



### Quick Update for March 3rd, 2023

**Snow** – The last few weeks that seems to be the new 4 letter word for us. Last week we had a very interesting snow event that closed down schools on Thursday. Friday was hell on wheels for anyone on day shift. We had quite a few injuries from slips and falls and it wasn't just us getting hurt – it was everyone. Co-workers from other labor groups, students, parents and caregivers. Then Monday night we got slammed again with more gross stuff falling from the sky, making getting home difficult for anyone on the afternoon shift. There's been lots of complaints, lots of questions and comments on how things can be done better moving forward. Here's a few things I can share with you....

**Why weren't we called in last Thursday to clean up before Friday?** Turns out that the last time we had a snow event and supervisors started making calls for people to come in to clean up – most of them were told “Why should I come in and risk my life when everyone else is safe at home?” I'm not going to downplay the health and safety piece of this puzzle, but frequently when a snow day is called, the weather has greatly improved as the day goes on and plows have a chance to get caught up on main roads. So, if there was a lot of opposition to coming in to clean up, I can't place all the blame on the employer. But, we need a better and workable plan to ensure the health and safety of all parties after the next snow event to minimize slips, falls and injuries around our schools. We have suggested that supervisors ask their staff who is willing to come in to clean up after a snow event (like we might get tonight) so that they know ahead of time who's going to respond – and it looks like they have agreed with that suggestion as I know some supervisors have already reached out to their staff about the possibility of cleaning up tomorrow after the storm stops and plows have had a chance to get main roads clear.

**Can someone tell the plowing contractors to not plow in my bunker?!?!** Lots of schools this week and last have had the same issue and access to snowblowers, ice chippers, gas cans and salt has been extremely limited. Pictures have been sent, emails have been sent and I'm confident that supervisors will be touching base with all plowing contractors and identifying areas that should not and cannot be plowed in so we have access to our equipment.

**Who is supposed to do snow clearing?** Yeah, I know, I know....touchy subject among lots of our members. But, let's dive right in anyhow. Wouldn't be the first or last time I'll piss somebody off.....LOL. Everyone is responsible for grounds and snow clearing. Head caretakers don't have snow clearing on their daily schedules and neither does afternoon shift, but it's still a requirement for the property. Everyone without a medically documented accommodation that speaks to no snow shovelling should be helping out with snow removal. If we need to short some things on our schedules to make that happen, then so be it. If it snows from 10:01pm to 6am, the head caretaker is gonna catch the brunt of the snow removal and get entrances open and walkways cleared through the day. If there's areas that still need attention at 2pm, then afternoons can help out with cleaning up. And likewise, if it starts snowing at 2:01pm, the afternoon staff should be keeping an eye on it and going to clean it up regularly through the evening. And when that takes time away from your regular scheduled section cleaning – your responsibility would be to ensure that at the very least you have all your priority areas and tasks done in your section and send an email to your area supervisor noting the times you were outside and why you didn't get all your section cleaned up as you normally would. This is one area where we really need to be watching out for each other, helping each other and working as a team to keep the grounds safe for everyone including other staff members, students, parents and caregivers.

**Boiler Course** – from Michelle Madley, Membership Officer – The training course for March 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> is boilers and sign up can be found on PD Place. An email from Neelam went out last Friday with a link to the sign up page. Spaces are limited to 25 and that will be based on seniority of anyone signed up as of March 14<sup>th</sup> which is the deadline for signing up. Confirmation emails will be sent out after that for anyone that is successful at obtaining one of the 25 spots. 2 days will be in class at the Ed Center, 1 day of practical.

**Recycling** – Yes, we have a recycling policy. No, not all schools are doing it. Why? It's likely politics of some sort. Every school should be encouraging students to recycle, teaching them what items get recycled and how to decrease our garbage footprint. Students should be supervised by teaching staff or the principal and collecting recyclables at least once a week. Everything that's been collected will be brought to one area of the school by the students and our members remove it to the recycle bin from there. **Depending on the time of day when the recycling team goes around and picks up it may be the head caretaker or the afternoon staff that takes it out but it must be removed from the building by our members.** There's no excuse that "I can't find a teacher to help out so we don't do it." Too bad, then it's on the principal to supervise the kids while they are collecting from room to room. And yes, the infamous pizza boxes are NOT recycling and are garbage once they've been exposed to grease, oil or cheese. If someone wanted to cut the tops off that are clean cardboard, the tops could be recycled but the bottoms are definitely garbage items. I'll include the recycling policy as an attachment for you to print off and keep handy in your caretaking rooms.

**Seniority List** – The latest seniority list was published earlier this week. Please take a moment to check your seniority date and if you believe it's wrong, members can contact Dave Dickhout or Darren Kerr with reasons why you believe it's incorrect and they will address that with the HR Dept. You can view the seniority list on the board website or on our own website at [www.cupe4153.ca](http://www.cupe4153.ca) under the Resources tab.

**Timelines** – Just a quick note that when you're sending emails or voicemails to support staff in the HR, Wellness, Health & Safety or any other department – please be polite at least. I've been tagged in emails where members have been inflammatory, accusing and downright rude because it's been a few days with no reply to their request. I'd love to sit here and say that I answer every email, text, voicemail or any other kind of message within a day or two but I'd be lying through my teeth. Sometimes things do get missed or other emergencies come up on the job. We're all human. Just keep in mind that there's a person on the other end of that email and they're a worker just like you and me. You can be polite and direct at the same time without being rude or disrespectful.

Cheers,

Blake

## **CUPE Spring School Wrap Up – 2023**

Last week/weekend we had 5 of our members attend courses in Toronto as part of the CUPE Spring School program. As part of their attendance, all members are encouraged to submit a brief write up to explain to members what they learned, how it can be applied to our Local, etc once the course or convention has been completed.

**Laurie Penner – Joint Health & Safety Rep** – Health & Safety Level 1 - I attended 9 individual courses during my time in class taking the Health and Safety Level 1. Being a new addition to our Local Health & Safety team I was eager to gather as much information I could to assist members with concerns. I learned to identify hazards in the workplace, current legislation, regulations, codes and guidelines. How to find proper info in the green book. I also learned about responsibilities and powers that Certified Reps and Joint Health & Safety Committee members have in the workplace. I can use this knowledge during my committee meetings with the employer to keep our members safe and healthy. I look forward to working with our members with health & safety concerns and not only helping them understand the obligations of the employer but also enforcing those same obligations.

**Dave Wardell & Darlene Barrick – WSIB 1 Course** – Both Darlene and Dave took the same course because we currently only have two people with the training to represent members when it comes to WSIB claims, returning to the workplace and all the paperwork that goes along with a workplace injury claim.

1. What Management and Employee Rights are through the WSIB process including Timelines , duty to accommodate , RTW
2. The various forms : Form 6 employee , Form 7 employer , form 8 Doctor and the Return to Work forms FAF
3. We learned a lot about the History of WSIB & how it came about . Past injuries and diseases .
4. They talked about exposure and stress claims ( traumatic or ptsd ) , harassment and Health and safety as it relates to WSIB.
5. Also keeping in regular contact with your case worker and your activities and whereabouts . Complying with co-operation obligations and penalties .
6. Suitable work and determining a workers ability to work and determining fitness for essential duties .
7. The 5 point Check System . \* An Employer, a Worker, personal work related injury, proof of accident, compatibility of diagnosis to accident or disablement history

**Michelle Madley, Membership Officer** – Stewarding Course 1 - I had the opportunity to join in on Spring School, there was three topics we touched on ~ Understanding Mental Health, Psychologically Safe Workplace and Creating Accommodations. Mental Health has taken center stage in the past three years, living through Covid hasn't been easy for any of us. In two days, we couldn't even touch the tip of the iceberg on mental health and all that surrounds it. What did I take away from the weekend was to be more aware of caution signs, learned how to start the difficult conversations and I learned my role as an Executive how to help (or the avenues on how to help) All I know is we all struggle one way or another, and just because it doesn't seem big to you, it can be to someone else. Please be mindful of your co-worker, if they don't seem the same or their behavior seems off. Maybe just check in, sometimes all it takes is to know someone cares. Please remember always be kind and if you don't have anything nice to say, it's best left not said. We are all in this fight together, I'm always here for a phone call, text or email you're never alone. Stay safe everyone and enjoy your weekend ahead..

**Blake Corkill** – Stewarding Course 3 – I signed up for the courses mostly as a refresher because over the years, regulations & guidelines can change. There were 3 courses within my course – Discipline & Terminations, Handling Conflict and Racism in the Workplace. By far, the Racism in the Workplace was the most interesting and conversation provoking of the three. Personal stories were shared, some tears were shed and we all agreed that it's disgusting that it still exists today. I learned that even though I haven't lived with being treated differently because of my skin color or where I was born - that I can be an ally and supporter by lending my voice and calling out bad behavior when I witness it. And I believe that's something we all can do. Racism does exist in our workplace. But it can only exist if people ignore it and look the other way. As a national union and Local, we can do better to support members who are being discriminated against by simply using our voices and exposing bad behaviors.

# Administrative Memorandum

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**TO: Elementary and Secondary Principals and Offices, Facilities Management**

**FROM: Executive Council**

**RE: COMPREHENSIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

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The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board has a Comprehensive Waste Management Program which aligns with Ministry of Environment Regulation 102 & 103/94 and the Boards Eco-School Program.

**Each school has been directed to follow the Board's Recycling Plan as follows:**

- The Principal or Designate is responsible for organizing the recycling program in their school with interested staff and students.
- The Training/Waste Management Supervisor will work with the schools to ensure the programs are organized and running smoothly.
- The Training/Waste Management Supervisor will provide to each school a copy of the acceptable items that can be recycled.
- The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board shall reduce, re-use and recycle in all departments at every Board site.
- Staff and Students shall use containers in the classrooms, office areas and cafeteria for recycling. Each area will have containers for all recyclable material. The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board will be recycling "**Single Stream**". Single Stream recycling refers to a system in which all recyclable material are mixed together in a collection truck and then sorted at a recycling facility. Students and staff will not need to separate at the schools or administrative buildings. Blue bins will be designated for all recycling material.
- Single Stream recycling posters will be provided to all buildings and posted where recycling bins are located.
- The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board will provide blue recycling bins for the Board buildings.
- It will be the responsibility of the students to collect the recycling in the school and drop off to one central location. The Principal or Designate will be responsible for monitoring the students during this process.
- The Principal or Designate, Area Supervisor and Head Caretaker will select a central location within the building for caretakers to pick-up the recycled material. The Caretaking staff will be responsible for taking the recycled material to the exterior recycling bin.
- The use of clear plastic bags in individual recycling containers will no longer be required since all recycled material will be sorted together. However, caretaking can utilize large clear plastic bags to transport the recycled material to the outside green bin. The recycling facility will remove the bags before processing the recyclables.
- The Principal or Designate will monitor the recycling to see how frequent the recycling should be picked up in the school.

- Each school will be given a schedule of the frequency in which the garbage and recycling would be collected. Waste Management has been contracted by the Board to be the Waste Management Company to provide such service.
- Waste audits will be conducted as per Ministry of Environment Regulation 102 & 103/94 by Waste Management. The current contract provides 18 schools to have waste audits performed over two years.
- Waste Management will work with the Training/Waste Management Supervisor and the Board's Eco- School committee to develop waste reduction work plans performs waste audits and assists with education and in-services that align with the Boards Eco-School program.

The program's goal is to create an environmental awareness within The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. The support of Trustees, Executive Council, Superintendents, Principals, Teachers, Caretaking Staff and Students can achieve our program goals in reducing the amount of waste that is generated throughout the organization.