



## **WELCOME TO THE UNITED STEELWORKERS LOCAL 1-1937**

### **NEW MEMBER INFORMATION**

#### **Welcome**

We take this opportunity to welcome you into the ranks of the Steelworkers Local 1-1937. We trust that you will accept the responsibilities as well as the benefits of your Union Membership in this Union.

#### **History & Future**

As a new Member, you may not be aware that Local 1-1937 is the product of the merger of many Coastal Local Unions including 1-80 (which merged with Local 1-118 in 1989), 1-363, 1-2171 (which was itself the product of a merger between Local 1-71 and Local 1-217) and 1-85. All of the Locals were chartered to the International Woodworkers of America (I.W.A.) in either 1937 or 1943. They later became IWA-Canada and then the Industrial Wood and Allied Workers of Canada (IWA), prior to merging with the United Steelworkers (USW) in September of 2004.

It was negotiated into the Merger Agreement between the Steelworkers and the IWA that the structure of IWA Locals would remain in place, as the IWA service model has been very successful for the Membership since its inception.

Looking forward, our Local Union, as a Member of the Steelworkers IWA Council, remains a progressive and forward-looking part of the Labour Movement in Canada. We encourage the participation of all Local Union Members to ensure that the Local Union we received from our brothers and sisters, who built this Union before us, is left to those who follow us, as a vibrant and integral part of the Labour Movement.

The goal of the Labour Movement has always been to improve the lives of working people. Through the actions of Unions across Canada, the following standards have become the basic minimum rights within many workplaces and are now required by law in most Provinces. These standards exist because of the bargaining gains that Unions achieved over the years and because Unions have lobbied for Employment Standard Laws.

These Employment Standards include:

- ✓ **Minimum Wage Laws**
- ✓ **Hours of Work (daily and weekly)**
- ✓ **Overtime Pay**
- ✓ **Vacation Pay**
- ✓ **Basic Health And Safety Rules**
- ✓ **Workers' Compensation**
- ✓ **Basic Anti-Discrimination Laws In Human Rights Legislation**
- ✓ **Severance Pay**
- ✓ **Employment Insurance Benefits**
- ✓ **Parental Leave**

These rights are the very basic standards of wages and benefits. Unions have always pushed beyond these basic rights provided by law. Unions fight for living wages, benefits, and reasonable working conditions for their Members, all above what the law now provides for workers. Unions take this action because the law is just a minimum standard. Workers need more than the minimum wage to live; they also need medical, dental, and extended health and welfare benefits for their families. Workers need better levels of sick leave and vacation leave than minimum laws provide. Unions also fight for a decent standard of living and job security for workers that the law does not provide. **It is these actions by Unions that raise the standards and set benchmarks for all workers, Union or non-union.**

### **Many Faces Many Industries**

By choosing the Steelworkers it means joining more than 225,000 other Members in the most diverse Private Sector Union in Canada. Overall there are 850,000 Steelworker Members in the US and Canada.

Not only are Steelworkers producing the ore in Canada's mines and making the steel in the Country's steel mills, but they are also harvesting our forests and producing lumber products as the dominant Union in Canada and North America's Forest Industry. Steelworkers nationally are making furniture, electronics, auto parts, chemicals, and metal fabricating. Steelworkers also drive taxis, work in hotels, in crisis centres, warehouses, and machine shops and as security guards to name a few.

Locally your Union represents over 6000 Members working in the mining, logging, sawmilling, remanufacturing, various public sector jobs, trucking, fish farming, contract maintenance, warehouse, fabricating plants and agriculture sector and various other areas. Local 1-1937 is one of the largest USW Local Unions in Canada.

### **Democracy**

Democracy is the cornerstone of the Union with Members having the right to vote on their contracts as well as how their Union operates through Local, District, National and International Meetings, Conferences and Conventions. Included in this is the right of Members to elect their Representatives in Union elections at all levels (Local, District, National and International). The Local Union is operated and governed by the Local 1-1937 By-Laws and the International Constitution, a copy of which can be obtained at any Local Union office.

## **Union Dues At Work**

Your Union dues are collected and used in accordance with the democratic principles of the Union's Constitution and Local Union By-Laws. Dues are used for everything from collective bargaining to defending workers' rights and everything else in between. Some of the uses for your dues are noted as follows: Education Programs, Health and Safety Training, Grievance Representation, Arbitration, Research and Legal Services, Collective Bargaining, Pension Expertise, Organizing and Political Campaigns as well as the daily operations of the Local Union and the overall National and International administration of the Union. The Steelworkers are also able to maintain an impressive Strike and Defence Fund through the dues structure along with a Supplemental Strike and Defence Fund that is kept within the Local Union itself.

Dues give the Union the power to fight for Member rights at all levels and on many fronts, today and in the future. It is important to note that much of what Members pay in dues is tax deductible (union dues deduction is noted on your T4 from your employer).

As many Members have noted "dues" is the cheapest job insurance you could ever buy.

## **How Are Dues Calculated?**

Dues are calculated and paid based on the base rate in each operation.

## **When Do I Pay Dues?**

Members pay full dues for any month in which they work more than 5 days. On months when a Member works 1 to 5 days, the Member pays partial dues and if the Member does not work at all in a month, they will not have dues deducted.

## **Do Members Have A Say?**

Dues dollars are collected and banked in Canadian Banks and Credit Unions, under the authority of the Canadian Union Directors, who are elected by Canadian Steelworkers. Steelworkers oversee how dues are set by sending Delegates from the Locals to the Union's Constitutional Convention where policy is democratically decided.

Just as important, Members have a say in where their money goes. Local and overall Union accounts are audited regularly. The International Treasurer issues an audited public report to the Local Unions once every two years. All of this financial information is available to every Member. It adds up to accountability at every level.

## **Getting What You Pay For**

The benefit of paying dues is immediately returned to you:

## **In Representation**

Representation by the Steelworkers is second to none in advocating for Members on the job and off. In dealing with your employer, the Operational Representatives and Local Representatives have the knowledge and training to deal with workplace problems on your behalf. They will represent you in the dispute resolution processes available under your Collective Agreement whenever necessary. Please familiarize yourself with the grievance process in your Collective Agreement and if you have any questions contact your Operational Job Steward or the Local Union. Remember that for a Representative to assist you with a grievance in the best way possible your participation and cooperation in the process is necessary. Always remember that a grievance is defined as a violation of the Collective Agreement, a law, or a past practice of the employer. A grievance is not a complaint where one of the above-noted areas has not been

violated. You can find useful information about the Grievance Procedure on the website at [www.usw1-1937.ca](http://www.usw1-1937.ca).

### **In Collective Bargaining**

The United Steelworkers Local 1-1937 like the IWA before them, bargain some of the best wage and benefit packages (dental, extended, life insurance, short and long-term disability) in Canada, genuine retirement security, health and safety protection, job security and tough contract language in all areas. For working people, that is a big return, every day of the year, on a relatively small investment.

Steelworker (IWA) Collective Agreements across Canada have set patterns for thousands of workers. The Steelworkers have negotiated the best pensions in Canadian Industry. Years of experience and hard-fought battles by the Union and its Membership at the bargaining table have lifted workers' living standards to some of the best in North America. While the work is never finished, improving, and securing those gains is what our Union strives for.

### **In Education**

Every year thousands of Steelworkers are trained by the National, District and Local Unions in health and safety, collective bargaining, facing management, workers compensation, leadership, organizing and many other Union skills. We believe worker education means real power in and out of the workplace as well as at the bargaining table.

### **In Research**

Experts in economics and public policy provide the facts and figures needed by the Local Union so they can bargain the best possible Collective Agreements, solve health and safety problems and lobby governments (municipal, provincial and federal) on issues vital to the Membership.

### **In Legal Services**

The Local Union has a great track record of ensuring Members receive quality legal representation in arbitrations. On top of this, the Local has access to staff lawyers through the Steelworkers District 3 Office for legal issues around organizing, labour board or issues of industry-wide importance.

### **In Health and Safety**

Local 1-1937 provides health and safety education and provides Members with guidance for WCB, EI and Canada Disability Pension problems which can make a huge difference for Members dealing with a system that can become overwhelming to workers without the experience to deal with the system.

The Local Union Safety Council and operational safety committees fight for better health and safety in workplaces throughout the Local, while the National Safety Council fights for the same across the country.

### **In Communications**

Local 1-1937 communicates with the Membership directly through its Annual Delegated Meeting, Operational Meetings, appointments, drop-in, phone, mailouts, email, and fax mailings and through update bulletins and its own newsletter aptly named SOLIDARITY. Since the IWA merged with the Steelworkers, we have been actively trying to build our email and/or cell phone (texting) contacts to achieve a **Rapid Response Program** whereby Members who have given

their contact information can get up-to-date information (such as collective bargaining etc.) on a regular daily or weekly basis.

***The Local Union would appreciate your participation by forwarding your email address to the Local Union by phone or through the Locals website [www.usw1-1937.ca](http://www.usw1-1937.ca).***

### **In Government Lobbying**

The Union has dedicated staff to regularly lobby the Provincial, and Federal Governments to seek continuous improvements for our workers' rights and on issues that can impact workers' job security.

### **In Organizing**

Union organizers and Staff help thousands of new Members to join the Steelworkers every year. Workers do not have to commit to anything to know the facts. The more Workers that join the Union the stronger the Union is for every Member. The process is confidential and if you know of a friend or relative who would benefit from being in a Union, please contact the Local Union on a confidential basis to find out what the process involves.

### **In Equal Opportunity**

The Local Union maintains a Women's Committee that is tasked with helping Women Members become involved in all levels of the Union.

### **International Office**

The Steelworkers is an International Union with eight hundred and fifty thousand (850,000) Members in the US and Canada. It is headquartered in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania. The International is charged with the overall operation of the Union and is governed, as are all other aspects of the Union, by the International Constitution. The International President is David McCall.

### **National Office**

The Steelworkers National Office is located in Toronto. Its area of responsibility is to administer the affairs of the Union in Canada. The National Director is Marty Warren.

### **District 3 Office - Western Canada**

District 3 of the United Steelworkers is made up of a geographic area including the Province of Manitoba West and including the three Canadian Territories. The District has approximately fifty-five (55,000) thousand Steelworker Members. The head office for District 3 of the United Steelworkers is the old IWA National Office at #300 – 3920 Norland Avenue, Burnaby BC. District 3 is responsible for overseeing affairs of the Union in Western Canada. The Director of District 3 is Scott Lunny.

### **USW (IWA) Wood Council**

When the IWA merged with the Steelworkers it was negotiated that a position of Council Chair be put in place to advocate on behalf of Wood Council Locals to the betterment of their memberships. The Wood Council Chair is Jeff Bromley.

### **Your Local Union - Local 1-1937**

Your Local Union covers a large geographic area including all of the BC mainland coast from Washington State to the State of Alaska and all of Vancouver Island and Haida Gwaii.

The Local Union Offices are located in Courtenay, Duncan, Port Alberni, Port McNeill, and Burnaby. The Local's administration office is in Courtenay.

The Local Union is governed by a twenty-three (23) Member Executive Board who are responsible for overseeing the operation of the Local Union through Executive Board Meetings held quarterly.

The Local Union currently has 10 full-time Officers and 5 Support Staff working out of the many offices to deal with the day-to-day issues of providing service to the Membership.

### **Executive Board Positions**

President	Brian Butler		
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Rick Nelson	Warden	Nolan Paquette
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Richard Arnason	Conductor	Shelley Siemens
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice President	Chris Cinkant	Executive at Large	Dan Jorgenson
4 <sup>th</sup> Vice President	Glen Cheetham		
Financial Secretary	Dusty Palmer		
Recording Secretary	Jason Cox		
		+ 12 Ward Area Executive Board Members	

### **Local Annual Delegated Meeting**

Due to the geographic size of Local 1-1937, the Union holds a Local Annual Delegated Meeting (LADM) so that Members from across the Local can attend to set the agenda and conduct the business of the Union on an annual basis. The LADM is generally held in the month of April each year and delegates are selected democratically from workplaces on a proportional basis as per the Local Union By-Laws.

### **Area Meetings**

Area meetings may be held at various locations throughout the Local Union for a variety of reasons but are generally held to inform members of activities in the Local Union or elsewhere that may impact or interest them. Area meetings may also be held virtually by video conferencing.

### **Operational Meetings**

Operational meetings may be called and conducted by the Union Stewards in your workplace or by your Union Committee or Local Representative for various reasons including setting negotiation demands, informing the Members of issues that affect them or to hold nominations for committee positions to name a few. These meetings are operated under Roberts Rules of Order. You can read Roberts Rules of Order on the website at [www.usw1-1937.ca](http://www.usw1-1937.ca). It is important that Union Members attend these meetings in order to stay informed. **PLEASE ATTEND YOUR UNION MEETINGS.** Operational meetings may also be held virtually by video conferencing.

### **Your Workplace**

In your workplace, the Union has the right to elect a grievance committee and a safety committee, which represent the Local Union in the workplace. These representatives are advocates for other Members in the workplace in areas such as grievance handling and safety-related matters.

Once you are a Union Member you should familiarize yourself with the names of your Union Stewards on the shop committee so that you are aware of who they are if you have any questions or concerns related to your rights in the workplace or contract issues. As well, you should familiarize yourself with your Union Safety Representatives on the Safety Committee so that you

know who to speak to regarding questions or concerns around safety issues. If you do not know who your Operational Representative (Steward) is, please contact the Local Union for the information.

The Collective Agreement that is in force at your worksite is available to you upon request of your Operational Representative or in the event that the Steward does not have a copy available please contact the Local Union to obtain a copy. **Please find enclosed a business card for your Business Agent.**

### **Safety**

All working people have the right to return home after a shift in the same condition as when they started work. With that in mind, we include the WorkSafe Regulation that allows working people to refuse to perform unsafe work, which is also referenced in Articles in most of our Collective Agreements.

### **Refusal of Unsafe Work**

#### **3.12 Procedure for refusal**

(1) A person must not carry out or cause to be carried out any work process or operate or cause to be operated any tool, appliance or equipment if that person has reasonable cause to believe that to do so would create an undue hazard to the health and safety of any person.

(2) A worker who refuses to carry out a work process or operate a tool, appliance or equipment pursuant to subsection (1) must immediately report the circumstances of the unsafe condition to his or her supervisor or employer.

(3) A supervisor or employer receiving a report made under subsection (2) must immediately investigate the matter and

(a) Ensure that any unsafe condition is remedied without delay, or

(b) If in his or her opinion the report is not valid, must so inform the person who made the report.

(4) If the procedure under subsection (3) does not resolve the matter and the worker continues to refuse to carry out the work process or operate the tool, appliance or equipment, the supervisor or employer must investigate the matter in the presence of the worker who made the report and in the presence of

(a) a worker Member of the joint committee,

(b) a worker who is selected by a trade union representing the worker, or

(c) if there is no joint committee or the worker is not represented by a trade union, any other reasonably available worker is selected by the worker.

(5) If the investigation under subsection (4) does not resolve the matter and the worker continues to refuse to carry out the work process or operate the tool, appliance or equipment, both the supervisor, or the employer, and the worker must immediately notify an officer, who must investigate the matter without undue delay and issue whatever orders are deemed necessary.

#### **3.13 No discriminatory action**

(1) A worker must not be subject to discriminatory action as defined in [section 150 of Part 3 of the Workers Compensation Act](#) because the worker has acted in compliance with section 3.12 or with an order made by an officer.

(2) Temporary assignment to alternative work at no loss in pay to the worker until the matter in section 3.12 is resolved is deemed not to constitute discriminatory action.

### **Some Obligations For You As A Union Member**

- Familiarize yourself by reading the International Constitution, Local By-Laws, and your Collective Agreement, which can be found at the Local Union office.
- **Ensure that legal picket lines are respected at all times.** Unionized workers have collective strength achieved directly through their right to withdraw their service and strike an employer when in a legal position to do so. Crossing a legal picket line without a picket pass from the Union on strike is something that goes against everything a Union stands for and should never be attempted by a Union Member. In doing so a Union Member could face legal consequences through the Discipline and Trials Sections of the International Constitution. More importantly, it would be seen as siding with the Company in the dispute, something that would forever label a person as someone devoid of principle and destitute of honour. If you encounter a legal picket line, please honour it, by refusing to cross it.
- Familiarize yourself with your Committee Members, Chairpersons, Business Agents, and Local Union Officers. They are there to serve you.
- Co-operate with your Fellow Members and Officers and Business Agents for a stronger Union.
- Report violations of the Collective Agreement in your workplace to your elected representatives.
- Complete and return to our office the enclosed Death Benefit Beneficiary Designation Card.
- Keep the Local Union informed of any change in your address or phone number.
- Forwarding your email address to the Local to participate in the Rapid Response Program (optional) to keep up to date on issues, as noted earlier in this document, would be of assistance. You can forward your email address through a Local Office or through the website.

**Finally, and once again, welcome to the Steelworkers.**

In solidarity,

Local 1-1937 Executive Board

BB/jm/pb  
USW 1-1937



**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOUR UNION  
UNITED STEELWORKERS LOCAL 1-1937**

**Burnaby Area Office**

8988 Fraserton Court  
Burnaby BC V5J 5H8

Phone: 604-874-0274 Toll Free 1-877-611-2171

Fax: 604-874-8137  
buradmin@usw1-1937.ca

**Courtenay Administration Office**

202 - 1509 Cliffe Avenue  
Courtenay BC V9N 2K6

Phone: 250-334-3329 Toll Free 1-800-663-5594

Fax: 250-334-2662  
admin@usw1-1937.ca

**Duncan Area Office**

351 Brae Road  
Duncan BC V9L 3T9

Phone: 250-746-6131 Toll Free 1-866-746-6121

Fax: 250-746-1012  
dunadmin@usw1-1937.ca

**Port Alberni Area Office**

4904 Montrose St  
Port Alberni BC V9Y 1M3

Phone: 250-724-0171

Fax: 250-724-2800  
paadmin@usw1-1937.ca

**Port McNeill Area Office**

PO Box 214  
6 – 311 Hemlock St

Port McNeill BC V0N 2R0

Phone: 250-956-4312 Toll Free 1-888-956-4312

Fax: 250-956-4988  
padmin@usw1-1937.ca