

Tabletalk –
your bargaining resource –
publishes four times a year. Its
goal is to give CUPE Local bargaining
committees, elected officers and
servicing representatives useful infor-
mation for preparing – and negotiating –
bargaining demands. Tabletalk's
three-hole punch style makes it easy
to keep in reference binders. Feel
free to make copies or use the
material to fit your members' needs.
Comments welcome at
research@cupe.ca

Disponible en français

“It Isn’t Easy Being Green!”

“Climate change” is the buzzword we hear in the news and on TV. We’re told to change our light bulbs and buy fuel efficient cars, but are these real solutions?

If the environment is going to be a priority, some things will have to change. We live in a pro-business, profit-oriented, market-driven, environmentally challenged society. In Canada, corporations and businesses promote free trade agreements that remove what they consider barriers to profit and mobility, such as laws, regulations and bylaws that aim to respect the environment. If history is any indicator, it will be up to public policy to protect the environment, develop sustainable jobs and promote renewable energies.

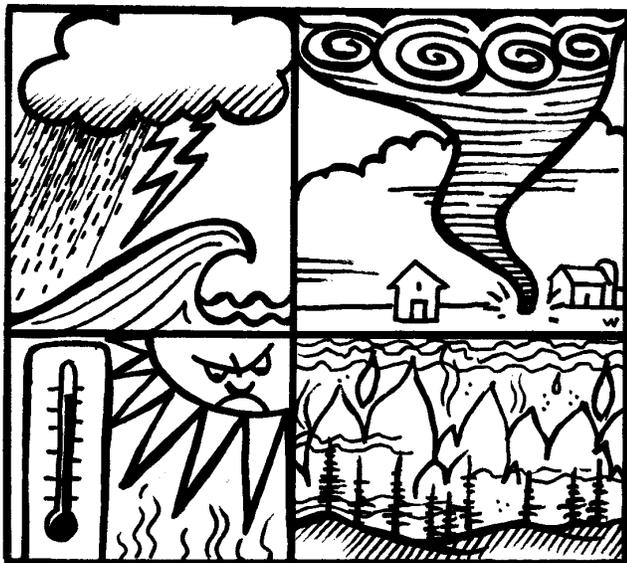
What does “Greening” mean for CUPE?

Climate change will impact water and energy resources, forestry, fisheries, agriculture, waste management, tourism, transportation, buildings and other infrastructure, health care, and social services.

Northern, resource and coastal communities will be particularly affected.

Extreme weather events will affect municipal infrastructure, including roads, bridges, buildings, water and sewer networks, electrical infrastructure, and flood control systems. Since local governments hold more than half of the total public infrastructure assets in Canada, they will also be responsible for a large part of the costs of adapting infrastructure to climate change.

Changing temperatures and ecosystems will result in more heat waves, smog, increased risk of disease, pests and fires, putting more pressure on health care and social and community services to cope with the impacts.



(continued on page 2)

Our employers are at the forefront of delivering services that will be affected by climate change. We have a unique opportunity as community activists and CUPE members to encourage our employers and to work with them to promote responsible action on climate change.

Can we negotiate “Greening”?

Collective bargaining is one of the strongest tools we have to influence change. Union contracts have helped promote shorter work hours and better vacations for the broader labour force. We can do the same for environmental issues at the bargaining table:

- Negotiating a meaningful role for the union in decision-making can help ensure workers have input into decisions about greening their workplaces, e.g., environmental audits, transportation policies.
- Negotiating a joint environmental committee along the lines of existing Health and Safety Committees can help encourage and enforce regulations that protect the environment.
- Negotiating a policy that commits the employer to positive action on climate change issues can be a good first step to raising awareness and changing behaviour. Here’s an example:

CUPE Local 2099 and the City of Mount Pearl, expiry June 2010

26.10 Pollution Control

The Employer and the Union agree that the limiting of environmental pollution is a desirable objective. Therefore, the parties affirm, according to their respective responsibilities, their joint objective to co-operate and promote jointly the objective of a pollution free environment at work and in the community.

Has your local negotiated “green” language? If so, please send your example to research@cupe.ca.

We can’t ignore the environmental gains won through political action by CUPE members with

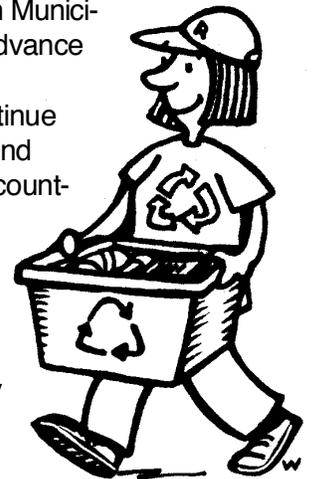
school boards and municipalities in their communities, such as bylaws against pesticides; policies against sweatshop labour products; and, designations of municipalities as nuclear-free zones. We should not underestimate our ability to influence environmental agendas at the local level through our awareness of issues at our workplaces and contacts with the public to whom we provide services.

Many CUPE members are front-line workers in the effort to protect our environment, and all CUPE members can play an active role in promoting safer, healthier, and more responsible practices.

CUPE takes action

On the wider stage, CUPE has demonstrated a strong commitment to environmental issues. Here are some examples:

- CUPE is widely recognized as a world leader for our campaigns advocating water protection and safety, and effective waste management.
- CUPE’s National Environmental Committee is made up of members and staff and advises the National Executive Board on environmental issues, such as environmental awareness and protection, water protection, the environmental and health effects of pesticides, and green job creation.
- CUPE became involved with the climate debate by developing and releasing a position paper on the Kyoto Accord, as well as fact sheets and analysis on climate change.
- CUPE connects with employer associations like the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to inform and advance action on climate change.
- CUPE members and staff continue the fight against privatization and contracting out that reduce accountability and the ability to implement green public policies. For example, the proposed Golden Ears Bridge in BC, being built as a public-private partnership, will not have HOV (High Occupancy Vehicle) lanes, a contradiction of the Greater Vancouver Regional



(continued on page 3)

District's sustainable regional initiative to reduce greenhouse gases.

- CUPE staff and members engage with national and local environmental organizations at work and in their communities. One such example is CUPE's work with the Labour Environmental Alliance Society (LEAS) that embraces the principles of environmental sustainability and social justice in its work to create alliances and initiatives, which promote healthy workplaces, healthy homes and communities, and a healthy environment.
- CUPE's new National Headquarters is being built to environmental standards registered under the Canada Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.



Ignoring climate change is not an option. If unions, communities, individuals, and groups take the lead, change will follow.

For more information and analysis on climate change, visit cupe.ca to check out three new fact sheets on climate change: #1 *A Backgrounder and Call to Action*;

#2 *Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol*; #3 *Workplace Action toward a Greener World*. Also, check out CUPE "Economic Climate" for the table, "Outline of Potential Climate Change Impacts on Workplaces, Households and Communities," June 2007. ■

We are not alone in our actions on climate change. Internationally, unions are also initiating creative and powerful ways to fight climate change:

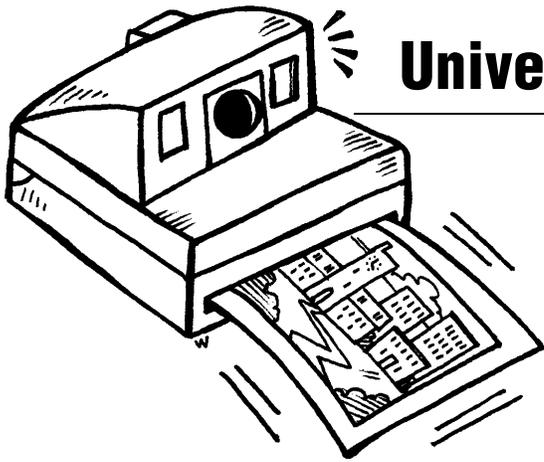
- In Australia, the Building Labourers took on the developers and instituted bans on projects that threatened the environment. Without unionized labour, the projects could not proceed.
- In England, UNISON, the union that represents public employees, is training and seeking employer paid time off for "green reps" to help generate more environmentally friendly workplaces.
- In Germany, the Alliance for Work and the Environment, a joint initiative of unions, environmental groups, government, and business, is undertaking a massive insulation improvement project that will create 200,000 jobs, cut two million tonnes of CO₂ emissions and lower heating costs for tenants.

Climate change will affect the economy. Jobs will be lost but new, greener jobs will emerge. That's why we need a "Just Transition" process that will develop ways to help workers displaced by the shift to a greener economy, with training and job placement strategies. Tackling climate change will offer many public benefits such as reduced pollution, improved public transit, healthier buildings, reliable water, and safer food.

Source of greenhouse gases	Percentage
Oil, gas and coal industries	20%
Road transportation (moving people and goods by road)	19%
Thermal electricity and heat generation	17%
Industrial processes	7%
Agricultural processes	7%
Residential sources	6%
Commercial and institutional sources	5%
Waste sectors	4%
All other sources (mostly energy-related)	15%

(Source: *Fact Sheet #1: A Backgrounder and Call to Action*, CUPE, May 2007)

We hear a lot about programs aimed at what households can do to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gases, like smart meters, efficient light bulbs, improved insulation, etc., but notice in the table that the four major sources of greenhouse gases are industrial. What does that tell you about where governments should be focusing their reduction strategies?



University Sector Snapshot

CUPE represents about 54,000 university and college workers across Canada – some 3,000 in colleges and 51,000 in universities. Workers in this sector are about 10 per cent of CUPE's membership and represent a diverse range of jobs: sessional lecturers, teaching, research, and graduate assistants; professional technicians, librarians, library support workers, bookstore employees, laboratory demonstrators, childcare employees, and clerical staff; trades, maintenance, grounds, food services, housekeeping, parking, and security workers; and workers who staff campus student services, such as women's centres and student organizations.

CUPE locals on campus are typically quite independent from each other and different occupational groups often belong to different locals. There are over 120 locals and 170 bargaining units across Canada.

Union density in the post-secondary sector is lower than the rest of the public sector. The unionization rate based on membership in the university sector is running at 47 per cent, with colleges higher at 64 per cent.¹ In both of these sectors, union membership has grown moderately since 1997.

Federal government funding for this sector has been declining for many years. In 1974, government funding represented 79.9 per cent of total university operating revenues; in 1994, it was 74 per cent, but dipped to 56.7 per cent by 2005.

The federal government announced increased funding to the provinces and territories for post-secondary education through the Canada Social Transfer (CST) by \$800 million per year beginning in 2008–09, with funding to grow by 3 per cent per year. However, federal cash transfers to provinces need to be at least \$4.25 billion this year to restore funding to 1992–93 levels.

The reduction in government funding relative to student enrolment has squeezed the universities and contributed to the major shift to temporary employment in the sector to save costs. Temporary employment was always higher in the university sector, but its growth over the last ten years has outpaced the rest of the public sector and colleges, and seems to have reached alarming proportions. For workers, temporary work typically means reduced or no benefits, lower pay rates, and no job security.

Inadequate funding has led to a dramatic increase in privatization at Canada's universities. What is most apparent is the growing reliance on individuals rather than the government to finance university operations. University tuition and other fees have been skyrocketing in recent years with students paying a far larger share of the costs of post-secondary education. In 1974, student tuition fees comprised 16.1 per cent of university operating revenues, rising to 19.9 per cent in 1994. By 2005, this had ballooned to 30.4 per cent.²

Public-private partnerships are seen by universities, as the way to expand the university campus. Most private partners support science and business programs, so most of the new buildings are for these faculties. Arts and social sciences have become the poor cousins, creating have and have-not faculties on campus.

(continued on page 5)

¹ Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Historical Review*, 2006, based on NAICS 6113 (universities) and NAICS 6112 (colleges).

² Statistics Canada and CAUBO, *CAUT Almanac of Post-Secondary Education in Canada*, 2007.

Coordinated bargaining

The distinct nature of the bargaining units and the checkerboard membership of locals in each province makes coordinated bargaining a challenge in the university sector. Some provinces, including Saskatchewan and British Columbia, have a blend of academic, administrative, and support worker locals. Ontario has few administrative support bargaining units and Quebec has a small number of academic-only units. Nova Scotia academic locals are the largest of the CUPE locals in the sector. New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland have no academic units. The density of CUPE membership in each province varies considerably as well.

Currently (July 2007), formal coordination of bargaining only takes place in British Columbia and Ontario. British Columbia began coordinating in the 1990s, and the method of coordination has differed each round. The most recent round of coordination was extraordinary and resulted in progress that would not

have been possible without the joint efforts of all the locals.

The locals in the Atlantic region are planning a coordinated bargaining conference. In Quebec, locals coordinated in the past but are not now formally coordinated.

Ontario locals have come a long way in their coordination since 2005, when they agreed to coordinate on specific issues. The challenge in Ontario is the large number of bargaining units. The CUPE university locals with contract expiry in 2007 have agreed to continue coordination on wages, job security, and pensions and benefits as well as a common expiry date. ■

(Source: *Snapshot of CUPE's Post-secondary Sector Presented to the NEB*, CUPE Research, June 2007)

Help to Fight Contracting Out

Employers who contract out our work are often reluctant to divulge information about their contracts with private suppliers. This information could help CUPE staff and members build a case for bringing contracted out services back in house.

The Health Employees Union (HEU) recently challenged the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority to release details of their contract with the multinational contractor, Aramark. The Employer and Aramark refused on the grounds that releasing the information would harm Aramark and interfere with competition for the services.

The arbitrator ruled that the BC Privacy Act did not protect this information: "Simply putting contractors and potential contractors in a position of having to price their services competitively is not a circumstance of unfairness or undue financial loss or gain."



The arbitrator's decision requires Vancouver Coastal Health Authority to give the Union access to the entire cleaning contract between Aramark and the Health Authority, in addition to the business case.

This decision may help open the door to getting information that can help us fight contracting out.

(Source: <http://www.oipc.bc.ca/orders/OrderF07-15.pdf>, OIPC File No. F04-22698. Quicklaw Cite: [2007] B.C.I.P.C.D. No. 21)



Innovative Language

It appears the chance of workers facing quarantine is on the rise. We are seeing the resurgence of diseases we thought had been eradicated, such as measles and mumps. We hear a

lot about the threats of Avian flu, West Nile virus, and SARS in the media. For several years, scientists have been predicting we are due for a massive influenza outbreak.

The possibility of being quarantined appears to be increasing, particularly for CUPE workers in health care, social services and schools.■

Here's an example of thinking ahead:

CUPE Local 2512 and the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, expiry December 31, 2008

Article 22 – Quarantine

An active employee shall be granted a leave of absence without loss of pay or sick leave credits as a result of being quarantined by order of the Medical Officer of Health from attending his/her duties. The Board has the right to request appropriate documentation in such circumstances.

This provision does not apply to employees on sick leave, unpaid leave or any other approved leave at the time of quarantine.

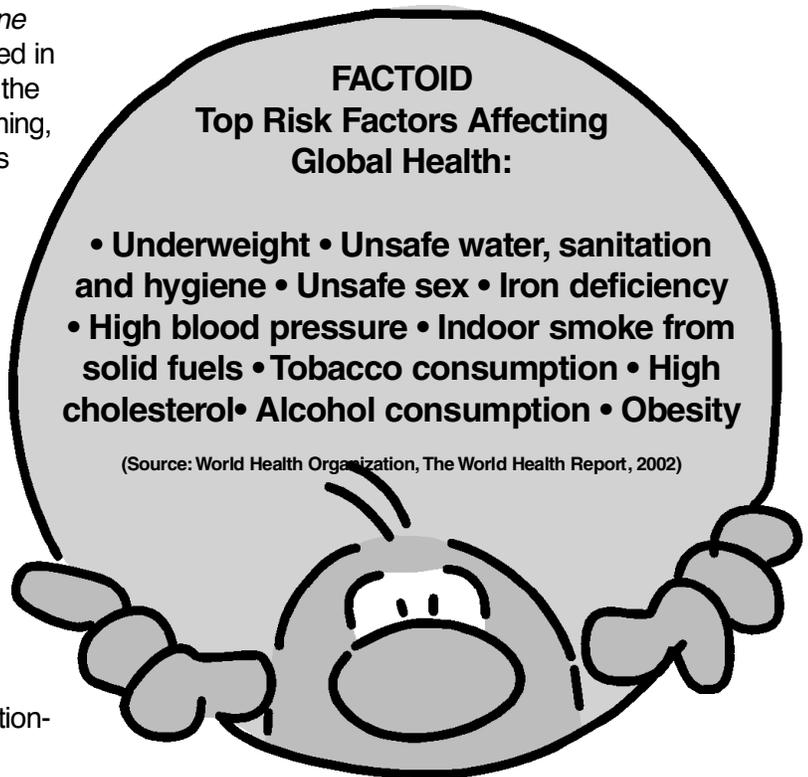
In Search of Bargaining Terms in French?

In March, the Office québécois de la langue française (OQLF) launched a booklet entitled *Pour une convention collective ... en bons termes*. Published in paperback and intended for union members and the various other parties involved in collective bargaining, this glossary presents 125 terms and expressions frequently used in collective agreements.

The booklet is designed to update the language used in the field of labour relations. There have been many changes in the last few decades; concepts have evolved and developed, and new terms have become more widespread.

Each major entry in the booklet is accompanied by a definition and the English equivalent; where applicable, synonyms and explanatory notes are added to help explain why one term is recommended over another. This reference document is available through the Quebec Federation of Labour (QFL) or you can download it for free at www.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca/ressources/bibliotheque/dictionnaires/conventioncoll_2007.pdf ■

(Source: *CUPE in Brief*, SCFP, vol. 8, no. 5, April 23, 2007)





CUPE's Collective Agreement Information System (CAIS) is a database of CUPE collective agreements, coded by wage rate and collective agreement provision. The reports listed were prepared by CAIS staff for specific CUPE events.

Canada-wide University Workers Sector Meeting, October 2006:

For Academic Workers:

- CAIS Wage and Provisions Report (Eng. and Fr.)
- Electronic Collective Agreements

For University Services:

- CAIS Wage and Provisions Report (Eng. and Fr.)
- Electronic Collective Agreements

For Support Staff:

- CAIS Wage and Provisions Report (Eng. and Fr.)
- Electronic Collective Agreements

Western Canada Municipalities June 2007 Conference:

- CAIS Wage Report (Eng. only)
- CAIS Provisions Report (Eng. only)
- Electronic Collective Agreements

If you would like a copy of any of the above CDs, please contact your CUPE staff representative and ask them to email research@cupe.ca with the name of the CD you want and a mailing address.



Overall, consumer prices rose 2.2 per cent in July compared with July 2006, identical to the increases in the three previous months.

For the fourth straight month, most of the average growth in consumer prices is attributable to costs associated with owned accommodation.

Consumer Price Index by Province, July 2006 to July 2007

Newfoundland and Labrador	1.0
Prince Edward Island	1.3
Nova Scotia	1.5
New Brunswick	2.2
Quebec	1.3
Ontario	1.9
Manitoba	2.2
Saskatchewan	3.2
Alberta	5.0
British Columbia	1.6

(Source: Statistics Canada, *The Daily*, Tuesday, August 21, 2007)

As expected, the Bank of Canada raised its key interest rate in July by one-quarter of a percentage point to 4.5 per cent. Chartered banks followed suit to hike consumer loan rates, which led to slightly higher mortgage rates for consumers. Experts are predicting that the Bank of Canada may shy away from its planned increase in September because of the global credit woes that have rattled financial markets.

Higher mortgage rates fuelled the increase in mortgage interest cost. In previous months, the growth in mortgage interest cost had been mainly attributable to higher prices for new homes, rather than the cost of borrowing.

In July, consumers spent 2.7 per cent more for food purchased at grocery stores than in July 2006. In spite of this increase, fresh fruit prices were down 3.7 per cent in July 2007 from July 2006.

Consumers were able to purchase and lease motor vehicles for 1.6 per cent less than in June, following a decrease of 0.3 per cent over the preceding month. Such downward movement is due to the end of the model year, when discounts are given to reduce inventories of the current year's models. ■

Current and Upcoming 'Key' Negotiations – August 29, 2007 (covering 500 or more employees)

Federal Jurisdiction

Public Sector

Employer	Union	# of Employees	Status	Expiry Month
Government of Canada	Various unions	140,750	arbitration/conciliation/bargaining/ tentative agreement	Apr 06-Sep 07
Canada Revenue Agency	PSAC	33,200	bargaining	Oct 07
Government of Nunavut	PSAC	2,100	bargaining	Sep 06
Go Transit (Ont.)	ATU	910	bargaining	Jun 07

Private Sector

Canadian Pacific Railway	Teamsters	4,400	conciliation	Dec 06
British Columbia Maritime Employers Association	ILWU CANADA	3,700	bargaining	Mar 07

Provincial and Territorial Jurisdictions

Public Sector

Employer	Union	# of Employees	Status	Expiry Month
Government of Alberta	AUPE	21,000	mediation	Aug 07
City of Montréal	Various unions	17,800	bargaining	Dec 06
Association provinciale des agences de sécurité (Que.)	Steelworkers	14,000	bargaining	Jul 07
Government of Saskatchewan	Teachers	12,400	bargaining	Aug 07
Capital District Health Authority	NSGEU	7,900	bargaining/conciliation	Oct 06
Government of New Brunswick	CUPE	6,290	bargaining	Jun 07
Société de transport de Montréal	CUPE/CSN	6,250	bargaining	Jan 07
City of Vancouver	CUPE	5,270	work stoppage	Dec 06
Nova Scotia Association of Health Organizations	Nurses	4,000	bargaining	Oct 06
Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations	HSAS	2,700	tentative agreement	Mar 07
Government of Prince Edward Island	PEIUPSE	2,440	bargaining	Mar 07
City of Québec	CUPE	1,410	bargaining	Dec 06
Health Authorities of Prince Edward Island	CUPE	800	bargaining	Mar 07

Private Sector

Construction Industry in Alberta	Various unions	22,500	bargaining/tentative agreement post-mediation bargaining	Apr 07
Greater Vancouver Hotel Employer's Association	UNITE HERE Canada	1,240	bargaining	Jun 07
Nova Scotia Power Inc.	IBEW	900	bargaining	Jul 07

Upcoming 'Key' Negotiations

Employer	Union	# of Employees	Expiry Month
Regional Health Authorities of Manitoba	Nurses	11,000	Sep 07
Security Industry Employers Bargaining Association (Ont.)	Steelworkers	3,500	Jun 07
City of Québec	Various unions	2,610	Dec 06
National Research Council Canada	RCEA/PIPSC	2,600	Jun/Jul 07
London Health Sciences Centre	CAW-Canada	1,100	Oct 07

(Source: *Labour Policy and Workplace Information, Labour Program – HRSDC, August 29, 2007*)