

Why Workers Join Unions

In the 1830's in the United States and in the 1860's in Canada and the United Kingdom, workers began to band together to demand fair treatment from employers. These were the first unions. Their purpose was to identify:

- *unfair wage levels*
- *too-long work hours*
- *unsafe or inhumane working conditions*

In general they fought against unacceptable treatment by employers.

Unions today operate on the same basic principles. The issues that concern them most are:

- *fair wages*
- *job security*
- *safe, clean working conditions*
- *recognition of seniority*
- *stopping favoritism and similar injustices to employees*
- *proper grievance procedures*
- *satisfactory retirement programs*
- *employment equity*

How A Union Is Formed

STEP ONE Identify the group of employees the union will represent. For example, people who work in certain trades or people who work in the same or related industries often group together to form a union.

STEP TWO The union organizers invited employees to join. Employees who want to join sign an application form and pay a fee (called dues) to show their interest.

STEP THREE When the majority or qualified employees supports the union, an application of certification is made to the appropriate labor relations board.

STEP FOUR Once the union is certified; the members elect their own officers.

STEP FIVE The union now represents the employees in all further negotiations with the company concerning wages, benefits and working conditions.

Please mark ballot with an "X"	
I vote to join the union X _____	I do not vote to join the union _____

