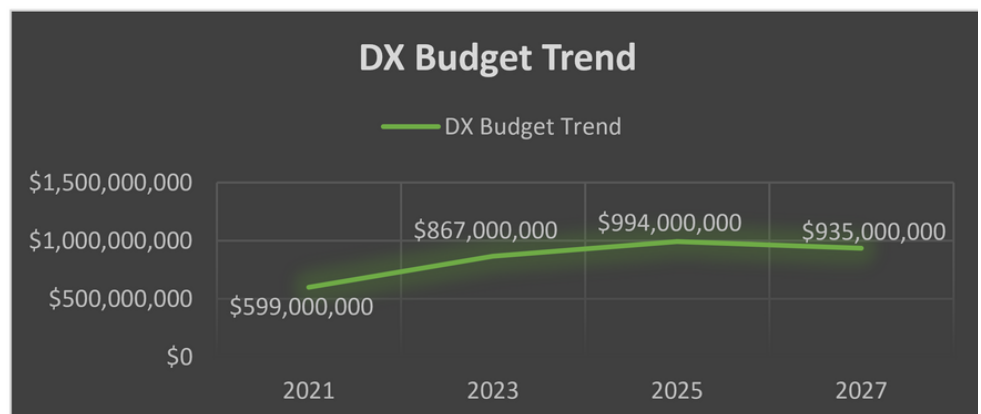
The BBFA applies to all Local Distribution Companies (LDCs), requiring all LDCs to follow the government mandated timeframes or, allow others to do so if the LDC cannot. If an LDC cannot meet the construction deadlines laid out by the government, these LDCs are subject to financial penalties.

The Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure has a target time frame for this project to be completed at the end of 2025. This mandate covers 700,000 premises across Ontario for which Hydro One serves about 85%, making this a large implication for Hydro One and in turn, for the PWU. The timeframes for this extensive amount of work are very tight with no room for negotiation as all LDCs must comply with this new legislation.

## Distribution Operational Capital Work Program

In 2022, the PWU was also approached by Hydro One with their Joint Rate Application Program (JRAP), a five-year plan which was submitted to the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) for approval, due to the substantial increase in DX work that is anticipated to happen from 2023 to 2027. This spending would cover a variety of activities related to the DX system, but the main focus would be in infrastructure improvements.

It should be noted that in 2021, the normal budget for DX work was \$599 million. In 2023, the forecasted spend is \$867 million increasing steadily to \$935 million in 2027 with a peak in 2025 with \$994 million dollars. The total spend of the project will be ~\$4.5 billion dollars.



# A LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING FOR STABILITY

Continued...

With these two major demands on the PWU workforce, it became evident that there wouldn't be enough PWU Regular and Hiring Hall Members combined to complete the work. For this reason, the PWU established a Purchase Service Agreement (PSA), which would allow the company to contract work out, if there are no available PWU Members able to work it. This provides stability for each party as it prioritizes giving work to PWU Members, while ensuring Hydro One wouldn't be incurring any penalties for not meeting the timelines laid out by the government.

In addition to the stability, the PWU also gained the following:

- All existing 170 lines apprentices in the Hiring Hall will obtain regular full-time status.
- An additional 366 lines apprentices will be brought into the Hiring Hall, on top of the 170 mentioned above, with ~45% of these Members being guaranteed regular full-time employment.
- At the end of the agreement the number of Regular full-time lines staff will grow from ~1100 to ~1300, a number which has not been seen since the 1980's.
- Area Distribution Engineering Technicians' positions will increase by 45, which is an increase of ~25%.
- The Field Business Centers will add 70 clerical positions to the regular full-time complement.
- These hiring numbers have allowed the PWU to settle numerous Failure to Post grievances as well as a few Policy grievances.

**“The language in the Collective Agreement, specifically Article 12 Purchase Service Agreement (PSA) gave the Union the ability to protect the jobs of PWU members, while increasing the number of Regular employees and Hiring Hall apprentices at Hydro One in a sustainable and principled manner. The LOU provides sustained protection and gains over the duration for PWU Members.”**

**- Tom Chessell, Vice President, Sector 3**





# LABOUR DAY IS APPROACHING!

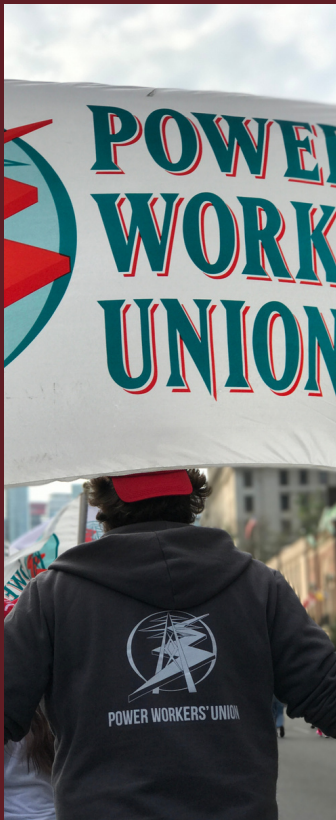
## MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4TH, 2023

It is anticipated that over 25,000 proud unionized brothers and sister will walk through Toronto to the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) in this historic Canadian tradition.

The largest annual act of solidarity in Canada.

The first 500 attendees will receive:  
A t-shirt, hat, admission to the CNE and a \$20.00 lunch fare.

Keep an eye out for a bulletin and registration form next month.



WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

# A WSIAT AWARD 10 YEARS IN THE MAKING

On February 10th of 2023, the PWU received an award and decision from the Workplace Safety & Insurance Appeals Tribunal (WSIAT). This award came nearly 12 years after a PWU Member died, due to an occupational exposure to benzene. This award shows the relentless commitment our Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) Department had for the Member and their family; setting a precedent for cases to come.

The PWU Member was employed as a “sprayer” for 33 years, with their main job being spraying a mix of herbicide and oil/diesel to the intersections of roads which would keep rights-of-way clear of obstructions caused by vegetation or pests. Between December of 2011 and January of 2012, the Member went to the hospital with symptoms of feeling unwell. On February 1st of 2012, the worker had a bone marrow biopsy test done, which revealed acute myeloid leukemia AML and subsequently the Member died one week later on February 8th, 2012, at the age of 77.

The Member’s estate filed with the WSIB in 2012; seeking benefits such as survivor’s benefit as well as a non-economic loss benefit, under the WSIAT for AML developing due to occupational exposure to chemicals contained in the mix of herbicides. This claim was first denied in November of 2013, as the decision found the worker to likely have had exposure to herbicide but concluded that the medical evidence from the American Institute of Medicine did not support a causal link between either these chemicals and the development of AML.

The worker’s estate requested a Board reconsideration of the decision, and in response to this, an Occupational Hygiene Review was performed. Following the review, the denial of the claim was upheld. In October of 2018, a further request for reconsideration was made, after a supporting evidential report in favour of the development was provided from Dr. R. Bourgault, a medical consultant with the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers Incorporated (OHCOW), in conjunction with a retrospective exposure report from T. Irick, an Occupational Hygienist at OHCOW.

In opposition, the WSIB obtained another report from Occupational Hygienist Ms. S. Farkas which provided an opinion regarding the worker’s likely exposure to benzene in diesel fuel. The report accepted that the worker had an annual occupational exposure to benzene but denied the reconsideration. The appeal was further denied concluding that the worker had occupational exposures to benzene which did not exceed regulatory exposure guidelines.

**This award shows the relentless commitment our Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) Department had for the Member and their family; setting a precedent for cases to come.**





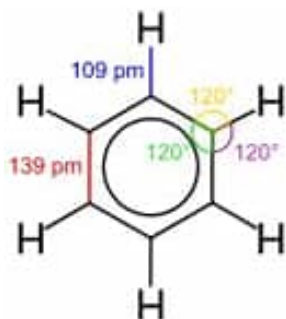
# A WSIAT AWARD 10 YEARS IN THE MAKING

Continued...

After these reconsiderations were denied, Andrew Kolar, PWU's WSIB Staff Officer at the time knew that the WSIB's own policy for the Benefit of Doubt applied. The policy states that in determining any claim under the Act, the decision shall be made in accordance with the real merits and justice of the case. It is not practicable to determine an issue because the evidence for or against the issue is approximately equal in weight, the issue shall be resolved in favour of the person claiming benefits.

This case was then brought to the Vice Chair of the Tribunal to make the decision, where he considered all components of the case, including 14 additional pieces of scholastic material. His analysis concluded that there should be an entitlement for all applicable benefits, as the worker's occupation exposure to benzene exceeded the threshold set out by the medical community, recognizing a probable connection of the onset of AML due to this. PWU's WSIB Staff Officer, Karen Pitsadiotis has been aiding the family in ongoing entitlements since the decision was made, ensuring they are continuing to be well supported.

Although a good news story, over ten years in the making- a Member lost their life due to an occupational exposure and illness. This reality forces us to recommit ourselves to one of our main motivations as a Union, to continue protecting and advocating for our Members, even when met with obstacles.



Benzene chemical ring.



The PWU's two WSIB Staff Officer's Karen Pitsadiotis (left) and Andrew Kolar (right) who were pivotal in getting this WSIAT award for the PWU Member's family.

# RYAN'S ROAD TO RECOVERY



On May 19, Ryan Brown fell victim to a terrible electrical contact injury while restoring power that has left him hospitalized, fighting for his life. He is currently under the care of the best surgeons, doctors, and nurses at the best hospital in the country for his type of injury.

Due to the severity of his injuries and the unknown of what the future holds, the dollars raised through this fund will go to Jordan for the family's immediate financial needs.

**IF YOU'D LIKE TO DONATE, PLEASE USE YOUR PHONE TO SCAN THIS QR CODE.**



SCAN ME

**THANK  
YOU.**

# FILING AN OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE CLAIM WITH THE WSIB

***This article will assist Members with how to file a compensation claim for illnesses that may be caused by workplace hazards.***

An occupational disease is a health problem caused by exposure to a workplace health hazard, for example cancer, asthma, asbestosis and silicosis, and noise-induced hearing loss.

## **Making a claim for occupational disease**

If you think you've become ill because of something you were asked to do or were exposed to at work, you can submit a claim for WSIB benefits. If your claim is allowed, the WSIB will help you get the treatment and services you need for your illness and to improve your quality of life. WSIB benefits can include prescription medications, wage replacement benefits and return-to-work services.

## **Submitting a claim**

You can submit a claim through your employer, doctor, or you can file your own claim. To file a claim, you will need your current address, date of birth, Social Insurance Number (SIN), the name of your employer and their address, and the symptoms or illness you are claiming for. You will then need to fill out and submit a Workers Report of Injury/Disease or call 416-344-1000. This reporting form (also known as a Form 6) can be found on the WSIB website.

## **What happens when the WSIB receives your claim**

They will assign you a claim number and a WSIB decision-maker who specializes in occupational disease. Your decision-maker will provide you with your claim number and call you to gather any additional information needed to process your claim. They'll then review information from you, your employer(s), and your health-care provider(s) to decide if you're eligible for WSIB benefits.

It's helpful if you can:

- Describe your symptoms and when they began.
- List the substances you were exposed to and describe the type of work you were doing.
- Provide the names and addresses of all doctors you have seen for this illness, and the dates of all medical visits.
- Provide detailed information about your previous jobs and employers, how long you worked at each job, and the type of work you did.

A medical specialist often needs to diagnose an occupational disease. The WSIB may ask you to sign a permission form so they can get a report from a medical specialist.

The WSIB will call you to let you know our decision and send you your decision in writing.

If you wish assistance from your union contact the PWU WSIB Department.

**Phil Hames, PWU Staff Officer at [phames@pwu.ca](mailto:phames@pwu.ca) Sector 1&2**

**Karen Pitsadiotis, PWU Staff Officer at [kpitsadiotis@pwu.ca](mailto:kpitsadiotis@pwu.ca) Sector 3&4**



# GROWING THE UNION

The PWU would like to take a moment to recognize some of our new Utilities and Members who have recently joined the PWU.

**CORNWALL  
ELECTRIC**

**SECTOR 4  
31 MEMBERS**

**NORTH BAY  
HYDRO**

**SECTOR 4  
35 MEMBERS**

**NORTHERN  
WIRES**

**SECTOR 4  
10 MEMBERS**

**GOREWAY  
POWER**

**SECTOR 2  
23 MEMBERS**

Bargaining Committees will be bargaining over the next couple of months to solidify their first Collective Agreements.

**FROM ALL OF US AT THE PWU, WELCOME!**

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: DUSTI SHEDLER

Contributed by Dusti Shedler and Nicole Kaufmann

***We are reminded of the importance of Health & Safety Training after A PWU Member's family trip to Mexico takes a turn when a local suffers a medical emergency.***

In February of this year, Dusti Shedler and her daughter joined her brother and sister-in-law on a vacation to visit her parents in Mexico. Now snowbirds after retiring from being a school principal and paramedic, they spend almost the entirety of Canadian winters in Mexico. On the final day of their vacation, Dusti was lounging by herself by the pool on her phone when she heard a frantic scream. Startled, Dusti looked up to see people pointing to a woman face down, floating in the pool. Dusti jumped into action right away, directing two men to help get the woman out of the water while she made her way around.

The woman's lips were blue, and her breathing to the untrained eye seemed to be absent. People were screaming, "she's dead, look at her lips" and without hesitation, Dusti instructed an acquaintance to begin chest compressions, while she initiated rescue breaths. A gentleman in the crowd assisted them in moving the woman to her side, where water could escape if it was trapped. They went through this process four to five times, and miraculously, were able to get the woman's pulse back.

An ambulance was called and the onsite doctor was summoned, both arriving approximately 20-30 minutes later, escorting the woman to the local hospital. The following day Dusti heard that the woman did not drown but suffered a massive heart attack. Dusti and her acquaintance were able to re-establish an effective rhythm in the woman's heart without the need for intervention from an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). Dusti has been trained in CPR/AED yearly through Hydro One, and her First Aid instructor recently told her that the woman in this situation had a 2% chance of resuscitation, making this feat even more impressive.

Although clear in her recollection of events, Dusti admits the finer details are a little blurry. She states, "Years ago, I was in a similar situation with my daughter and screamed for help. No one was around, no one came or assisted us. I was just in the right place, at the right time and I did everything I could, so she had a chance."

There are many things that can be attributed to what made Dusti the right person, for this place and time. Her parents' history of working in leadership roles, her concurrent First Aid training, and her devoted role as a single mother, are all obvious contributing factors. Dusti became a PWU Member with Hydro One in July of 2008, and is now a Planning and Scheduling Technician in Station Services. Nicole Kaufmann, Hydro One Chief Steward had the following to say about Dusti:



Dusti and her daughter in Mexico.

***"Dusti's commitment to her family and community is inspirational. She takes great pride in her daughter and gives back to her community through volunteering and paying it forward."***

We are all reminded of the value of adequate Health & Safety training, and the PWU will continue to advocate for it in the workplace, knowing people will be using it at all times in their life. Dusti's resolve in this precarious situation and her training are the reason why someone is still living and breathing today.



# PWU ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT 2023

NOTTAWASAGA INN RESORT & CONFERENCE CENTRE

**With your help we were able to raise:**

# \$60,000.00

**Meaning each of our three charities were able to receive:**

# \$20,000.00

In support of



# THANK YOU!!





# PWU HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING ACCREDITATION LEVEL 4

Contributed by Bailey Farrell

The Power Workers' Union (PWU) kicked off Mental Health Awareness Month with 60 elected PWU Representatives successfully completing PWU Health & Safety Accreditation Level 4.

PWU Health & Safety Accreditation Level 4 is a mental health education course that was developed in-house at the beginning of 2018. At that time, the PWU joined forces with the Workers' Health and Safety Centre (WHSC), Ontario Shores and Living Works to create a training package that would put real tools into PWU representatives' toolbox. The course is comprised of three components, which have been thoughtfully included to ensure all participants receive a well-rounded knowledge of mental health.

When developing the program, the first course component that needed to be created was a comprehensive module to help elected PWU representatives gain a better understanding of the CSA Standard Z1003-13 (R2018) "Psychological health and safety in the workplace - Prevention, promotion, and guidance to staged implementation". As described on the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) website, CSA Standard Z1003-13 (R2018) defines a psychologically healthy and safe workplace as a "workplace that promotes workers' psychological well-being and actively works to prevent harm to worker psychological health including in negligent, reckless, or intentional ways."



*The most recent group of PWU Members to complete Health & Safety Training Accreditation Level 4.*

The PWU teamed up with the Workers' Health & Safety Centre to develop a brand-new course called Psychosocial Hazards and Workplace Mental Health. This course is now available on the WHSC website and workgroups around the province. Nancy Hutchinson, a training services representative at WHSC had the following to say about the course:

**"The PWU were again, ahead of their time and incredibly progressive when they identified the need to provide mental health support and training to their Members and immediately took action to develop and comprehensive training program. As a result of the PWU initiative and success the WHSC has offered a similar training course throughout Ontario."**

# PWU HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING ACCREDITATION LEVEL 4

Continued...

For the second course component, the PWU wanted to ensure elected representatives had a solid understanding of psychological disorders and their causes. To guarantee the information shared was accurate and true, the PWU teamed up with the Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences. Christina Fuda Mental Health First Aid Coordinator at Ontario Shores delivered their Mental Health in the Workplace Basic Training Workshop, and had the following to say about its partnership with the PWU:

**"Ontario Shores has been delighted to partner with Power Workers Union since 2017 in offering various Mental Health Training courses to PWU Members and their staff. These trainings give PWU Members and staff the tools to identify mental illnesses in their workplaces (such as depression, anxiety, trauma, and substance use), along with effective and proven communication skills to better support those living with these illnesses."**

The third component of the course is the SafeTALK Suicide Prevention Program from LivingWorks Education Inc. This portion of the training program is extremely important, as many times the overwhelming feedback we hear from participants is "I'm not sure what to say". Karen Simba from SafeTALK has been instrumental in empowering PWU representatives, to know what the appropriate thing to say is, or principled approach is to take when finding yourself in a precarious situation. She had the following to say:

**"The Power Workers' Union and LivingWorks Education have partnered since 2019 in support of suicide prevention, and PWU participants receive LivingWorks safeTALK as part of their Health & Safety training. By the end of the half-day training, Instructors become Safety Connectors who are better able to recognize and reach out when someone may be having thoughts of suicide and connect them safely to resources and further support. LivingWorks believes everyone has a role to play in suicide prevention and is proud to partner with the Power Workers' Union."**

The importance of mental health has come to our societal forefront, being acknowledged more and more every year. Though this is true, too many people are still suffering in silence, dealing with extreme stress, whether personally or at work. The PWU is determined to continue to work tirelessly to ensure our PWU elected representatives are equipped with the tools to support their Members whenever they may need it.



*PWU Members who completed SafeTALK Suicide Prevention Program.*

To date, 147 PWU Members and elected representatives have completed this level of training, growing our PWU network of trained representatives and knowledge regarding workplace mental health and mental fitness.

# THANK YOU FOR READING

**POWERWORKS - SUMMER NEWSLETTER - 2023**



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