



# OPEIU LOCAL #9 NEWSLETTER



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## MEETING NOTICE

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Tuesday, June 15, 2010

6:00 p.m.

Iron Workers Local No. 8

12034 W. Adler Lane

Milwaukee, WI 53214

## ENJOY YOUR SUMMER

There is a general membership meeting in June and then the general membership meetings are on hold until September. With summer clearly having arrived with some unprecedented heat already members will be busy planning vacations and Holiday weekends. We wish everyone an enjoyable and safe summer.

## ADMINISTRATION MOVES AHEAD TO KILL ANTI-UNION SCHEME

The Obama administration is a step closer to killing off a George W. Bush-era scheme that reimburses federal contractors for their expenses in waging anti-union campaigns.

Under that program, bitterly attacked by labor when first put into place, federal contractors are able to use taxpayer dollars to hire union-busting consulting firms, produce anti-union materials, pay wages of workers forced to attend anti-union meetings and the like.

The US Chamber of Commerce complained that the Obama administration's proposal to disallow this activity interferes with the

employers "rights to communicate with their employees."

Union advocates declared that position nonsense, pointing out the businesses can and do communicate with their workers all they want—but should not be able to do so with taxpayer dollars.

The administration's proposal to end the practice was published in the Federal Register. The public has until June 14 to comment, after which a formal rule will be put in place.

## FEDERAL COURT SIDES WITH OSHA ON WORKER SAFETY RULES

A federal appeals court has upheld the power of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to determine how to draft and uphold workplace safety rules. The decision marked a major win for workers, thousands of whom die on the job every year.

The court ruling stemmed from a case in 2003 in which a contractor in Houston hired 11 immigrant workers to strip asbestos from a building but neither trained the workers nor provided them with the proper equipment to protect them from the dangerous substance. The City ordered the work to halt but the contractor convinced the workers to stay and work at night, behind locked gates.

OSHA ultimately cited the contractor 11 times for not training each worker and 11 times for the lack of proper equipment (respirators). The Bush Administration's OSHA Commission overturned the majority of the

citations saying that the contractor could only be cited once on the training violation and once on the safety equipment violation. This cut the fines by about 95 percent.

OSHA officials rewrote the rules to avoid another such episode, but the National Association of Home Builders sued, claiming OSHA did not have the authority to make such rules. The US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia has ruled that OSHA indeed has such authority and sided with the agency in the case.

The AFL-CIO General Counsel said that the decision makes it clear that if an employer doesn't protect its workers the employer can get cited for each worker it does not protect. This is a really important principle that will help ensure that workers get the protections they need and deserve to be safe on the job.

***As always if you have any problems do not hesitate to call or email the office.***

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