



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWSLETTER

PLEASE POST

## HEU marks National Aboriginal Day – June 21

The Hospital Employees' Union will join National Aboriginal Day celebrations on June 21, the day when Canadians come together to honour the unique heritage, cultures and contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Metis people.

This year, the HEU First Nations Standing Committee will be partnering with CUPE National to develop ongoing strategies to fight the privatization of water services on reserves in Canada.

“HEU continues to advocate for the fair and equal treatment of all aboriginal peoples in Canada,” says secretary-business manager Judy Darcy. “June 21 provides an important opportunity for all HEU members to come together and show our public support for our aboriginal sisters and brothers, other communities, and their issues.”

As of March 2010, 114 First Nations communities across the country were under Drinking Water Advisories and 49 First Nations water systems were classified as “high risk”.

Although legislation and regulations for drinking and wastewater have been developed in provinces and territories, these do not exist in First Nations communities. And much of the blame can be placed on the federal government for improperly installing wells and filtration systems and abandoning any responsibility for maintenance and repairs after the initial installation.

June 21, the first day of summer, is a date that holds special significance for Canada's Aboriginal peoples. Aboriginal groups have a long-standing tradition of celebrating their culture and heritage at this time.

After consultations with Aboriginal groups across Canada, the federal government proclaimed National Aboriginal Day in 1996.

Although the official day is June 21, celebrations in many parts of Canada last the entire week. To celebrate Aboriginal Solidarity Day, please post HEU's Aboriginal Solidarity Day poster on your local bulletin boards.

*June 18, 2010*

