ISSUE #38 November 2026

CUPE 38 connection

CUPE38 Connection brings you the latest updates, collaborative events, and resources to strengthen our community.

Join Our Next Meeting



Date: Tuesday, November 24, 2026
Time: 7:00 p.m. MST
Location: Virtual, via Zoom
Agenda: Regular business

RSVP: office@cupe38.org or call 403-233-2700

Bargaining Update

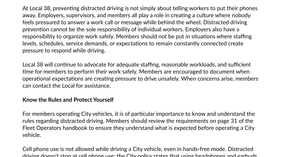


Your Bargaining Committee will meet with the City of Calgary on November 18th to exchange proposals. This first meeting marks the official start of negotiations, and it will give both parties an opportunity to outline their priorities for the new collective agreement.

We have committed to several additional bargaining dates in December. However, given the scope of the issues to be discussed, it is unlikely that a settlement will be reached before the new year.

Further dates have already been identified in January and February. We remain committed to keeping you informed of our progress toward a new collective agreement, and we will share updates as they become available. In the meantime, if you have questions or concerns, please reach out to office@cupe38.org.

Don't Forget – Children's Christmas Party!



Our annual Children's Christmas Party is just a few weeks away on Saturday, December 5! The registration deadline has passed, but we're still looking for volunteers to help us host the event.

This is a great chance to get to know your fellow union members outside of work, and to help spread a little joy and wonder to little ones this holiday season. Interested in helping out? Send an email to events@cupe38.org.

Are you registered for the party but unable to attend?

If you **pre-registered** to attend the Christmas party, but are no longer able to attend, gifts for **registered** eligible children will be available for pickup at the CUPE Local 38 office on the following days:

- Monday, December 7 until Thursday, December 10 from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Distracted Driving: Protecting Our Members on the Road



For many Local 38 members, driving is part of the job. Whether travelling between worksites, attending off-site meetings, responding to service calls, or operating a City vehicle throughout the day, members deserve to finish their shift safely and return home to their families.

Distracted driving remains a serious risk on our roads. With increasingly connected vehicles, in-cab technology, and constant pressure to stay reachable, drivers face more potential distractions than ever. Drivers are eight times more likely to be in a crash or near-crash event if they are distracted. The Safer Mobility Plan 2025 reported that Calgary has substantially more vehicular violence than other Canadian cities; the City is rightfully taking action on these findings.

At Local 38, preventing distracted driving is not simply about telling workers to put their phones away. Employers, supervisors, and members all play a role in creating a culture where nobody feels pressured to answer a work call or message while behind the wheel. Distracted driving prevention cannot be the sole responsibility of individual workers. Employers also have a responsibility to organize work safely. Members should not be put in situations where staffing levels, schedules, service demands, or expectations to remain constantly connected create pressure to respond while driving.

Local 38 will continue to advocate for adequate staffing, reasonable workloads, and sufficient time for members to perform their work safely. Members are encouraged to document when operational expectations are creating pressure to drive unsafely. When concerns arise, members can contact the Local for assistance.

Know the Rules and Protect Yourself

For members operating City vehicles, it is of particular importance to know and understand the rules regarding distracted driving. Members should review the requirements on page 31 of the Fleet Operators handbook to ensure they understand what is expected before operating a City vehicle.

Cell phone use is not allowed while driving a City vehicle, even in hands-free mode. Distracted driving doesn't stop at cell phone use; the City also states that any headphones and earbuds, laptops, smart glasses, using loose GPS units, reading printed materials, writing, personal grooming, and eating are not permitted while driving. Though certain members may have permitted use of two-way communication devices when required for operational purposes, these allowances must be clearly communicated by the employer.

City Operators are bound by Alberta's distracted driving legislation and can face penalties accordingly for infractions. Additionally, violations of City distracted-driving requirements can have employment consequences, up to and including discipline.

Members should also be aware of increased City vehicle monitoring. Technologies such as CTOS, along with the City's dash-camera pilot, may create additional records of vehicle operation and driver behaviour. Members should assume that their actions while operating a City vehicle may be documented and conduct themselves accordingly. Remember that the public is always watching and City employees are held to a higher standard for safety than private road users.

For members, the best approach is simple: prepare before leaving. Put the phone away to focus on driving. Routes and GPS information should be set before a vehicle begins moving. If work requires your attention while en route, find a safe place to park to attend to the request. Remember that in a City vehicle, you can use Calgary Parking owned parking spaces and lots for free.

Our union supports safe workplaces, and for members who drive as part of their duties, the workplace extends to the road. No service call, schedule, email, or notification is worth putting your safety or the public at unnecessary risk, whether in a work or personal vehicle.

Putting Safety and People First



On October 15, a fatal collision involving two Calgary Transit buses and other vehicles occurred on a busy road near a shopping centre and C-Train station in Saddletowne. Tragically, three passengers died at the scene and ten others were injured. Our thoughts are with the families and loved ones of those who lost their lives, those who were injured, and everyone affected by this tragedy.

Bus drivers face endless challenges daily, including heavy traffic, road rage, and deteriorating infrastructure, all while transporting Calgarians safely and efficiently. Unfortunately, their ability to deliver safe and reliable service is often affected by decisions made by management and Council, who are far removed from the realities of the driver's seat.

Drivers are pressured to keep on schedule by passengers and management in the face of cutbacks in funds, resources, and employees. Some drivers have even received speeding tickets while attempting to make up lost time. This management expects on-time service without considering the impacts of budget reductions and operational challenges. Operators should never feel pressured to choose between safety and meeting unrealistic scheduling expectations. Management cannot have it both ways!

It's concerning that road design and layout are heavily influenced by developers and builders who may not take traffic dynamics into account. They have no experience maneuvering large buses in difficult traffic conditions and dealing with verbal abuse or aggressive behavior from passengers. Their objectives of profit and housing volumes are far different than transporting large numbers of passengers efficiently and safely.

Urban sprawl affects traffic safety and increases traffic volumes. These factors contribute to traffic jams, longer commutes, and more accidents. Our roads are poorly maintained because of inadequate operating budgets, yet transit drivers face the fallout from potholes and obstacles.

All City employees deserve safe working conditions, and safety must remain a priority in every decision made by management.

Please be kind to transit drivers and employees on the front line, who have been deeply affected by this tragedy. Reach out to your fellow brothers and sisters, whether they work in the field or office. Compassion and support can make a meaningful difference during difficult times.

December 6: A Day of Remembrance and Action Against Violence Toward Women

December 6 marks the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Local 38 stands in solidarity to honour the 14 women murdered at École Polytechnique de Montréal in 1989, simply because they were women. We remember:

Geneviève Bergeron
Hélène Colgan
Nathalie Croteau
Barbara Daigneault
Anne-Marie Edward
Maud Haviernick
Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz
Maryse Laganière
Maryse Leclair
Anne-Marie Lemay
Sonia Pelletier
Michèle Richard
Annie St-Arneault
Annie Turcotte

As we honour the lives of these 14 women, we also remember those who have been impacted by gender-based violence and those who have lost loved ones to it. In Canada and around the world, gender-based violence remains a systemic issue impacting workers, families, and communities.

How You Can Make a Difference

- **Educate yourself and others:** Learn about the roots of gender-based violence and share resources.
- **Support survivors:** Listen, believe, and advocate for trauma-informed services.
- **Challenge harmful norms:** Speak out against sexism, harassment, and abuse in all forms.
- **Participate in your community:** Wear a white ribbon, attend vigils, workshops, or community events that honour the day.

Learn more about the movement to end gender-based violence at the Canadian Women's Foundation.

Facts About Gender-Based Violence

Stay Strong and See You Next Month!

Sincerely,

Your Executive Team

Official Publication of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 38
1439 – 9th Av. SE, Calgary T2G 0T4 Tel: 403-233-2700 Fax: 403-290-1757
Email: office@cupe38.org Web: www.cupe38.org