



Slap on the wrist for MOH in Whitby confidential files case

Memo to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care: You can't dump confidential mental health patient files in abandoned buildings!

During the 2002 OPS strike, Whitby Mental Health Centre staff from Local 331 found a nasty surprise in their rented strike headquarters.

Patient and personnel files had been unceremoniously dumped in buildings abandoned and sold when the facility was rebuilt in the mid-'90s.

President Joan Gates of Local 331, notified local police, the employer and the Information and

Privacy Commissioner (IPC) that members had found hundreds of boxes of unsecured files in a property now owned by a private landlord.

The IPC responded to OPSEU's complaint Sept. 5, finding that personal information was disclosed in a manner "not in compliance with the (*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*)."

It also found that records were "not disposed of in a secure manner."

The IPC said the Ministry must recover all documents remaining on the former WMH site, notify

everyone whose privacy was violated, train managers and staff on protecting privacy during a move, and make a full report to the Commissioner.

Contract meat inspectors ruled crown employees

The Ministry of Labour has ruled that per-diem or contract meat inspectors are indeed crown employees for the purposes of the Employment Standards Act (ESA.)

Jo-Anne O'Hara, a former contract meat inspector from Peterborough, has been relentless in her pursuit of justice and workplace health and safety for contract meat inspectors.

O'Hara received a letter from MOL saying "the 'per diem' meat inspectors are employees" of the crown under the ESA.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food has maintained that the "part-time" meat inspectors (who work up to 60 hours per week) were not employees, and were not entitled to employment rights including the right to belong to a union.

POSO depositors angry as RFP announced for selloff

The sale of the Province of Ontario Savings Office faces determined opposition from POSO customers. Yet the government persists. The employer announced to the staff that the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the sale would be released Sept. 25, with the sale set for early 2003.

Customer demonstrations have already taken place at branches in

Windsor, Seaforth, St. Mary's and Woodstock. More actions are planned, including Woodstock Sept. 12, and Guelph Sept. 18.

"This sale is a big loser for POSO customers, staff, and the citizens of Ontario. It is a mistake that will cost the Tories thousands of votes," said OPSEU President Leah Casselman, who will attend the Guelph event.