

CUPE WIRE

Official Publication of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 38
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Zoom Into the General Meeting

The rising numbers of Coronavirus infections clearly indicate that we are well into a second wave. Medical professionals are calling for a targeted shutdown to regain control of the pandemic. Given this state, the Executive of Local 38 has made the decision to cancel in-person meetings for November and December.

The December 22nd Regular General Membership meeting will be held through a on-line Zoom meeting. We encourage every card-carrying member to contact the office for the specific details to attend the meeting.

In an attempt to balance the confidentiality of the meeting with access for our members, we are asking the following:

1. Contact the Union Office at 403-233-2700 or office@cupe38.org to obtain the access code for the meeting.
2. When entering the Zoom meeting, please ensure your camera is on and that you identify yourself. We will need to confirm and record the name of all attendees. If a participant cannot be identified, they will be removed from the meeting.
3. Once the meeting starts, attendees will be given the instruction to turn off their camera if they desire to improve bandwidth.
4. If speaking, please activate your camera so other delegates can see who is speaking.

I want to thank everyone for their understanding during these times. While we prefer in-person meetings, to ensure the health and safety of our members, on-line meetings are needed to continue the democratic operations of our Local.



A Covid Christmas – The silver lining

2020 has been a year like no other. Toilet paper, Clorox wipes and hand sanitizer have become the must have commodities. Terms like lockdown, physical distancing, and contact tracing have entered the daily lexicon. However, with all these changes the holiday season is nearing and is a perfect opportunity for reflection.

Without a doubt, the year of 2020 has brought forth many challenges for many families and individuals. However, despite all the negative the pandemic has brought forth several positive changes.

Before the pandemic, most of us were busy living life filled with errands, hectic work schedules, numerous meetings it seemed there was a distinct lack of genuine moments. Further, the pandemic focused our collective attention on what really matters in life: health, family, meaningful experiences, and social interactions. Prior to the pandemic, a lot of our attention was focused on material goods and distractions which were neither enriching nor rewarding.

The pandemic and the ensuing restrictions forced the world to slow down. During this holiday season, while we may be required to be physically distant from our loved ones, it does not require us to be socially distant. While every person's situation is different, for those whom are not able to be physically present with loved ones, the act of inclusion in other activities is a powerful expression of thought and care. The single act of a phone call or letter can make the difference during these trying times. A small act can make a big difference.

Some suggestions for activities during the holiday season:

- Set up a virtual holiday happy hour – Just because we cannot share a meal together doesn't mean that we need to abandon socializing. Set up a time and set up a virtual meeting where everyone can get together, drinks in hand and celebrate the virtual togetherness

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A Covid Christmas – The silver lining

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- Arrange a Holiday recipe party – For many families, cooking together is a cherished holiday tradition. With the proliferation of video sharing apps, the cooking can happen together. A suggestion is to agree to a recipe (cookies are highly recommended) and share your baking activity virtually. At the end everyone can critique each other’s creations.
- Make homemade Christmas cards – Prior to the internet and email, Christmas cards were a common occurrence during the Christmas season. Make a homemade Christmas card, or if arts and craft aren’t your specialty, perhaps a personalized photograph to celebrate the holiday season. The only limitation is your own creativity.

While the holiday season of 2020 will be like no other in living memory, connections and genuine experiences are still able to be made. It just might take a little more creativity and effort than years past. Happy Holidays to you and your families.

*The Officers’ and Executive
of CUPE Local 38*

*wish you and your families the very best for
the holiday season and the coming New Year.*

*We hope your time with family and friends is
safe*

and enjoyable.

*Happy Holidays and please
remember don’t drink and drive.*

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH



december: |dē-'sem-bər| -n.

a month of lights, snow and feasts; time to make amends and tie loose ends; finish off what you started and hope your wishes come true

Bargaining Update

Over the past week you will have received communication from the Alberta Labour Relations Board and CUPE. In these emails it outlined that CUPE has filed a bargaining in bad faith complaint against ENMAX. CUPE has not taken this action lightly, and has only done so to protect the interests of our members across the organization.

In March 2020, your bargaining team had arrived at significant agreement with ENMAX on a large number of issues presented at the bargaining table. As is the process, many of these items were “signed off”. This means that agreement had been reached by the parties on that particular issue and it was signed by the parties as settled (pending ultimate ratification by the membership). Among these items was a Remote Work program and Letter of Understanding #8 outlining the At-Home-Agent program. Neither of these items were particularly contentious during bargaining.

On March 15, the provincial government shut-down the economy, and CUPE agreed to work with ENMAX to facilitate a sudden work-from-home program to ensure the safety of our members during the pandemic. It has been, and continues to be the position of CUPE that any long-term work-from-home program is a negotiated item, as it is a fundamental change in working conditions. This is why the At-Home-Agent program was developed through the bargaining process.

On November 12, we resumed bargaining with ENMAX. At the opening of the bargaining session, we offered to revisit the Remote Work article with the view of replacing it with a more comprehensive long-term work-from-home article. ENMAX engaged in a clear and strong position that they would not bargain any work-from-home language. Further, they announced that they were unilaterally withdrawing their agreement from the Remote Work program and withdrawing their agreement with Letter of Understanding #8. This essentially eliminates any work from home scenario once the pandemic is over.

We acknowledged that we could not, and would not unilaterally withdraw any agreements made at the bargaining table. We were hopeful that ENMAX would take this opportunity to work collaboratively towards a more fulsome work-from-home arrangement. To our surprise, ENMAX refused this, and is attempting to withdraw their agreement on other items noted above. Reflecting upon the actions of the ENMAX bargaining team, we can only conclude that ENMAX is withdrawing from any type of work from home arrangement.

It is our view that this constitutes a bargaining in bad faith practice. As such, and after consulting legal counsel, Local 38 filed with the Alberta Labour Relations Board. It is our hope that we can bring back a more collaborative approach to the bargaining table. But in the meantime, we must protect your best interests at the table. Our ultimate goal is to achieve a fair and reasonable collective agreement.

We are now attempting to secure further bargaining dates to continue a dialogue, and we will continue to keep you informed of developments.

REGULAR MEMBERSHIP MEETING

*All CUPE 38 Card Carrying Members
Invited to Attend*



**When: Tuesday, December 22, 2020
at 7:00 p.m.**
Where: Via ZOOM
(SEE FRONT PAGE FOR DETAILS)
Business: Regular

The CUPE Local 38 office will be closed from noon on
December 24, 2020 until January 1, 2021 inclusive.
The Office re-opens on Monday, January 4, 2021.