

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Season's Greetings!

It's hard to believe that another year has gone by and the holiday season is once again upon us. Many of us are looking forward to spending this special occasion celebrating with family and friends, enjoying special dinners with loads of desserts and possibly the occasional catnap on the couch in a warm home.

At the same time let's not forget that this time of year can be quite difficult for others. Too many people in Ontario this year will not be able to have a special dinner as they struggle to make ends meet. If you haven't done so already, consider a donation to your local food bank, toy drive or charity of choice, so that all people can share in the spirit of the season.

"In helping others, we shall help ourselves, for whatever good we give out completes the circle and comes back to us."

- Flora Edwards

On behalf of all executive members of the Liquor Board Employees Division of OPSEU I wish you and your families the best of this holiday season and a healthy and prosperous New Year!

In Solidarity

Denise Davis, Chair, LBED

Health & safety never takes a holiday break

As all of us who work at the LCBO know, the Christmas-New Year period is the busiest time of the year. We are all affected by the dramatic increase in customer traffic and increased sales volumes. From more cases being handled, shipped and stocked by our warehouses and retail stores to a higher demand on our head office and administrative support teams, we all feel the pressure at this time of year.

Did you know that almost one-third of accidents involve manual handling, which generally means lifting, pushing or physically transporting a load or cases? It is estimated that more than one million people in the workplace in Canada suffer from a job-related musculoskeletal disorder (MSD), including those injuries caused by manually handling products.

Working in an office is no exception to the risk of injury. Slips, trips and falls are common with clutter and cords around desks. As a result it is important to ensure that common areas such as corridors, kitchens, photocopy stations and stairways are kept free from obstruction to avoid injuries.

Always keep in the mind that health and safety never takes a vacation and we must be even more proactive when our workplaces are busy and hectic. Remember also to immediately report all health and safety issues to your supervisor and health and safety worker representative. Don't let unsafe issues go by the wayside.



Have you read Article 6.2 (d) of the Collective Agreement?

“Where an employee covered by section 6 (a)(i) is required to work before twelve (12) hours have elapsed since the completion of the employee’s previous shift, he/she shall be paid time and one-half (1 ½) for those hours that fall within the twelve (12) hour period”.

Ensure that you receive the proper payment if this situation arises.

Change to Employee Assistance Plan (EAP)

Effective Dec. 1, 2010 the LCBO’s Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) service provider has changed to Homewood Human Solutions.

The LCBO assured all employees in a letter dated Nov. 3, 2010 that the transition allows you to complete your counseling with our existing EAP provider.

Homewood Human Solutions can be reached at 1-800-663-1142 or online at www.humansolutions.ca, accessing the member area.

If you have any questions about the transition of the LCBO’s EAP Services, please contact Bonnie MacPhail, Acting Manager, of Corporate Health Services at 416-864-2558 or bonnie.macphail@lcbo.com

Invest in Ontario

There’s been a lot of talk lately about corporate tax cuts and the provincial wage freeze. Your union, OPSEU, has launched the “Invest in Ontario” campaign to educate all its members on how this will affect you and your families and what action we can take.

What is a wage freeze? A wage freeze is not a freeze at all; it’s a reduction in pay equal to the rate of inflation. So while your salaries remain the same the value of your income will decrease by 2 per cent each year for the next two years. For the average casual working at the LCBO this will mean a loss of \$3,000 over 5 years. For the average full-time worker it will amount to \$9,000 over five years. Add it up and for the 7,000 members of LBED alone this income loss will approach almost

\$2 million. That’s money coming directly out of our pockets!

So where is this money going? Health care? Paying down the deficit? Public education? No. It is going to the wealthiest corporations in our province, by way of income tax cuts. Every dollar lost by a public sector worker is directly “donated” to corporate profits in the form of tax cuts.

This affects every LBED member at every state of his or her employment. Whether you are close to retirement, or just starting your career, the wages lost in this two-year wage freeze will never be recovered. This will directly affect your pension, and the contribution you make to it.

Mobilizers for the “Invest in Ontario” campaign have been reaching out to our members, and the public, asking them to stand together to stop this before it becomes reality.

While we believe we are still protected for another two years due to our contract with the LCBO,

the risk is that the wage freeze may be put into law. If that happens, then the impact on us will be immediate. We must take action now before it’s too late.

What can you do? Visit www.stopthewagefreeze.ca and use the wage loss calculator. In a few easy mouse clicks the calculation will show exactly how much you and your family stand to lose from the wage freeze.

Here is the most important part. Click the “Take action now!” button. Complete the form and then hit Send. It will email your MPP directly and let them know that you do not support the corporate tax cuts! If we must take a wage freeze, let’s put the money back into public services and not into the pockets of some of the most profitable corporations in Ontario like the Royal Bank, Rogers Communications and Imperial Oil.

Lisa Foresta
Vice President, LBED Local 497
Region 4 Mobilizer



I'm a public servant and proud of it!

Imagine an Ontario with no teachers; your children are home schooled.

Image an Ontario where your own tap water is unsafe.

Imagine an Ontario where you can't call 911 in an emergency because there are not enough paramedics to operate our ambulances.

Imagine an Ontario where criminals walk free because our jails are overcrowded and we don't have enough correctional officers.

Imagine an Ontario where the government gets to decide when you get married because licenses take 6 months to get and not enough staff to handle the demand.

Imagine an Ontario where a loved one dies alone and afraid because we cut the budget in palliative care centres.

Imagine an Ontario where you are diagnosed with breast cancer but you can't get the treatments because we no longer have health coverage

Don't like that image? Then imagine this ...

Imagine an Ontario where the Government cares about its people and our public services.

Imagine an Ontario where teachers have small class sizes and an educational assistants so that our children can grow into the finest young people possible..

Imagine an Ontario where we feel safe when walking the streets.

Imagine an Ontario where everyone has a family doctor and access to health care.

Imagine an Ontario where a post-secondary education doesn't saddle our children with a "second mortgage."

Imagine an Ontario where we have affordable housing and no one living below the poverty line.

Imagine an Ontario that cares about our environment and helps protect it.

Imagine an Ontario with affordable and accessible daycare

Imagine an Ontario where we are again proud of our province.

That's the Ontario where I want to live in and there's no reason we shouldn't be able to achieve these goals.

In September I had the privilege of attending a training session with other labour activists associated with the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) – the umbrella organization representing provincial public sector workers from all the provinces.

The training was in support of a NUPGE campaign called Champions for Change. Essentially the campaign is asking all of us to think of the job we do and why it is so vitally important to our communities. In short, let's be proud of our work and the positive impact we make on the communities in which live our friends, family and fellow workers.

Don't stop there. Promote the great

job you do and tell people why you are proud of it.

Finally, the NUPGE campaign asks us to join the grassroots word-of-mouth campaign and fight for tax fairness across the country. Currently our taxation system favors the rich. Meanwhile, the middle and lower classes pay almost 20 per cent more in taxes. The system tax imbalance is getting worse every year and the income gap between the rich and the poor is growing.

We must speak up now and say: "This has got to stop. We Canadians will no longer take it".

Champions have been trained in areas all over the country and town hall meetings are planned to spread the message. Join the campaign when it comes to your community,

As part of our campaign demonstrations and days of action will be organized until our governments finally listens.

Follow us on our website www.alltogethernow.ca and please help make the campaign work by taking the time to talk to your family, friends and coworkers.

The time is now. We cannot wait. Stand up and take back your country. Stand up and declare: "I'm a public servant and I'm proud of it".

Felicia Fahey
Member
LBED Communications
& Education Committee



LBED activist Felicia Fahey joined mobilizers from across Canada at NUPGE's Champions for Change conference in Ottawa.

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Get on the list!

You can receive the Echo directly by e-mail. Just let us know how to reach you. Give us your secure e-mail address by calling the OPSEU Resource Centre: 1-800-268-7376 or 416-443-8888.

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