



UNION MATTERS

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 1

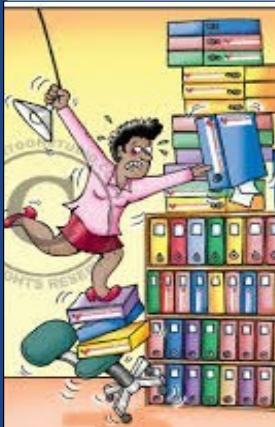
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

*My local works
because I participate*

Date and time of
General Membership
meetings are posted
at each worksite and
at www.cupe1169.ca

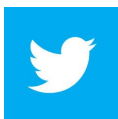
**"If you are the
proprietor or man-
aging director of a
company, you are
ultimately respon-
sible for the
health and safety
in all aspects of
the business."**

**~Forum of Private
Business~**



Always take the time to get
the right equipment and give
thought to where items are
stored.

Stay up to date with
union news on
Facebook and
Twitter



President's Podium

What is Workplace Violence?

It is an unfortunate reality that in today's society any employee can become a victim of workplace violence. There are steps that can be taken in preventing workplace violence and one of the first steps is understanding the concept. In fact, workplace violence has a much broader definition than most of us might realize.

As employees of the Calgary Public Library your safety and security in your workplace must be of vital importance to your overall well-being and every effort must be made by the employer to ensure you are not exposed to violence or the threat of violence while performing your everyday tasks. Potential acts or the threats of violence, including intimidation and harassment, that occur on Calgary Public Library property cannot be tolerated. Under the law every employee has the right to a safe and healthy working environment.

Were you aware that in Alberta you are protected under the law (Section 35 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act) for refusing all unsafe work if you believe there is an imminent danger to yourself or others caused by a work procedure at the worksite?

What are some examples of workplace violence?

- Aggressive contact with another person (co-worker or patron)
- Direct or veiled threats
- Intimidating or bullying actions
- Harassing or threatening comments made face to face or on the phone
- Stalking behaviour

How can workplace violence be prevented?

Physical security helps to prevent all forms of workplace violence and it is the single most important method of preventing the

physical or threatened assault of employees who work in public environments. The majority of criminals attempt to commit illegal acts where they feel they will not be detected or caught, or where there are no consequences for unacceptable behaviours. Security measures such as silent alarm systems, security cameras, preferably installed in plain view, and the presence of security guards are all good preventative measures.

To maintain a safe work environment staff must be trained to recognize early warning signs of imminent violence, while being guaranteed that their concerns will be respected and acted upon. It is the legal responsibility of the Calgary Public Library to investigate and take action to eliminate any perceived or potential dangers in the workplace.

The creation and implementation of policies which outline what to do in dangerous and threatening situations have been developed to protect both the employees and the patrons of the Calgary Public Library. However, it is critical that all staff be aware it is **not** their responsibility to intervene or interact with patrons who have demonstrated aggressive, threatening or violent behaviours towards staff or other patrons of the Calgary Public Library.

Your union has been contacted by members working at the W.R. Castell, Central Library who are afraid to go to work because they have been harassed and intimidated by offensive comments and gestures made by patrons. They have been verbally



assaulted and heckled while performing their assigned duties and when walking through public areas. These behaviours are not acceptable!

Of concern to your union are internal statistics that indicate an increase from 2014 to 2015 in incidents of a violent and aggressive nature, that have been filed by front line staff, which document the unacceptable and unsafe working conditions at the W.R. Castell, Central Library. Administrative determinations to decrease the number of security guards and then informing members of the bargaining unit that it will now be their responsibility to interact with potentially violent patrons is not a solution, it is not respectful, it is shameful!

Section 35 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act outlines how you can refuse unsafe work:

- Notify your manager that you are refusing work because you don't think it is safe, and state your reason for the refusal. *Do this through email and remember to cc your union.*

- Your manager must investigate and take action to eliminate the danger. There must be a written record of your notification, the investigation, and action taken. A copy of the report must be provided to you. *If your manager does not investigate and take action or provide you with a copy of the report, contact your union immediately.*

Remember, you cannot be disciplined or dismissed for complying with the legislation, according to Section 26 of the Act.

Workplace safety cannot be measured. It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that employees receive the safety benefits they are guaranteed under the law. It is the responsibility of the employees to follow all safety regulations and employer policies. Workplace safety free of the threat of violence must be taken seriously. This is non-negotiable.

*In solidarity,
Rh'ena Oake, President CUPE Local 1169
Calgary and Cochrane Public Library Workers*

Contract Corner: know your rights under the collective agreement



Health and Safety Committee – Article 22.01

The Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) shall be comprised of equal numbers of Employer and Union representatives. Union members shall be appointed by the Union to serve as representatives on the Joint Health and Safety Committee. One (1) of the Union representatives shall be appointed co-

chair for the Committee.

The Joint Health and Safety Committee shall identify health and safety problems in the workplace and recommend solutions.

The Joint Health and Safety Committee shall hold regularly scheduled meetings at least five (5) times in each calendar year.

What does this mean?

The JHSC has the responsibility to work together to identify and recommend solutions to worksite health and safety problems. This committee plays a critical role in providing effective communication be-

tween the workers and management. Employers and workers each have a responsibility to ensure workers are safe when they are at the worksite, inclusive of meeting all applicable legislation.

This committee does not make policy, rather, the recommendations and suggestions that originate from the committee are given careful consideration and when a critical concern has been identified an investigation will determine the best course of action.

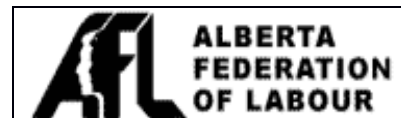
The JHSC minutes are posted on SharePoint and each employee is encouraged to avail themselves to what this committee is working on at any given time. Further responsibilities of the committee are to: identify unhealthy or unsafe environments; recommend corrective action; and ensure health and safety education programs are established and maintained.

It is important to be aware that every supervisor and manager is legally obligated to take reasonable steps to ensure health and safety for employees for whom they are directly responsible.

You can contact your JHSC at the following address: jhsc@calgarypubliclibrary.com

*Respectfully submitted by,
Terrill Budd, Chief Steward CUPE Local 1169*

CUPE LOCAL 1169 AFFILIATES



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For comments regarding the newsletter, contact the union office

