

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY: UNION ACTIVISM AND CLIMATE CHANGE

OPSEU PROVINCIAL YOUNG WORKERS' COMMITTEE EVENT (PYC)
TORONTO, WELLESLEY OFFICE
AUGUST 8-9, 2008

PARTICIPANT MATERIALS

- UNIONISM 101 WORKSHOP
- CLIMATE CHANGE & YOUTH ACTIVISM WORKSHOP



UNIONISM 101 - COURSE GOALS

The overall goal of this workshop is to increase awareness regarding the basic structures, processes and concepts of a union.

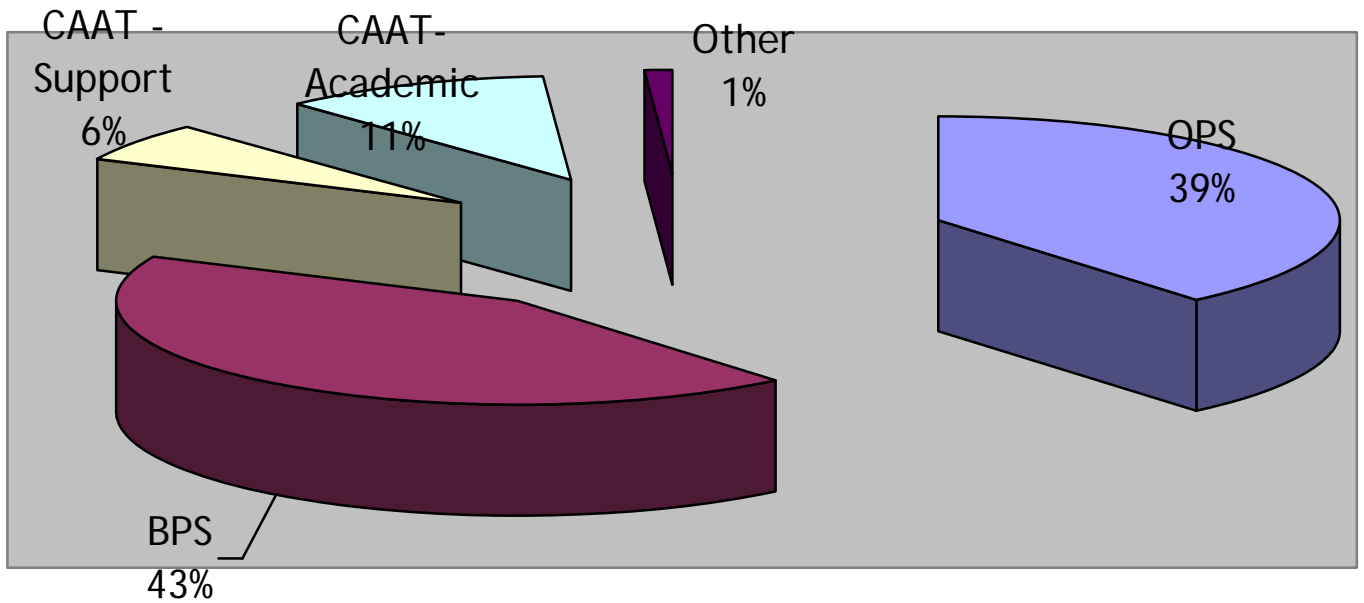
We'll work through a few popular education activities to learn more about the following:

- OPSEU's organizational structure
- OPSEU's decision-making process
- The Canadian labour structure
- How dues are used
- Basic language, terms and concepts
- Ways to get involved in the union

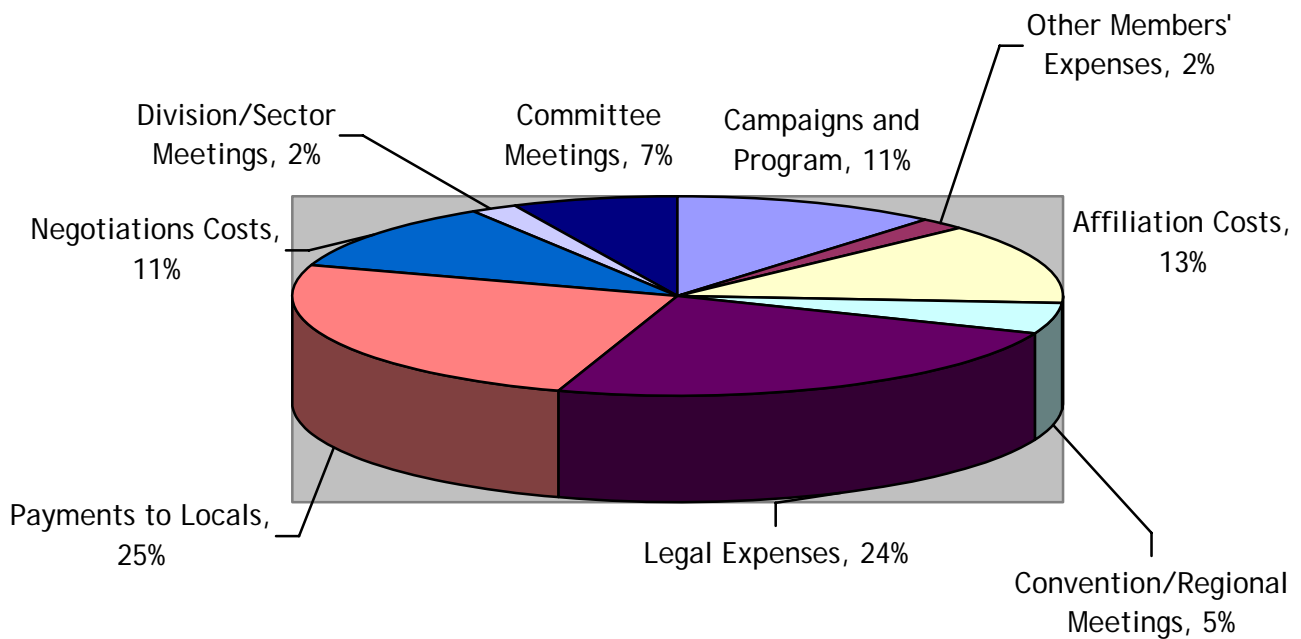
Upon completing these activities, members will be able to:

1. Explain basic terms and concepts
2. Identify key structures in the union
3. Understand how decisions are made in the union
4. Feel enthusiastic and motivated about OPSEU and unionism more generally
5. Be able to share their knowledge with other young workers

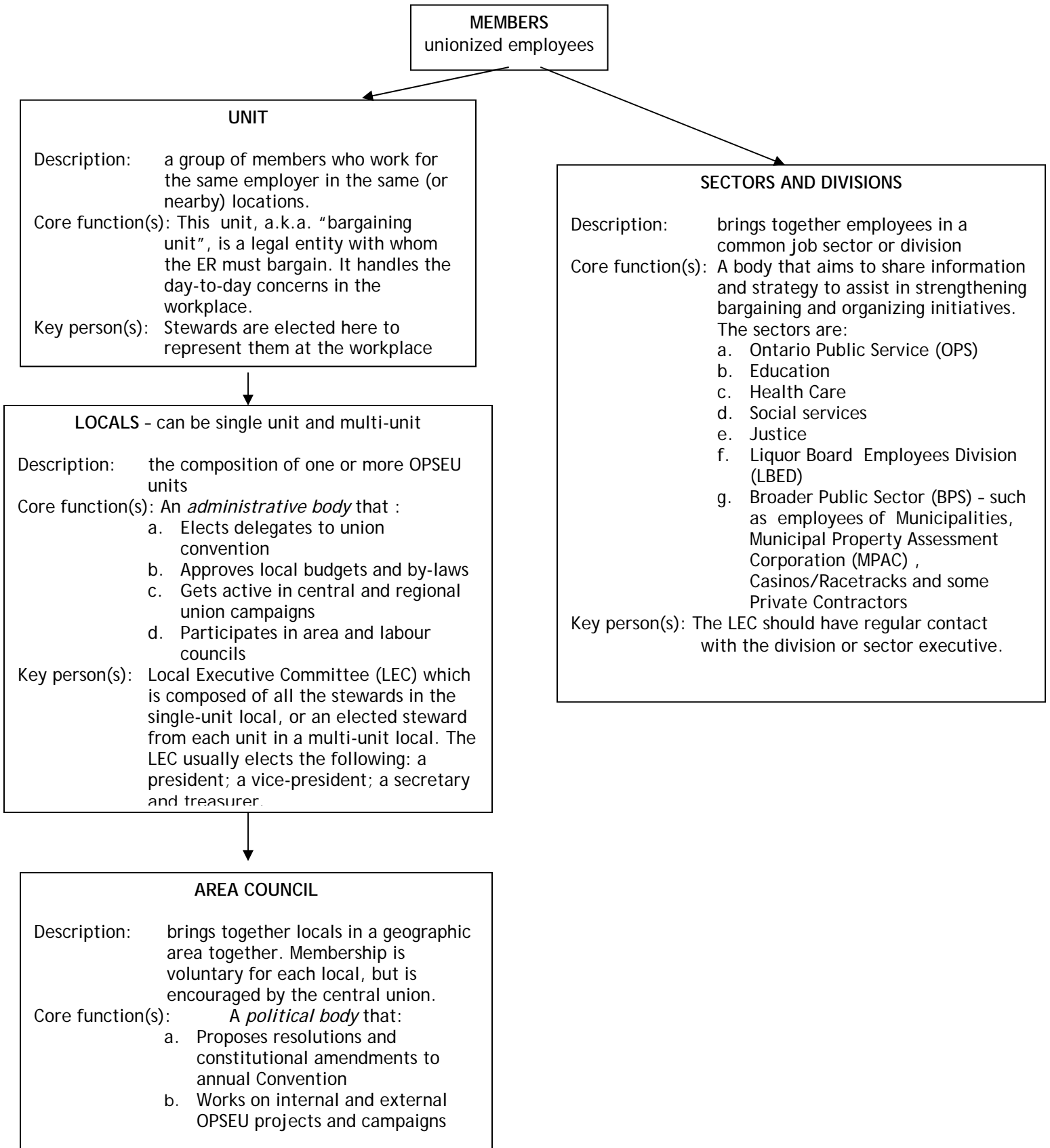
OPSEU SOURCES OF REVENUE -2008



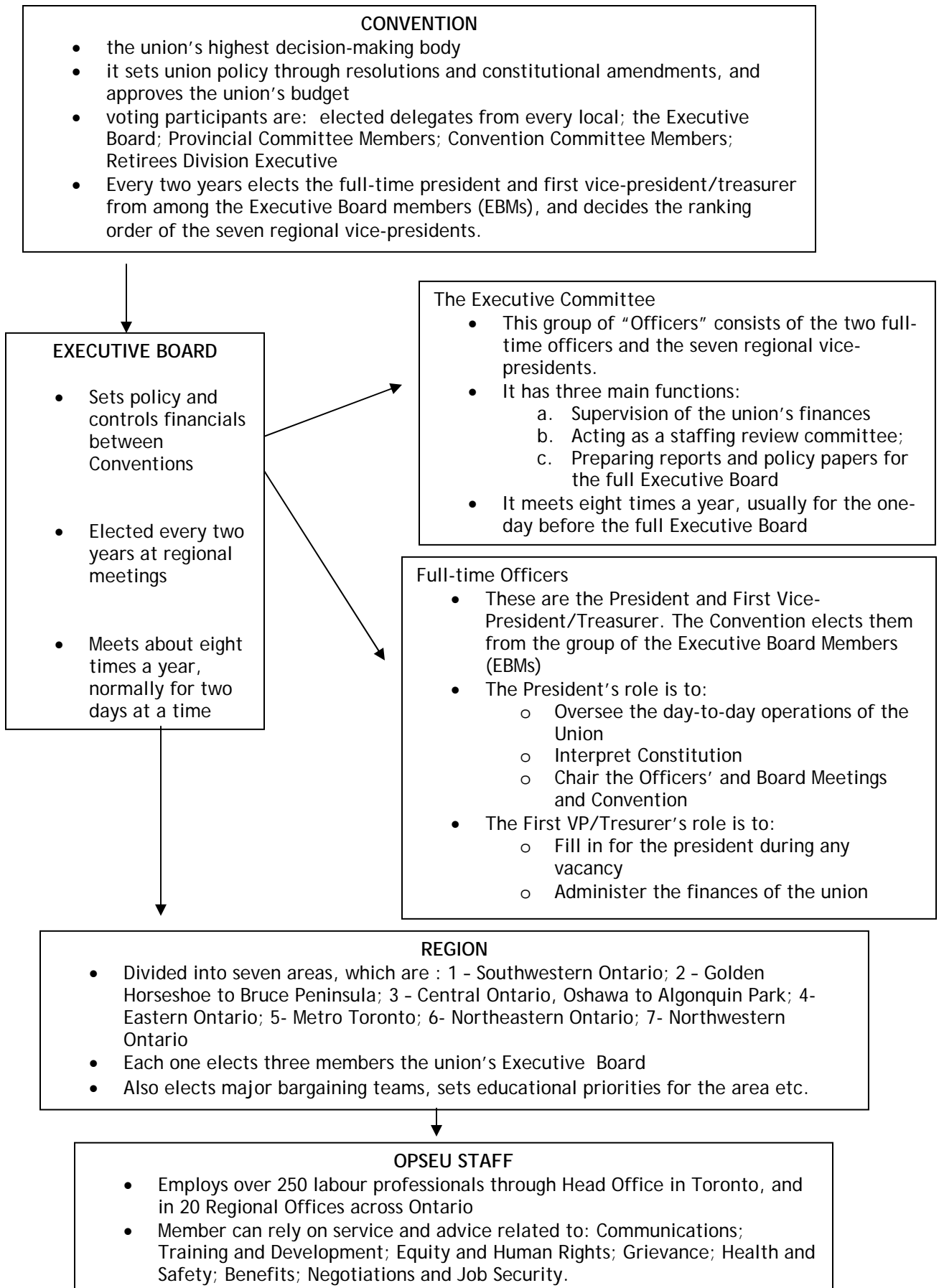
MEMBERS' EXPENSES - 2008



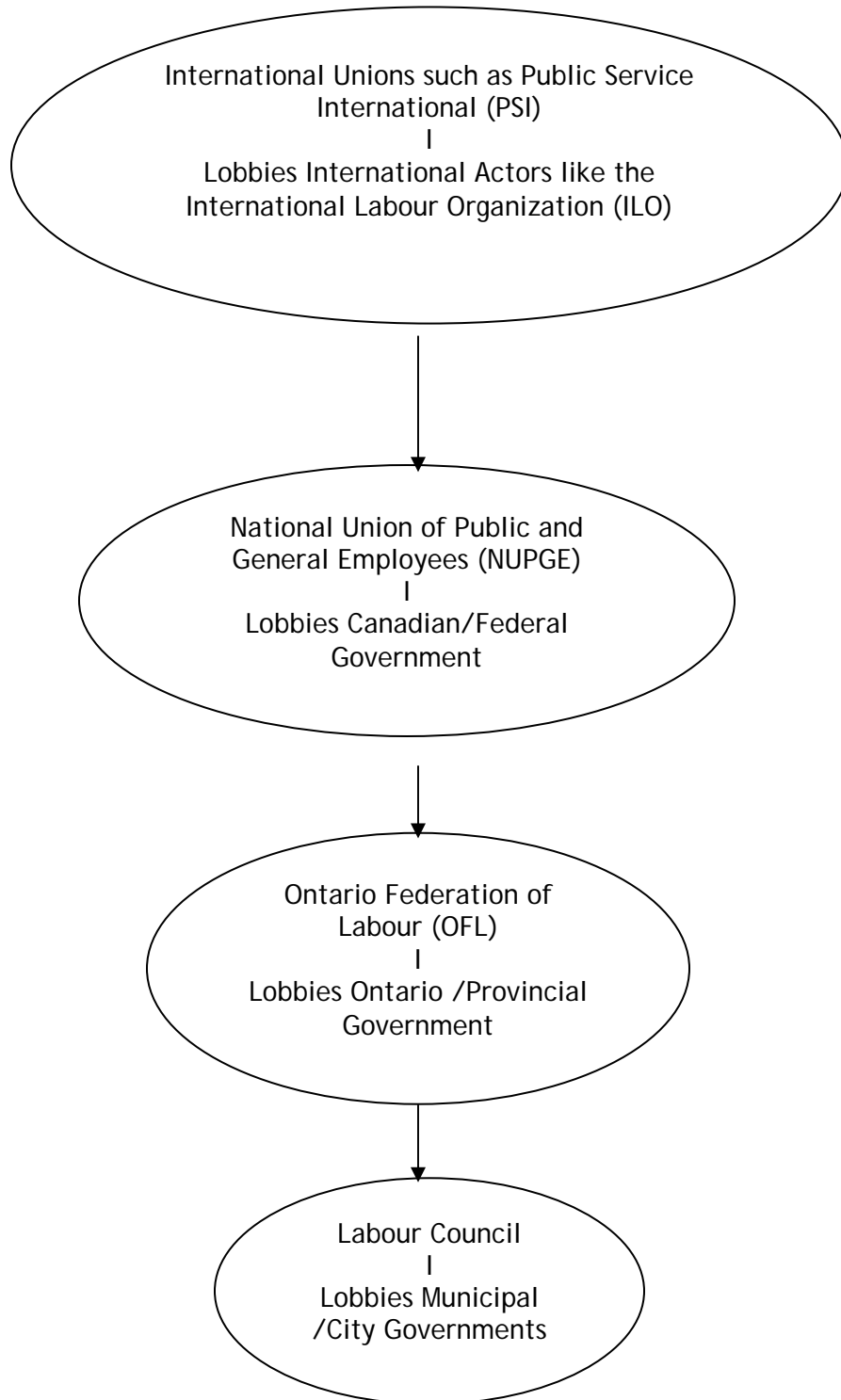
OPSEU LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE



OPSEU DECISION-MAKING



CANADIAN LABOUR STRUCTURE



Glossary of Labour Terms and Acronyms

A

- ACL - Association for Community Living.
- Across the board adjustment - An identical change in pay for all employees in the group.
- Application for certification - A request by a trade union to the Ontario Labour Relations Board to be designated as the sole bargaining agent for a particular group of employees.
- Arbitration - A process in which a single person or a panel hears both sides of a dispute and issues a decision (award) which binds both parties.
- Assessments - Special charges levied by unions to meet particular financial needs.
- ASU - Administrative Staff Union, representing managerial employees and excluded secretaries working for OPSEU.

B

- Back pay - Wages due for past services.
- Bargaining agent - A union that acts on behalf of employees in collective bargaining.
- Bargaining right - The right of workers to negotiate through their chosen representatives, or the right of a union certified by the Labour Board to represent the members in collective bargaining.
- Bargaining unit - The employee group deemed appropriate for collective bargaining. Factors include community of interest, history of collective bargaining, work performed, organization and representation of employees.
- Broader Public Service (BPS) - OPSEU members outside the OPS and the colleges.
- Bumping - Use of seniority to displace a junior employee when conditions require temporary or permanent layoffs.
- Bylaws - Local provisions to supplement our constitution. They need approval from the OPSEU President to be effective.

C

- CAAT - College of Applied Arts and Technology. OPSEU represents faculty and support staff in the colleges.
- Call-back pay - Required pay for a minimum number of hours when a worker is called back to work outside scheduled working hours.
- Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM) - Organization of union editors providing resources and help. See Resources.
- Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) - Canada's national central labour body, representing over 70 per cent of organized labour.
- CECBA - Crown Employees Collective Bargaining Act, which governs bargaining for the OPS.
- Certification - Official designation that a union is the sole and exclusive bargaining agent for a group of workers.

- Check-off - A clause in a collective agreement authorizing and instructing the employer to deduct union dues.
- Classification plan - A job evaluation method comparing jobs against a salary scale.
- Compensatory time off - (1) Time off in lieu of pay for workers who do overtime. (2) Extra time allowed when a holiday falls on an employee's regular day off.
- Conciliation and Mediation - Processes which provide assistance to resolve labour disputes. In the BPS, conciliation is a necessary step toward a legal strike or lockout.
- Consumer Price Index (CPI) - Statistics Canada monthly study on retail prices of selected consumer items.
- Contracting Out - Having work performed by an outside contractor and not by regular employees in the unit.
- Convention - Assembly of delegates to debate and determine union policies.
- Craft Union - A union whose membership is restricted to workers having a particular skill, e.g. printers, electricians.

D

- Decertification - A Labour Board decision to withdraw certification of a union as exclusive bargaining representative.
- Demotion - Transferring to a job with lesser responsibility.
- Discipline clause - Section of a collective agreement giving management the right to penalize employees.
- Downgrading - Demotion of a position through reduction of its duties and responsibilities.
- Dues - Money paid by union members to support their union.

E

- Employee Relations Committee (ERC) - A labour/management committee.
- Employment equity - The goal of removing employment barriers and discriminatory practices.
- Executive Board Member (EBM) - Each OPSEU region elects three EBMs to run the union between conventions

F

- Failure to represent - Charge that a union has violated a member's right to fair representation.
- Free collective bargaining - Negotiations where workers have the right to strike in support of contract demands.

G

- Good faith - An essential element of collective bargaining, requiring the parties make every reasonable effort to reach agreement.
- Grievance - Complaint by one or more employees or the union that management has breached the collective agreement.
- Grievance Settlement Board (GSB) - arbitration board which hears grievances from the OPS.

I

- Interest arbitration - A hearing at which an arbitrator is called upon to determine the contents of a collective agreement, usually because the workers are barred from striking to support their contract demands.
- Informational picketing - A protest designed to inform people about issues; not to bar people from crossing a picket line.
- Injunction - A court order restraining an individual or organization from committing or engaging in certain acts.
- In solidarity - 1. A common union salutation. 2. A newsletter put out by members for OPSEU stewards.
- International Labour Organization (ILO) - A specialized United Nations agency that works to improve labour conditions, living standards and economic and social stability.
- Internal organizing - Building union strength through maximum member participation.

J

- Job Content - The duties and responsibilities that make up a job.
- Job Description - A specific description of a single position.
- Job Evaluation - Process of setting criteria for comparing jobs in preparation for a classification plan.
- Job Security - Contract language protecting a worker's job.

L

- Labour Council - An organization of various unions at the municipal or district level.
- Labour-Management Committee (LMC) - A committee of management and worker representatives to deal with joint concerns and try to resolve them. Also known as Employee Relations Committee (ERC) or Union College Committee (UCC).
- Layoff - Temporary, prolonged or final separation from employment as a result of lack of work.
- Leave of absence - Permitted absence of an employee for a limited period.
- Local Executive Committee (LEC) - Local stewards (or Unit Stewards if the local has more than one unit). Directs local union activities between local meetings.
- Lockout - A labour dispute in which management refuses to let employees work, to force a settlement on its terms.

M

- Management rights - Management has all rights except as restricted by law or as bargained by the union. Specific management rights are often spelled out in a contract, typically covering hiring, discipline, work organization and staffing levels.
- Mediation - A process for resolving disputes in which a mediator acts as a neutral go-between.
- Ministry Employee Relations Committee (MERC) - Joint ministry level labour/management committee in the OPS which takes up ministry-wide or unresolved local issues.

O

- On-call time - Hours during which an employee is subject to call, if needed, usually in case of emergency.
- Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) - Provincial wing of the CLC which organizes campaigns and speaks for labour in the province.
- Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) - The body which certifies trade unions and adjudicates unfair labour practices and other charges under the Labour Relations Act.
- OPS - Ontario Public Service.
- Ontario Public Service Staff Union (OPSSU) - The union which represents all OPSEU employees except managerial staff and excluded secretaries, who are represented by ASU (above), and excluded staff.
- Organizing model - An approach to union leadership which involves members in solving problems.
- Overtime - Hours worked in excess of the maximum set by statute or collective agreement.

P

- Posting - Required display of vacancies available for competition within a bargaining unit.
- Probation - A trial period of employment during which a worker may be released.
- Promotion - A move to a position with higher duties and pay.
- Provincial Human Rights Committee (PHRC) - An OPSEU committee of one elected member per region to promote and educate members on human rights and equity issues.
- Provincial Women's Committee (PWC) - An OPSEU committee with one elected member per region to promote and educate members on gender issues.

R

- Rand Formula - Requirement that an employer deduct dues from every employee in a bargaining unit, whether or not they have joined the union. Named for Mr. Justice Ivan Rand who created it to settle a strike over union security at Ford in 1945.
- Recognition - Employer acceptance of a union as exclusive bargaining agent for employees in the bargaining unit.
- Red circling - Keeping pay rate after demotion to a lower classification.
- Reinstatement - Restoration of a dismissed or demoted employee to former job.

- Reopener - A contract clause that allows the parties to renegotiate a portion of the agreement (usually wages) before the expiry date.
- Retroactive Pay - Payment for a period in the past covered by a wage increase.
- Rights arbitration - A hearing at which an arbitrator is called upon to determine the meaning of a collective agreement, normally the final stage in a grievance procedure.

S

- Scab - Worker who refuses to join co-workers in a strike, or worker who crosses a striking union's picket line to perform their work.
- Seniority - System recognizing length of service for job security, vacation and other benefits.
- Service model - Union leadership that solves members' problems, but doesn't encourage members to work together to solve problems for themselves.
- Severance pay - Payment to a worker whose employment is permanently ended.
- Shift differential - Premium pay for work during inconvenient hours.
- Shop steward - Union official elected to represent a group of workers.
- Slowdown - A deliberate slowing of work short of a strike, to force concessions from an employer.
- Solidarity - Identification with a group who share common interests.
- Straight-time pay - Regular wages exclusive of premium pay, overtime and bonuses.
- Strike - An organized work stoppage or work refusal by employees to back a bargaining position.
- Strike benefits/strike pay - Money paid by a union to striking members.
- Strike fund - Union reserve to provide strike pay and cover other strike costs.
- Strike vote - A vote of bargaining unit members on whether to authorize a strike.
- Successor rights - The right of a union to continue to represent employees when the operation is sold or transferred to other owners.
- Suspension - Removal from work as a disciplinary measure.

T

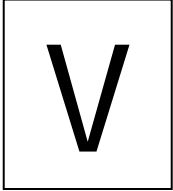
- Technological change - Introduction of new machinery or production techniques.
- Total Quality Management (TQM) - One of many joint labour/management participation schemes.
- Trusteeship - Taking over the administration of a local union's affairs by the central union.

U

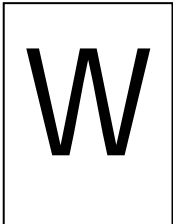
- Unfair labour practice - Employer or union activities that violate the Labour Relations Act, such as intimidation, coercion, interference, or failure to bargain in good faith.
- Union jurisdiction - Union authority over certain types of work, certain workers or specific areas assigned by the union or central

labour body with which it is affiliated.

- Union label/union bug - Proof that a product is made under union conditions.
- Union security clauses - Contract language that protects the institutional life of the union, such as check-off and notice language.
- Union shop - Requirement that every worker covered by the collective agreement must become and remain a member of the union.



- Voluntary recognition - Employer agreement that a union is the bargaining agent for a defined group of employees without a Labour Board ruling.



- Wage range - Minimum and maximum rates for a job.
- Workers' Compensation - A system paying workers who are injured on the job.

PYC

Local

Convention

GET INVOLVED IN THE UNION!

Larger Community
le. local youth
organization

Educationals

Other
le. Area Council

CLIMATE CHANGE & YOUTH ACTIVISM - COURSE GOALS

The overall goal of this workshop is to increase awareness about the causes and effects of climate change, the groups most impacted, and to begin initiating plans for change in our lives, our communities and workplaces.

By starting with our own experience, building on our knowledge base and developing personal and regional action plans, members will learn more about:

- How we are currently seeing and experiencing climate change
- Key environmental terms and concepts
- How we can change our daily habits and lifestyles to make a huge difference
- OPSEU's 3 Year Green Plan
- Examples of successful strategies in other unions, workplaces and communities

At the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Describe their personal experiences and concerns about climate change
- Understand key dimensions of climate change and how human activity is creating the crisis
- Make the link between the growing environmental crisis and social justice/anti-oppression
- Share their increased awareness about OPSEU's environmental program with other members
- Develop and implement ideas for action in their union, communities and workplaces
- Appreciate their individual roles in addressing climate change and committing to action

TASK SHEET: OUR EXPERIENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

In your small groups, discuss the following two questions:

1. How are each of you experiencing climate change and global warming? Be specific by describing the sign you see:
 - Personally
 - At work
 - At home
 - In the union
 - In your community or globally

CLIMATE CHANGE QUIZ

1. **The greenhouse effect is:**
 - a. Caused by a layer of gases in the atmosphere that surrounds the earth, trapping the sun's heat close to the earth and warming the earth's surface.
 - b. A way of growing better tomatoes
 - c. A scientific theory stating that the earth is warming because humans are burning fossil fuels.
 - d. All of the above
 - e. None of the above

2. **Circle which of the following are greenhouse gases:**
 - a. Water vapour or steam
 - b. Oxygen
 - c. Carbon dioxide
 - d. Methane and Nitrous oxide
 - e. Fluorinated gases
 - f. Nitrogen

3. **Which of the following human activities is NOT an important contributor to global warming?**
 - a. burning fossil fuels
 - b. deforestation
 - c. raising livestock and managing manure
 - d. damming rivers for hydroelectric generation
 - e. use of gases in refrigeration and fire suppression systems
 - f. use of fertilizers

4. **Where is temperature change expected to be greatest?**
 - a. Equatorial regions
 - b. The high latitude regions, like the Arctic
 - c. Eastern areas like New Brunswick
 - d. Central Canada

CLIMATE CHANGE QUIZ - CTD.

5. Which of the following warming impacts on forests are predicted: (circle)
- a) Forest fires will increase across most of Canada
 - b) BC's forests will become a source of global warming
 - c) Increased precipitation will allow expansion of Canada's Boreal forest ecosystems
6. Which country produces the greatest greenhouse gas emissions per capita? Can you rank them in order of GGEs:
- a. Germany
 - b. United Kingdom
 - c. France
 - d. Canada
 - e. Japan
 - f. United States
7. What 3 sectors produce the most greenhouse gas emissions in Canada?
- a. Oil and gas production
 - b. Residential and office heating
 - c. Transportation
 - d. Mining and manufacturing
 - e. Electricity production
 - f. Agriculture
 - g. Waste
8. To avoid temperature increases over 2° C and possibly stave off very dangerous climate change which of the following must occur?
- a. Global greenhouse gas emissions will have to be reduced by 50% by 2050.
 - b. Global emissions must fall towards zero (net) by the end of the 21st century.
 - c. Developed countries must peak between 2012 and 2015 (4 - 7 years from now).
 - d. Developed countries must cut emissions by a minimum of 30% by 2020 (12 years from now).
 - e. Developed countries must cut emissions by 80% by 2050.

TASK SHEET: DEVELOPING A PERSONAL & REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

At your tables, please do the following:

1. Take 10 minutes to individually read through all the resource materials (pages 22-34 of your materials).
2. After you've had a chance to read through most of the materials, start to work in your regional groups to develop an action plan. You will be given 20 minutes.

Using the outline below, develop and write down your strategy that will address changes in:

- a. Your own individual habits/lifestyle
 - b. Your workplace
 - c. Your community
 - d. Your union (take hints from OPSEU's 3-year plan, on the last page your materials)
3. After you have developed and recorded your strategy, hand your plans into the facilitators. Then
 4. Now take five minutes to identify the theme or central point of your strategy.
 5. Spend the remaining time - about twenty minutes - doing the following:
 - i. Develop a sketch, song, mime etc. that symbolizes the central point or theme of your strategy
 - ii. Presentations must be no longer than five minutes. The shorter and snappier, the better!
 - iii. Be prepared to perform your work in the large group at 2:45pm.

ACTION PLAN OUTLINE

Region _____

Individual: Three things I am going to change in my life

-
-
-

Community: Three things I am going to do in my community

-
-
-

Union: three parts of the OPSEU 3-year plan that I will assist in implementing or will support

-

-

-

Workplace: Three things I am going to change or lobby for in my workplace

-

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“TAKING ACTION” EXERCISE - RESOURCES & EXAMPLES

I. EXAMPLES OF INDIVIDUAL ACTION

Reduce Your Personal Energy Use - This is the easiest and most effective way to reduce your own carbon emissions and to help curb global warming.

Get Active Politically

- Tell your government to get serious about :
 - energy conservation
 - investing in and supporting renewable energy
 - legislating a 2020 cap on greenhouse gas emissions - a cap between 30 and 40% below 1990 emissions. (And ending subsidies to the oil and gas industry). See earlier resources on carbon taxes and cap and trade/auction.
 - urgently investing in public transit and rail systems
- Make your city cool. Support your municipality's efforts to reduce greenhouse gases. And ask them to do more. Many of our cities are out in front of the federal and provincial governments.
- Get involved with local citizen/community groups organizing around climate change. Or, help to form one working with your union, Labour Council or other groups you're connected with.
- Write letters, become a cyber activist, lobby politicians and hold their feet to the fire at election time. (Check out VTACC, Voters Taking Action on Climate Change www.vtacc.org/)

Reduce Your Personal Energy Use – This is the easiest and most effective way to reduce your own carbon emissions and to help curb global warming.

X

Explore Transportation Options/Drive Less

- Get active in support of the expansion of public transit. Take transit, it's better for the earth and way cheaper.
- Walk or bike to closer destinations.
- Join car pool or auto share options
- Increase your car's fuel efficiency. Don't idle, drive within the speed limit, open window instead of turning on air conditioner, keep tires adequately inflated, etc.
www.eartheasy.com/live_fuel_efficient_driving
- Consider buying hybrid, (soon electric) or other fuel efficient cars. Research your specific car's energy impact score (ton co2/yr). <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/>
- Shrink the travel distances in your daily life: Choose homes that are close to your work or schools (if you can afford it), choose

closer dentists and other professional services, and shop close to home.

The average person spends 32 hours a month driving and 27 hours a month working to pay for the use of their car. According to one study, if you and three others who commute 20 km/day travelled together, you'd reduce your CO2 emissions by 75% and save as much as \$360 per person/year.

http://www.davidsuzuki.org/NatureChallenge/What_is_it/The_actions/Move_around_smarter

Cut back on air travel

- Explore ways to conduct work and business without flying
- Stop taking short flying vacations

To measure the number of pounds of lbs of carbon dioxide you emit via air or car travel: <http://www.terrapass.com>

Make Your Home Energy Efficient

- Do an energy audit of your home [<http://www.oeenrcan.gc.ca>]
- Upgrade appliances to energy efficient models. Don't purchase appliances that are not energy efficient (Look for "Energy Star" label) Read Energy Efficiency Guide). New fridges (the biggest energy consuming appliance) are 40% more efficient than 10 years ago.
- Lights: turn them off, install motion detectors, replace all incandescent with fluorescent, unplug electronics, including TVs, etc when not in use.
- Make your furnace and water heater as efficient as possible. Consider "on demand" water heating.
- Button up your home to reduce energy waste
- Cool your home more efficiently
- Purchase your energy from sustainable energy sources. Check with your Hydro utility.
- Reduce water consumption

See a Low Carb(on) Diet, by David Gershon to estimate reductions in carbon emissions as a result of implementing the changes described above.

Take care of your waste and produce less of it -- Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

Reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from landfills and reduce the energy consumed and emissions associated with producing new products

- Buy less; stop buying the newest in everything
- Reduce your garbage
- Compost
- Recycle everything that can be reused

Neutralize your Carbon Dioxide Footprint

- Choose a carbon offset program that enables you to offset your CO2 emissions. Purchase carbon credits online to compensate for your last long-distance flight.

Voluntary offset programs should not be seen as a substitute for government regulations to reduce greenhouse gases, but they are a personal step in the right direction. Offsets can be purchased to mitigate emission from air travel, auto use, home heating.

http://www.davidsuzuki.org/Climate_Change/What_You_Can_Do/carbon_neutral.asp

Eat for the Planet

Ingredients for a North American meal are typically transported for thousands of kilometres. Check out Food Share Toronto report:

www.organicconsumers.org/environment/ACF230.pdf

- Eat locally whenever possible
- Check labels
- Talk to produce managers and ask them to purchase locally produced food
- Buy in season
- Support local farmers, farmers' markets and food cooperatives
- Support farm workers in their struggle for decent wages and working conditions
- Grow your own vegetables
- Create community gardens
- Eat organic
- Eat low on the food chain whenever possible. Eat less meat. Become a vegetarian
- Eat only sustainable seafood

Protect the Forests. Protect Old Growth Forests and Harvest Sustainably

Support the protection of threatened forests and the use of ecosystem sensitive forestry practices. Over-exploiting and poor forestry practices release greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the number of trees available to absorb CO2. Good practices reduce emission and protect biodiversity.

- Demand government action to protect old growth forests and support environmental organizations working for this goal
- Demand sustainable forestry practices.
- Reduce paper consumption (and packaging)
- Use only recycled/post consumer paper for all home paper products. Why do we need bleached toilet paper?
- Build with wood which meets certification standards that you support. Check out Forest Stewardship Certified (FSC), Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI).

Learn more about the role of humans in creating the climate crisis:

Watch documentaries such as:

- An Inconvenient Truth, Manufactured Landscapes, The Story of Stuff. The Thirteenth Hour
- Read, and learn more about what actions you can take. Check out the Greenpeace Green Living Guide (2007)
- Check out the web which is FULL of resources, including Environment Canada -
<http://www.ec.gc.ca/education/default.asp?lang=En&n=826B95C3-1>

II. EXAMPLES OF UNION ACTION IN CANADA

Canadian Labour Congress has actively lobbied Canadian governments to implement Kyoto. It adopted a major policy resolution on climate change at its 2008 convention. It participates in the Climate Action Network, an alliance of over 100 organizations committed "to preventing dangerous levels of human interference with the global climate system, protecting environmental sustainability and public health, while upholding principles of just transition, equity and social justice."

www.climateactionnetwork.ca/e/about/mandate.html

See also CLC 2008 Policy and Just Transition Manual:

canadianlabour.ca/updir/climatechangeEn.pdf;

canadianlabour.ca/updir/justransen.pdf

B.C. Government and Service Employee Unions (BCGEU) members have launched "Cool Communities" initiatives in communities throughout BC which include improving public transportation, protecting the Coastal Douglas Fir, a Green Trade Fair and food security campaigns to promote local food production.

The Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) has adopted a greenhouse gas reduction target policy for OPSEU (May 2008). The policy sets annual union-wide targets of between 2% and 3% until 2040 for a cumulative, absolute reduction of 80% from 2006 emissions. The union will monitor and report on progress.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees and the New Brunswick Union of Public and Private Employees have both produced union guides for action in the workplace to reduce carbon emissions.

www.cupe.ca/updir/Green_booklet.pdf

The National Union of Public and General Employees took an early lead in raising member awareness of climate change, producing background resources as early as 2000 calling for increase public transit, retrofitting of homes and buildings, reforestation, development of alternative energy sources. It maintains a well resourced Environment web page on its web site. www.nupge.ca/issues/environment.htm.

The New Brunswick Union of Public and Private Employees has published "Cool Comforts: Bargaining for Our Survival" earthinstitute.ca. Its author, Peter Corbyn has launched a green social networking site www.greennexus.com. Participants on GreenNexus can calculate their carbon footprint at home and work, earn points towards purchase of environmentally friendly items and network with green communities across Canada. The program allows the union to aggregate the emissions reductions from active member's personal efforts.

The Public Service Alliance of Canada has implemented video conference capacities which will substantially reduce the need for union leaders and staff to travel to meetings. It has produced a draft guideline for reducing the environmental footprint of union conventions and is retrofitting buildings for energy conservation.

The United Steelworkers and Environmental Defence (ENGO) have formed a strategic alliance which commits the two organizations to advocating together for working people and the environment in the following areas: toxic chemicals in commercial activity, creation of "green manufacturing jobs, and development and implementation of strategies to address climate change and protect natural resources. See more in the section "Taking Action in the Community".

(See also "USW: Address the issues of poverty in your community by creating "Green Jobs" in Resource: Green Jobs are Vital to a Just Transition)

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers members mobilized actively in the campaign against Climate Chaos organized during the Bali talks. CUPW strongly supported the call to save the Kyoto treaty and to address the impact of climate change on the world's majority.

Canada Post Corporation (CPC) owns a big fleet of vehicles and many buildings. CUPW has been raising the greening of the post office operations for almost two decades, e.g., use of hybrid vehicles, more public transportation, extended door-to-door on foot mail delivery, retrofitting of buildings and customer use of recycled paper to send their mail. CUPW has pressured CPC, petitioned Ministers and raised these issues in bargaining, pointing to examples of companies such as Purolator or countries whose postal administration is greening their operation. The Union, like many others, is not including environmental workshops in its national convention.

The National Campaign to Promote Employer Provided, Tax-Exempt Transit passes. This campaign, led by the Amalgamated Transit Union, aims to make employer provided transit passes tax-exempt. Exemption of employer provided transit passes from taxation is expected to result in a shift to mass transit of 5%. This will reduce or slow the growth of emissions by about 2% and result in more service sector jobs.

Communication Energy and Paperworkers Union was in the forefront early on in developing a position on Kyoto. Even though its membership draws strongly from the energy sector it took on the issue of Kyoto squarely and conducted a grass roots union wide discussion. Its position was developed and released in 2003. CEP supported Kyoto and played an important role in convincing the then Liberal government to do the same. The Minister of the Environment at the time also agreed to monitor the impacts of Kyoto, suggesting that a Just Transition program might follow.

Union Buildings

The **Canadian Union of Public Employees** has a new national building that includes the following environmental features:

- Energy-efficient fluorescent lighting throughout the building
- Solar panels.
- Dual flush toilets and low-flow sink faucets.
- Very close access to public transit and train station.
- An extensive recycling program
- A teleconference centre
- A green housekeeping/office-cleaning program.
- Native species landscaping and no irrigation system.
- Energy-efficient heating, cooling and ventilation system. Annual natural gas consumption in the building will be 67.5 per cent lower than a building of similar size not built to LEED specifications. Likewise, electricity consumption will be 43.9 per cent less.

The **B. C. Government and Service Employees Union's (BCGEU)** new Fraser Valley Union Centre has a number of "green" features like a sustainable building site, water efficiencies and indoor environmental air quality that will help the union in targeting a "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)" Gold certification. Gold standard added about 20 % more to the cost, but that is expected to be offset by reduced operating costs and a longer lifespan.

III. EXAMPLES OF WORKPLACE ACTION

Goals for Workplace Action

- Decrease energy use. Prioritize conservation and sustainability.
- Shift from non-renewal sources and shift to renewable energy sources
- Increase the efficiency of equipment
- Reduce waste
- Support employees to reduce non-renewable energy consumption in their travel to work and in their workplace activities.

- Change workplace culture to one that values sustainability and recognizes the central role of worker participation in reducing carbon footprints.

Options for Taking Action

Form a union environment committee

- Select Environment Representatives/ Green stewards.
- Involve members who know about workplace energy and technology use or who are keen to get active.
- Find out what other unions/workplaces are doing.
- Check out “Cool Comforts: Bargaining for Our Survival” earthinstitute.ca (New Brunswick Union of Public and Private Employees; and “Healthy, Clean and Green: A Worker’s Action Guide to a Greener Workplace”, CUPE
- Develop a union workplace environmental policy
- Set goals for the union work
- Bargain an environment committee for your workplace. Include a role for Union Environmental Reps which give them the similar rights to represent workers as stewards or health and safety stewards. Work towards a training process for environmental stewards.
- Or, seek to expand the mandate of Health and Safety Committees (depending on provincial H&S legislation)
- Apply a filter to union proposals which assesses their impact on people with disabilities and makes necessary accommodations.

Communicate to members

Let members know about actions taken to date and invite their participation. Get the word out. Let members know about your commitment and invite their participation.

- Publish newsletters describing your policies and actions taken, or include them in existing newsletters.
- Celebrate successes

Form a joint union/management committee

Worker participation in workplace climate change and environmental programs is essential:

- Worker/union participation is a precondition for creating a workplace plan that is comprehensive, effective and beneficial to all
- Workers’ knowledge is crucial. Our front line experience means we often know the most about work processes and how to make them more energy efficient
- Full participation is the most effective way to change practices and workplace culture. Changes that are imposed seldom work.
- Worker participation is essential to ensure that new approaches do not negatively impact working conditions

- Participation in the planning process ensures that employers cannot use programs to decrease carbon emissions as justification for cutting costs and staff.

Ideas for getting started

- Talk to one another about the issues and why it is important for unions and employees to be at the table with management and participating in reducing carbon emissions.
- Do a workplace environmental inventory/audit of energy consumption and carbon emissions. Include emissions resulting from the electrical power purchased and emissions produced from fuels burned in the workplace. E.g. heating and air conditioning, vehicles. (This may require outside expert assistance.)
- Assess the carbon emission impact of the workplace supply chains, including contracted out/privatized services.
- Set goals for the work together
- Develop a carbon management plan which prioritizes projects, assesses costs and payback times for investment; communicates and monitors impacts; involves staff and unions. (This is a major undertaking.)
- Make an agreement to reduce carbon footprint by a certain percentage.
- Use purchasing, contract benchmarks and other leverages to reduce the carbon footprint of suppliers, contracted out services, etc.
- Recognize the important role of Union Environmental Reps. Provide time off work for training, inspections, meetings, paperwork.
- Get Management commitment to create environmental officer positions (or some appropriate title

Union/Employer Action Ideas to Get Us Moving

Technology and Equipment

- Power down IT at night, automatically where possible; increase use of sleep modes
- Train staff in using equipment in eco-friendly way
- Label equipment describing how much energy it uses
- Label equipment indicating who is responsible for turning it off
- Replace only when necessary, with energy efficient models
- Service regularly to enhance efficiency

Lighting

- Replace incandescent lights with CFLs or LEDs
- Turn off lights in daytime when there is enough daylight.
- Maximize use of natural daylight to cut down on electricity
- Put lights on motion detectors: e.g. outside security lights, washrooms, stock rooms

Water

Water uses energy when treated, pumped, delivered, heated and packaged in bottles.

- Reduce water usage
- Reduce water temperatures
- Install dual flush toilets and low-flow sink and shower faucets
- Insulate hot water pipes
- Install “on demand” water heating to save energy
- Replace/fix leaky faucets
- Reduce water usage in industrial processes
- Install solar water heating systems
- Ensure employee access to clean drinking water without relying on carbon intensive plastic or glass bottles. Phase out bottled water, use public drinking water. *See UK Unison campaign www.unison.org.uk. See OPSEU resource on bottled water greeningopseu.blogspot.com/2008/05/bottled-water-fact-sheet.html*

Heat - Reduce heating costs and emissions

- Turn heat off in rooms not in use
- Raise air conditioning temperatures. Why freeze?
- Lower heating temps in winter (19 degrees is warm enough for most people) and reduce further when workforce goes home. Install programmable thermostats
- Install more efficient furnaces
- Insulate, caulk and weather strip: windows, walls, basements and attics
- Ensure doors and windows are not unnecessarily opened when heat/cooling is operating
- In large workplaces explore possibilities for combined heat and power generators

Increase Workplace Use of Renewable Energy Sources and Natural Ventilation

- Use the sun’s natural heat and light wisely: work with experts and workforce to consider how sun, shade and natural ventilation can be used
- Purchase energy produced from renewable sources
- Explore possibility of installing renewable sources at the worksite such as wind turbines (note, these are more expensive initiatives)

Air Quality/Hazardous Substances

- Minimize emission of harmful air pollutants from all sources: heating, power generation, waste burning, vehicles and transportation, materials off gassing, cleaning products and solvents
- Use green and environmentally harmless substances

Paper Consumption

- Reduce consumption: print less, duplex everything

- Use recycled, unbleached paper
- Reduce packaging
- Explore emerging E-paper/E-book options

Transportation

- Encourage and provide incentives for employees to switch to lower carbon alternatives: walking, riding, transit, carpooling, allowing flexible working hours. Campaign for improved transit. Provide discounted transit passes.
- Bargain collective agreement benefits for car pooling or using transit.
- Reduce work-related vehicle travel.
- Purchase energy efficient company cars
- Turn off cars, trucks, while waiting. Don't idle or speed.
- Reduce company air travel
- Support alternatives to air travel. (One British company has given employees an extra day's holiday if they travel by train rather than plane.) Companies and unions are beginning to use videoconferencing as an alternative.

Reduce Waste - Reuse and Recycle

In some workplaces waste is a big source of carbon emissions. Reusing and recycling uses fewer resources, and less carbon, than new products. Recycling paper means more trees still standing to absorb CO₂ (In the UK, paper use consumes a forest the size of Wales each year). Waste in landfills puts toxins in the groundwater and produces methane, potent greenhouse gas.

- Audit waste to determine how much recyclable and non-recyclable waste is produced.
- Develop strategies to increase recycling and re-use (e.g. donating materials so they don't end up in landfill)
- Eliminate packaging and disposable items wherever possible
- Replace equipment only when necessary and with equipment meeting the latest energy standards from suppliers with good employment and environmental standards.
- Compost food waste
- Set goals for waste reduction. The UK Trade Union Congress reduced waste by 40% in a year and a half.

Food

How does the food provided at your facility contribute to global warming?

- Reduce the food transportation miles involved and the packaging and processing of food. Explore ways to purchase locally produced products.
- Assess the carbon emissions associated with vending machines

Landscaping

- Plant native species, including ones that do not have high water requirements
- Water with drip irrigation systems

Education

- Provide union and employer-sponsored education for employees in how to reduce carbon emissions and increase energy efficiency
- Hold environmental awareness sessions - e.g. show Inconvenient Truth, or other videos, at lunch
- Provide on-line resources for employees to determine their environmental footprint

Reinvest Monies Saved

- Increase workplace energy efficiency
- Purchase carbon offsets to meet targets
- Check out "Cool Comforts: Bargaining for Our Survival", p. 81 for potential financial models for workplace greenhouse gas reductions.

Selected Resources

- *Environment Canada website "What You Can Do"*
<http://www.ec.gc.ca/education/default.asp?lang=En&n=826B95C3-1>
- *For an example of a company taking the lead, check out Vancity Credit Union in BC, which decided in 2006 to go carbon neutral by 2010 and met its goal 2 years later, in 2008.*
<https://www.vancity.com/MyCommunity/OurVision/ActingOnClimateChange/ClimateChangeSolutions/VancityIsCarbonNeutral/>
- *"Cool Comforts: Bargaining for Our Survival" earthinstitute.ca (New Brunswick Union of Public and Private Employees; and*
- *"Healthy, Clean and Green: A Worker's Action Guide to a Greener Workplace", CUPE*
- *NUPGE: "Keeping Our Cool—A Climate Change Primer"*
- *And many other sources*

IV. EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY ACTION

There are many community groups and communities of interest already organizing around climate change. We can learn from them, as they can learn from us. Effective union action could involve connecting up with this movement and helping to enhance it. Or it may mean taking a new initiative. There are many possibilities. Here are just a few.

Get engaged in climate change in your community around issues like:

- Influencing urban planning to reduce global warming and restore environments
- Supporting or launching green energy local initiatives: solar projects
- expanding public transit
- Getting public commitment to renewable energy initiatives; public funds for local ideas like wind power generation
- Keeping water in the public commons
- Pushing for green building and energy conservation codes/regulations

- Organizing for green jobs: e.g. working with municipalities and businesses to create new green manufacturing and service industries
- Working with disadvantaged communities to link living conditions to environmental concerns
- Changing land use practices and helping to get public infrastructure to support changes

Food Security - work with communities to draw the links between climate change, health and nutrition; between farmers and poor communities

- build farmers' markets and make links with farms and support organic farming
- support community gardens
- participate in food share programs directed towards poorer communities

Education and Dialogue

- Work with environmental and community groups to educate one another on the links between environmental sustainability and social justice.
- Work with others in the community to deepen public education on the need for strong government action, the importance of the public sector in addressing climate change, of just transitions and for climate change programs that socially just for vulnerable communities
- Create forums to discuss different perspectives regarding climate change policy issues such as carbon taxes, cap and trade, biofuels, the Tar sands. Building unity around issues rests on open and respectful debate.

Political Action

- Work in coalition with other groups to force politicians to put climate change high on the agenda. See the VTACC example below. Lobby politicians. Develop election strategies together.
- Ask your union to develop climate change materials for municipal, provincial and federal elections and distribute widely
- Organize actions around key international dates which are key to negotiating international agreements to curb carbon emissions and providing supporting to the most vulnerable countries and communities

GREENING OPSEU - EXTENDED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN - 2008 - 2010

	2008	2009	2010
Green Operations	Set targets for greenhouse gas reductions. Develop financing mechanism for capital improvements including lights, HVAC & water use. Policy development - energy, water & purchasing. Begin building energy improvements. Expand recycling where possible.	Implement green purchasing policy. Continue building improvements. Maximum recycling at all OPSEU facilities.	Continue building improvements.
Green Stewards	OPSEU convention meeting Identify new green stewards. Develop communication network. Pilot one-day educational (fall) & train-the-trainer. Identify & support one project per region.	OPSEU convention meeting. 1 st Green Award established. Identify & support additional projects in regions. Continue education program.	OPSEU convention meeting. 2 nd Green Award. Identify & support additional projects in regions. Expand education program to members.
Greener Jobs	Identify all "green jobs" done by OPSEU members. Identify contacts in other unions. Link with at least one existing OPSEU campaign.	Develop "Green jobs" policy. Launch one proactive public campaign. Network with other unions & green groups.	Continue public campaign. Network with other unions & green groups.
Greener Workplaces	Identify issues and develop language for joint committees. Bring green workplace issues into bargaining.	Bring green workplace issues into bargaining.	Bring green workplace issues into bargaining.
Greener Pensions	Work with Pension Liaison Cttee. to identify existing screens. Establish ethical investment screening guidelines. Develop policies for proxy instructions.	Conduct an annual review of pension investments. Propose policies for shareholder investments. Develop proxy focus - e.g. tar sands.	Annual review. Continue with proxy activities.
Greener Labour Movement	Develop 1-day educational for union & green activists. Network with labour/environment coalitions.	Identify key issue for joint action - e.g. Alberta tar sands. Greener labour conventions & other meetings. Promote video-conferencing.	Continue work on key issue(s).
Greener Communities	Establish criteria and procedures for supporting green campaigns outside OPSEU. Create criteria for local hero award.	Provide support to outside campaigns on request. Present the local hero award at convention	Provide support to outside campaigns on request. Present local hero award at convention.
Greener Lifestyles	Encourage members to take actions at home. Research opportunities for OPSEU Enterprises (e.g. group discounts)	Offer green products through OPSEU Enterprises.	Offer green products through OPSEU Enterprises.
Environmental Management System (EMS)	Develop EMS. Policy development - energy use, water, etc. Establish staff support.	Annual progress review. Policy development as required.	Ongoing review and adjustments.. Report to the OPSEU convention.