



January 28, 2021

A First Collective Agreement – Significant Gains for Bee-Clean Members in St. John's

Another of our private-sector bargaining units – Bee-Clean workers in St. John's, NL – has reached its first Collective Agreement (CA).

The organizing efforts of the St. John's local are bearing fruit. Not only did they go out and sign the cards, but the local stayed on the case, and invested in the collective bargaining process.

Craig Dyer, chief steward for the local, says “This is why our organizing is so important. Better wages, better conditions, better staffing, means a stronger postal service – what's good for the cleaners benefits all postal workers and mail users too.”

In this CA, the cleaners' top pay rate will go from \$12.50 (just over minimum wage) to \$15, plus the consumer price index that the province is set to add to the minimum wage in April. They'll be covered by fundamental union protections like health and safety provisions, the right to a union rep, seniority, a voice in staffing regulations and more. They also gained paid holidays, overtime rates, more vacation time, and life insurance, among other benefits. It's a contract we can be proud of.

Better conditions for cleaners in the plant helps all of us keep the mail moving safely. As described in the story of this bargaining unit in the upcoming issue of Perspective, the St. John's plant was one of the first Canada Post facilities to shut down because of multiple COVID-19 cases among workers. Then and every day, cleaners' work is keeping the facility open – as they do in every location across the land during the pandemic.

The St. John's local, while organizing the cleaners, also signed on to the fight for a 15- dollar minimum wage in NL – a connected struggle. We all need both better workplace conditions and legal standards, and this is how

we fight for our own members and all workers at the same time.

Last January, our New Brunswick unit of Bee-Clean workers got a new contract, but it was an arbitrated agreement, and we knew we could have done better in negotiations. This one is a negotiated settlement, and all postal workers know from recent experience how preferable it is to sit down and resolve issues with the employer.

If you're a Bee-Clean worker who doesn't yet have union representation, you have a lot to gain by joining CUPW. If you have cleaners in your facility without a union, make sure they know about this victory. We're stronger together!

In solidarity,



Jean-Philippe Grenier
3rd National Vice-President

2019-2023 / Bulletin # 230
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