



# IBEW 483

Newsletter of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 483

April 2009

*Representing:* • Light • CFS • Clerical • Water • Water Pollution Control • Building Maintenance • Supervisors • Click! Network • Elmhurst • Fircrest • Lakeview • Milton • Ohop • Parkland • Peninsula Light • Sumner • Eatonville • Pierce County Traffic Signal • Asplundh Tree • Trees Inc. • JTS, Inc. • Henkels & McCoy • RCE Flagging • Osmose • Northwest Line Construction NECA • Pacific West Corporation •

## IBEW Local 483 Spearheads Shared Line Apprentice Training

A shared Line Apprentice Training Agreement between Ohop Mutual Light Company, Parkland Light & Water Company and Elmhurst Mutual Power & Light Company is in its sixth month. This agreement, which was brokered by IBEW Local 483, has enabled Line Apprentices from all three utilities to receive on-the-job training in areas of the industry that were not available at their home utility.

This agreement allows apprentices to be “loaned out” to another utility for the purpose of getting training hours. Before this agreement apprentices spent a longer time in their apprenticeships just to get the required training hours. The response from both management and labor has been very positive. Finding ways to train our members with available resources is key in keeping our membership at the top of its league.

## Congratulations Journeyman Wireman Exam Applicants!!!



Exam Committee from left back row: Cynthia Horton, Ray Leske, Rich Danison, Alice Phillips (Business Manager) and Frank Weite. Exam Applicants from left front row: Alex Smith, George Nordhaug, Jeremy Dunn and Gregory Reed.

Congratulations to the first ever Journeyman Wireman Exam Applicants for completing their test at IBEW Local 483. IBEW Local 483 has always offered the Journeyman Lineman Exam, but recently began offering the Journeyman Wireman, Journeyman Tree Trimmer, Journeyman Meterman and Journeyman Communication Technician Exams at our Union hall.

### **Brotherhood Night & Open House** **Friday, May 15, 2009**

*Please join us to honor our retired brothers and sisters and show off our new building at the annual 483 Brotherhood Night & Open House. A light buffet and refreshments will be served starting at 5:30 p.m.*

*Where: IBEW Local 483  
3525 South Alder Street  
Tacoma, WA 98409*

*Volunteers are needed, so please contact the hall today if you are interested in helping out with this event.*

*Please remember to contact the Union Hall as soon as possible to update your information if you have had a change of address, telephone, name change, etc.*

*If you are on an unpaid status for any length of time, please check with the hall to make sure that your dues stay current.*

**IBEW Local 483 Supports The Employee Free Choice Act And So Should You**

*The following is an article written by the AFL-CIO*

The best opportunity for working men and women to get ahead economically is by uniting with coworkers to bargain with their employers for better wages and benefits. These are tough economic times – soaring gas and food prices, home foreclosures, unaffordable health care, and shattered retirement security. Wages for working men and women have stagnated while pay and bonuses for CEO's have sky-rocketed.

The Employee Free Choice Act is the most important legislative proposal in seventy years because it will remove unfair barriers to union representation and collective bargaining so that workers can get their fair share and improve jobs and benefits for everyone. It will help workers achieve the American Dream by giving them the freedom to choose a union and bargain collectively. It will mean that the economy can work for everyone again.

Current federal labor law – the National Labor Relations Act – has become a barrier to workers' rights. Companies intimidate, harass, coerce and even fire people who try to organize unions. Workers are fired in a quarter of private-sector union organizing campaigns and most workers who try to form unions are subjected to repeated, coercive one-on-one anti-union meetings with their supervisors. Even after workers successfully form unions, 44 percent of the time they can't get a first contract. This is an urgent crisis for workers, blocking their free will and their ability to bargain for a better future.

**PROVISIONS**

The Employee Free Choice Act Remedies these problems in three specific ways:

**1. Removes Current Barriers that Prevent Workers from Forming Unions to Bargain Collectively.**

Requires that when a majority of employees have signed authorizations designating the union as its bargaining representative, the union will be certified by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). Requires the Board to develop model authorization language and procedures for establishing the validity of signed authorizations. Changes the current corporate-dominated representation process that encourages companies to coerce and intimidate workers who seek to form a union and pressure them to influence their choice.

**2. Guarantees Workers a Contract When They Form a New Union.**

Provides that when an employer and newly formed union are unable to bargain a first contract within 90 days, either party can request mediation by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS). If no agreement has been reached after 30 days of mediation, the dispute is referred to binding arbitration. All time limits can be extended by mutual agreement. This change eliminates current incentives for employers to delay and stall negotiations and will dramatically reduce the delay, frustration and animosity generated by the company-dominated system.

**3. Strengthens Penalties against Companies which Break the Law During Organizing Campaigns and First Contract Negotiations.**

Company violations have become epidemic in large part because remedies for corporate misconduct, such as illegal firings of union supporters, are so weak that companies treat them as a cost of doing business and a cheap way to scare workers away from their union support. New tougher remedies will provide more protection for workers' rights.

- a. Civil Penalties:** Up to \$20,000 per violation against companies found to have willfully or repeatedly violated employees' rights during an organizing campaign or first contract negotiations.
- b. Treble Back Pay:** Increases to three times back pay the amount a company is required to pay when an employee is discharged or discriminated against during an organizing campaign or first contract negotiations.
- c. Mandatory Applications for Injunctive Remedies:** Requires the NLRB to seek federal court injunction when there is reasonable cause to believe a company has discharged or discriminated against employees, threatened to do so, or engaged in conduct that significantly interferes with employee rights during an organizing campaign or first contract negotiations. Equalizes remedies by making mandatory injunctive remedies against companies the same as the currently required injunctive remedies against unions.

**What's on [www.ibew483.org](http://www.ibew483.org)?**

There is a wealth of information at your fingertips on our website.

Questions about your contract?

- Click on the **Contracts** link and you can download a copy of your Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Don't remember when your next Unit/General Meeting is?

- You'll find a schedule on the **Home Page**.

Want to e-mail the hall but don't know the address?

- Go to **Contact Us** and send your e-mail.

There are links on the **Home Page** to:

- International Website
- WAC Rules
- Northwest JATC
- L&I Workplace Rights
- Unemployment Compensation
- Lineco
- And a whole lot more

[www.ibew483.org](http://www.ibew483.org) will provide you with a long list of sites to help you answer any questions you may have or get the important information you need. Don't forget that we post important information about our local and upcoming events as well.

**Negotiation Updates****Recently Approved Contracts:**

Click! Network  
City of Milton  
Pierce County Traffic Signal  
City of Fircrest

**Upcoming Contract Negotiations:**

Custodial & Building Maintenance  
Ohop Mutual Light Company

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**Business Manager's Report...by Alice Phillips**


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### City of Tacoma Pay and Compensation Study

The Pay and Compensation results are in for most of the non-represented positions at the City of Tacoma, and from IBEW Local 483's perspective the news is not good! There are a few classifications that received healthy increases, but all non-represented classifications lost their longevity pay. The local unions in the City of Tacoma have always recognized longevity as a benefit, and now the City of Tacoma is trying to consider this benefit part of your base wage. Our Custodial & Building Maintenance Unit is currently at the bargaining table, with management's first proposal including raising the wages of all of the classifications to the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile of market and removing longevity. This is the first unit utilizing the Pay and Compensation Study as part of their negotiating.

I can tell you that I have personally been involved in almost every meeting possible that has been related to the Pay and Compensation Study. The conversations **never** included removing longevity, and the market was to be between the 65<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentile with the perception being that if the dollar amount between the 65<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentile was no more than a few pennies you may fall somewhere in-between. IBEW Local 483 and the Tacoma Joint Labor Committee have already scheduled additional meetings to strategize on how to approach the issue of longevity in a unified manner, and I believe that we are all aware of the old saying "If you harm one, you harm us all".

What can you do to help achieve an acceptable contract? Be Ready! By this I mean, attend Union meetings, stay informed and get your financial affairs in order. Although it is difficult in these hard economic times, try to start a fund you can use in case we find ourselves in a position to take drastic action in order to achieve an acceptable agreement. How long can you survive without a paycheck? Last but most importantly remember solidarity! If you have concerns about what the bargaining team is doing, please **do not** address these concerns at work and **do not** talk to management about them. Come to a Union meeting and ask about them. To do anything other than that undermines the Union's ability to bargain on your behalf.

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### New CDL Requirements

Effective January 1<sup>st</sup> of this year the requirements to obtain a CDL became much more stringent. Any individual wishing to obtain a CDL will need to take the mandatory training course which requires defined hours in a number of categories. There are 160 hours total broken down in to the following categories:

- 40 hours of classroom instruction,
- 18 hours of street driving,
- 16 hours of training and backing maneuvers,
- 18 hours of proficiency development and
- 70 hours of combined lab training, range training and observation.

The categories are all the same but the number of hours will vary for the different classes. For more information contact the local union office or you can go online to [www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/cdltrainreg](http://www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/cdltrainreg). It is also becoming more difficult to get deferred prosecution for a DUI. You may get your personal drivers license back, but your CDL will be suspended for one year. Please remember that the legal limit for a CDL driver in their personal vehicle is .04, which is half of what the legal limit is for a non-CLD driver.

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### Political Action Committee Hard at Work

Just when you thought that all of the political campaigning was over, it is time once again to focus on our local elections. For the City of Tacoma we have a number of races coming our way. The Mayor and four Council seats are up for re-election. Our current Mayor Bill Baarsma is term limited out along with Connie Ladenburg, Rick Talbert, Mike Lonergan and Jake Fey. If you are interested in participating in our Political Action Committee, please contact me at the union office. We will be starting our interview process shortly, and the key to any local success is directly proportionate to its member's involvement.

**April Meeting Schedule**

Executive Board	Thurs.	Apr.	9	5:00 p.m.	Union Hall
General Meeting	Thurs.	Apr.	9	6:30 p.m.	Union Hall
Water	Tues.	Apr.	21	5:30 p.m.	Union Hall
CFS	Thurs.	Apr.	16	6:15 p.m.	Union Hall
Clerical	Wed.	Apr.	22	5:30 p.m.	Union Hall
Peninsular Light	Mon.	Apr.	13	4:30 p.m.	Peninsula Light Co.

**May Meeting Schedule**

Executive Board	Thurs.	May	14	5:00 p.m.	Union Hall
General Meeting	Thurs.	May	14	6:30 p.m.	Union Hall
Brotherhood Night	Fri.	May	15	6:00 p.m.	Union Hall
Water	Tues.	May	19	5:30 p.m.	Union Hall
CFS	Thurs.	May	21	6:15 p.m.	Union Hall
Clerical	Wed.	May	27	5:30 p.m.	Union Hall
Peninsula Light	Mon.	May	11	4:30 p.m.	Peninsula Light Co.

**June Meeting Schedule**

Executive Board	Thurs.	June	11	5:00 p.m.	Union Hall
General Meeting	Thurs.	June	11	6:30 p.m.	Union Hall
Water	To Be Determined				Union Hall
CFS	To Be Determined				Union Hall
Clerical	To Be Determined				Union Hall
Peninsula Light	Mon.	June	8	4:30 p.m.	Peninsula Light Co.

*♿ We encourage all members to attend Union meetings.*

*If you have a special need that makes it difficult for you to participate, please contact us so that we may arrange necessary accommodations for you.*

**International Brotherhood of  
Electrical Workers, Local 483**

3525 South Alder Street  
Tacoma, WA 98409

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