



## GREATER VANCOUVER REGIONAL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES' UNION

November 25, 2024

Dear Brothers & Sisters:

### **Reflection of the late Brian Northam**

Let us take a moment to honour and remember a truly remarkable individual, our beloved colleague, brother and dear friend, Brian Northam. With heavy hearts, we reflect on his life and the profound impact he made on all of us, both within the workplace and beyond.

Brian's journey at Metro Vancouver began on April 29, 1988, when he was first hired into WWTP Operations. Just one year later, in May of 1989, Brian became indentured as an Electrical Apprentice. In July of 1993, Brian successfully completed his apprenticeship and was posted as an Electrician at Iona WWTP. Just a few months later, in December 1993, he was appointed as a Field Electrician within the Sewer & Drainage District, where his skills and work ethic began to shine even brighter. For the next three decades, Brian was an Electrician in the Field Utilities Division until he retired in July 2024.

Throughout his career, Brian was not only committed to his trade but also to his brothers and sisters in the union. His advocacy for worker rights, safety, and fairness was unwavering. He dedicated himself to the GVRDEU in many important roles, including as a Steward, a member of the Bargaining Committee, a Municipal Pension Plan Trustee representative, and an OH&S Officer. Most notably, he served as our Vice President for the last several years until June 2024.

As a champion of worker safety, Brian's influence is still felt today. Many of the safeguards and protocols that protect us every day are the direct result of Brian's tireless work. He was a fierce advocate for ensuring that every worker had the tools and knowledge they needed to return home safely to their families. His legacy of mentorship in this area is something that will continue to benefit future generations of workers.

In addition to his remarkable professional achievements, Brian was also a dedicated member of his community. He was a long-standing percussionist with the Delta Police Pipe Band, where his passion for music was a source of joy for all who knew him.

But perhaps the thing that will be missed most of all, the thing that made Brian truly special, was his sense of humour. Brian had a quick wit that made everyone around him smile. No matter the situation, he had the ability to lighten the mood, ease the tension, and make even the hardest days a little brighter. His comical aspect was a gift, and it's one we will all carry with us, whether through a joke, a memory, or just the way he made us feel at ease. Brian knew how to make people laugh, and that joy will live with us forever.

Brian fought a courageous battle with cancer for the last few years, and though he was off work since June 2021, his spirit remained a source of strength for us all. He passed away on November 13, 2024, leaving behind a legacy that will never be forgotten.

Our deepest condolences go to Brian's family. We are truly grateful that you shared him with us for so many years as a friend. His commitment to his family was mirrored by his dedication to his work and his union family, and we will always be grateful for the time we had with him.

A Celebration of Life will be planned for Spring 2025, and we will share the details with the membership when they become available.

Brian, thank you for your devotion, mentorship, and friendship. Your legacy lives on in the work we do every day, in the safety measures you helped implement, and in the hearts of those who had the privilege to work alongside you. You will be deeply missed. May you rest in peace.

With sympathy,

The GVRDEU Executive Officers