

WHAT DOES THE SKILLED TRADES COUNCIL DO FOR YOU?



**REPRESENTING
SKILLED TRADES WORKERS
COAST TO COAST**

www.uniforskilledtrades.ca
trades@unifor.org



VISIBILITY

Visibility as a distinct Skilled Trades Group within Unifor

UNITY

Working together for common interests and common goals

VOICE

A clear expression of the Skilled Trades Vision to Unifor Council, National Executive Board, government bodies and agencies, etc.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING CONFERENCE

To debate and set our bargaining goals as Skilled Trades

POLICY

Council meetings set Unifor Skilled Trades Policy

JOURNEYPERSON CARD

Union recognition of bona-fide journeyperson status

SEPARATE RATIFICATION

The right to vote separately on Skilled Trades issues

In Unifor we have well over 50,000 Skilled Trades and Apprentices that, if they apply through the process identified in the Constitution, they can have the Skilled Trades program negotiated into their Collective Agreement, pay their one half hour dues to the Skilled Trades Council, and begin to have an effective voice on Skilled Trades issues in their Union.

The National Skilled Trades Council and its Area Sub Councils are the Voice for the Skilled Trades members in Unifor

What's the cost to a tradesperson to join the Skilled Trades Council?

It costs just one half hours dues once per year to belong to the Skilled Trades Council and National Council. Sixty (60) percent stays with the local area council, and forty (40) percent goes to the National Council. Not one penny goes to the National Union.

Strengthening the identity of the Skilled Trades and building solidarity within the Union has gone hand in hand since the formation of the Union.

Our Union is truly different than other industrial unions. As a result, we have a Skilled Trades Department, with a Director of Skilled Trades and one staff.

The Skilled Trades, through the work of the Council, have the opportunity to have separate skilled trade's representation, protection of skilled trades' demands, the right to apply for separate ratification which is Article 17:14 of the new Unifor Constitution.

The Chairperson of the Skilled Trades Council Executive is an officer on the National Executive Board.

Through the Skilled Trades Council, the Skilled Trades Bargaining agenda covers a wide range of issues:

- ◆ Special Skilled Trades Wage increase
- ◆ Elimination of wage disparity between trades
- ◆ Improved tool allowance
- ◆ Skilled Trades pension adjustment
- ◆ Definition of Journeyman in the Collective Agreements
- ◆ Apprenticeship Language
- ◆ New Technology Language
- ◆ Work Ownership Language
- ◆ Skilled Trades Training Committees
- ◆ Job descriptions/Guidelines/Demarcation

The Skilled Trades Council has and always will be the voice for the Skilled Trades members in our Union. The history of the Skilled Trades Council dates back to 1938 in the UAW where the first Trades Council was formed in Detroit.

In 1958, the UAW abolished the American arm of the Skilled Trades Council. In Canada, the Canadian Skilled Trades Council fought to continue to be recognized and was successful.

The delegates and the Executive Board of the Unifor Skilled Trades Council are rank and file Unifor Skilled Trades workers. Quebec has a recognized position on the Executive Board.

At the most recent Founding Convention of Unifor, the National Skilled Trades Council was enshrined in the Constitution. The Chairperson of the National Skilled Trades Council executive is now automatically the representative for Skilled Trades on the National Executive Board. At one time we had no representation on the NEB, and the first recognition we received came in 1994 under CAW President Buzz Hargrove. The new constitution's recognition is much better, as it does not rely on the support of the total membership, but the Chairperson is duly elected to the position by the skilled trade delegates to the National Skilled Trades Council as per the Council bylaws, which are approved by the National Executive Board.

There are Area Sub Councils across Canada, and with the formation of Unifor, the sub councils have an excellent opportunity to become stronger. Moving forward, the policy will allow flexibility for r councils and there is also an opportunity for growth of new area councils, where there are a sufficient number of skilled trades members in an area to support it.

The Skilled Trades Council meets three times per year and has a rotation where meetings take place across Canada rotating between the Area Councils. The big question trades people have is "What does the Skilled Trades Council do for me?"

Examples of some of the resolutions that have been turned into bargaining gains are as follows:

1987 - One half hour dues per year referred to the Constitutional Convention. Issue of a wage differential between skilled trades and non-trades

1990 - Improved wage differential, special skilled trades increases

1993 - Pension differential between Skilled and non-skilled established

1996 - Work ownership for Skilled Trades established, and apprenticeship numbers

1999 - Apprenticeship numbers, 80 point pension, increased pension differential, and a new fund for a Skilled Trades Union Education Program (STUEP) at Port Elgin

2002 - Apprenticeships, SPA training replacements, New Technology committees

2005 - TSSA certification, wage and pension improvements, LOA for International and Canadian relief work, Katrina, Habitat for Humanity, and AFN projects across Canada (Social Commitment). Skilled Trades Coordinators

2015 -Paid Time off for relief work and Canadian Community Fund established

2016 -February is the next Skilled Trades Bargaining and New Technology Conference

All these gains made by the Skilled Trades over the years evolved from resolutions that were discussed and debated by the Skilled Trades Council Delegates. It was the Skilled Trades Bargaining Committees from the many different local unions that turned these resolutions into success at the bargaining table.

The Skilled Trades Council does not bargain Collective Agreements. The Skilled Trades Council supports the process leading up to bargaining, by providing Skilled Trades Resolutions, attending and participating in the Skilled Trades Bargaining and New Technology Conference. Once the resolutions have been discussed, debated, and passed at the Conference, they then go to the National Collective Bargaining Conference, and are endorsed by the whole union.

The Skilled Trades Resolutions are then used by Bargaining Committees and National Staff Representatives in negotiating for skilled trades programs across Canada. The Unifor Skilled Trades Department will provide assistance to these Bargaining Committees and National Representatives upon proper request.

The Skilled Trades Area Sub Councils provide resources and a forum for the Skilled Trades members to raise their specific skilled trade's issues, whether it is on training, contracting out, apprenticeship, or government issues on Apprenticeship or trades certification. The Council provides a forum to hold these discussions, and then move them to the National Skilled Trades Council meetings.

The National Skilled Trades Department participates in various Council meetings and provides all the delegates an up-to-date report of what is happening with the Skilled Trades across Canada.

The Unifor National President and/or the Assistant to the President responsible for Skilled Trades also attend the UNSTC conferences held 3 times a year. Therefore, Skilled Trades issues are being kept front and center with the leaders in Unifor.

As you can see, the Council is important if skilled trades want their issues dealt with, either between bargaining, raised at the government level, or have policy set by the Union to deal with specific skilled trades issues. The Unifor National Union looks to the National Skilled Trades Council as a voice for the skilled trades. With the National Skilled Trades Council now enshrined in the Unifor Constitution, this will be more important to trades than ever before.

THE SKILLED TRADES COUNCIL DOES THE FOLLOWING:

- ◆ Has active committees including Apprenticeship, Resolution, Bylaws and New Technology;
- ◆ The Executive of the National Skilled Trades Council is also the Advisory Board for the National Executive Board on Skilled Trades related issues, or policy;
- ◆ The Area Councils process Unifor Skilled Trades Council Journeyman cards, which ensure the tradesperson has completed a bonafide apprenticeship or meets the qualifications of a journeyman as laid out in the Skilled Trades Policy Manual;
- ◆ The journeyman card provides preferential employment opportunities at other Unifor certified locations;
- ◆ The Skilled Trades policy manual is a record of the policies of the Skilled Trades dating back to the UAW and CAW, and now enshrines policies developed by Unifor;
- ◆ There is a Skilled Trades website which provides information submitted by delegates, along with job opportunities that arise across Canada. The website address is: www.uniforskilledtrades.ca
- ◆ When the Skilled Trades delegates meet three times per year, it brings delegates from across Canada together, as a resource, to discuss, debate, and to network with other skilled trades in different sectors of our Union;
- ◆ The Council is responsible for assisting with the Skilled Trades Bargaining and New Technology Conference, which is put on by the National Unifor Skilled Trades Department every three years;
- ◆ The Council processes Skilled Trades Resolutions which are then required to be presented in Collective Bargaining for skilled trades across Canada, that arise from the Skilled Trades Area Council, and then also has representatives on the Resolutions Committee to the Skilled Trades Bargaining Conference, to work on all Resolutions to the Convention

WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR THE SKILLED TRADES COUNCIL

The Unifor Skilled Trades Council, like any organization, is only as strong as its membership. In order to be an effective organization that unites Skilled Trades workers from all Unifor Locals we need maximum support and participation. In other words, **WE NEED YOU!!**

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