

# The Source



CUPE Local 454

Fall 2020

## President's Message

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed both the best and the worst of people and governments here and around the world. The essential nature of work and the omnipresence of workers is being rediscovered while every crack and gap in our systems are being revealed. The impact of the decisions made every day by government are impacting our communities and our members lives daily. The future of our work lives has been redefined. A significant amount of CUPE members are having to adapt to new duties and are finding ways of navigating through this pandemic. The world will forever be changed but I believe it is bringing us closer and we will continue to find ways to become more engaged with each other. These are unprecedented times, but history shows that CUPE members provide vital public services that will help our communities not only survive but thrive. I am proud of CUPE 454 members in Delta your dedication and passion are truly inspiring.

In September, Delta facilities were re-opened. It took a great deal of work from our members along with the support of the Union Executive working with the City of Delta. Together we were able to make this happen thanks to the strong work that was done by all of us working together. Delta brought back approximately 300 CUPE 454 members to work providing the much-needed support to make the openings successful and as always, they were all up for challenge. There have been bumps and curves along



the way but CUPE 454 members were there to reduce the wrinkles and provide the much-needed services to the community while opening our facilities safely for everyone. The maintenance staff have been instrumental in keeping our facilities spotless and germ free. I cannot say it enough how vital and important the work that CUPE 454 members provide to keep all of us safe.

There are many things in our road that are going to be different, like how we have meetings, we bargain, and connect with each other day to day. The positives to this are, we are finding better ways to communicate and increase member engagement. In fact, participation at our membership meetings is up almost 50%. This shows more members are actively participating and asking questions and guiding our local. I know there are still many worries and fears that the pandemic is causing, not only at work but at home. I always encourage our members use the free counselling services offered by the Union and the employer the number is 1- 800- 668- 2055 (BC Consulting) please utilize this support if you or your family members need the help.

Going Forward, the Union Executive will continue to bring all workplace concerns and fears and disputes to the employer and advocate for any change necessary. We are here to provide support and encourage all members to feel comfortable in bringing the issues to Job Stewards in the workplace. Job Stewards have monthly meetings.

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## Occupational Health & Safety During a Pandemic

British Columbia is now in a second wave of the SARS-CoV-2 / COVID-19 pandemic as per the announcement by the BC Provincial Health Officer ("PHO") on October 19, 2020. Many CUPE members are asking what this means and if this changes the way the pandemic is approached by WorkSafeBC or CUPE in terms of health and safety. In reply, nothing has changed. While the PHO may add or amend Orders, the CUPE National Health and Safety Branch and CUPE BC Region health and safety continues to provide up to four new resources per month with respect to topics such as filing workers compensation claims, conducting Hazard / Risk Assessments, the Right to Refuse, sector specific resources, checklists and dozens of other Fact Sheets, Bulletins, and templates. These can be found on the CUPE National Health and Safety website at <https://cupe.ca/health-and-safety> and the CUPE BC OHS Committee website at <https://www.cupe.bc.ca/occupational-health-and-safety-committee>. CUPE has created more resources than all other Unions in Canada combined.

The foundational elements of a response to the pandemic include having a functioning Joint Health and Safety Committee which ensures that (i) the employer has an up to date Exposure Control Plan, (ii) has conducted Risk Assessments as part of the Exposure Control Plan, (iii) has created Return to Work / Safety Plans and (iv) continuously monitors the workplace for exposures and responds accordingly. Each of these have numerous sub-elements. All of these are done in conjunction with and in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee. Resources for the foundational elements above are found on the two CUPE website links. In addition, the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers ("OHCOW") has numerous resources for the workplaces and that are frequently updated. These include the recently released document titled "Workplace COVID-19 Risk Management (Control Banding) Matrix" available at <https://www.ohcow.on.ca/news/new-risk-tools.html>

WorkSafeBC has created safety plans titled "COVID-19 and Returning to Safe Operation – Phases 2 & 3" which are found at <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation>. The website is broken down into sector specific resources, and contains certain sample occupations within certain sectors. There are also templates for employers. CUPE Locals and members should review these resources in conjunction with the CUPE National Health and Safety sector specific resources at <https://cupe.ca/health-and-safety-practices-while-working-during-pandemic-all-sectors> and <https://cupe.ca/general-health-and-safety-system-checklist-covid-19> and <https://cupe.ca/preventing-exposure-covid-19-sector-specific-resources>

The Right to Refuse during the pandemic is a more challenging issue which requires fact specific analysis. If a Right to Refuse situation occurs, please contact the CUPE Local Joint Health and Safety Committee, the CUPE National Representative or the CUPE National Health and Safety Representative. There are Right to Refuse resources on both of the CUPE National Health and Safety and CUPE BC OHS Committee websites as well as WorkSafeBC at <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/health-and-safety/covid-19-faqs> and <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/rights-responsibilities/refusing-unsafe-work>

The pandemic is an opportunity to ensure the Joint Health and Safety Committees are functioning at the highest level possible. If they are not, workers health and potentially their lives, are at stake.

Tom McKenna  
CUPE National Health and Safety Representative



## *Member Spotlight*

### Sam Abulail

- ◇ Executive Member
- ◇ Works Yard
- ◇ Bargaining Committee

**What three words describe you?**  
Positive, enthusiastic and dependable

**How long have you been a CUPE 454 Member?** 22 years

**What do you for the City of Delta?**  
Parks Foreman

**What have you gained from your CUPE 454 activism?** I have gained confidence, knowledge and skills to become an advocate for our local in areas

such as bargaining, employee rights and equality.  
**Since the COVID-19 Pandemic, what has been the biggest challenge in the workplace?**  
Adjusting to the new protocols.

**What are your long-term union goals?** I'm happy to continue on with my current roles as Executive at Large in Parks Outside and a member of our Bargaining team.

**Where do you see yourself in ten years?**  
Ready to retire!

### **November Virtual Membership Meeting** **6:00 P.M. via Zoom**

1. Go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZAvfuqqTsjH9w96G6fdUh3GLq0FN8dhmDw> to register prior to the meeting. You can also scan the following QR code to the right on your phone

2. **You must register in advance to attend the meeting.** Registration will close at 4PM on November 18. We cannot guarantee any registrations done after this point will be approved in time for the start of the meeting.

3. After your registration is approved, you will receive a confirmation code to the email you used to register. **There is a link that is unique to you inside that email – you must use that link to attend the meeting. Do not put in the Meeting ID and Password manually – that will continue to send you to the registration page.**





## Have you heard the phrase - Work now and grieve later?

As workers we take pride in our work and how we carry out our duties. We have views regarding the issue of the fairness of work assignments and how to respond to a supervisor or manager who directs an employee to perform certain tasks. In the past, if workers did not like something the employer did, they would "down tools" and go on strike. Today's labour laws do not allow strikes while a collective agreement is in effect. Instead, the union and the employer must resolve disputes through the grievance process and arbitration.

The workplace is not a place for unnecessary and repeated debate. It is an established principle that employees are expected to work now and grieve later if they believe the direction from the supervisor and or manager is not appropriate.

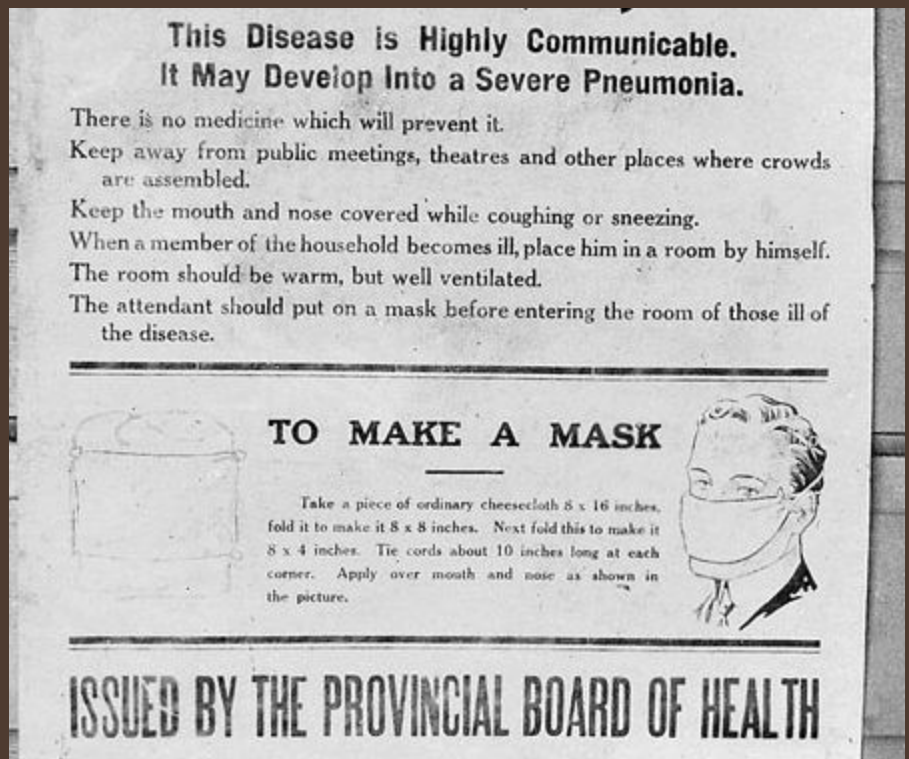
If you find yourself in a situation where there is a disagreement over a work assignment or a direction from the supervisor and or manager and a resolve cannot be reached, you are required to follow the direction under the work now and grieve later principle unless whatever you are being asked to do is something that is illegal or unsafe. Remember, you have a right to refuse unsafe work. We ask that you take detailed notes of the interaction and then contact the union office. If your rights have been violated the Union will file a grievance

Rob Limongelli  
National Representative  
CUPE BC Regional office

### *CUPE Members at Work*



DPD 454 Members Jennifer Steffen and Cathy Kerr



## Changes to the Municipal Pension Plan

### Important Proposed Changes to the Municipal Pension Plan (MPP):

The Pension Plan Partners (various Unions and Employers) are proposing changes to your pension. These changes, as proposed by the Plan Partners, will for most Plan Members result in an improved lifetime pension (the amount you receive throughout retirement, excluding the bridge benefit). The proposed changes are significant and are proposed to take place on January 1, 2022.

To achieve this, the Plan Partners are proposing the following changes:

**Removing the Bridge Benefit** (temporary benefit for those retiring before age 65) on service earned on or after January 1, 2022, to fund the higher lifetime pension. For those who have contributed up to December 31, 2021, your Bridge Benefit will be prorated based on your years of pensionable service.

Benefit	Current formula (on service earned to January 1, 2022)	Proposed change (on service earned on and after January 1, 2022)
Unreduced Bridge Benefit	$0.7\% \times \text{HAS}^* \text{ up to YMPE}^{**}$ $\times$ Pensionable Service <sup>***</sup>	No Bridge Benefit on new service after December 31, 2022.

\* HAS – Five-year highest average salary.

\*\* YMPE (year's maximum pensionable earnings)- \$58,700 in 2020

\*\*\* Pensionable Service - Total years of contribution to the Pension Plan

After January 1, 2020, the Plan Partners are proposing an annuity, which will offer 1/4 or 1/2 of the current bridge amount, for those retiring before age 60. This annuity will be deducted from your future pensionable earnings amount.

**Removing the rule of 90** (age + years of service = 90) for unreduced pensions and increasing deductions for early retirement before age 60.

Benefit	Current formula (on service earned to January 1, 2022)	Proposed change (on service earned on and after January 1, 2022)
Early retirement deduction rules	Pensions are reduced by 3% per year from age 60 when retirement occurs prior to age 60 and the rule of 90 has not been met	Pensions are reduced 6.2% per year from age 60 when retirement occurs before age 60 No rule of 90 on new service
Eligibility for no reductions	Unreduced if retiring at or before age 60 with at least 2 years of service or if retiring with rule of 9.	Unreduced if retiring at or before age 60 with at least 2 years of service and at age 65 with any amount of contributory service

**Replacing the two-tier contribution rate** to a single contribution rate.

Current contribution rate	Proposed contribution rate
8.5% of your yearly wages up to and including YMPE (\$58,700 in 2020)	8.61% of your yearly wages
10% of your yearly wages above YMPE	

**Moving to a flat rate pension benefit** from a two-tier system. Benefit Current formula (on service earned to January 1, 2022)

Proposed change (on service earned on and after January 1, 2022) Unreduced Lifetime Pension  $1.3\% \times \text{HAS}$  up to YMPE

+  $2.0\% \times \text{HAS}$  over YMPE  $\times$  Years of Pensionable Service  $1.9\% \times \text{HAS} \times$  Years of Pensionable Service

To calculate the difference in your pension plan (current plan v proposed plan), use the MPP redesign calculator: <https://www.mppredesign.ca/general-members/online-calculator-5/>

Proposed Plan Video: <https://www.mppredesign.ca/general-members/>

For more detailed information on the proposed plan changes, visit: <https://mpp.pensionsbc.ca/> or call the temporary Call Center at 1-877-251-0997 (Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

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**Executive Board & Job Stewards**

President - John Gibson  
Treasurer - Richard Carter  
Secretary - Nick Angrignon  
1st Vice-President - Tamara Laza  
2nd Vice-President - Kathleen Chan  
Executive at Large:  
    Inside - Lee Fraser  
    Outside - Greg Harrison  
    Parks - Jeff Kirkbride  
    Parks (Outside) - Sam Abulail  
    Police - Liz Stockdale  
    Diversity - Jorge Cardoza  
Chief Job Steward - Cherie Raines  
Job Stewards:  
    John Schellenberg  
    Terri Contoli  
    Shelley Simpson  
    Pamela Hubbs  
    Mike Robinson  
    Jaspreet Sohi  
    Danielle Fantillo  
    Eli Wiebe  
    Jennifer Steffen  
    Joel Morrell  
    Gordon Klammer  
    Talvir Nijjer  
    Jaimie McIntyre

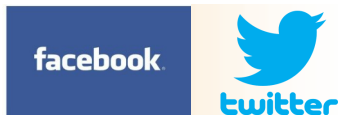
Newsletter Layout by Office Assistant :  
Kathleen Ladislaus  
KI/Move-Up

They are all amazing and bring the important issues and concerns to the Executive for action. I continue to encourage you to bring any day to day issues to the Job Steward in your area. Our website lists the list them all.

I know there is some significant attention and concern with the proposed pension redesign. We have been taking calls and answering questions the best we can. We brought this to the membership the day it came out and we will continue to provide support to get the proper information to members. I sit on the CUPE BC Executive Board as Regional Vice-President and advocated along with other members that CUPE BC provide info sessions to all CUPE members. As a direct result of this, sessions have been offered to all members.

On the bargaining front, CUPE Local 23 representing Burnaby Municipal and Library Workers reached a tentative agreement. It is a roll over deal which means terms of the agreement stays the same and they only agree to wage and term. It was a two-year deal with a 2 percent increase each year, this means there is a regional settlement trend, and your bargaining team will be working on the best strategy along with 4 other locals that expire in 2020. We discussed this in depth at the membership meeting and the membership was supportive of the bargaining teams looking at a similar proposal with the employer. We will explore this over the next couple weeks and hope to come up with a strategy.

**Follow and Like CUPE 454 on:**



**We're on the web:**

[www.454.cupe.ca](http://www.454.cupe.ca)

**CUPE Local 454**

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On October 24, the political landscape in BC has changed with an historical win by the NDP achieving a strong majority government under the leadership of John Horgan. As your president I will continue working with the two MLA's re elected in delta as these relationships are vital to our local. Congratulations to Ravi Kahlon of the NDP re elected along with Ian Paton of the Liberals in south delta. I look forward to the continuation of working with both of our MLA's along with Mayor and council in the coming years.

In closing please stay safe at work and home the world is a strange place to navigate through these days and the union is here for you please reach out to us if you need any support we are here for you. Also a reminder the local purchased masks for all of you if you have not received a mask please call the office 604 943 4526 with details of where you work and I will make sure you get a mask delivered to you.

I always like to end with a big thank you to all 454 members. The work you all provide is vital to our community and as your president I continue to be proud of the excellent work you all do every day so THANK YOU!! I will see you all out there.

**In Solidarity**

John Gibson, President CUPE Local 454