

ONE VOICE

Information Bulletin for Members of United
Food and Commercial Workers Local 401

**SPRING AND SUMMER
SHOWDOWNS!**



**UNION
POWER!**

**... THINGS WILL HEAT UP
IN JUNE, JULY, AND
AUGUST!**

Inside:

Cargill Doesn't
Care

FreshCo Fear

Putting Pressure
on Superstore



A message from your union's leadership

Alberta's essential workers have all been greatly impacted by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Whether they work in grocery stores, meatpacking plants, Oil Sands camps, health care facilities, or anywhere else, we've all taken risks and faced challenges that have left us drained and deflated.

While others were told to "stay home," we were called "essential" and "heroes" -- and our members rose to the occasion.

Local 401 workers have redefined heroism by ensuring Albertans continue to have access to the goods and services on which they have relied over the pandemic. And while it feels good to be recognized, nice words only go so far.

Calling people "heroes" is one thing, but getting the respect, pay, and protections you deserve at work is quite another. Unfortunately, getting anything more than lip-service out of most employers has proven more difficult than we might have hoped.

But that is what your union is here to fight for. And that is the fight we've been having on behalf of our members from day one of this pandemic. Our members have been there for Albertans throughout these unprecedented times. And while government officials and employers have consistently failed to protect them, we have been pushing for safety and to have your sacrifices and contributions properly acknowledged.

We have stood strong in the face of some of the worst situations faced by essential workers during this pandemic, whether it was the outbreaks at Cargill, Olymel, and many of the camps up North or the strain faced by union members in overcrowded grocery store and under-resourced health care facilities, we have worked together to change those situations and improve the working conditions of UFCW Local 401 members. Our lives are better, safer, and fairer when we stick together. That's what participating in a union is all about, whether you are an LPN in Medicine Hat, a meatpacking worker in Red Deer, or a grocery store cashier in Grande Prairie.

Our strength comes from our solidarity, and together we have won meaningful victories across the province.

While workers in industries across Canada have faced wage rollbacks in recent years, UFCW Local 41 members have negotiated contracts that have provided reasonable gains, improved on benefits that enhance their lives, and broken new ground on crucial contract language to ensure dignity, respect, and safety in their workplaces.

At Olymel, the courageous actions of our union members stopped the deadly trajectory of the Coronavirus in its tracks, helping to avoid further preventable deaths even when public health officials and the Company failed to act. Our advocacy provided meatpacking workers with prioritized access to safe vaccination, and we are working to extend that access to all of our members.

Our tireless efforts around pandemic pay resulted in the Critical Worker Benefit for essential workers in Alberta. And while we are gratified to see action on the arguments we put forward, we continue working to address the unfair eligibility requirements of the program and ensure the contributions of all essential workers are recognized and provided even more substantial compensation.

It has been a year unlike any other. And in many ways, the challenges we face are growing as we enter the second year of this pandemic characterized by frightening new variants. However, throughout it all, the courage and camaraderie exhibited by Local 401 union members have shown that we can make it through these difficult times and emerge stronger than ever, ready to build a bigger, better, and brighter future.

In solidarity,

Thomas Hesse, President

Richelle Stewart, Secretary Treasurer

Cargill Doesn't Care

Cargill union members are headed into an important round of negotiations with the Employer.

After the tragic COVID outbreak at the Plant in 2020 and mounting concern over the current outbreak, it is clear that Cargill needs to do right by its employees at the bargaining table and keep them safe.

Cargill Inc. is one of America's largest private companies with revenues of **more than \$100 billion** in 2020. Founded in 1865, Cargill focuses on food processing and production.

The company is owned by the Cargill-MacMillan family, ranked the fourth richest family in America by both Forbes and Business Insider. **23 members of the family own 88% of Cargill Inc. and 14 Cargill-MacMillan family members are billionaires - the most of any family in the world.** It is this ultra-rich American family that Cargill union members are going up against in negotiations as they seek justice through a fair contract that recognizes their sacrifices and contributions and keeps them safe.

And while Cargill may have near-limitless resources, Cargill workers have the power of truth and the weight of their story behind them. Publicly mismanaging the 2020 outbreak left Cargill Inc. with a badly damaged reputation and an acute sensitivity to critical media and attention. As Cargill workers bargain for justice by, in part, telling their stories, the Company will be forced to atone for its sins by providing employees with significant victories at the bargaining table.



Canadian Labour Congress
Congrès du travail du Canada

The Canadian Labour Congress is the largest labour organization in Canada, bringing together dozens of national and international unions, provincial and territorial federations of labour and community-based labour councils to represent more than 3 million workers across the country.

Canada's labour movement has a long history of improving workers' everyday lives. We fought for and won many of the rights enjoyed by all workers today - minimum wages, overtime pay, workplace safety standards, maternity and parental leave, vacation pay, and protection from discrimination and harassment.

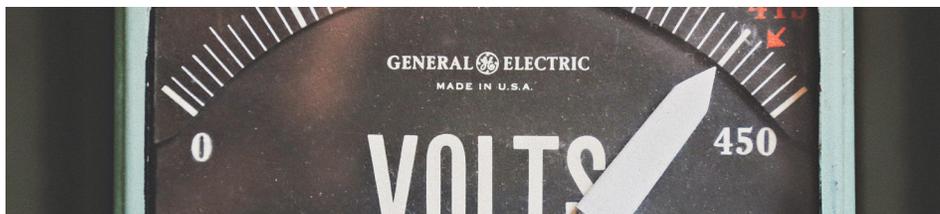
Today unions work hard every day to protect the rights we've won, and to win new rights for all workers. We are social unions, focused not just on the gains we can make in bargaining, but the gains we can make for society as a whole, like fighting to end child labour, or to win workers compensation, public pensions and social programs that help people keep working, like health care and child care.

Every three years, delegates to the CLC Convention elect four Officers to fill the executive positions of: President, Secretary-Treasurer, and two Executive Vice-Presidents.

These Officers work closely with the elected representatives of the Canadian Council to fulfill the mandate adopted by convention delegates.

The 29th Constitutional Convention of the Canadian Labour Congress will be held virtually from Wednesday, June 16 to Friday, June 18, 2021, using an exciting, interactive, and secure online platform.

If you are interested in attending the Convention, let your union know by sending us an email at: ufcw@ufcw401.ab.ca



Putting More Pressure On Superstore To Act!

Superstore union members have been bargaining with Loblaws for some time now. And while there was good progress earlier, the Bargaining Committee recognizes it's time to pour on the pressure.

Progress lately has been very slow and Loblaws is dragging its heels on important issues like scheduling.

Superstore union members have made many sacrifices and contributions over the course of the pandemic that have resulted in significant success for Superstore. In November 2020, Loblaws reported an increase in sales of almost 10% and said that it, "continued with its 2020 winning streak."

That winning streak wouldn't happen without the hard work of Superstore union members. But the Company also indicated it would not be bringing back pandemic pay premiums and is failing to reward the vital role that Superstore workers have played in their success at the bargaining table.

It's time to turn up the pressure and demand that Superstore address important workplace issues!

Your union wants you to participate in negotiations and hear what the Company is saying at the bargaining table. It's easy to watch as all bargaining is taking place online due to COVID. Let the Company know you're watching what they say and do and that you will hold them accountable. **Email your Union Labour Relations Office to get involved!**



**NEW
COURSE**

**A special invitation from President
Thomas Hesse and Secretary Treasurer
Richelle Stewart!**



REPRESENTATION AND

LEADERSHIP

DETAILS: GOUNION.CA

IN HARD TIMES

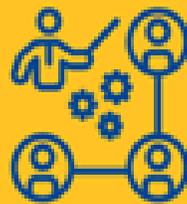
**Apply
today!**



**Apply using
the code
below or at
gounion.ca**

REPRESENTATION & LEADERSHIP IN HARD TIMES

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this course is **ONLY** offered **ONLINE** at this time.



You must have access for the entire two days to a laptop or desktop computer in order to participate.



Safeway Workers Still In Limbo

"It really is hard to imagine how Safeway could have screwed this up worse," says UFCW Local 401 President Thomas Hesse. "To put their employees through something like this during a global pandemic is just beyond the pale."

On January 25, 2021, Safeway announced its intention to convert six Alberta Safeway stores into FreshCo's. That's about as much straightforward information as Safeway union members have gotten from the Company about the decision since.

Knowing a decision like this was coming, the Safeway Bargaining Committee negotiated provisions into the new Safeway contract to give Safeway union members options in the face of a conversion. Instead of living up to that agreement, Safeway has rushed the process and only succeeded in confusing Safeway union members.

We've been fighting for Safeway union members' rights from the start.

UFCW Local 401 immediately dispatched additional representatives and Walking Stewards to the converting stores to ensure that



mounting media scrutiny, the Company was forced to announce a closure ten days later. At the time, public health officials were still describing the workplace as safe, even with two deaths then lined to the outbreak (a total of four would be discovered). UFCW Local 401 consistently pushed for the prioritization of worker input in determining how the outbreak became so widespread, as well as what was required to make it safe for reopening. We have also fought to address the hardship Olymel workers faced during the temporary closure.

Thankfully, the courageous action of our Olymel union members, combined with the decisive action from UFCW Local 401, halted the deadly trajectory of the virus and brought the active cases at the Plant down to zero during the weekend of March 20, 2021.

However, new cases have since surfaced and Olymel union members know that they must remain vigilant to ensure the safety of their workplace. Union representatives will continue working to support and meet the needs of Olymel workers as the situation at the Plant unfolds.

"Olymel is on probation," says Union President Thomas Hesse. "They failed to keep their workers safe. And so while we're happy that things have gotten better, we will be working with our members to keep a close eye on the Plant to ensure no one else gets sick."

affected members were supported. We have worked with members to understand their options and give them the information to make the best decisions for them and their families.

The situation is challenging because Safeway union members are trying to assess their options without all of the necessary information. And the Company has been outright negligent in providing it.



Additionally, it is not just members in converting stores who might be affected. As converting stores have members bump out, Safeway workers in other stores wonder whether those bumping in will affect their employment. **Your union is working to look out for both groups.**

A grievance was filed to address the Company's failure to ensure an orderly and efficient process around the conversions. **The grievance identifies 17 ways the Company failed to live up to its obligations.** At the same time, union lawyers have launched a legal challenge against what we believe is an unfair decision by an Alberta arbitrator around the agreement at new FreshCo's.

Your union will continue exploring every option to fight for our Safeway members' rights at converting and non-converting stores as this process unfolds.

Olymel On Probation...

The outbreak at Olymel was heartbreaking and tragic. It was also preventable had the Company and public health officials been doing their jobs. Shortly after learning about the outbreak, UFCW Local 401 began reaching out to our members to gauge how they were feeling and determine a sensible response. Olymel members overwhelmingly indicated that they were scared and wanted to see the Plant temporarily closed.

As an open and democratic union, we do what our members tell us to do. So on February 5, we publicly called for a temporary closure.

After sustained pressure from Olymel union members and in the face of mounting media scrutiny, the Company was forced to announce a closure ten days later. At the time, public health officials were still describing the workplace as safe, even with two deaths then lined to the outbreak (a total of four would be discovered). UFCW Local 401 consistently pushed for the prioritization of worker input in determining how the outbreak became so widespread, as well as what was required to make it safe for reopening. We have also fought to address the hardship Olymel workers faced during the temporary closure.



<https://unionsavings.ca>

UNION SAVINGS

Exclusive Discounts for Union Members,
Retirees and their Families

Union Savings has more than 140 participating unions representing national, provincial and local unions, ranging from large private and public sector unions to regional unions and small associations.

With almost two million individual members, Union Savings leverages its strength in numbers to negotiate savings and discounts that are exclusive to Canadian union members, retirees and their families.

Contact:

1-800-418-2990

info@unionsavings.ca



If you are a UFCW Local 401 member, we have negotiated a series of discounts on valuable goods and services to which you have exclusive access as a union member. To see those discounts go to <https://unionsavings.ca>

Not-For-Profit

Union Run

Member Focused

Workers' Compensation experts ready to help you!

The Workers' Compensation Board exists to provide support to workers who are injured on the job. If you become unable to work due to an accident at your job, Workers' Compensation can help provide you with income or return to work under modified duties.

But like any support, you need to know if you're eligible and then fill out forms to make a claim. This process can be challenging and confusing.

Your union's WCB Department can help make sure you get the support you deserve!

In 2019-2020, our WCB Advocates helped ensure Local 401 members received more than \$470,000 in WCB benefits. They also helped union members change unacceptable decisions by WCB and secured support for workers affected by COVID-19 outbreaks.

If you need help, contact your Union Labour Relations Officer to see if our WCB experts can make a claim for you!



A Strong Message Makes Civeo Listen

Bargaining in the camps has been challenging to say the least. Civeo has given union members in Fort McMurray plenty to be frustrated about.



For months, Civeo union members have been calling on the Company to use the federal funding it received to provide sorely needed hazard pay and avoid unnecessary layoffs. The Company's own documents indicate that it has benefited from more than \$6 million in federal subsidies. But most Civeo workers have yet to see a dime of that money. Then, Civeo canceled a series of bargaining dates for no other reason than its team failed to properly prepare.

Civeo union members did their part to prepare for negotiations in 2021. All Bargaining Committee members were booked off, up-to-speed on the status of bargaining, and prepared to have a productive discussion.

Unfortunately, the same could not be said for the Company. Civeo contacted the union to let us know that they could not even manage to coordinate their committee members' schedules. As a result of their disorganization, they made the one-sided decision to cancel negotiations. Needless to say, this development further frustrated Civeo workers who were anxious to discuss their priorities at the bargaining table.

Tired of Civeo's excuses, union members decided to send a strong message by responding to a survey about whether they would be willing to vote yes in a strike vote. An overwhelming 97% of Civeo union members voted yes in that they would be willing to support a strike if the Company did not get its act together and show up ready to resolve important issues at the bargaining table.

Did Civeo get the message? You bet they did!

Civeo got back to the bargaining table and union members were able to secure agreements on issues like recall, janitorial work, and benefits. There is lots left to discuss but this just goes to show that when we speak with a united and strong voice, UFCW Local 401 members can achieve results!

WINNING FOR WORKERS

Unions are about members working together to win victories that improve their lives.

Everyday, we fight for you by advancing grievances, negotiating settlements, pursuing WCB claims, and looking out for your best interests.

Call us if you need help with your grievance: 1-800-GO-UNION!

Working together, 401 put \$3.5 million dollars of victories into our members pockets in the last number of months!

The Alberta Federation of Labour *Who are they and why should you care?*

The Alberta Federation of Labour is a voluntary association of unions and employee organizations that have banded together to achieve common goals. Since 1912, the Federation has fought hard to improve conditions for working people, their families and their communities.

In its early years, the AFL was active in the struggle for a minimum wage and the reduction of work time to a standard 40-hour week. Today, the Federation continues its tradition of speaking out on the issues that matter most to workers.

The AFL is currently made up of more than 25 unions from both the public and private sectors. Taken together, these unions represent nearly 175,000 workers from across the province. The AFL's priorities are set at membership conventions held every two years. Every union affiliated to the Federation is entitled to send delegates.

The unions affiliated to the AFL have always been able to identify common priorities and goals — and they accomplish more as a team than they would if they acted separately. The logic behind the AFL is the same logic that underlies all unions: **Working people are stronger when they stand together than when they stand alone.**



Gil McGowan, President of the AFL



When we work together, we can win victories and improve each others' lives.

Here are some UFCW Local 401 workplaces that have won better contracts by **bargaining strong together** over the past six months:



AGROPUR



COMPASS
GROUP