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Show Your Union Pride

Hats, hoodies and high viz safety shirtly currently available.
Limited inventory on the hoodies.
Please call (204) 786-8658 or come and see us at 244 Cree Crescent
We have currently on order, new t-shirts, (long and short sleeve) and
hoodies, (2 types) with our current logo, which should be in stock by
the end of June. Please check with the office for arrival.

We Offer Training In:
• Heavy Equipment • First Aid/CPR
• CSTS • PCST • Ground Disturbance
• WHMIS/TDG • H2S Alive • Basic Rigging
• GPS Training • Fall Protection • Crane Awareness
• Simulator Training • Class 7 Powered Lift Truck
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We Also Offer Skid Steer Training
For more information call us at 1-204-775-7059
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Meeting your current
and future training needs!
A Message from Business Manager Marc Lafond

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

As you all have heard in the news and media, Fort McMurray was hit very hard by the recent wildfires. I’m sure I can speak for everyone in saying that our hearts and prayers go out to those affected. There are 2,196 Operating Engineers Local 955 members who are currently evacuated from their homes, with over 100 of them losing their homes altogether. OE local 955 provided $500/family prepaid credit cards so that these members could purchase a few life essentials.

On the morning of May 6th, the IUOE Canadian Business Managers held a conference call to discuss this terrible tragedy, and to confer about potential assistance that could be provided. It was suggested, and agreed upon by all those in attendance, that every Local (if they could afford it) would contribute a $10/member donation to assist our IUOE brothers and sisters who have been affected.

I am honored to be able to say to you all that this Union’s table officers held an emergency meeting and unanimously agreed to donate $10.00 per member funded from our general revenue to provide assistance.

As Canadians, we pride ourselves on our generosity and kindness to those less fortunate. Not too long ago, when some of our IUOE Local 987 brothers and sisters suffered flood damage in 1997, the IUOE were there to assist us. It’s nice to be living in a country like ours where we are able to reciprocate this generosity to others at a time when they need us most. It’s the Canadian way of doing things, but more importantly it’s the UNION way of doing things - HELPING ONE ANOTHER.

In solidarity,

Marc Lafond
Business Manager
The new Federal Liberal government promised to rescind both Bill C-377 (union disclosure bill) and Bill C-525 (Federal union certification and de-certification) during the election last fall. The government has most recently tabled legislation in order to rescind these two bills. This will take some time to work itself through the system, however in the meantime, they will not be enforcing them.

The IUOE Local 987 have decided that all new individuals making application for membership shall have to complete the new “online” member orientation course prior to being initiated.

REMINDER: Last winter, we had a winner for the OE987 bursary (Amy Nepinak); however we did not receive an application by the deadline for the Gord Collins memorial bursary. There are a number of bursaries available through the OE987. I would encourage everyone to apply. It’s a real shame to not take advantage of these opportunities.
The 2014 Sun Life Canadian Unretirement Index shows signs of growing optimism in Canadian attitudes on retirement. The average expected age of retirement was 66—the lowest in four years. The survey also showed slight improvements in Canadians’ confidence in financing retirement expenses.

### Average expected retirement age

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>65</td>
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### Retirement readiness

- **38%** Satisfied with retirement savings in 2013 vs. **34%** in 2012
- **80%** Confident they can pay for basic living expenses in retirement in 2013 vs. **78%** in 2012
- **71%** Confident they can pay for medical expenses in retirement in 2013 vs. **69%** in 2012

### Retirement plans

- **8%** Plan to retire before the age of 60
- **27%** Plan to retire between the ages of 60 and 65

#### Plans for age 66:

- **28%** Fully retired
- **27%** Working full-time
- **29%** Working part-time

#### Of those who expect to work past the age of 65:

- **65%** Because I need to
  - **35%** Because I want to

Source: 2014 Sun Life Canadian Unretirement Index
Regional distribution of benefits highlights inequity in EI system

At the moment, “a few miles” will cost a worker more than a month in employment insurance benefits in Saskatchewan.

For example, someone living in Langham -- which falls into the Saskatoon EI zone -- must have worked 630 hours in the past year to be eligible for benefits. That person can then receive payments for up to 40 weeks. A “few miles north” in the northern Saskatchewan EI zone, a worker needs 210 fewer work hours over the same period to be eligible for five more weeks -- 45 weeks overall -- in benefits.

Income protection for a changing labour force

“Does this really make sense?” Carleton University Professor and Associate Dean of Economics Frances Woolley quips.

Woolley, who has done extensive research into the country’s EI system, believes regional zoning needs to be replaced by a system that better caters to the changing make-up of Canada’s labour force.

“If we accept the basic principle that people who struggle to find work should be entitled to more income protection through EI than other people, why use the regional unemployment rate as a proxy of ability to find work -- age, gender, ethnicity, education, occupation, experience, Aboriginal status, mental and physical health all have substantial effects on a person’s ability to find and keep a job,” she says.

“Indeed, age is used in some other countries as a basis for employment insurance eligibility. However no other country that I am aware of uses a regional zoning system.”

Woolley’s interview with rabble follows the latest announcement from the federal government to extend the EI benefit period in three regional zones (Edmonton, southern interior B.C., southern Saskatchewan). Eligible EI residents in these zones -- and 12 others already identified in the federal budget in March -- will be able to receive payments for up to 50 weeks in July, extending the maximum benefit period by five weeks. Both the Saskatchewan and Saskatoon EI zones were part of the 12 zones included in budgetary announcements; however, residents must wait until July for the benefit extension period to kick in. It will be retroactive to January last year.

Problems in the current system

Woolley also touches on problems with the use of local unemployment rates in the EI system formula. Eligibility for the system is based on the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in a zone in the past three months. Because it is a backwards-looking indicator, it can make it more difficult for people to qualify for employment insurance than it should be, she says.

Under the current system, someone who loses their job at the beginning of a recession will be eligible for fewer weeks of employment insurance benefits than someone who loses their job at the end of a recession, even though the first person is likely to be exposed to a period of high unemployment rate for longer. This is because the unemployment rate being used for that first person is based on the labour market conditions prior to the economic downturn, when unemployment would have been lower, Woolley says.

By the time the second person becomes unemployed and applies for EI benefits, the tough job conditions have eased and the economy improved, but because unemployment rates are based on the three previous months, this individual will likely need less work hours to qualify for EI and be eligible for benefits for longer. While there is some scope for adjustment, this exposes a major flaw in the system, Woolley says.
Diligent or Complacent Employee: Which describes you?

By Business Representative Suzanne Ducharme

In our everyday lives it’s natural to become complacent with safety, but on the job site, being complacent can have far reaching effects both personally and professionally. Above all else, the Operating Engineers are professionals in their field. Having said that, I would like to remind everyone not to take short cuts. Do your pre/post-shift walk arounds, FLRA, JSA and log books. The employer has expectations for a safe workplace, and they do not hesitate to discipline, up to, and including termination, for breach of policies and procedures. Read everything you sign your name on, especially the tool box talks. They house important information about the job site and reminders on safety requirements. Take matters into your own hands, and when returning from you RAP, read through the bulletin boards of items that you may have missed hearing about.

Another item of importance is social media. Manitoba Hydro has a very strict policy when posting pictures of their projects. You must have written permission to utilize those pictures. Again, the employer will not hesitate to terminate and discipline for posting pictures.

We as The Operating Engineers will rise above, and not give cause to the employer, or Manitoba Hydro to put our members under the microscope for our actions that are within our control. Know your job, and know your site requirements in all matters.

Wages vs. workers: How Canada’s minimum rates compare

Workers in Canada have fought for higher minimum wages for more than a century and a new wave of this campaign is percolating in workplaces across the country. Low-wage workers struggling to make ends meet and organizations advocating for a realistic living wage -- like the Fight for 15 movements -- have won successive wage increases despite fierce opposition from business owners and politicians. Opponents usually point to unmanageable labour costs and warn that increases in unemployment will be a result.

During the federal election, the NDP promised to increase the federal minimum wage to $15 per hour. The Liberals criticized Thomas Mulcair for making a promise that would not help most workers. They relied on Canadians’ lack of understanding of who regulates the minimum wage: Wal Mart cashiers, they argued, would not get a wage bump under Mulcair’s plan. But 100,000 workers would, including workers in the banking industry, telecommunications and the energy sector. Provincial and territorial governments are responsible for setting minimum wage rates. At the moment, New Brunswick has the lowest general adult minimum wage at $10.30 an hour. At $12.50 an hour, the Northwest Territories has the highest minimum wage rate.

In New Brunswick, minimum wage regulations do not cover domestic and live-in care workers, whereas those in Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut are generally entitled to the general adult minimum wage. The federal government directs minimum wage regulations for employees of corporations in federally regulated sectors such as banking, shipping, telecommunications and railway and road transportation. Currently, the federal minimum wage rate is the same as the general adult minimum wage in the province or territory a worker is based. About six per cent of Canadian employees work in federally regulated sectors.

Workers struggling to make ends meet are battling to find a solution to low-wage woes. The Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Association of Social Workers have expressed support for a guaranteed income as a way of improving the living and health standards and for families and workers on low wages. The Liberal Party of Quebec announced on Thursday during a cabinet shuffle that it supports a minimum guaranteed revenue, a statement that seems out-of-sync with the cuts of social programs and services that they have ushered in since 2014.
Manitoba Building Trades: Project Labour Agreements FAQ

During the 2016 provincial election campaign, both Brian Pallister, PC Manitoba Leader and Merit Manitoba (a non-union contractor’s association) have characterized project labour agreements (PLA) as “forced unionization”. This information is provided in response to questions we have been getting on this issue.

What is a PLA?

PLA’s have been around for decades for large public and private sector construction and maintenance projects in Manitoba and across Canada. Under a PLA, projects establish common wage and working conditions for large groups of contractors and a diverse, transient workforce.

Why are PLA’s needed?

PLA’s were introduced to prevent fly-by-night contractor bids on projects offering lower costs using poorly trained and unqualified labour. It was recognized that lowest price does not mean lowest overall cost or best value for the purchaser/customer. By requiring all contractors to pay prevailing wages under one collective agreement, contractors are selected for productivity and quality, not just price.

PLA’s also play a key role in increasing the participation of Manitoba workers on Manitoba projects. That means more of the wages from public projects paid to workers stay in Manitoba. PLA’s are also effective in engaging Aboriginal workers as was the case during the Floodway Expansion Project.

Do PLA’s prevent some contractors from bidding on projects?

No. Any contractor, small or large, union or non-union, is free to bid for work. If they win a tender, they will be required to pay fair wages to their workers and pay a fair share of the cost of training workers.

Do PLA’s increase project costs?

No. In fact PLA’s consistently deliver higher value to project owners. Unions and unionized contractors partner to invest heavily in training and skill development. This investment delivers the most highly skilled and productive labour force in the industry? Productivity advantages translate into lower costs.

Who introduced PLA’s to Manitoba?

Conservative Premiere Duff Roblin, one of Manitoba’s most respected leaders, introduced PLA’s for large Manitoba infrastructure projects including the construction of the floodway.

Who trains skilled trade and construction workers?

There are only two main providers of trades training; publically funded community colleges and union funded training centers. Unions partner with their contractors and make significant investments in leading edge training that meets industry demands. In fact, these partnerships have resulted in five jointly funded union training centres in Manitoba. By comparison, our non-union competitors make no contributions to workforce development.
Why is this investment in training important?
Unlike other professions, the bulk of skilled trades and construction training is delivered in the field. The workplace is a tradesperson’s classroom. Unions and their partner contractor community help train the workforce that safely and efficiently builds Manitoba every day. Without this training, Manitoba would not have a skilled workforce required to build essential infrastructure in the future. While the unionized construction industry contributes to this training, the non-unionized industry passes the buck to community colleges and the unionized construction industry.

Are union workplaces safer?
Yes. A 2015 report published in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine reviewed workplace data for 40,000 contractors in Ontario (2006-2012). The study found that union workers are 29% less likely to suffer a critical injury at work and 17% less likely to suffer muscular/skeletal injuries. This represents very significant savings; both in financial and human terms.

Why does the non-union construction industry oppose PLA’s?
The non-union sector contributes virtually nothing towards workforce development. By shifting these costs to the public purse and unions, the non-union sector drives down workers’ wages. PLA’s prevent non-union firms from using workers from other jurisdictions, temporary foreign workers and unqualified workers on Manitoba projects.

PLA’s require them to pay their fair share of training costs and fair wages to their workers. This disrupts their business model of maximizing short-term profits while off loading training and development costs to either the public sector or the unionized construction industry.

Therefore, the non-union sector opposes PLA’s and advocates for a free-for-all system that maximizes its short-term profits while enjoying the benefits of public and union investments in the industry.

For more information, please contact us at:

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News From OETIM
Betty Lou Doerksen - Executive Director

OETIM is pleased to present the newest addition to our fleet:

Potain Tower Crane

Installation began at 244 Cree Crescent in mid April and was completed on May 14, 2016. This was a huge endeavour for OETIM and the Union, but it is, and will continue to be, a definite asset to the members and for future training. Seeing it from afar is quite impressive, and I would suggest you drive by and have a look. Or even better, attend the Union picnic for an up close look. Tower Crane classes have begun, and will continue to be offered at the request of Red River College and Apprenticeship Manitoba.

2016 began with classes in Heavy Equipment Operation starting January 18, 2016. We are currently running our third course of the year. With summer projects beginning infrastructure work, interest in heavy equipment training remains strong.

Members continue to take the on-line safety courses, and we now offer Basic Fall Protection as well as many other on-line courses. Zoom Boom, Skid Steer, Rigging, Crane Awareness and First Aid/CPR are offered every few months, but if training is needed sooner, we will make every effort to accommodate. We now also offer 3D GPS training on the dozer and excavator. If you are interested in taking any of these courses, and they are not scheduled, please call and have your name put on the wait list. For those members needing training ASAP, please remember that to be reimbursed by the Trade Improvement Trust Fund for training, you must receive prior approval, pay into the TITF, and be a member in good standing.

Check your safety tickets and make sure you are Always Ready for a call out.
Throughout my time spent at the Operating Engineers Union Local 987 I have learned many tricks that the office members have up their sleeves to be used at the right moment. The passion that Marc Lafond, Business Manager and Financial Secretary has, is evident through his work ethic and dedication to the OE987 Union. I have seen Marc support and encourage his colleagues in their work to further the interests of the labour movement as well as the members of OE987. These are the interests he has at heart.

Within the last seven months, I’ve only had the opportunity to meet a few of the members of OE987. This being said, I can confidently say that this collective group of workers is very fortunate to have such a great group of staff working at their office. I have become passionate about labour issues in the course of my studies at school and I can honestly say that my experience in these last seven months has not only strengthened my interest in these issues but has also motivated me to try to make a difference within the community that I work with.

The labour movement began and was developed by workers who came together and advocated collectively for themselves as well as their fellow workers. The success of these struggles can be seen in the many benefits that have been achieved and entrenched in the various collective agreements. Workers of the past have fought for and won benefits that are that are enjoyed by today’s workers. You can see this same spirit in the work of OE Local 987 where they continue to advocate for workers’ rights and to achieve stronger contractual language. A clear example of this is the fight for job security.

As the Union representatives achieve better benefits, the membership of the Union continues to grow. Marc and the staff are not satisfied to just fight for the current members’ rights, they also spend their days organizing workers and ensuring that the membership grows. The Union has a department that is responsible for organizing new members and is quite successful in this regard. The time spent by the staff travelling to rural communities and talking to workers locally has resulted in increased awareness about the Union. This, in turn, creates a growth in the union membership. Again, this is a testimony to the hard work done by the Union representatives, the passion they have for their work and their genuine desire to bring strength and happiness to the members they represent.

I consider myself extremely lucky to be a part of such an organization for the short time I spent with the union and will always stand by the commitment and leadership that the Operating Engineers of Manitoba Local 987 exemplifies. It is important for each member to continue to make the time to get involved in the union, to advocate for fairness and raise the bar not only for themselves, but all members within the workplace.
Congratulations to our members for having attained 30 years and over membership in the Operating Engineers of MB Local 987!

In Memoriam
Ed Lochert, Local 987C
deceased June 1, 2015
Albert Pakay, Local 987
deceased February 17, 2016
Jason Sinclair, Local 987
deceased November 23, 2015
Ragnheithur Heidi Thomasson, Local 987A
deceased December 20, 2016

Local 987 wishes to honour and thank our members who have recently passed away

Dues Notices
Please be advised that Out-of-Work dues are $28.00/month effective January 1, 2016

Out-of-Work Dues for retirees and people who are sick are now $16.00/month. Please call our office at (204) 786-8658 to receive more information in order to advise us and to see if this would apply to you.

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

SHOW YOUR UNION PRIDE AND SHARE PHOTOS OF YOU AND YOUR CO-WORKERS ON THE JOB!

Congratulations to our members for having attained 30 years and over membership in the Operating Engineers of MB Local 987!

Belinda Blanchard – 987
Bus Rep, Operating Engineers/formerly Misericordia

Des Booker – 987A – HSC

Brent Boughton – 987A – HSC

Ned Funk – 987A – HSC

Donna Chuipka – 987D – Winnipegosis & District Health Centre

Branko Carevic – 987A – HSC

Rocky Spencer – 987A – HSC

Charlie Motkaluk – 987A – formerly Misericordia Health Centre

Kevin McElgunn – 987A – Misericordia Health Centre

Claude Marion – 987A – Parmalat Dairy

Doug Mansell – 987 – Pipeliner

Randy Hallett – 987 – Heavy equipment operator/pipeliner

Return Undeliverable Addresses To:
OPERATING ENGINEERS OF MANITOBA LOCAL 987
244 CREE CRESCENT
WINNIPEG MB R3J 3W1

PM# 40042037