



UNION AMI UPDATE

May 27, 2010

THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY HAS HIT A NEW LOW

They want to punish the members

The Company has now withdrawn its offer of 100 to 300 weatherization (DAP) jobs. They have made it clear that the reason for the withdrawal was retaliation for the Union joining the community in continuing to oppose AMI at the CPUC. Both proposals from the Company regarding DAP and AMI deployment **make it easy to fire part time workers without any recourse (grievance and arbitration.) It will also strip them of any wage guarantees, while threatening every union member at the Gas Co. (see the enclosed fact sheet.)**

The Company has no credibility

- This is the same Company that just agreed to an out of court settlement of over \$400 million stemming from allegations they manipulated electric rates during the energy crisis a decade ago.
- Several years ago the Company paid out over \$300 million from allegations that they manipulated natural gas rates. In other words, it was alleged that the Company broke the law.
- They were just caught in a massive lie in an arbitration trying to strip part time workers of all their rights. The Company was claiming Part Timers are “at will” employees (can be fired for any reason or no reason) even though they had already conceded part timers have the same rights as full timers in a previous arbitration. When caught red-handed, they continued to lie and pretended ignorance of an arbitration which they participated in barely 6 years earlier.

This Work Belongs to Us

In reality the work for which they want to create a separate contract already belongs to the full-time workers of the Gas Company. Under normal circumstances the Company should expand the full time work force to do that work at higher pay than they propose for the AMI workers, thereby creating real full-time Gas Company jobs for the part-timers with full benefits etc. **If we give that work away now, we will never get it back!**

Now they want to remove those same rights in a separate AMI agreement. Under the current proposal from the Company, firing you for no reason at all would be perfectly legal! You would have better protection in a used car agreement. If the Union was reckless enough to sign such an agreement the Company could fire any or all of these members at any time and there is nothing the affected member or the Union could do about it. No grievance, no arbitration, nothing!

Signing an agreement that gives up the employment rights of over 800 part time members would put at risk the workplace rights of not only those members, but of the rest of the membership in the future. This lack of rights would be the starting point for the Company in future contract negotiations.

Why the Rush?

Throughout the bargaining process over AMI, the Company has relied on its playbook of fear, intimidation, manipulation and retaliation, instead of working out a fair deal that everyone can live with.

Now they have put an unrealistic deadline of June 30, 2010 on the bargaining, even though they freely admit **there will be not one single AMI installation until 2012! We cannot and will not enter into a deal that will jeopardize the working conditions and livelihoods of the entire membership!**

While these are trying times for all of you immediately affected by the Company's ill-conceived plan, it is important to remain united throughout this process. The unity and support of the membership has always been the most important factor in all successful Union negotiations. **The Company is clearly testing the waters for next year's negotiations with this union-busting proposal.** We saw what they had in mind in the last round of negotiations including gutting the pension plan, sick time and the bidding system. At that historic mass meeting you told them in no uncertain terms NO! Apparently that time has come again.

We will continue to keep you updated about the on-going negotiations on AMI. Stay strong, stay united!