



# USW LOCAL 7884

## ON THE LINE

PH:250-  
865-  
2223

*February/2011*

### RESULTS OF STRIKE VOTE TAKEN AT ELKVIEW

- Total Number of Members: 698
- Total Number of People Voted: 620
- Votes in Favour: 609
- Votes Against: 11
- Number of Spoiled Ballots: 0
- % of Members in Favour of a Strike: 98.2 %



Members of United Steelworkers Local 9346 at the picket lines in front of one of the gates at Elkview Mine.

*Union workers at the Elkview mine near Sparwood are on strike over a new labour contract. The more than 700 members of United Steelworkers Local 9346 walked out Sunday at the open pit mine. Union members have been without a contract since October 31, and voted 98.2 per cent in favour of striking last week. Among the outstanding issues are the employer's contribution levels to the workers' retirement savings plan (RSP) and retiree benefits.*

*Presently the Company contributes 5% into an Employees RSP and the Employee contributes 4%, the Company has offered to increase the Company contribution from 5% to 7% which is far from being satisfactory to the Union.*

*Also the Medical Services Plan after retirement is presently only covered for 5 years, the Company has offered to increase this benefit too 10 years and the workers want MSP for life similar to other Teck operations. Other outstanding issues that the Company has not addressed are:*

- **Christmas Shutdown**
- *Sunset Clause (discipline removed after a period of time)*
- *Stat Pay for 10 and 12 hour shifts*
- *Dental Plan B improvements*
- *Retro-pay starting from November 1, 2010*
- *Improvements to Vacation time.*

*The Union's Local President, Chris Nand, said he and members of the Union's Bargaining Committee had met with Teck on Sunday January 30<sup>th</sup>, and the company had presented them a package that they were not happy with. "The Bargaining Committee was not happy with the package and refused to recommend it to members, he said. "It did not address the key issue which is the employer's contributions to RSPs and Retiree Benefits. "We are just too far apart on certain issues, and the company has not been willing to move on them." Local 9346 president Chris Nand says that the strong strike vote sends a clear message to the employer "that the members' needs have to be addressed."*

*If you require any other information on the strike at Elkview, call us at 250-865-2223, or send us an e-mail [uswlocal7884@telus.net](mailto:uswlocal7884@telus.net) you can also check out Local 9346 website at [uswlocal9346.com](http://uswlocal9346.com) and click on the Bargaining link.*

# ***LOCAL 7884***

## ***BARGAINING UPDATE***

*Your Local Union Bargaining Committee met on January 4<sup>th</sup> to set the protocol for our upcoming negotiations. We have sent out priority sheets to every member with enclosed return stamped envelopes, please have your priority sheets filled out and returned back to your Bargaining Committee, once we have the priority sheets in hand, we will then prepare our Bargaining proposals.*

*We will also have a Contract Action Team in place. The CAT committee will consist of 29 workers throughout the mine-site, two on each shift in mine operations, two on each shift in maintenance, process operations, process maintenance, warehouse, blasting crew, and the dry. The duties of the CAT committee will be to relay accurate and up to date information to their respective work groups as negotiations progress. Once we have the CAT committee in place, we will have their names posted so that you know who the CAT committee members are on your shift and in your respective work group. As negotiations progress, please do not listen to rumour's. Unless you hear the information directly from a CAT member or the Union Hall that's all it will be is a rumour, a mixture of truth and half truth passed around verbally. We are just getting started so please be patient and we will keep you informed as the Bargaining Process progresses.*



# ***Scheduling Your 2011 Vacation Entitlement***

*Vacation entitlements will be posted as soon as possible but no later than January 15th of each year. Employees may then indicate their preference in vacation dates to supervision up to and including February 15th.*

*After February 15th of each year, supervision will schedule vacations in accordance with Bargaining Unit seniority for those employees who have indicated their preference. Employees who did not indicate their preference will have their vacation periods scheduled by the Company.*

*The Company will post vacation schedules no later than April 15th of each year with a copy being sent to the Union. Once vacation lists have been posted, vacations can only be changed with the mutual consent of the employee and the Company except where a major business circumstance that could not have been reasonably anticipated by the Company requires the rescheduling of some or all of the vacations.*

***The Company will schedule vacations in 40-hour blocks for 5x2 and 48-hour blocks for 4x4 with the following exceptions:***

***(a) at the beginning and end of shutdowns;***

***(b) the final portion of vacation entitlement;***

***(c) other durations as requested by the employee and approved by the Company.***

*Upon receipt of proof of loss, the Company shall reimburse an employee for reservation deposits lost as a result of his vacation being rescheduled by the Company, provided the employee has made arrangements through his supervisor to have the vacation time off and makes the supervisor aware in writing at the time the vacation is rescheduled of the deposits the employee will lose as a result of the rescheduling.*

## *How does Vacation Scheduling Work?*

*Your vacation request must be submitted before February 15<sup>th</sup>, after February 15<sup>th</sup> and before April 15<sup>th</sup>, the Company will go to the most senior employee on the shift and approve their requested dates, and then move to the next most senior employee, then the next most senior employee, and so and so on.*

*Once the Company gets to a point where an employee has requested dates that the Company cannot approve because of manpower requirements( because there are already too many senior employees off who have already requested that period), the Company must then proceed no further down the seniority list until they have notified the affected employee of his dates being denied, which the employee will then have the opportunity to choose alternate dates that the company can accommodate. Once those vacation request dates have been completed, the Company then moves to the next senior employee and the same process takes place. It is done this way so that no junior employee is given their preference over a senior employee who is required to choose alternate dates.*

*Remember, if you do not put in your vacation request by February 15<sup>th</sup> you will be eliminated from this process and the Company can schedule your vacation wherever they like, as long as it does not conflict with an employee who has submitted their vacation request by February 15<sup>th</sup> and has been denied that period because of manpower requirements. Meaning you will get whatever dates that are left that the company schedules you for. Regular Vacation requests will have preference over Special Vacation and Special Vacation requests will have preference over Bank Time requests.*

*For the purpose of the Collective Agreement, a week of vacation shall consist of one (1) work period of four (4) working days (48 hours) plus four (4) days off, for the 4x4 schedule. And the work week shall consist of five (5) working days (40 hours) plus 2 days off, for the 5x2 schedule.*

- 1. An employee who has been in the service of the Company less than one (1) year prior to the first day of January 1<sup>st</sup> in any year shall be entitled to a vacation with pay as follows:*
  - If hired between January 1<sup>st</sup> and June 30<sup>th</sup> inclusive of the previous year will get two (2) weeks of vacation with pay.*
  - If hired between July 1<sup>st</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> inclusive of the previous year, will get one (1) week of vacation with pay.*

*If you have any difficulty scheduling your vacation or have any questions please contact the Union Hall by calling us at 865-2223, or e-mail [usw7884@telus.net](mailto:usw7884@telus.net).*

## **Sharp Objects Are Still being found in the Laundry**

*There have been many instances where the Dry workers have unloaded the dryers and been poked and jabbed and cut by objects left in workers clothing, specifically X-Acto knives where the knives have broken apart and the blades have been released into the machines. The dry people remove the laundry from the dryers with their hands and have been cut by these knife blades, so please have consideration for the Health & Safety of your Co-Worker's by making sure that your pockets have been emptied before throwing your clothes in for cleaning.*

## **Your Defined Benefit Pension Plan**

*You want to know how your Pension Plan works. How much you are entitled too?*

*Whether your 18 or 65 You Should know about your Pension*

***You need three (3) requirements to be able to retire unreduced.***

*1.) At least 55 years of age*

*2.) At least 30 years of Service*

*3.) Total age and service must total 88.*

*May 1, 2010 the base of the Pension is at \$63.75 times years of service, Pension Bridge is \$21.00 to a maximum of 30 years.*

***Examples:***

***30 years of service 58 Years of age***

***Pension Base \$63.75x30=\$1,912.50 + Pension Bridge \$21x30=\$630.00 = \$2542.50 month***

***33 years of Service 55 years old***

***Pension Base \$63.75x33= \$2103.75 + Pension Bridge 21x30=\$630.00= \$2,733.75month***

*There are many other factors to the Pension Plan that you should be aware of, including indexing ¾ rise of the CPI to a max of 3% based on \$1,500.00 of your Pension base and \$1,800.00 after the age of 65. Spousal death benefits: After you die 66 2/3rds of your pension for your spouse for the rest of their life. Loose the Bridge after 65.*

*You want to know how the Pension Plan works, what you can expect to receive. Contact the Hall set up an appointment.*

# **Retirement**

## **When is the Right Time?**

*I had one friend tell me “before you decide on early retirement, take a week off and watch daytime television; you may change your mind”. On the other side of the coin, I had another individual tell me, “We have no porch, no rocking chair - and no time. My biggest need is a calendar because there are so many things to do. Now I encourage people to retire - the younger the better.”*

*I don't think a week goes by that I don't have one of our members drop by and talk to me about retirement. As people reach that magic age, which for the most part is somewhere between 55 and 65 many of our members think about questions like, “When is the best time to retire?” It is no easy question to answer.*

*What do they say about the best of plans? We could have been working on a 20 year plan, carefully calculating how things would fall into place for us at 55, 58 or 60 only to fall victim to health problems. And yes size does matter, it takes money to retire and continue living the life style you have become accustomed to. People are living longer. That is why each and every time we go to the Bargaining table we work hard to grow our Pension in as many ways as possible.*

*For those that are young and just hired on at the mine, there may be some out there trying to convince you that Pensions are not important, you are better off making more money and investing it on your own. Don't believe it. Nothing is further from the truth. The type of Pension we have sets us apart from others, ours is a non-contributory Defined Benefit Pension Plan.*

*Google it; you will find out there is no Pension Plan better. The employer assumes the risk, not you or I. The reason employer's don't like it, and continue to try and convince you that you should give it up, is that it is expensive for them. We work at an operation, and for a company that is making Billions in profit each year off of the backs of those that produce their product; they can afford it. We deserve to be able to retire with dignity.*

*Going full circle, it is important, if you have yet to do so, to plan for your retirement. Not just finances but how you intend to use your time. Retiring early gives individuals a chance to pursue their hobbies, and as they say “enjoy the fruits of your labour.” Retiring later is a choice some will make because they have to, or they just enjoy what they do for a living. Whatever your decision, take your time to make it. I believe people should look at retirement as a gift. You decide when you should give yourself that gift.*

## *Attendance Review Program – A.R.P*

*Once again the Company is meeting with workers to discuss their attendance at work. Please read the following article which we published last summer. If you have any questions contact the Union Hall.*

*The company started to roll out it's "new" attendance review program and is proceeding with meetings with workers who the company feels have attendance problems. Actually, the attendance review program is not new at all. In the 1980's the company introduced an A.R.P program which the Union challenged. The arbitrator found that it was acceptable to have a program for attendance for "Non Culpable" absenteeism. Non culpable means that it is of no fault of the employee (IE sickness, injury, other types of leave).*

*In today's world many company's have these programs. It is also clear that most Union challenges against Attendance Review Programs are concentrated not on the policy itself but on how the company applies the policy in individual circumstances.*

*For example, if a worker was put on the ARP and their attendance does not improve, the company will have to make a decision on whether to discharge the worker or not. The company will be under careful scrutiny by an arbitrator on the following.*

- 1. Is the absenteeism excessive*
- 2. Is there any prognosis for improvement in the future?*
- 3. Has the employer met its obligation or duty to accommodate (Human Rights Act of British Columbia)?*

*The above is not a complete list of what the company's obligations are. Another example is that the Union has successfully negotiated benefits for workers who are absent from work for "non culpable reasons" (ie sickness accident benefits, long term disability benefits, holiday pay accrual for a period of absence up to 1 year, continuing seniority rights, continuing health benefit rights).*

*Certainly, the company cannot discharge a worker for accessing negotiated benefits. Only time will tell on what the company intends to do in each particular case. It is at that time, all legal challenges will be made by the Union and its members.*

*If you are put on the Attendance review program, please call the Union hall for a more in-depth Conversation, as all cases will be different.*

# *Grievance Report*

- *We had a number of people who missed work during the Christmas period. The employer requested Doctor's notes to verify their illness. Under the Collective Agreement the Company may request a Doctor's note on the qualifying days (day before and day after) and also if a worker is absent on a stat holiday. If a Doctor's note is not produced the employer may withhold any payment for the stat holiday. This is the only time under the provisions of the Collective Agreement that the employer may request a Doctor's note.*

*Under general law, an employer may request a Doctor's note to verify, an absence when the circumstances are suspicious. Examples would be, if a worker had previously asked for the shift off and was denied, if a worker was involved in other off work activities that were not in keeping with being ill.*

*The point is the employer does not have an unfettered right to request a doctor's note for every absence. The employer must have legitimate concerns to do so. If you phone in and the employer requests a Doctor's note for no legitimate reason, please contact the Union Hall immediately or your shift Union representative.*

- *We continue to have issues with people not being honest when the Company decides to investigate various matters. Again, the rule of thumb is "if you are in a hole, stop digging". The Company will go to great lengths to obtain information. Always in matters of potential discipline request a Shop Steward.*
- *We continue to have overtime issues around the mine-site and we are pursuing with these complaints. Last year we were approached on a number of occasions about overtime not being posted. The Collective Agreement is clear that the company must post (bulletin boards) on a regular basis a list of employees in the specific work group showing the occasions when an opportunity for overtime was made available. This allows for any worker to be able to check that they are unfairly being overlooked or left out of an overtime opportunity. If overtime is not being posted for your work group, please contact us immediately.*
- *We have a number of complaints from workers who are not being given a ride home or being told they cannot drive their personal vehicles home when they report to first-aid when they are ill. The Union will be pursuing both of these matters to arbitration. If you report to first-aid and are told that no ride will be provided to your home (or vehicle downtown) or you are told that you cannot drive your personal vehicle from the mine-site please contact the Union Hall immediately.*

- *Recently at an investigation meeting the Company advised the Union that they were going to use a recording device (tape recorder). It is the Company's position that on occasion they will use recording devices with everyone's knowledge and it is their right to do so. The Union does not agree and will be pursuing this matter to arbitration.*
- *We have had a number of people interested in becoming a Shop Steward. Presently we are committed to preparing for Bargaining and the various schools that go with that. We intend to run Shop Steward's schools once Bargaining is concluded. We thank all of you who have submitted your names so far. Please contact the Union Hall after Bargaining for dates of our next school.*

## **W.C.B. Report**

*Hearing complaints are quite common at the mine-site. A number of individuals have developed permanent hearing problems as of a result of exposure to occupational noise. As a worker, you must recognize the risk and use the various hearing protection's made available. It is also important to have your hearing checked on a regular basis so that if you are developing a hearing problem it can be addressed. Unfortunately, once you suffer from hearing loss, to often there is nothing that can be done to reverse the problem and you will need hearing aids.*

*Hearing aid's are not cheap and can cost several thousand dollars. If the WCB accepts your claim for hearing loss they will cover this cost. Of coarse in order to convince the WCB to accept your claim they will look for you to provide medical records and if you don't have them your claim may be denied. Also one has to take into account the loss to your quality of life if you develop a hearing problem. For a free appointment call 250-865-2772 and schedule a hearing test. It takes about 20-30 minutes and I am assured that it is painless. We note that it is recommended to have a hearing test once a year. For more information, please call the Union Hall.*



# COAL PRICES

*Coal generally comes in two flavours: metallurgical or coking coal is used primarily used in the production of coke, a key ingredient in the integrated steel mill process, while the more abundant thermal coal is lower in carbon content and calorific value, higher in moisture value and is the world's most abundant fossil fuel; it's used mainly to produce energy.*

*Metallurgical coal is primarily sold to steel mills and used in the integrated steel-making process. In steel production, two of the key raw ingredients are iron ore and coke. Coke is used to convert iron ore into molten iron. Coke is made by heating coking coal to about 2000°F (1100°C) in the absence of oxygen in a coke oven. The lack of oxygen prevents the coal from burning. Australia accounts for almost two-thirds of global exports of metallurgical coal and it is also the second-biggest exporter behind Indonesia of thermal coal. About 90 percent of Australia's coking coal exports come from Queensland state, hit by recent floods and now impacted by cyclone Yasi.*

*Already, two mines, Rio Tinto's Hail Creek mine and Xstrata Coal's Collinsville mine have been closed, and Xstrata was considering shutting its Newlands mine as well. Several coal export ports and rail lines have also been shut. The Queensland Resources Council estimated that 85 per cent of Queensland's coalmines were running at reduced capacity because of inundation following last month's floods.*

*Consultancy Wood Mackenzie says thermal coal spot prices into Europe not only broke through the \$100 a tonne barrier during January but also reached \$130 a tonne, while in the Pacific basin prices hit \$140 a tonne and could well exceed the \$197 a tonne reached during the Queensland floods in 2008. Production was expected to fall by 25-50 per cent in the March quarter even before cyclone Yasi hit.*

*Already India's unit of Standard & Poor's says that the shortage of Australian supply would push up coking coal prices by 15-20 per cent to between \$260 and \$270 a tonne in April, when steel producers renegotiated their contracts with miners.*

*The spot price of coking coal has already shot up by \$40 to \$50, to \$280 to \$290 a tonne. After peaking at \$383/tonne on January 20, 2011, spot hard coking-coal prices declined for over a week as dry weather in Queensland resulted in the resumption of contract shipments. The HCC price declined a total of 10.4 percent to \$343/tonne over that period. However, prices swiftly reversed direction earlier this week, increasing \$16/tonne (4.7 percent) this week.*

*A recent report by Risk.net cites Macquarie Securities' senior commodities analyst Max Layton, who estimates that "in total, approximately 4.05 million tonnes [of coal] have been lost from the major Queensland ports in December and the first two weeks of January compared with the May-November average. On top of this, we estimate 250,000 tonnes of coal have been lost through the Brisbane port. Taking standard port splits, the total comes to 3.3 million tonnes of metallurgical coal and 1 million tonnes of thermal lost so far – a decent amount, but not apocalyptic." However, Layton warns there has been a "massive drawdown of almost all available stocks in the chain, both at the ports and subsequently at the mines. This cannot continue forever."*

*"The upswing in price is primarily due to supply concerns, driven by cyclones off the east coast of Australia and to a lesser extent a labour strike at Teck Resources' second-largest metallurgical coal mine in Canada," RBC says, as miners at Teck's Elkview Coal struck to protect their Pension Plan and other Benefits.*

## **Teck coal strike Adds price pressure**

**Walkout at Elkview mine in B.C. follows production drops from weather, equipment failure and Australian flood**

*A strike at a coal mine owned by Teck Resources Ltd. TCK.B-T in southeastern British Columbia threatens to further tighten supply of the steel-making commodity and drive up prices already elevated by severe flooding in Australia.*

*About 700 unionized workers walked off the job late Sunday at Teck's Elkview open-pit mine, the Vancouver-based company's second largest coal operation, which represents about 20 per cent of its annual production.*

*Elkview, located near the town of Sparwood, B.C., represents an estimated 2 per cent of the world's supply of seaborne coal, which is in strong demand from fast-growing nations such as China as the country rapidly builds out its infrastructure.*

*The labour stoppage comes less than two weeks after Teck said coal sales would be lower this quarter due to a mix of bad weather and an equipment failure at one of its ports. It's the second time in six months that workers at one of Teck's six Canadian coal mines have gone on strike.*

*The previous strike at Teck's Coal Mountain mine lasted about six weeks, but with minimal impact on the company's overall production. Analysts say a long strike at Elkview could become a bigger problem in part because of the higher-quality coal at that mine.*

*"If it was an extended strike, it could have an effect on the seaborne market," said BMO Nesbitt Burns analyst Meredith Bandy.*

*That's on top of an already-tight market for coal after massive flooding in the Australian state of Queensland last month curbed production at about 80 per cent of the area's coal mines. Australia supplies about half of the metallurgical coal used to make steel.*

*The spot price of coal has been climbing since the floods, surpassing \$340 (U.S.) per tonne late last week, levels not seen since the last round of flooding in Australia and the commodities run-up in 2008.*

*At the Elkview mine in B.C., workers represented by United Steelworkers Local 9346 served strike notice on Thursday. They have been without a contract since Oct. 31. Teck owns 95 per cent of Elkview, with the remaining 5 per cent split between Japan's Nippon Steel Corp. and South Korean steel producer POSCO. The mine's current production capacity is approximately 5.5 million tonnes.*

*BMO estimates every week of lost production at the mine will mean a loss of two cents in earnings per share, "although in the event of an extended strike, higher pricing could potentially offset lost production."*

*Teck announced last month that it expects coal sales of five to 5.5 million tonnes in the first quarter, compared with 5.25 million for the same time last year. Annual sales are expected to be in the range of 24.5 to 25.5 million tonnes, which is down from previous analyst estimates of about 26 million.*

## **Recent Retiree's from the River**

*Nelson Taillon – Haulage Driver – 40.5 Years*  
*Marianne Mamchur – Janitorial Crew – 36 Years*  
*Jorg Ebenau – Electrician – 36 Years*  
*Dale Webber – Carpenter – 34 Years*  
*John Reese – Millwright – 33 years*  
*Jim Bonnell – Crane Operator – 33 Years*  
*Vui Vong – Heavy Duty Mechanic – 33 years*  
*Hans Sorenson – Electrician – 32 years*  
*Larry Olsen – Heavy Duty Mechanic – 32 Years*  
*Al Lougheed – Haulage Driver – 31 years*  
*Robert Wright – Haulage Driver – 30 Years*  
*Armand Lagace – Welder – 25 Years*

**Congratulations to All**

## *Dangerous Occurrences at the Mine-Site*

- *Operator was running a loaded man-bus from the pit to the dry when the lugs affixing the left rear dual wheels failed causing the wheels to dislodge and come off the hub. The operator maintained control and brought the bus safely to a stop.*
- *Operators were running waste to backfill spoil from 6 shovel in trucks # 27, 49, & 75; on the return leg, # 27 truck slid on the ramp below the switchback and operator stopped truck on the ramp and called to shut down the haul. Shortly after, unit # 49, descending the ramp noticed the first truck stopped; tried slowing and skidded avoiding the stopped truck and parked his unit further down the ramp. Unit # 75 following behind spotted the stopped trucks and began slowing down and then sliding; operator tried to control skid and the rear of his haul truck contacted the truck box of # 27 truck.*
- *A contractor was struck on the hard hat and upper back by a cat bar falling 25 feet from above. A second contractor was working overhead chipping ice from the boom of # 5 shovel when the cat bar slipped from his hands falling to the area below.*
- *Operator was running loaded haul truck from turnbull pit to spoil, while rounding a gradual corner truck began sliding, operator tried to control skid and truck travelled across the haul road and into the berm.*
- *Contractor was installing access doors in dryer fan area; while removing temporary tarp curtain a 10 foot x one inch in diameter steel rod dislodged from curtain eyelets and fell 60 feet to the ground; landing close too workers below.*
- *Operator was checking hydraulic oil in dozer, when cap was opened hot oil sprayed into the operators face causing him to step back and fall onto dozer tracks and then down to the ground between the blade and the tracks.*
- *Operator was operating drill water truck travelling to # 2 drill. When going up the ramp the truck began loosing traction; half way up the ramp the truck began sliding backwards and sideways. The truck slid sideways, water shifted and the truck rolled over at least one revolution stopping on its side.*
- *A 200 hp pump had an electrical failure when the 600 volt motor had a “dead ground” due to a bearing seizing; the failure caused the equipment to short and the energy dissipated through the end cover plate of the motor. As a result the cover was blown off a distance of approximately 25 feet nearly hitting an operator working in the area.*

- *Overhead door fell when chain broke while lifting door; the worker was in close proximity of the falling door and nearly got hit.*
- *During preparation of loading access area near sump, at south end of Henrietta pit, a KMC dozer operator backed too close to the edge and dozer slid back in an upright position into the sump. The cab partially flooded, the operator pushed the cab door open against a few feet of water and evacuated to high ground.*
- *Worker was working in the pump area of the load out paddle feeders. Worker had been walking across a section of catwalk, and had crossed this section four times without noticing any hazard or deficiencies. Worker was crossing this section of catwalk grating for the fifth time when the grating tilted vertical. Worker grabbed the guardrail to prevent herself from falling 30 feet to the floor below. A co-worker had been working on the ground below and felt material hit his hard hat; he looked up to see the worker hanging from the guardrail.*
- *Cancellation of a prepared blast pattern required the removal of 8 ½ rolls of XT line which amounts to approximately 80 lbs of explosives, from the blast pattern; due to the length of lines removed it created a large volume of now waste material requiring disposal. The blast foreman chose to fire the XT in the mines land fill site rather than store the material for disposal in compliance with the Mines Code. No notification or warning of the blast was given, so as to protect persons from exposure to dust, fumes and smoke.*
- *Man buss # 23 loaded with workers, was on its way to the mine-site for their scheduled shift. Approximately half way to the mine-site the buss noticed a 5 ton service truck coming towards him on his way to Elkford. The buss driver slowed his buss down and pulled as far to the right hand side of the road as possible. The contractor's 5 ton service truck went by the buss at a high rate of speed, smashing the driver's side mirror off the man buss and his service truck. The buss driver pulled over and stopped, the contractor never slowed, and continued on his way to Elkford.*
- *Cable crew was inserting a junction box into line that was servicing # 5 shovel in order to power up # 4 drill; after getting clearance to de-energize # 5 shovel, crew locked out switch house per procedure but, removed line side connection feeding switch house at 4160 volts instead of the load side.*

*Some of these Dangerous Occurrences could have easily resulted in serious injury or even death, so please be careful. Be aware of your surroundings and if you're unsure or hesitant about something stop, and re-assess your situation before you have an accident.*

# **HOPE FOR THE FUTURE**

*Finally there are signs that Behavior Based Safety programs, such as Courageous Leadership do not work. Companies will spend literally millions of dollars to place the blame for accidents on the worker. But now workplace BC is taking into account the human factors in accidents. This is what workers have been trying to get recognized since the 1930's. Now 80 years later, it is slowly being accepted.*

*Although "Behavior Based Safety" is being promoted as a modern concept, it actually originated in the 1930's and 1940's with the work of H. W. Heinrich at the Travelers Insurance Company. At that time the "research" that he did on thousands of insurance and injury/illness reports written by corporate supervisors, came to a conclusion that the workers, so-called "man failure" in the jargon of the time, was to be blamed for 88% of the industrial accidents.*

*Managers were delighted with Behavior Based Safety because it shifts responsibility for Health and Safety to the workers and does not require significant change in the work process, engineering design or management system. Behavior Based Safety is less expensive because management can use current workers to identify hazards rather than employing Health and Safety professionals.*

*However, if we analyze our workplaces, we will find that many hazards are present there. These hazards are the elements that actually pose a risk to the workers. Any worthwhile injury or illness prevention measure should start with a risk assessment of the workplace first. Hazards that can be found when working with chemicals, gases, live energies, heights, machines, and even the environment should be eliminated through engineering control and safeguards.*

*The following is an example of the proper way to look at the cause of an accident. And yes an accident not an incident. An accident is an unplanned series of events. An incident is just a politically correct phrase that sugar coats the truth. An Accident is an accident. This is a first of a series.*

## **CELL PHONE OR MDT- MESSAGE REMAINS THE SAME**

*Cell Phone usage at the Mine-Site is prohibited for workers, excluding some exceptions for management and certain contractors. The following outlines a discipline report that was given to a worker for using a cell phone at work. In part it states: “You admit that you have been using a cell phone at work. This despite the fact that you acknowledged using a cell phone at work is against company policy. We are not prepared to take the risk of having anyone operating equipment or in the environment where big equipment is operating of being distracted and causing a safety hazard. This risk is too high. Current research indicates that talking on a cell phone has the same effect on your abilities while operating as being impaired. Texting while driving is the root cause of countless deaths in motor vehicle accidents all over the world”.*

*It is also against company policy to be typing while operating equipment. It has been agreed to by the Occupational Health and Safety Committee that workers are not to type while equipment is in motion. Truck drivers should find a safe place to pull over, signal to show other drivers, come to a complete stop and set the park brake. Then you can send your message to pit control. If pit control sends you a message that requires more than a yes or no do not respond until you are safely stopped. If pit control sends a message to a shovel operator that cannot be answered with yes or no, to be safe you should also stop the shovel and set your brakes. Then type your response if you cannot answer on the radio. Use common sense if you cannot do it on the public roads, don't do it at work. Your car or truck weighs 4000 to 6000 lbs. A haul truck weighs over 1 million lbs when loaded. No message is so important as to require an answer that can't wait. Take the time to do it right.*

*There is no difference in either of the Safety messages regarding texting. It is against company policy and safety rules to text on your cell phone. And it is against company policy and safety rules to text on your Goic - MDT screen while operating your equipment. The rules and safety message remain the same as that outlined in the company's above noted discipline report. “We are not prepared to take the risk of having anyone operating equipment or in the environment where big equipment is operating of being distracted and causing a safety hazard. This risk is too high. Current research indicates that talking on a cell phone has the same effect on your abilities while operating as being impaired. Texting while driving is the root cause of countless deaths in motor vehicle accidents all over the world”.*

*To all those who continue to use their cell phones on site in spite of the Company rule; The company is now looking at the possibility of installing a tracking device in pit control to detect cell phone usage on site. So be careful because with this device installed once you turn your cell phone on, you will be detected.*

# *You're Employee Assistance Program*

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential and voluntary support service that can help you solve all kinds of problems and challenges in your life. You and your immediate family members (as defined in your employee benefit plan) can receive support over the telephone, in person, online, and through a variety of issue-based health and wellness resources.

## **IS THE SERVICE CONFIDENTIAL?**

Yes. Your EAP is completely confidential within the limits of the law. No one, including your employer, will ever know that you have used the service unless you choose to tell them.

## **HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?**

There is no cost to use your EAP. You can use the service for free. If you need more specialized or longer-term support, your EAP will help you select an appropriate specialist or community service that can provide assistance. While fees for these additional services are your responsibility, some may be covered by your provincial or organizational health plan.

## **HOW CAN THE SERVICE HELP?**

Your EAP offers immediate, confidential support for:

**Personal Well-Being:** Personal stress • Depression • Grief and loss • Anxiety • Aging and midlife issues • Life transitions • Mental health and well-being • Managing anger • Crisis situations • Traumatic experiences.

**Relationship Issues:** Communication • Building healthy relationships • Relationship conflict • Separation/divorce • Domestic abuse.

**Family Issues:** Parenting tots to teens • Blended families Family relationships • Communication Single parenting • Aging parent concerns.

**Addictions:** Alcohol • Drugs • Tobacco • Gambling • Other addictions • Post-recovery support.

**Workplace Challenges:** Workplace conflict • Performance worries • Career planning • Violence • Harassment • Work-life balance • Work-related stress.

**Immediate, confidential help is just a phone call away,  
toll-free, 24 hours a day, seven days a week:**

**1 800 387-4765 (TTY Service: 1-877 -338-0275)**

For online counselling visit: **[www.shepellfgi.com/ecounselling](http://www.shepellfgi.com/ecounselling)**

For online resources visit: **[www.shepellfgi.com](http://www.shepellfgi.com)**

Your Shepell.fgi EAP is a confidential service available to you and your family members as part of your company's health care benefit package. There is no cost to use the EAP.

# Union Representation: When Do I Need IT?

*Our Collective Agreement (CBA) allows for Union representation for certain circumstances. Firstly, Article 7.03 contemplates that a variety of disputes or complaints may arise from time to time. You should talk to your immediate supervisor and hopefully resolve the issue. If you cannot reach a resolve, a Shop Steward should be contacted as soon as possible so that they can provide advice and meet with a member of management to discuss the complaint or dispute.*

*When discipline is being contemplated by management, you have the right to Union representation; management must offer you the option of having a Shop Steward present. It has been our experience that all workers who face a possible disciplinary meeting should always exercise their right to representation. The Shop Steward is there to advocate on your behalf, they will have knowledge of similar incidents and the past practice.*

*They will make sure the issues are properly identified up front and have the opportunity to provide you guidance. Sometimes, the issues are clear and the Shop Steward will make sure that notes are taken to reflect the meetings discussions. In many cases, the Shop Steward will be able to provide argument and ask questions on matters that you did not think of.*

*The right to representation is one of the most important rights that you have so take full advantage of it, if you have any questions call us at the Union Hall. Stop by or send us an e-mail. 250-865-2223 or [usw7884@telus.net](mailto:usw7884@telus.net).*



# *C&F*

## *Restaurant*

*We Deliver Chinese and Western Food*

*(Highway 43 – 815 Golf Club – 250-865-2686)*

- *Lunch Buffet- \$11.99 –Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 11am – 2pm*
- *Dinner Buffet- \$14.99- Friday & Sunday – 5pm - 8pm*
- *Business Hours Tuesday thru Sunday 11am to 9.30pm – Closed on Mondays*



*Are you hungry after a hard day's work in the Coal Mines?*

*Stop in at the Elkford Golf Coarse and let us do the Cooking  
Best Chinese Food in the Elk Valley*