

CUPE locals show leadership on the environment

Members of CUPE 606 in British Columbia have won the 2016 CUPE National Earth Day contest for their ongoing involvement with Bike to Work events in their community. CUPE 606 represents schoolboard workers in District 68 in Nanaimo and Ladysmith, BC.

CUPE 606 members have joined with community members for at least ten years promoting greener work commuting habits. On two separate occasions, the members won the community prize awarded to individuals who commute by bicycle. CUPE 606 has also been a leader creating workplace cycling teams, joining with teachers and office support staff to encourage all workers in Nanaimo and Ladysmith schools to cut greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality by bicycling to work.

CUPE 2348 members from Winnipeg are the first runners-up for the 2016 Earth Day contest. Local 2348 members work at the Klinik Community Health Centre in downtown Winnipeg.

CUPE 2348 members have advocated for many green steps in their workplace through their Workplace Wellness Initiative Committee, a joint committee comprised of workers and management. The committee has put in place a workplace battery recycling program, a composting program, helped get energy efficient lighting in place in the health centre, and reduced the use of disposable plastics at work. On Earth Day 2016, Klinik workers operated an e-waste recycling event for the community.

CUPE 4953 members, representing health care workers in Victoriaville, Quebec, are also runners-up this year. Local 4953 members have helped put in place several environmental programs where they work, such as a carpooling initiative and a workplace recycling program.

Each year the CUPE National Environment Committee holds its Earth Day contest to promote the good green



CUPE 606: Winners of the 2016 CUPE National Earth Day contest for their Bike to Work events.



CUPE 2348: First runners-up for the Earth Day contest for their workplace e-waste recycling program.

actions CUPE members take where they work and live. In 2013, CUPE adopted a National environment policy that calls on our union to do all it can to reduce carbon emissions, fight for clean air, water and soil, and many other green steps.

National staff can help CUPE locals interested in starting and/or expanding workplace environmental programs. Contact enviro@cupe.ca for more information.

CUPE's Climate Change tool goes online

"Starting to Talk: CUPE Climate Change Conversations" is now accessible online through cupe.ca. CUPE members can now download or view the PowerPoint presentation in the Environment section of cupe.ca and host conversations about how climate change affects their community and workplace. The discussion tool also helps CUPE members learn about climate change science and consider actions they can take to cut greenhouse gases that cause climate change.

National environment staff and/or members of the CUPE National Environment Committee can help CUPE locals and members interested in hosting a climate change talk. Contact enviro@cupe.ca for more information.



New and improved workplace environmental resources

CUPE National has published an updated version of the fact sheet "How to form a Workplace Environment Committee". Copies of the fact sheet can be ordered in English and French. The fact sheet spells out the benefits of having a committee to address environmental issues in the workplace, such as waste reduction, recycling, transportation, greener meeting practices and other issues.

CUPE National has also revamped its online workplace environmental auditing tool. This simple yet effective online tool calculates a "green score" when you answer a series of questions about workplace waste programs, water, cleaning products, transportation and other issues. The survey quickly gauges the extent of a workplace's environmentalism.

Find the tool online at cupe.ca/cupe-eco-audit-0.



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EnviroAction is CUPE national's environmental newsletter.

For more information: enviro@cupe.ca