

The Local Line

"A PPA Award Winning Publication"

The Official Voice of the
Northwest Illinois Area Local

Local Update by Jackie Engelhart

Floor Edition

November 9, 2007

Breaks "Policy" Ended. We were notified last week that the policy instituted by former District Manager Lynn Smith, requiring all craft employees to sign in and out for breaks, is officially ended. All employees can thank our new District Manager Robert Hart for officially ending this. In practice, most supervisors were no longer requiring their employees to continue to sign in and out, but it took Mr. Hart's authority to end it. He has stated he wants employees treated well and this is an action on his part to support that. Lynn Smith was punishing all employees because he caught a few taking an extended break, and he left it as his legacy to the District. We never disagreed with the premise that employee breaks are 15 minutes and employees should monitor their breaks to the 15 minutes. We strongly disagreed with punishing all for a single incident of a few. We advised (at that time) that a procedure talk be given to all employees.

Light Duty Requests Management has instituted new procedures for light duty requests and all employees should have had a service talk with their supervisor. In the past the employee submitted their medical to the medical unit and were assigned per their restrictions. Now, the employee is to submit a written request to the Plant Manager with their medical. In the past management did not always monitor the employee for an updated medical, but the new policy letter states "*periodic updates are the responsibility of the requesting employee, failure to maintain updated status will result in the employee to perform their full duty assignment.*" Management has centralized all light duty information for the plants and the associate offices at the district level, in anticipation of implementation of "Phase 2" of the National Reassessment Process". The Unions will be briefed on Phase 2 of NRP (outsourcing) on 11-15-07.

Fitness for Duty Exams Within the last two weeks we have become aware that employees are being sent for Fitness for Duty Exams based on extended light duty requests. These employees are being subjected to a "full-blown" physical examination at the Northern IL District Medical Unit. They are being required to complete PS Form 2485 Medical Examination & Assessment which is normally required of new hires. They are also being required to provide a urine sample and (at least in one case) to remove their clothing. We have informed management that we believe this is a violation of the employee's privacy and have written to Carol Stream Plant Manager Greg Johnson, with a copy to Labor Relations Manager Dellutri and District Manager Hart. We contacted APWU headquarters and they were not aware of this. We believe the examination and the questions the employee is required to answer should be limited to the light duty condition only.

Jackie Engelhart
President
Alan J. Czerwinski
News Director

Special points of interest:

Breaks "Policy" Ended.

Light Duty Requests

Fitness for Duty Exams

FSM 1000's are Gone.

Pie Racks in Automation

Reassignments to Custodian

Open Season Health Fairs

NWIAL Human Relations Retirement Seminar on 11-17-07.

Veteran's Day Sunday 11-11

FSM 1000's are Gone.

We now know the machines are gone but we are still trying to arrange meetings with the affected employees, the Union, and management at both plants. Only Palatine tour 1 MDO Michelle Davis has met with the FSM 1000 employees and the Union. Management has told us that the FSM 1000 would be leaving Palatine by the end of the year, but when the decision was made to eliminate this unit we were not informed at either plant. We found out the machines were on their way out from the employees, just the same way we found out the AI was coming in at both plants. We have talked to management many times and have been promised many times that they would communicate with us on operational changes that affect our members, but they continue to do otherwise. When the affected employees want to know why we aren't telling them anything, it's because management isn't telling us. We expect bids to be posted in manual flats at both plants and there is no reason that this should not happen soon.

Palatine Auto Time Changes

Management did not discuss or consult with us before making the decision to change the starting times for tour 1 Automation Clerks from 2200 to 2150, effective 11-24-07. I spoke with Michelle Davis and she stated one of her managers was to have talked to the affected employees, but he did not. The Local Memo states "The Employer shall consult/discuss with the Union regarding changes of work schedules for employees for which the Union has exclusive recognition prior to implementing any such changes."

Pie Racks in Automation

Stacking trays on top of the Pie Racks has been a safety concern of the Union for many years. It was discussed at both plants in Labor-Management meetings, and management said it's a problem all over the country. A few years ago Palatine agreed to set up a committee to explore possible solutions. After the first meeting we were told there would be no more meetings and the "agreement" was to stack trays no more than 3-high on top of the Pie Racks. We never agreed to this and consider stacking more than one tray on top to be a safety issue. I have talked to some of the Automation Supervisors and they think the Union agreed to 3-high because that's what they were told, but we never agreed to this. Tour 1 has started filing safety grievances, and we would like management to stop saying we agreed to this and continue looking for a solution to this problem. If this problem affects you, the Union needs your statement.

Reassignments to Custodian

Palatine Maintenance Steward Bob La Foe informed us that the custodial exam Test 916 has been suspended from 8-31-07 through 9-30-08. As a result, the parties have agreed to the following In-Service Custodial Register selection process: 1. *Current Maintenance employees who previously passed the 916 in score order*, 2. *Current Maintenance employees who did not pass the 916 in Maintenance installation seniority order*, 3. *Other APWU Craft employees who previously passed the 916 in score order*, 4. *Other APWU Craft employees who have not passed the 916 in their respective craft installation seniority order*, 5. *Other Craft employees who previously passed the 916 in score order*, 6. *Other Craft employees who have not passed 916.*

Open Season Health Fairs

Open Season Enrollment Benefits Health Fairs for the Northern IL District are scheduled for Palatine P&DC on Wednesday 11-14-07 from 6 AM to 8 PM., & Carol Stream on Wednesday 12-5-07 from 6 AM to 8 PM. APWU Health Plans are rated very highly by outside reviewers in terms of coverage and cost. Visit APWU Health Plan Rep. Arlene-Thomas Benford at the APWU Health Plan Table and check out the APWU offering. **NWIAL Human Relations Retirement Seminar on 11-17-07.** The Seminar is upon us but you still have time to sign up by calling either the Carol Stream or Palatine Union offices. Special guest speakers are former APWU Retirees Director John R. Smith, who will be speaking on retirement, and APWU Legislative Director Myke Reid, who will be speaking about Legislative issues of concern to us as citizens and as Union members. The Seminar will be held at the NWIAL Union Hall at 194 W. Lake St. in Elmhurst. The hours are 9AM to 4 PM and lunch will be served. The Seminar is free to all NWIAL members, and we request a \$10 donation to COPA (Committee on Political Action). For those of us nearing retirement age, which is most of us, this Seminar is worth attending. The Human Relations Committee and Director Mimi Jackson always do a great job of putting the seminar together and she is now in "seminar mode".

Veteran's Day Sunday 11-11

This Veteran's Day we recognize our veterans for their service & dedication to our country.

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