

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

May 4, 2020

Good Day,

Once again, I hope this finds all healthy and safe. I know that what is happening throughout the world and here at home can be very depressing and has created deep anxieties for all of us.

Members in our EPCOR and Capital Power bargaining units who have not experienced the same anxieties around layoffs, as they are considered essential workers, have however been dealing with health and safety concerns as many of them are not able to work from home but must continue to access their regular worksites. CSU 52 and IBEW 1007 have been working with the Employers to put processes into place which we hope are sufficient to protect their health and welfare. If you have concerns (in your particular work sites) that protection and safety processes are not what they should be, please contact us so that we can help deal with those issues. Please continue to practice required health and safety protocols both at work and away from work.

For our City of Edmonton, TELUS World of Science – Edmonton (TWOSE) and Edmonton Public Library (EPL) bargaining units, we recognize the hardship that laid-off members face and also the stress and anxieties that members who continue to work may have been wondering if they also might face a layoff in the near future. At TWOSE, EPL and in Recreation Facilities at the City, almost all staff have faced layoffs without any certainty of when they may be called back. While the period of temporary layoff is for a maximum of 16 weeks, there is no guarantee that we will be able to resume any level of normal operations at that time. This last week, we once again saw a large number of City members receive layoff notices. We need to be cognizant of the fact that the temporary layoff procedure that the Coalition of Edmonton Civic Unions (CECU) signed with the City of Edmonton, of having to deal with an unprecedented emergency (which was never contemplated in any of our collective bargaining agreements) would not come without problems. If you were laid off and feel that the layoff was not done properly, that you were senior to someone in your work area who was not laid off and that you have the skills and ability to do that work, please call your union office as soon as possible. While we have allowed some loosening of the layoff procedures during this emergency, we have not given up the right to grieve on your behalf. We have had discussions with City representatives as recent as Friday, May 1st – they also acknowledge that there may have been some problems with how some layoffs were done and agreed that the Temporary Letter of Understanding does not prohibit the Union from protecting your rights. Your Union continues to be here to represent you and advocate on your behalf.

I'm sure we are all aware of the Province's decision late last week to begin the process of slowly reopening our society and economy. This will not be an overnight back-to-normal process but rather a slow one with some speed bumps along the way. One of the major complications as we move forward will be the collapse of the world price for oil and natural gas. Combined with the other issues in Canada, around Alberta being able to get its hydrocarbon products to market the Province's revenue stream, has all but dried up and provincially we are looking at somewhere around a 22 billion dollar deficit. This has a significant trickle-down affect to Cities and Municipalities which may not allow these jurisdictions to recover as quickly as we might be able to do if only facing the health crisis.

Remember, your Union is here to aid and assist you in any way we can, If you need help please do not hesitate to call and we will attempt to provide whatever assistance we can.

***Thank you and stay safe,
Lanny Chudyk***