

Get the facts!

HOW DOES THE UNION WORK?"

A union is a democratic organization of a majority of the employees in a facility. The basic idea of union is that by joining together with fellow employees to form a union, workers have a greater ability to improve conditions at the worksite. In other words, "in unity there is strength."

"WHO RUNS THE UNION? THE COMPANY SAYS THAT THE UNION IS JUST A BUNCH OF OUTSIDERS - A THIRD PARTY."

You run your own union. You elect your own negotiating committee and prepare your own list of improvements for a union contract. You elect your own officers and job stewards. The union is not "outsiders," it is you, the worker.

"HOW MUCH ARE DUES?"

The dues will depend upon what the local needs to operate efficiently and effectively. However, the dues will be set by you, as a local union, with the exception of the International portion of the dues, which is set and voted by all Local Unions at the International Convention every five (5) years. However, no dues are paid until the majority of workers vote to accept a contract they helped to negotiate. All initiation fees will be waived for members in newly organized units.

"WHERE DO UNION DUES GO?"

The union dues are divided between the International Union and the workers' own local union, which will have its own treasury. Dues are used to run the union and keep it strong.

"WILL THE UNION MAKE US GO ON STRIKE?"

No one can force you to go out on strike. There can only be a strike at your facility if a majority of the workers at your company vote to go on strike. Over 98% of all union contracts are negotiated without a strike. Wise unions only strike when they know they can win.

"CAN I GET FIRED FOR HELPING THE UNION OR FOR ATTENDING A UNION MEETING?"

It is illegal for you to be fired, punished or harassed for attending union meetings or for supporting a union. The law protects your right as workers to improve your working conditions.

"WHAT BENEFITS CAN THE UNION GUARANTEE?"

The union can only guarantee one thing; with the support, strength, and unity of the workers, working together we will win the best wage and benefit package possible.

"WILL I LOSE THE BENEFITS I HAVE NOW?"

No, it is against the law for the company to take away any benefits you now have in order to punish you for voting for a union.

"WHAT ABOUT UNION CORRUPTION AND DISHONESTY?"

The company would like you to think that all union officials everywhere are corrupt. Most unions are decent, honest organizations dedicated to improving the lives of working people. Unions aren't perfect - nothing is. At least union officials

are elected, and bad ones can be voted out. Remember, you, the employees are the union.

"WILL THE SHOP FACILITY CLOSE IF I VOTE FOR A UNION?"

It is against the law for the company to close or threaten to close because of union activity. Remember, companies go out of business because people stop buying their product, not because their workers are treated fairly.

"WHAT IF MY EMPLOYER CAN'T AFFORD A UNION CONTRACT?"

No one wants your company to close, especially a real union, one that represents the best interest of its workers. If the company says they can't afford the wage and benefit increase that the workers want, we say it must prove its poverty by showing the union its financial records. Then we can make decisions together based on real information instead of company propaganda.

"WHAT CAN WE EXPECT THE COMPANY TO DO TO TRY TO GET US TO VOTE AGAINST THE UNION?"

Usually the company tries to influence employees with scare-talk, anti-union speeches and letters. On the other hand, be prepared for the company to be on their best behavior until the campaign is over. Some companies even make improvements during a union campaign, hoping employees will forget about their past problems.

"DOES THE COMPANY HAVE TO NEGOTIATE IF THE UNION WINS?"

Yes. The law requires the company to bargain "in good faith" with the committee which the employees elect.

"IS IT EASY TO GET A UNION IN?"

No, it takes the work of employees who are dedicated to helping their coworkers. And it takes the active involvement of as many employees as possible.

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers®