

REPORT ON WORLD WATER DAY

On March 22, CUPE members across Canada joined other concerned citizens for "water walks," blessing ceremonies, press conferences, film screenings and other community events aimed at protecting public water.

Our Canadian partners included the Council of Canadians, KAIROS, Development and Peace, the Sierra Club, and provincial environmental organizations.

In Mexico City, four CUPE delegates marched with Mexican and Latin American water workers, campesino and indigenous peoples' groups, and other international water activists.

Across Canada...

In Halifax, CUPE and its water allies organized a one-day symposium attended by officials from Nova Scotia's Department of the Environment and from the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM). Results were released at a press conference. A public screening of the documentary "Thirst" rounded out the activities.

In Winnipeg, about 60 people gathered in front of City Hall where Winnipeg city council passed a "Water for Life" declaration. Diane Ludwick from CUPE 2348 read a statement to the crowd and the Raging Grannies performed a water song.

Booklet available

Water: No time to waste is a consumer guide to water conservation produced in collaboration with Environment Canada. Email comm@cupe.ca for copies.

Across Vancouver Island, members of CUPE's Water Watch campaign supported various events. In the Greater Victoria area, 11 local councils passed water declarations and a noon-hour rally was well attended. Campbell River's city council also passed a declaration presented to them by a group that included CUPE members.

Rallies and Water Walks were held in Qualicum and Courtney, and 300 people attended a hearing in the Comox Valley to comment on a proposed housing development with a private water component.

In Mexico City...

Frank Menten, CUPE's Saskatchewan regional vice-president, and Rodger Oakley, president of CUPE 401 in Nanaimo, B.C. (also co-chair of the Vancouver Island Water Watch committee), travelled to Mexico City along with two CUPE research staff for 10 intense and sometimes emotional days of meetings and marches.

Reports and photos of their activities are posted at www.cupe.ca/worldwaterday/.

:cc/cope491 / March 2006



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Canadian Union of Public Employees