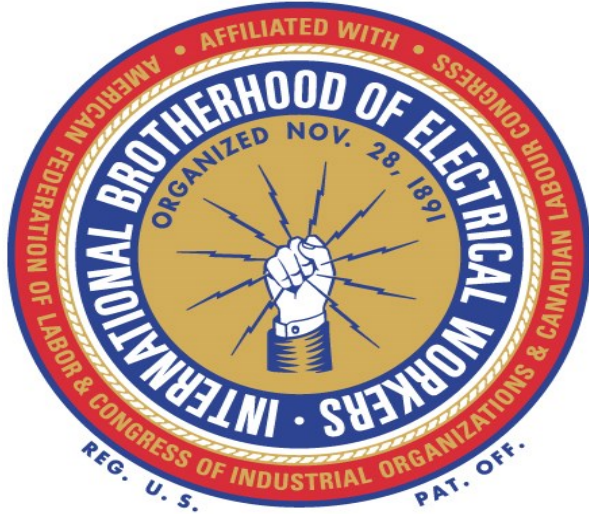


TAILGATING

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Congratulations to Kenny Ziemke lower left and Gerald Helbing lower right on receiving their 25 year watches, Congratulations guys you've earned them!



What workers can expect from the Secretary of Labor

The United States Secretary of Labor is the head of the Department of Labor who exercises control over the department, enforces and suggests laws involving unions, the workplace, and all other issues involving any form of business-person controversies.

I will give you a little history on the secretaries we have had since the 2016 election. President Trump first nominated and the senate confirmed Alexander Acosta. Acosta was forced to resign earlier this year because of his lenient 2008 plea agreement for wealthy sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. Acosta was replaced by Patrick Pizzella as acting Secretary of Labor. Pizzella was the executive director of the right to work committees in New Mexico and Delaware from 1977 to 1980. As most of you know, right to work is anti-union legislation aimed at unions, such as people not paying dues, but by law unions have to represent them.

Now President Trump plans to nominate Eugene Scalia, son of the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, to be the next Labor Secretary. Scalia is a partner at the international law firm Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, (big firm over 1200 lawyers). Scalia a management-side attorney, who in 2006 argued on behalf of Walmart against a Maryland law that would have required the retail giant to spend more health care money on its employees. The Wall Street Journal describes him as “one of the go-to guys for challenging financial regulations.” Scalia played a key role in getting a federal judge to vacate the Obama Labor Department’s fiduciary rule, which requires brokers to consider only the best interest of the client, irrespective of commissions or fees, when providing retirement advice. (That would be a novel idea wouldn’t it, looking out for the client’s best interest).

As you can see union brothers & sisters, the Department of Labor at the current time should be renamed as the Department against Labor. 2020 is a big election year, and elections have major consequence’s as you can see. Do the right thing and make Unions Great again.

In solidarity, your vice-president Randy Drummer

“Change”

I am writing you today about change. We see it all around us and occurring in our world daily. Now I can only relate to you what I see and hear from my work location at Alliant Energy. I am certain that no matter what contract you work under, you are seeing many changes as well. Over the last year or so the advent of “AMI” or automated metering has come about on the Alliant Energy property. The company wants to advance their technology by being able to sample the data faster, be able to detect outages quicker thus allowing them to dispatch to outages quicker as well. To accomplish all of this they are laying off and doing away with roughly 100 or more positions as well as reducing the overtime payouts for after hour reconnects. I’m not a mathematician, but I am certain that it will be quite some time for Alliant to recover their roughly \$166 million price tag that went with this technological investment for the entire state of Iowa.

One thing I am certain of, is that Ameren in St. Louis, Missouri has had smart meters in place for over 30 years. Alliant also piloted this program in Wisconsin, so one would think that by now we would have all the kinks worked out and have little growing pains in the transition process. Unfortunately this is not the case. It has been nothing short of chaos, hurried decisions, with large amounts of money wasted. One would think they could gather some helpful tips or insight to help the process. We obviously have a communication breakdown inhibiting this process.

Another problem we have, is that with the world of social media and instructional YouTube videos, it has made it so much easier for our less than honest customers to communicate on how to cheat the meters and divert their utilities illegally. Now that we do not have someone looking at these meters on a regular schedule, such as our meter readers, no one is the wiser. In our area we are seeing this happen more and more. One of the reasons I feel these are occurring is because of the temporary rate increase and the warm summer months, people are behind and are desperate. I don’t see this getting any better. I wish the powers to be would have went to the IUB and presented the idea before jumping into the AMI world head first. Maybe we could’ve had a program in place and a series of guidelines to follow.

Right now in south central and south eastern Iowa there are over 3000 meters that have to be manually read each month. As we have let most, if not all of our meter readers and service mechanics go, they are now having line and gas crews go out and read meters. This is taking us away from the work we need to be getting done before winter hits, not to mention it takes us off capital spending that they MUST have us all on! Unfortunately, we can work down to a meter reader position, so if we are told to read meters we must. How is this saving the company and ultimately the customer money? They are taking a much higher paid and higher skilled position away from what they should be doing and having them do what the entry level should be doing. They should NOT have let the meter readers and service mechanics all go until the entire project was complete! As the saying goes you are robbing Peter to pay Paul.

I heard the rate case meetings were very spirited in some areas over the proposed rate increases. I can only imagine what will happen next time when the company goes in for recovery of the cost for “smart metering”. Food for thought! Also, at what point do you price yourself out of the market to attract new industry into your territories???

Jeff Denz

E-Board Member Unit #8

What to do with new hires

We often get calls from members and Stewards asking if we knew they have a new hire and asking if we have met with them yet. One thing I will say is ULCS does a great job setting time aside for us to come in and talk to new hires, let them know who we are and what we are all about, and inform them of their contract and other benefits we might be able to offer. Alliant Energy does an ok job and have gotten better at blocking off a reasonable amount of time to come down and talk to new hires as well. With that being said we have some contracts that don't inform us of postings, job awards or new hires. Because of that we are in need of your help to keep us informed of postings and when those Companies have new hires. Know your contract language on postings, bidding, interview process and job awards. We need you to help to hold the Company accountable and make sure they are following the contract. Ignorance is not an excuse and does not hold water when we go to the table to bargain or fight for fairness.

Selling ourselves and the IBEW is one of the biggest challenges we face. Ask yourself these two questions; Why are you a member of IBEW Local 204? And, Why should a new hire join the Union? They aren't as easy to answer because everyone has a different reason for being a member and joining the Union. If you are like me you have worked non-union for employers and have had situations where you would have benefited from a contract and representation. I can explain my reason for being a member and the value of paying dues, but for some who have never needed representation or a contract to provide fairness and equality it can be hard to explain. If you are ever posed with those questions keep it positive. We do a lot of great things from community service and donating to charities across the State, to negotiating the wages and benefits that provide the quality of life that allows us to do things we enjoy doing and enjoy life. Could those wages and benefits be better? Absolutely they could and that's what we are here for, to keep fighting. Could they be worse? Damn right they could be.

One other thing that I want to make sure our Stewards and members know is all of the necessary forms to get a new hire signed up for membership are available on our website. If you do not have access to the internet or a printer we would be glad to send some in the mail. With all of the turmoil on Alliant Energy property and with a slew of negotiations coming up we need our Stewards and members to step up and help out whenever possible. If you see a new hire and they are interested in signing up please don't hesitate to head over to our website access those forms or call the hall and request a set get dropped in the mail. Don't wait six months and call complaining that we still don't have a new hire signed up. It is everyone's responsibility to represent our Local, so please do your part, step up and stop passing the buck. If you have time to waste complaining then you have time to print off the necessary forms and present them to a new hire. We do not have the bandwidth to drop everything and make a visit when some see fit. We want to get out to those new hires and potential members face to face and will make every effort to do so, but we shouldn't wait around for that time to come to get them signed up.

If you get a chance ask your employer if they notify the Union about openings, postings, job awards and new hires. Some employers like Black Hills Energy are dead set on not allowing us to sit down with new hires on the job, so those members need to make sure they notify us of any and all new hires. You need to be an extension of the Union and help inform and sell potential members on the benefits of being a member and the strength of the group standing together. Visit our website and know where the necessary forms are located. If all else fails or you don't have access to our website please call in. We would be glad to send those forms in the mail.

www.ibew204.com

November 2019

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|-----|
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 Daylight Saving Time Ends | 4 | 5 | 6 Unit Meeting Centerville | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 Veteran's Day | 12 | 13 Unit Meeting Iowa Falls | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 Unit Meeting Council Bluffs | 21 Executive Board | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 Thanksgiving Day | 29 Day After Thanksgiving | 30 |
| | | | | | | |

IBEW Local 204 is YOUR union. Nothing happens unless the membership is an active part of the union. The power we have as workers comes from the power of the members and the resources each member brings to the table. So how do we as members become a more active part of our union?

Read your contract – By reading and understanding your contract, you will better be able to spot when your rights, or the rights of other members, are being violated. Knowing what rights/benefits you have can also help you keep an eye out for what you think is missing from your contract.

Submit ideas for contract proposals – When contracts come up for renegotiation, a letter/survey is sent out to all members under that contract. Filling out and sending back the survey is your opportunity to propose changes or new ideas to YOUR contract.

Attend a Union Meeting – Local 204 holds union meetings just about every Wednesday somewhere in Iowa. With the exception of a meeting at the DAEC, all members are invited and welcome to any meeting, regardless of location. Attending one of these meetings can be a great way to learn more about what is going on in our union.

Attend the Member Education Conference – This conference is held by Local 204 every March in Cedar Rapids. Past topics have covered issues like grievance handling, company/union communications, legal rights of members and stewards, and the IBEW Code of excellence.

Wear it proud – Wear your union attire at work and in public. Show those around you that you are a proud union member. While only 10% of the working public are union members, imagine if 10% of those you ran into at the grocery store wore a union shirt or hat. Wearing your union colors reminds our community that we are a part of them, just as they are a part of us.

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