

Employer Gives LabourWatch Materials to Employees During Union Drive

John Mortimer
President, Canadian LabourWatch Association

We just learned, that several months ago, a Saskatchewan employer heard about a **Steelworkers drive** just two days before the union filed for certification. After learning about our website from their Association, the employer retained a law firm associated with us in the province. **The employer did not sit back** and watch employees make an important decision about their work without complete information on how it would impact them. So, Monday morning, the employer held a meeting based on the legal advice they had received.

The employer gave copies of LabourWatch FAQ's, card revocation instructions and forms to the employees at the meeting. The employer had printed these from our web site, which is freely accessible by the public with a balanced, factual picture of unionization and decertification.

The **employer used the materials as their communication guide.** Their message: "You can join a union or not, but you should be informed. **Don't take it from us** - read these handouts and go to the web site." The meeting happened none too soon - the union filed for certification that afternoon. The employer told us that "**the employees became upset at the union**" as LabourWatch gave a different picture than the union had given.

A number of employees immediately filed to revoke their cards. In return, the union filed an Unfair Labour Practice (ULP) regarding, in part, the employer's use of the LabourWatch materials. The upshot is this: **the union filed for certification, with 48% of the 80 employees,** but afterwards were unable to get quorum at meetings or form an executive. Eventually they decided to withdraw the ULP complaint. The employees succeeded in remaining union-free which was their goal in the end.

The employer learned a valuable lesson and **empowered employees at two other locations,**

in another province. They held employee **information meetings about unionization** and handed out the same materials for that province as a preventative measure.

In the end, the union was not yet active at these locations but these **employees expressed appreciation** for being informed about their rights and responsibilities. The employer told us that in all locations "**the employees really liked the independent and factual perspective of the LabourWatch materials** rather than just having management's view".

At the Canadian LabourWatch Association we are glad that our site helped these employees.

21,000 Users

Jamie McCallen
Webmaster, Canadian LabourWatch Association

Our hits tracking tells us that **3,500 people visit each month.** Our total page views are almost 75,000 since December 2000. Over 500 visits have been made to the union card revocation forms for the various provinces. **Over 700 visits to the decertification forms.** The most frequently visited questions (FAQ's) are:

- How do I decertify a union?
- Why is the union interested in me?
- What if I have signed a union card but don't support the union?

If you have never visited us please do. Spread the word to others so that people can make informed decisions and be helped in a convenient manner. **Management should visit the employer section to learn about do's and don'ts during drives and decertifications.**

French Content

Jamie McCallen
Webmaster, Canadian LabourWatch Association

We now have employee FAQ's in French and English for: Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and the Federal jurisdiction.