

September 15, 2010



DISTRICT COUNCIL

HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

1. Notifications:

All schools must notify District 10 Office of both:

- i) the name of their Health and Safety Site Representative;
- ii) when monthly inspections are planned for this academic year.

2. Correspondence:

Health and Safety Site Representatives are reminded that it is an OSSTF policy that only non school e-mail addresses be used for all correspondence. Representatives who do not send their e-mail address to District 10 Office will therefore not receive memos, etc. from OSSTF. To get in touch with me via e-mail use the following address page.dave@sympatico.ca.

3. Inspections:

Health and Safety Representatives are encouraged to conduct the monthly site inspections with their CUPE and Administrative colleagues whenever possible. The purpose of this is to foster a collegial approach to Health and Safety issues / concerns at the local level and hopefully resolve them in a cooperative and timely manner.

Site Representatives (OSSTF and/or CUPE) are also encouraged to accompany Russ Shaw (and any other Board designated personnel) during their inspections, whenever feasible. Site Representatives should discuss this with their Principal in advance so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Due diligence is absolutely paramount when fulfilling these duties.

During the course of this summer, on August 11th 2010 to be precise, a work refusal by CUPE members at one of our High Schools took place. The condition of an Auto Shop was deemed to be too hazardous to work in. Tom LeBoeuf and Wendy Pitvor were contacted and agreed that the workers had most definitely got valid concerns for their safety. The room was subsequently shut down and taped off.

Considering that in the not too distant past we have had an explosion in one of our Auto Shops this occurrence is very disturbing.

Had a Ministry of Labour inspector been notified, without doubt, infraction tickets would have been issued and fines against all parties concerned would most likely have been imposed.

I have at the time of writing this visited the school and spoken with the current Health and Safety Representative and the Branch President, who were both unaware of the situation having ever taken place, and stressed the need for extreme vigilance in such areas of the school when conducting site inspections.

I understand that Staff at the school who worked in the room were brought back in to make it safe once again and have no idea as to whether or not any disciplinary action has been taken against them by the Lambton Kent District School Board.

4. Monthly Inspection Reports:

Copies of the monthly inspection report forms (green) should continue to be sent, as soon as possible, to the District 10 Office until such time as the new electronic reporting system is in place. Mike Dodman (CUPE) and I will be reviewing these inspection forms at the monthly worker meetings. Please make sure that perpetual repeat items and any other major concerns are highlighted. The Joint Health and Safety Committee is currently looking into a new checklist, possibly electronic and searchable, of inspection items so that consistency across the District is maintained.

5. Health and Safety Binder:

A common Health and Safety binder has been previously distributed to all OSSTF, CUPE and Administrative Representatives. The purpose of this was to simplify and standardize the content of Health and Safety expectations. Health and Safety Representatives should review its contents and make sure that everything is up to date.

6. Health and Safety Policies and Procedures:

The Lambton Kent District School Board has demonstrated that Health and Safety in its facilities is a very important consideration. Health and Safety Policies and Procedures are in place in many departmental areas and more are on the way. Worker Representatives have had access to this process from its initial stages and are actively engaging in the decision making process both in terms of the protocol and audit outcomes. The information from the audit outcomes will focus on improvement of the overall management system at the Board level. It will not target individual schools or employees.

7. Training/E-Learning:

Annual Training for OSSTF, CUPE and Administrative Site Representatives will take place in the Fall. Health and Safety Certification (Part 1) will also take place in the Fall. Dates, times, location, etc. are yet to be finalized. Details will be posted in PD Place.

The Lambton Kent District School Board is currently looking into finding a suitable Science "Prep Course" for those new to the profession or new to teaching Science. The purpose of this is to ensure that all necessary Health and Safety precautions, etc. are undertaken by staff when using, storing, handling chemicals and equipment, etc.

E-Learning modules for Health and Safety were supposed to be ready upon our return to school but unfortunately fell foul of glitches.

8. Visits to Schools:

Both myself and Mike Dodman (CUPE) can be made available for any monthly site inspection, should any Health and Safety Representatives feel that our presence would provide assistance.

9. General:

As your OSSTF Health and Safety Officer I would like to inform you all that I will continue to work diligently on your behalf at the Joint Health and Safety Committee meetings and seek positive outcomes for all issues/concerns related to your health and safety in the workplace.

Finally I would like to thank all the Health and Safety Site Representatives for great job that they do throughout the year.

Dave Page,
District 10 Health and Safety Officer