

## Get active on World Water Day March 22, 2006

On World Water Day (WWD), CUPE will join the Council of Canadians, Development and Peace, KAIROS and other allies to protect public water.

- **Water quality** is on Canadians' minds, from Walkerton to North Battleford to Kashechewan.
- **Water sources** are in danger, from the Great Lakes to Devil's Lake, Man.
- **Water and wastewater services** in our towns and cities are under threat from private companies – and some local politicians. They want to create P3s (public private partnerships) to manage the vital fluid that sustains all life on this planet.

Since 1997, CUPE members across Canada have been working to resist and reverse trends toward privatization of water resources. We are part of the global movement to defend water as a human right and to keep corporate profits out of community water systems.

By learning more about water issues, your CUPE local can take action. With our allies, we can make World Water Day 2006 a day to promote and protect public water.

As citizens and as public employees, let's spread the word: All water is public water!

### Ten ways to mark World Water Day 2006

1. Learn about and expose plans to privatize water in your community.
2. Create banners with a strong message that fits your community. Display the banners in a public place (you may need permission to do so).
3. Organize a roundtable session on a specific water issue.
4. Organize a water ceremony with local Aboriginal or faith groups.
5. Sponsor a drawing or painting contest for school children. The theme? Keeping our water clean and safe.
6. Ask your local newspaper to donate free space for an advertisement about WWD. Or ask for a free ad to publicize your WWD event.

7. Create a songbook that features old and new songs about water.
8. Invite local students to produce and perform a skit on water issues.
9. Plan a meeting with the editorial board of your local newspaper. Convince them that public water is an issue worth publicizing.
10. Produce and distribute flyers, pins or stickers to promote the day.

## How to make a bigger splash

### ■ **Get your municipal council to sign the “Municipal charter for water”**

Almost 100 towns and cities, and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, have signed a Water Declaration. It says that water is a sacred gift connecting all life, and that our planet's fresh water is for the common good, not for commercial profit. A copy of the declaration is enclosed in this special CUPE mailing.

### ■ **Have your council declare World Water Day in your community**

Talk to a friendly town or city councilor about how to do this.

### ■ **Set up a meeting with provincial representatives and federal MPs**

Bring together a group of citizens who care about water issues. When you meet local politicians, hand out fact sheets and explain why Canada needs a national water policy.

### ■ **Organize a panel discussion**

Ask the public library or community centre to donate space. Each panel member should make a short presentation. Then the audience can discuss the issue. Choose one or two topics that matter in your community. See Bulletin #3 for topic ideas.

### ■ **Show a movie (with popcorn, of course!)**

Bring people together to see a documentary about water issues. *Thirst* is an excellent film about water P3s in the United States. Visit [www.thirstthemovie.org](http://www.thirstthemovie.org) to order the film and download a free study guide. *Dead in the Water*, produced by the Fifth Estate in 2004 is a CBC/National Film Board production. Visit the Fifth Estate's website at [www.cbc.ca](http://www.cbc.ca).

### ■ **Organize a rally, public demonstration, street theatre or parade**

Plan carefully. You will need a place that is the right size, one or two good speakers, lively entertainment, banners and maybe good food. A successful rally is a mix of dynamic speakers with music and fun! You may need to get a special permit for a parade.

### ■ **Plan a concert or coffee house**

A concert or talent night can help your community celebrate WWD. Plan to make more money than you spend on the event by having everything donated: the stage, sound equipment, music, food and drink.

## ■ **Distribute information**

Build awareness by setting up information tables and handing out flyers in workplaces, malls, or on the street. If there is a large public event (such as a hockey tournament) or a political event in your community in March, use these events to get your water message out.

## ■ **Contact your local media and build networks**

When you organize any event, advertise on radio and in local newspapers. Ask a local media “personality” to be part of your event. Put posters up in many locations. Collect the names and contact information of people who attend your event. By building email, fax and phone lists you can create a network of water activists in your community.

Visit [www.cupe.ca/worldwaterday/](http://www.cupe.ca/worldwaterday/) for more info and resources.

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