

Mobilizers prep for Dec. 10 action around next contract

We're getting ready to bargain.

The OPSEU collective agreement at the LCBO expires March 31, but OPSEU mobilizers are in the field already to talk to members. The union is gearing up for events across the province on Dec. 10.

That day marks 60 years since Canada signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Article 23(2) of the Declaration says that "Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work."



Vanda Klumper, chair of the LBED bargaining team, walked mobilizers through the bargaining timeline for this round.

in our stores. In logistics, the LCBO pays non-union agency temps \$10 an hour to do our union jobs. We even have wage tiers in a few permanent jobs.

"It's too early to tell what our exact demands will be this time around, but many LCBO practices are clearly

"Dec. 10 is a day to highlight what's wrong with the way the LCBO treats people," says Vanda Klumper, chair of the bargaining team for the OPSEU Liquor Board Employees Division (LBED).

"We have three-tier and sometimes four-tier wages

unfair," said Klumper. "Dec. 10 is the day we shine a spotlight on them."

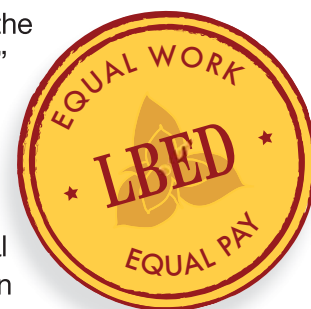
Final demand-setting meeting goes Nov. 22

Union demands for the 2009 contract talks will be set at the Final Demand-Setting Meeting Nov. 22 in Toronto. Elected LBED members from all locals will debate and vote on bargaining priorities.

"This year we've had a survey of all members, a pre-bargaining conference, and demand-setting meetings in every local," said Klumper. "Nov. 22 is the last step in our first democratic demand-setting."

The Dec. 10 events will focus a lot of attention on casual work at the LCBO, said Klumper.

"The rise of part-time, casual, low-wage jobs is not just an issue at the LCBO," she said. "It's a big concern for people in all kinds of poor-quality jobs. More and more workers can't afford to get their teeth fixed, let alone purchase a home or send their kids to college or university."



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Health and safety workshops a big hit

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Canadians support fairness at work

Canadians think part-time workers should be paid the same as full-timers doing the same job. And they think part-timers should have benefits, too.

That's the finding of a Canada-wide poll conducted in late September by Vector Research.

In the survey of 1,100 people, 72 per cent were in favour of a law to require employers to pay part-timers the same hourly rate as full-timers doing the same job. A whopping 81 per cent said a law to require employers to pay pro-rated benefits was "a good idea."

The survey asked several questions on part-time and "temp agency" work. The results are fascinating. Visit www.equalpay.ca and click on "Poll Results."

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"Ontario needs good jobs," Klumper said. "We think our message is going to resonate with a whole lot of people."

The Dec. 10 events do not mean the union is only concerned about casuals, Klumper said.

"As a bargaining team, we're committed to bargaining for all our members, not just one group," she said. "After we nail down our demands we'll be talking about a lot more issues."

Starting this week, eight OPSEU members (listed below) will be visiting locals, talking to members, and making plans for the Dec. 10 events. The mobilizers met in Toronto Oct. 29 for a training and planning session.

"We're looking for members to spread the word and volunteer a few hours on Dec. 10," said Klumper. "When your union calls, say hello!"



"Good jobs are disappearing in this province," OPSEU president Warren (Smokey) Thomas told the LBED mobilizers. "Employers are trying to get around paying decent wages by hiring more and more casual workers because they can get away with paying them less. If we don't stand up and say, 'This isn't right,' then we will see more and more full-time jobs disappear."



Judith Laird, of Local 163 in London, makes a point at the mobilizer training session.

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Health and safety workshops draw attention to workplace risks

LCBO workplaces are destined to become safer following a series of LBED health and safety workshops over the past six weeks that attracted dozens of local reps from every region of the province.

“Every LBED local could send up to five representatives to the workshop in their region and we pretty much drew the maximum number everywhere,” said OPSEU health and safety officer Terri Aversa, who organized and coordinated the workshops. Workshops were held in London, Toronto, Thunder Bay, Hamilton, North Bay and Kingston. The final workshop is scheduled for Whitby on Nov. 13.

The purpose of the workshops was to share information and knowledge about health and safety rights in LCBO workplaces, including the obligations of the employer and union to enforce those rights.

Aversa said the two leading health issues facing LBED workers are ergonomic hazards and repetitive strain injuries. Other risks examined by participants included asbestos and mould in the workplace.

Participants were also advised on the responsibilities the LCBO has in terms of recording and tracking injuries that occur in the workplace.



More than 20 LBED reps from OPSEU Region 2 met Oct. 16 in London to learn about health and safety rights in the workplace.

“I recall one member who told us she had suffered a workplace injury five years earlier but was not told that she should have reported it to the employer which would have allowed her to qualify for WSIB premiums,” Aversa said.

Members came away from the workshops with a much stronger understanding of the health and safety rights enjoyed by LBED members, and the obligations of the employer.

Workshop activities included case studies that required the participants to develop strategies on how to handle specific health and safety incidents in the workplace.



Skies might have been overcast and dark on Sept. 5 but that didn't stop dozens of OPSEU members from attending this year's annual BBQ hosted by Local 5109 representing LBED members at LCBO head office in Toronto. There were plenty of game prizes available.

WE'RE ALL IN THE SAME BOAT!
 Liquor Board Employees Division
Bargaining 2009

Got a question?
Call **OPSEUdirect** at **1-800-268-7376**

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EAP Hotline: 1-800-263-1401

The LCBO Employee Assistance Program is a confidential, hassle-free counseling service for eligible LCBO employees and their immediate families.

For assistance, please call 1-800-263-1401.

To find out more about the program, visit:

www.opseu.org/leb/eap

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The Echo is authorized for distribution by:



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