

# LOCAL ELECTIONS

Our union would collapse without the selfless, dedicated work of USGE Local Officers. It stands to reason that there are very precise requirements that govern the election of these key individuals.

Each Local must elect officers to conduct its affairs in accordance with USGE By-Law 7 and By-law 9.

By-law 7, Section 3, concerning Local Executives, states:

- a) *A Local Executive may be composed of a President, one or more Vice-Presidents, a Secretary-Treasurer (or a Secretary and a Treasurer), a Chief Shop Steward and Shop Stewards.*
- b) *Each Local that is composed of two or more Sections shall ensure that the membership of each Section will have an opportunity to elect a Section President. This election will be completed prior to, or during the Local election process.*
- c) *All Local Officers shall be members in good standing of the USGE.*

The USGE National Office has the responsibility of tracking and updating Local Officer elections, and ensuring they are in accordance with Local By-Laws.

As terms of office approach the expiry date set out in Local By-Laws, the National Office sends the relevant Local:

notice that Local elections should be held;

a set of election forms; and

a reminder that a new set of election forms must be submitted, even if there is no change of Local Executive members.

It is very important that the election forms be submitted in a complete and timely manner, as the names of all Local Officers whose term of office has expired are removed from the USGE mailing list. Unless the National Office is in receipt of new, properly-completed election forms, the Local receives no further mail or rebates.

To avoid having to take such regrettable action, the National Office sends a letter to the former Local Officers informing them that their names are being deleted.

## **SPECIAL ELECTIONS TO FILL EXECUTIVE POSITIONS UNEXPECTEDLY VACATED**

There are occasions when a Local Officer resigns from her/his position during a given term of office. An election must be held to fill the vacancy until the end of the set term of office.

To better understand the process, let us use the example of a Local Secretary who is elected in April 2006 to serve a two-year term ending in March 2008. This hypothetical Secretary is subsequently required to resign for health reasons in December 2006, after serving only nine months. The Local must then hold a special election to fill the Secretary's term for the balance of the term – until March 2008.

It is absolutely critical that the results of this special election be correctly reported to the USGE National Office. The official election form must clearly indicate that the individual newly-elected is serving out the balance of someone else's term of office. The form should not leave the impression that the Local has set out new dates or terms for its regular election of officers. (Should a Local in fact wish to alter its By-Laws to change the dates of its set terms of office, a copy of the amended By-Laws must be submitted to the National Office at the time the change is made.)

## **EXTENSION OF TERMS IN EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES**

There may be exceptional circumstances that result in the extension of a Local Officer's set term of office. For example, a Local member who is standing for office may not be available to assume his or her duties at the start of the new term set out in the Local By-Laws. In such cases, the Local may seek an extension of the incumbent's term of office by submitting a written request to the USGE National Office. When granted, these extensions are generally for only a few months

*(March 2006)*