COLUMBIA GAS WORKERS UNITE

AUGUST 2024

LOOKING AHEAD TO LABOR DAY

GET TO KNOW THE MEANING OF THIS IMPORTANT HOLIDAY

August is here. It's the last full month of summer when so many of us try to squeeze in last minute beach vacations and camping trips with our families. The countdown to Labor Day has begun – this year, the holiday that marks the unofficial end of summer will be September 2. But why do we celebrate Labor Day, and why does the holiday come at the end of summer? The answers may surprise you.

Let's start at the beginning. Just under two centuries ago, the Industrial Revolution would move families off of small farms and into bustling cities and sprawling factories. Conditions were brutal.

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STRUGGLING WITH SURVEILLANCE? FEELING UNDERVALUED?

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

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Men worked from sunrise to sunset, sometimes more than 12 hours a day, six days a week. Women could be expected to work the same hours in textile mills and other factories, enduring scorching heat and dusty, polluted air. Children, many too young to graduate from elementary school today, were forced to mass produce linens and garments.

This inhumane treatment of working men, women, and children gave rise to the American Labor Movement. It was the first time in the modern era that workers came together to protest mistreatment on the part of their employers, demand fair pay and time off, and put an end to abusive practices like child labor.

After years of organizing individual workplaces and local unions, working Americans first envisioned a day to celebrate their accomplishments – Labor Day – in September of 1882. It was then that workers in New York City came together by the thousands for a great parade to honor the contributions of working people.

From that first parade 142 years ago, Labor Day became a state holiday, primarily in the Northeast and in the West. Nearly two dozen states made Labor Day a holiday before the federal government took action to make it a national holiday.

WHY NOT MAY DAY?

Around the world, other nations host May Day celebrations to honor the contributions of working people. Both Labor Day and May Day, however, have their origins right here at home. While Americans continue a Labor Day tradition that dates back to 1882, the internationally celebrated May Day was created in reaction to the May 1886 bombing at the infamous Haymarket Riot in Chicago.

WHY LABOR DAY STILL MATTERS TODAY

As working people, we've come a long way from the way we worked and lived generations ago. We have not only Labor Day as a national holiday, but other paid holidays and time off as well. Yet none of that time was "given" to us by employers. Paid holidays, PTO, sick leave – even the weekend itself – were won by generations of American workers coming together in Unions to bargain for the time and compensation we earn with our labor. And the fight continues!

FEELING OVERLOOKED? UNDERVALUED?

Call **Deirdre, (484-678-8896) Valerie, (202-412-5258)** or **J.J. (330) 631-1751** and let us know!

THE UNION DIFFERENCE

GET TO KNOW JOSE CROAL, SENIOR GAS TECHNICIAN, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE AT ENBRIDGE GAS OHIO

I've been working in natural gas and have been a member of Local G-555 for 38 years. I started out as a meter reader and did that for three years before moving over to construction and maintenance, where I've worked ever since. It's a long learning curve to get to the top classification, and I worked seven years to reach a position as a senior gas technician. Ohio law requires gas technicians to re-qualify every three years, so my coworkers and I are in near constant schooling — both in the classroom and out in the field. We're tested to ensure we're always current on our skills and knowledge.

Most of us work as part of a two- or three-member crew, with two more senior workers and one trainee, and you don't always work with the same people. It's hard, physical work. I have high seniority so for the past three years, I've been driving a dump truck that delivers supplies and picks up materials from job sites where we're doing repairs and maintenance on gas lines.

We work on both residential and commercial service lines. Every day is different depending on what kind of emergency is happening. We may get a call that a residence doesn't have gas or someone has hit a meter and caused a leak. Other times, construction crews digging sewer lines may accidentally damage one of our gas lines. Whenever there's a leak, we need to shut down the flow, fix any damaged pipes and valves and get them back to working order. Some days, we're dealing with replacing a corroded pipe or a main line leak. We may have to use a backhoe to dig up the line to gain access for the repair.

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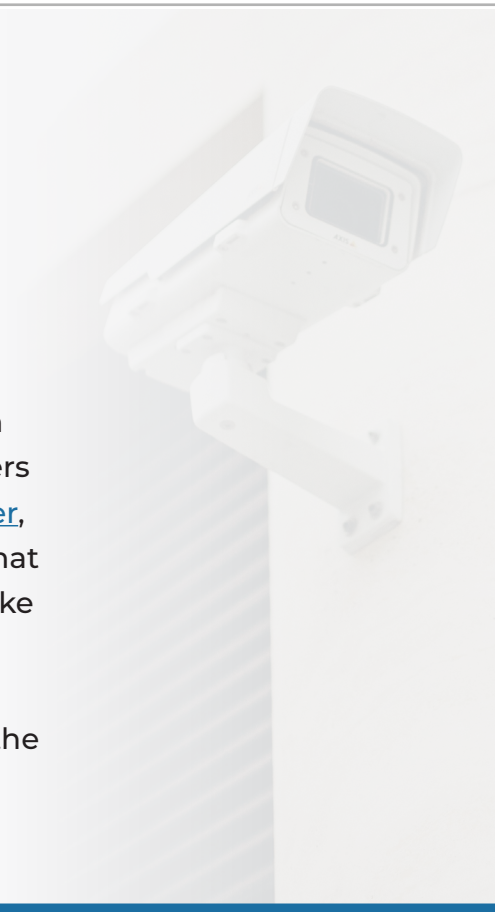
SURVEILLANCE UPDATE



CAMERAS, OTHER EQUIPMENT INSTALLED AT SOME OHIO WORK SITES

The use of surveillance cameras and other recording devices has been one of the most important concerns we have heard about from workers throughout this campaign. Like we covered back in our May newsletter, however, Union employees have a whole different set of protections that non-Union workers simply don't have when it comes to surveillance, like the right not to be disciplined for "yellow" safety scores or the right to have their faces blurred in video recordings. That's because without a Union, the company makes the rules. With a Union, workers come to the table to bargain over the rules with their employer.

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