

# IBEW LOCAL 2067 – SaskPower Equivalency Agreement Update



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## IBEW Local 2067

### Membership Update

In January of 2019, the Mayor of Estevan contacted IBEW Local 2067 and asked if we wanted to be part of a committee that would meet with the Honorable Catherine McKenna in regards to the SaskPower and Government of Saskatchewan's proposal on an [Equivalency Agreement](#) that would permit coal fired generation units to run past their mechanical end of life until their economic end of life.



This Economic Transition committee consists of representatives from the City of Estevan, the Rural Municipality, the Estevan Chamber of Commerce, the UMWA, and the IBEW. It was the hope of the Mayor that a representative from each group would be permitted to meet with the Government to express views and concerns about the decisions that have been made in regards to coal fired generation and the impacts it will have on our communities, members and employers. Unfortunately, the Minister did not commit to a scheduled meeting with the representatives of the Economic Transition Committee.

We reached out to IBEW International Political Action Coordinator, Brother Matt Wayland, and asked if a meeting could be established between us and the Government to discuss our concerns. A meeting for the labour organization was scheduled and held on February 27, 2019. In attendance at the meeting were IBEW Business Manager, Jason Tibbs; IBEW Unit 4 Chairperson and SFL Executive Council representative, Brother John Donohoe; UMWA International representative, Jody Dukart; and UMWA member, Ashley Johnson.

Now many may ask why this meeting was necessary as it had been stated that the Government was likely going to sign onto the equivalency agreement anyway. That is a very valid question, however, with all the various laws, acts, and regulations coming into place, the agreement still does not guarantee that the coal fired units will remain operational past their mechanical end of life. Even with an equivalency agreement in place, the current carbon pricing makes it unlikely that the coal fired units would remain economical with pricing emissions over 370 t CO<sub>2</sub>e/GWh at \$50 per tonne. Our meeting was more to point out that people over estimate what can be done in two years and under estimate what can be done in 10 years. Without having a proper plan in place prior to the closing of plants, the federal government needs to take a more balanced approach when looking to make changes that will impact members, families and communities.

## Provincial Regulations

On January 1, 2018, The [Saskatchewan Greenhouse Gas Regulations](#) came into effect. The regulations apply on a system-wide basis, including independent power producers with the exclusion of co-generation and flare gas generations units. A system-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions “cap” in megatons was introduced at 33.5 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e for 2018-2019, 77 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e for 2020-2024 and 64.5 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e for 2025-2029. These limits were the same as to what the federal regulations would have required. The provincial regulations also enabled the Equivalency Agreement.



## Equivalency Agreement

An Agreement in Principle was signed in November of 2016. The agreement would enable the [Federal Coal Regulation](#) to “stand down”. The emissions limits would be those set by the *Saskatchewan Greenhouse Gas Regulations* and without the *Equivalency Agreement* the coal fired generation units would be required to retire on specific dates according to *Federal Coal Regulations*. This would force a closure of BDPS 4 and 5 by the end of 2019. The *Equivalency Agreement* does not specifically exempt SaskPower from paying a federal carbon price.

## Next Steps

We have reached out to the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour for their assistance in providing a draft of recommendations that will be presented to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change. We are looking to provide recommendations that would not require carbon pricing to achieve significant reductions, and should pricing still be required, a means to ensure that the money collected would be used by SaskPower to put towards projects and initiatives that reduce the carbon footprint of the Company, while still maintaining employment opportunities. What we do not want to see happen is the money being solely used for Independent Power Producers as the money should be used to benefit the shareholders of the company it was taken from.

In Solidarity

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