

October 2024

2nd Vice Presidential Report

Hello all attending members of local 15

To start off this has been a trying time dealing with the new policies that are being implemented by the company.

It seems that the company is throwing policies from every direction and all at the same time to keep us from being able to make decisions and take the proper steps.

Zero tolerance is the almost past its "warning date" of October 15, as the company puts it, and the step up actions will begin.

Wearing of PPE entering and leaving the premises, all I will say there is, if you want to make it easy for them to catch you by either not wearing or not wearing it correctly then you may be finding yourself with discipline problems.

We are required to wear safety boots, safety glasses, high visibility vests, hard hats, and have a proper escape respirator.

The company has rules to meet the requirements of the WCB act when entering this workplace that are no different from any other industrial site.

As for all the other items that are currently being put into place;

The JOH&S members want to hear about it. Talk to us, but more importantly send it to us by email with the details. We are all getting lots of questions, advice and feedback from some of the policies, but as a committee we need to look at the items, seek more information about them, and once there is enough information - present it to the company where required. (The appropriate level of management) Then if we don't receive a proper response, move it forward by the steps set up for us.

Having only a conversation with us may lead to key points and details being missed or forgotten. As for me, I am dealing with a couple of WCB claims, changes in the new WCB first aid rules, and these new company policies, so it is easy for me to put items on the back burner with good intentions to deal with them, but forget about them as another fire hits the table.

The steps for the JOH&S committee to follow are discussion at the meeting, if no resolution, letter of recommendation to the mill manager then if nothing is resolved, the issue goes to WCB to be investigated.

Going to WCB, we are required to show the steps that we did, provide documentation of what was attempted to resolve the issue and how the company received the information and responded in a timely fashion.

There are exceptions to these steps if there is a violation of the WCB act or other rights then it will be forwarded sooner to the correct people.

One course of action that the union JOH&S is doing, is consulting an outside resource with knowledge of the WCB Act and OH&S Regulations and how to use the law to support the challenges being put in place, and for us to use these systems to help us.

The big issue people are facing and asking about is who owns the lock outs when they are issued?

The company is trying to make the worker take full responsibility for lockouts.

This will be one area that we will be asking for proper guidance on.

The glove policy has been another change. There has been a letter sent to the safety manager for clarification on wearing gloves.

There are certain applications, when wearing gloves is an unsafe act and they will be addressed. If you feel that wearing gloves is not appropriate, go to your supervisor with information, supportive regulatory framework and written instructions and give him the opportunity to take the proper steps to deal with it before bringing it to us.

Once you do this, then forward the issue to a JOH&S member by email. Include the resolve, or if no response or follow up. Please include any correspondence you had with supervisors or managers trying to find a solution, so we can use this to follow up.

I know that this will help us track and review the issues and be able to bring them up using the appropriate steps.

If it is an issue that you can't do your job with gloves on and will take more time, that is a problem for your supervisor to address and do what the policy states.

Remember they have told us SAFETY OVER PRODUCTION.

The company has said on many occasions they are willing to slow down or shutdown production to do a task safely.

The boot policy and the glove policy are blanket statements ... they do not work for every situation at every job site.

The boots policy is being reviewed, currently.
Not going to speculate on it until they bring it in.

If you have had a conversation about other issues have been discussed and resolved please inform us so we don't have to deal with every single problem.

If we go to them with concerns that they addressed individually then we look like we as a union are divided. They will use this as an opportunity to continue to divide us. This is the time that we need to stand together and be strong.

Once we get more information from the planned meeting we will be able to address the standards required by law.

The way the company is going they are creating an hostile atmosphere and any injuries or damage no matter how serious will go unreported as workers will be afraid to report because of the risk of being disciplined resulting in potential suspensions.

Not reporting an injury at the time of injury could potentially cause your claim to be denied as it was not reported.

It is required by law under the Worker's Compensation Act to report all injuries.

This must be kept up to protect yourselves.

I think I have rambled on long enough but in closing if you have a concern that can not be resolved by talking to your supervisor, please contact a JOH&S member and provide us a written explanation of the situation so we have evidence to help us investigate properly.

Thank you
In Solidarity
Barry Touzin
2nd Vice President
JOHS cochair