



INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS **LOCAL UNION 953 NEWS - JUNE 2014**

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Hello Brothers and Sisters:

I hope that all of you are finding time in your busy lives to enjoy the beautiful summer weather and the great outdoors!

I recently had the opportunity to attend the Cooperative LAMPAC and the Midwest Investor owned LAMPAC meetings which were held in the Twin Cities area. There are two common items of interest that were discussed in detail at both LAMPAC Meetings, the recently released EPA Ruling and the growing use of Solar Power.

Solar Power is a rapidly growing field which is currently heavily supported by incentives. Without the incentive programs it would not be financially feasible to own and install a solar panel on your property. As stated at the meetings, solar energy is currently available during the daylight hours. The homeowners would be required to switch back to the grid at dark. The industry is currently working on developing the batteries to store the energy for use after dark. This process in itself could cause potential problems for the Utilities and will need to be worked out if the use of solar energy is going to grow in our area.

The second item, the EPA's new rule on Carbon Emissions for existing power plants causes great concern. There is approximately 645 pages in this new rule that the Utilities are struggling with trying to understand what it all means. We do know that it puts the existing power plants in a position where they may be forced to close, if the Utility cannot comply with the new rule once finalized. There is currently an ongoing 120 day comment period. You may submit comments at the following websites: If you are a member of a Cooperative, go to Action.coop, to submit your comments. If you are not a member of a Cooperative go to Tellepa.com, to submit your comments.

Please spread the word about these websites to your family and friends, the more consumers that comment on this Rule, the better.

Enjoy the rest of your summer, stay safe, and don't forget to send your comments to the EPA before the end of September, 2014.

Yours in Solidarity,

Dale Blank
Business Manager/Financial Secretary

Dear Members,

I hope the welcome of Summer finds you well. I'm happy to report IBEW Local 953 has now instituted a new Substation Technician Apprenticeship Program administrated by Missouri Valley Line Contractors Apprenticeship Program. The indentured apprenticeship will be very similar to the Lineman apprenticeship already in place. Upon graduation from this program a worker will receive a Journeyman Substation Technician ticket, this ticket is approved by the Department Of Labor and recognized worldwide. Because of the high volume of work performed inside the substation fence Local 953, along with Local 2150, felt it would be valuable to include this program and classification under the Power Agreement which all Unionized contractors work under in the state of Wisconsin. For more information about this check out www.movalleyjatc.org and click on Substation Tech. I would also like to report The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (O.S.H.A.) recently updated its standards in Electric Power Generation, Transmission, and Distribution and its Electrical Protective Equipment standards. These changes further increase safety protections for America's workers! If you would like additional information on these changes please give me a call. I can also send a fact sheet to you upon request.

On a sad note, MJ Electric had a fatality of a Lineman working near Dexter, IA, who fell from the aerial device he was working out of last month. The final safety investigations are still ongoing, but preliminarily information indicts the worker was wearing a safety harness but may not have been clipped in. Very sad, please put his family in your prayers, and remember to cover the basic safety steps to keep yourself safe.

Brady Weiss
Asst. Business Manager

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are our brother's keepers or at least we should be doing everything we can to be our brother's keeper. We have been experiencing an increase in safety incidents for several months. Many of us have been dealing with plant closures, negotiations, terminations, grievances, injuries, near misses, and other distractions. We may find ourselves not paying full attention to the tasks that we or our coworkers are performing. I don't know what the true cause of the increase in safety incidents is. What I do know is that if the trend continues we will very likely be dealing with something even more tragic. We have all been given the tools and safety procedures to do our jobs safely, but we must use them accordingly. Nobody can afford to take short cuts or not follow the safety rules. If it is personality issues, then we need to check those at the door when we arrive at work. We don't need to be best friends, but we do need to communicate with everyone on a professional and courteous level. We are not only responsible for our own safety, but we need to watch out for all of our brothers and sisters. We must be our brother's keepers. Hope to see you at the golf outing. Enjoy your summer and stay safe.

In Solidarity,

Martin Sandberg
Asst. Business Manager

"The significant problems we face cannot be solved by the same level of thinking that created them."

- Albert Einstein

What is a union? It is a group of workers who have fought and won the right to collectively negotiate wages, benefits and conditions.

The strength of your union is directly related to and dependent upon the participation, support and unity of the entire membership. It is through that participation, support and unity that this Union has been able to secure excellent working agreements for the membership. It is that same support that provides the leadership of this Union with the will and way to challenge management when you believe that your rights or agreement may have been violated. However, a lack of the same could lead to a diminishment of those benefits. That is why it is so important that if you have not, you should become an active, involved member. I.B.E.W. Local Union 953 has been representing and providing for its members since May 26, 1919 and going forward with your support, that same service will carry on for many more years.

On another subject, apparently we have once again entered the storm season as the incidence of storm related concerns from the membership seems to be on the rise. I am sure that this summer will be no different than the others, so if you happen to be given direction by management that you believe might be contrary to the agreement, please remember that when in doubt, obey, then grieve later. I also encourage you to contact your local steward with any related concerns.

Lastly, I would briefly like to touch on Work Place Monitoring. Today, it seems like just about anything that we do in the workplace could potentially be monitored through the use of some form of technology. If you view this as an invasion of your privacy, your concerns are probably valid. However, it would seem that the shareholders needs greatly outweigh your concerns, therefore I don't believe it is realistic to expect any favorable changes in the

future regarding monitoring in the workplace. Although I can partially understand the reasoning behind some of management's decision to utilize such options, I have to ask myself if they might unknowingly be creating an air of mistrust amongst the workers. In addition, I cannot help but wonder when the line will be crossed between their need for employee management and your contractual rights. Hopefully that doesn't happen, but if it does, your Union will be there.

Have a Safe Summer!

In Solidarity,

Robert J. Lahti
Asst. Business Manager

The most important word in the language of the working class is "solidarity."—Harry Bridges



In Unity there is strength; We can move mountains when we're united and enjoy life -- Without unity we are victims. Stay united.—Bill Bailey

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 2, 2014

IBEW Statement on EPA Carbon Emission Rules

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The IBEW is studying the lengthy rule on carbon emissions for existing facilities. We will review it with a fair but critical eye, as our concerns with the EPA's new rule are the same as we have expressed over past agency dictates — namely that the regulations focus solely on the environmental aspect of public policy at the expense of balancing our nation's economic and energy needs.

The President spoke eloquently over the weekend about concerns for public health and cleaner air. Like most Americans, we share those goals. It will do our nation little good however, to achieve these goals at the expense of a balanced energy portfolio capable of meeting the demands of modern society. The jobs of thousands of working men and women and the well-being of their communities are also worthy of saving.

The EPA has a track record of underestimating the impact of its rules, making faulty predictions that have cost tens of thousands of good jobs. In 2011 the IBEW and several other unions testified before the agency, predicting that 56 gigawatts of generation would be lost due to plant closings under then-proposed rules. At the time, the EPA estimated only 4.7 gigawatts would be lost. Our experience in the industry enabled us to see what the agency's models could not. Approximately 90 percent of the plants scheduled to close were required to run during last winter's polar vortex to prevent grid disruption. Experts now confirm that 56 gigawatts will indeed be lost by 2016. We will critically examine the new rules to determine how much additional capacity could be lost, and we hope the EPA will take our estimates seriously this time.

Despite the wishes of the President and the environmental movement, renewable energy such as wind and solar are simply not ready to replace other fuel sources in meeting the demand for electrical power and will not be for the foreseeable future. That leaves natural gas as the only viable alternative in the short term. Our nation has learned from bitter experience that relying too heavily on one energy source is not a sound policy.

We will continue to work with the President and the EPA to craft rules that are more in tune with the reality of the electrical power system and that are part of a balanced approach that moves our nation toward achieving all of its goals for the environment, the economy and our energy future.

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) represents approximately 725,000 active members and retirees who work in a wide variety of fields, including utilities, construction, telecommunications, broadcasting, manufacturing, railroads and government. The IBEW has members in both the United States and Canada and stands out among the American unions in the AFL-CIO because it is among the largest and has members in so many skilled occupations.