COLUMBIA GAS WORKERS UNITE

MAY 2024

EXTRA, EXTRA! UNION WORKERS SCORE MASSIVE WINS IN SURVEILLANCE BARGAINING

Last year, Columbia Gas announced it was installing a surveillance or "telematics" system in company vehicles. For non-Union workers, that was a unilateral choice the Company made. They never met with employees or sought employee input – because they didn't have to!

For Union workers, it was a different story. The Company notified the Union that it wanted to bargain about the telematics system and its impacts on the workforce. Union workers and their representatives then engaged in extensive negotiations to come to an agreement.

The Union was able to secure a number of protections for members, including:

- The Company not being allowed to look at video other than when a safety incident triggers a video clip
- Workers being allowed to cover the on-vehicle camera after a trip
- The Company not remotely activating or live streaming cameras
- Workers not being disciplined for "yellow" safety scores
- Workers' faces being blurred in video recordings
- A rolling 12-month period where prior offenses can no longer be used for discipline
- Discipline must occur within 20 days of an offense
- Reducing the number of disciplinary points for some offenses from eight points to four.

In contrast, non-Union workers are at-will employees and have no way to contest unfair discipline. Not only do they not receive the protection of Union workers against unfair discipline, but they have no way to defend themselves when they face an accusation from the Company.

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In other words, when it comes to the non-Union Columbia Gas employees, you get what the Company gives you.

This Union victory proves once again that the only way for workers to have a voice on the job and a seat at the table is to come together in their Union. A Company can't just impose their will on Union workers; they need to sit down and bargain in good faith. For gas workers from Conneaut to Cincinnati, life is better when we're with the UWUA.

CASE STUDY: UWUA LOCAL 349

PROTECTING WORKERS FROM UNFAIR DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES

If you work in Ohio, you've probably seen workers being disciplined or even released from their positions unjustly. At least that's what you'll see in a work environment where workers don't have their Union to defend their rights and get the company's disciplinary procedures set forth in writing.

One of the single greatest advantages of being part of your Union is that you always get a say. That's because when it comes to terms of employment, whether for yourself or for any of your colleagues, you and your fellow workers bargain for that with your employer through your Union. When the rubber meets the road, and a real-life disciplinary situation occurs, you can point to your Union contract and your Union can help to ensure your employer follows the agreed upon rules.

In practice, all this means is that you can fight that unjustified action by the Company. First, you can initiate a grievance process where your Union works to resolve the issue with your employer. Then, if that process is unfruitful, you can proceed to arbitration, where a neutral third party hears your case. All the while, your Union is in your corner fighting for you.

At UWUA Local 349 in Toledo, we've been able to reduce or eliminate unjustified employer actions. As for cases going to arbitration, we've had a high success rate representing aggrieved members.

This is the Union difference: having a fair set of rules at work and having a team in your corner when those rules aren't followed. Learn more at **columbiaworkersunite.org**.

COLUMBIA GAS FAT CATS LIVIN' LARGE

EXECUTIVES GIVE THEMSELVES BONUSES WHILE EXPECTING WORKERS TO SETTLE FOR LESS

We're connecting with Columbia Gas workers and what we're hearing about raises is awful. Like hearing managers are giving themselves raises nearly three times that of workers. Are they doing nearly three times the work?

We shouldn't be surprised, not when the CEO of NiSource, which owns Columbia Gas, got a raise that put his salary at over $10.5 million a year.[1]

That's why the bosses don't want us to have our Union, because the more they can skimp on raises, the more they can pay themselves!

MEANWHILE, OUR MOVEMENT CONTINUES TO GROW!

We're moving right along! Across Ohio, Columbia Gas workers are coming together to form our Union. That's because we're ready to win higher pay, better benefits, and respect in our workplaces.

That desire to come together as a Union has become even clearer since word has spread about the raises that have recently gone out. It comes as no surprise that executives are receiving bigger raises than workers, sometimes much bigger.

1. https://www.tipranks.com/news/nisource-inc-adjusts-top-executives-compensation-packages

GET ALL THE FACTS AT COLUMBIAWORKERSUNITE.ORG.

Ready to get involved?
Call Deirdre **(484)-678-8896** Valerie **(202)-412-5258** or J.J. **(330) 631-1751** now.

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SIGN YOUR CARD. MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD.

Didn't get a chance to sign your card yet? We've got you covered. Inside this edition of the newsletter, you'll find your own brand new authorization card along with a pre-stamped and addressed return envelope.

Despite what you may have heard, signing this card does not mean you're voting yes on our Union. When you sign and return your card, all it means is that you think we should hold a fair election to determine if a majority of us want a Union.

You can vote yes or no when the election comes. Your card simply means you want workers' voices to be heard. And no matter what they tell you, the company will not know whether or not you've signed your card. So let Columbia Gas know that your voice matters!

Thank you to everyone here in Ohio who's already involved in our organizing efforts. Haven't connected with us yet? It's not too late. Call **Deirdre (484-678-8896) Valerie (202-412-5258)** or **J.J. (330) 631-1751** for more information and to get involved.

QUESTIONS? CALL DEIRDRE (484) 678-8896, VALERIE (202) 412-5258, OR J.J. (330) 631-1751.