

*When we fight as one,
The fight will be won!*



Negotiations Update

OE3 still in talks regarding member contracts

There is a rumor at the Capitol that the governor is not willing to negotiate with state employees any time soon. We were told by legislators that not only is the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) agreement dead on the floor, but the governor does not see any reason to bargain with unions over contract improvements. This is partly due to California's uncertain economy and the statewide May 19 Special Election. The Operating Engineers has talked with several unions in contract negotiations with the state, and they are in the same position we are in.

The last time we met with state representatives, we gave them a very detailed proposal on what we thought was fair for everyone. At this time, the Department of Personnel Administration (DPA) has not officially responded to our proposal. In the meantime, we are fighting the state for unilaterally implementing changes to our contract; i.e. overtime calculation, premium pay for working on a holiday and the removal of two holidays. Local 3 has not agreed to any of the proposed take-aways. It is important to realize the only change to your working conditions that you have to live with is the two furlough days that were implemented by the governor. All other terms and conditions of the contract remain in effect until we negotiate another agreement or reach impasse with the governor.

SAFETY FIRST: California citizens pay tribute to fallen Caltrans workers

Since April is safety month, we would like to address some safety information:

* Since 1924, 171 California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) employees have been killed on the job. One of the biggest hazards are motorists who do not exercise caution while driving where highway workers are present. Each year, a statewide Worker Memorial Day is held to honor those employees, and their names are put on a memorial plaque in the lobby of the Caltrans headquarters building in Sacramento.

For more safety information, please see back page



From left: Member Paul Wilson, Unit 12 Craft Maintenance Director Tim Neep, member Jack Barba and Financial Secretary Dan Reding attend the Caltrans Workers' Memorial in Sacramento on April 16.

Did you know ... ?

* Did you know that more highway maintenance workers are killed than firefighters and law enforcement officers combined? Last year, 729 Caltrans vehicles were struck on the road, not by the fault of the Caltrans worker. Of those, 55 workers were injured, and one died.

* Last year Senate Bill 290 (SB 290), the "Move Over Bill," was submitted to the legislature; however, it did not get the governor's signature. Sen. Rod Wright introduced the updated bill in February; the legislature and Local 3 are working on getting it signed into law.

* Protective vehicles are geared up to help protect workers:

* *Shadow Vehicle* – This vehicle is used to close lanes and provide protection for the crew and vehicles involved in maintenance activities.

* *Barrier Vehicle* – This vehicle is parked in advance of a maintenance worksite to provide physical protection of crews in the cone zone.

* *Advance Warning Vehicle* – This vehicle is parked a considerable distance in advance of a maintenance operation and displays messages that advise motorists of what to expect ahead.



Above and below: Hundreds gather at the state Capitol to honor those who died on the job.

* Traffic on state freeways is steadily increasing, and the challenge of building and maintaining the California highway system is becoming more difficult. As the system ages, the workload increases exposing more and more workers to speeding traffic and the threat of injury or death.

* Orange signs and cones are also used to direct the public around a worksite. Caltrans employees must wear protective equipment, such as hard hats, gloves, orange vests or shirts, goggles and safety glasses, and sufficient lighting must be in place to allow motorists to identify workers.

Please, cautiously make a lane change when approaching emergency lights to help California highway workers avoid injuries and death.

Last year, Local 3 sponsored a safety training class for departments that use mowers. Listed below is 2009's Mower Safety Class Schedule for Northern California:

May 19:

1635 W. Pine Ave., Fresno

May 21:

500 Queens Lane, San Jose

May 27:

624 N. East St., Woodland

May 28:

624 N. East St., Woodland

June 2:

380 Foster City Blvd., Foster City

June 3:

1604 South B St., Stockton

June 4:

1500 Redwood Highway, Garberville

Instructor: Certified Safety Training Specialist Jim Green

