



A PUBLICATION OF THE AFFILIATED CONSTRUCTION TRADES

A Division of the WV State Building Trades, AFL-CIO | Bill Hutchinson, *President* | Dave Efaw, *Secretary-Treasurer* | Steve White, *Director*

PW Rates Expire July 1, May be Months until New Rates Calculated

Republicans Demand Big Wage and Benefit Cuts, Survey Extension Denied

Republican lawmakers denied a state agency time to prepare new prevailing wage rates meaning there will be a period of time without required wage rates starting July 1.

Legislation earlier this year changing the prevailing wage law called for a new methodology to calculate the wages and benefits paid to construction workers.

The law required the method to be completed by June 1 and new wage rates to be in place by July 1, unless the method devised needed more time. An interim committee of the legislature had the authority to extend the time for new wage rates till September 30.

But that committee, based on straight party line votes, refused to grant extra time for the survey even though WorkForce requested it.

That means as of July 1 the state prevailing wage law will no longer be

in effect – until new wage rates can be calculated. Hopefully the calculation

can take place before the September
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The interim Joint Committee on Government and Finance prepares to hear a presentation on the new prevailing wage methodology developed by WorkForce, WVU and Marshall at the state capitol on June 8.

WorkForce Unveils New State Method for Calculating Prevailing Wage Rates

Senate Bill 361 directed WorkForce to find out what wages are paid to construction workers.

The new method will be used for calculating the required prevailing wage rates on tax funded projects.

On June 1 WorkForce posted the

new method on their web site. It includes many features that are new to the process which had been a responsibility of the Division of Labor.

The old law required a rate for each craft in each county but the new law mandated groups of counties be

created.

The new law also forbids collective bargaining agreements from being used.

WorkForce compressed the number of crafts the survey would look at. In some instances they combined

rates.

For example Millwrights and Diesel Mechanics are in the same category.

Similarly rates for Sprinklerfitters have been put in the Pipefitter cat-

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Must Apply in Person

Parkersburg Iron Workers 787 Take New Apprenticeship Applications Wednesdays

Iron Workers Local 787 Joint Apprenticeship Committee (JAC) takes applications for their apprenticeship program each Wednesday (excluding holidays).

Those interested must fill out the application at 303 Erickson Boulevard, Parkersburg in person, during regular business hours; 8:00 am – noon and 1:00 pm – 4:30 pm.

Applicants must provide proof they are at least 18 years old, capable of performing work of the Iron Worker trade, be a High School Graduate or have an equivalent certificate, have a valid driver's license, and pass an aptitude test given by the Parkersburg Workforce office.

In addition an applicant must live within Local 787's area for at least one year prior to applying. Lo-

cal 787's area in Ohio includes the Counties of Athens, Meigs, Morgan, Noble, and Washington; in West Virginia Calhoun, Doddridge, Gilmer, Jackson, Lewis, Mason, Pleasants, Ritchie, Roane, Upshur, Wirt and Wood Counties.

If selected a candidate must pass a substance abuse test.

The Iron Workers Joint Apprenticeship Training Program teaches in the classroom as well as on the job. Classes are held evenings and Saturdays, allowing on-the-job learning while getting paid.

The goal is to educate new workers how to safely, efficiently, and effectively perform all aspects of the trade including structural, ornamental, and reinforcing iron work, as well as mathematics, welding, and rig-

ging.

The Apprenticeship is a four year program with starting wages set at 50% of Journeyman scale with full benefits.

Increases are given every six months until training is complete.

Applications will be kept on file for a year.

No applicant will be rejected because of race, color, religion, national origin or sex. Iron Workers Local 787 JAC will take affirmative action to provide equal opportunities in apprenticeship.

For more information contact Brad Winans, Apprenticeship Coordinator, at 304-485-6231. ■

Wage & Benefit Cuts

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30 deadline that had been asked for.

"We were shocked," said Dave Efaw, Secretary-Treasurer of the WV State Building Trades Council.

"WorkForce did what the legislature asked and everybody knew a survey was the likely method, but it was clear that leadership wanted to change the rules."

WorkForce, along with researchers from WVU and Marshall Universities, unveiled the new process at a June 8 meeting of legislative leaders in Charleston.

Republican members were unhappy with the methodology presented, in particular the decision to survey contractors to find out what actual wages and fringe benefits are paid in various regions of the state.

House Speaker Tim Armstead (R-Kanawha) chaired the meeting and called on staff attorneys to attack the proposed methodology.

Claims were made that the methodology, because it did not use Bureau of Labor Statistics data exclusively, was somehow illegal or not in compliance with the law.

But Senator Jeff Kessler (D-Marshall) challenged that claim.

"Show me in the law where it says the BLS data must be used exclusively, it's not there," said Kessler.

And the staff lawyers also argued that fringe benefits should not have been included in the calculations.

"I asked Senate Majority Leader

Mitch Carmichael on the floor of the Senate just seconds before the vote on this bill if fringe benefits would be included and he said yes," said Kessler.

Earlier presenters from WorkForce explained that BLS data was considered and would be used only when better data was not available.

The problem with BLS data is no fringe benefits are included, residential work rates are mixed with commercial and industrial, no information on the location of projects is available, and for more than half the craft categories there is not enough information in many areas of the state.

During the legislative session the idea of using BLS was proposed but many legislators opposed it.

"We had a deal to let the experts come up with a method for determining the true market wages," said State White, ACT Director.

"Now that some don't like the result they want to forget the deal.

They really need to see how this new method works before passing judgement."

According to White the committee may have had authority to extend the time for a survey but it did not have authority to approve or reject the new method.

"We fully expect the survey to take place because that is what the law says." ■

Roofers Local 185 Members Volunteer



Members of Roofers Local 185 Charleston pose in front of the new shelter they built on May 30 for the children of Bridge Elementary School in Kanawha County.

The 16' x 16' shelter was needed so kids have a place to go outside during all kinds of weather.

(From left, front) Jeff Mullins, Business Agent; Matt Kerr; Ray Flanagan, Apprentice Instructor; Matt Mullins; (back) Justin Bowen; apprenticeship coordinator Bruce Hysell; Charles Bishop; and Mike Bishop.

Tri-State Roofing donated the roofing material.

Construction Industry Representatives Thank Kanawha County Commissioners

Representatives from both labor and management attended a May 21 Kanawha County Commission meeting to express appreciation for a recent policy decision in support of

prevailing wage rates.

The group publicly thanked the commissions for requiring all county commission projects to use prevailing wage rates, not just those in ex-

cess of \$500,000.

Recent legislation created the high threshold.

"On behalf of both labor and management in the construction industry we truly appreciate the leadership you have shown," said Jim Cerra, Executive Director of the Kanawha Valley Builders Association. "Making sure tax dollars are spent effi-

ciently and productively with local contractors and workers makes good business sense and is excellent public policy."

Also in attendance were a number of local contractors as well as Paul Breedlove, Business Manager of the Charleston Building Trades Council and Dave Efaw, Secretary-Treasurer of the WV State Building Trades. ■



Kanawha Valley Builders Association Executive Director Jim Cerra (standing) presents a plaque of appreciation to Kanawha County Commissioners (from left) Dave Hardy, Kent Carper and Hoppy Shores.

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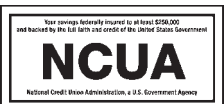


Members of Operating Engineers Local 132 and their families enjoy plenty of good food during the annual 'Operator Rodeo' event held on Sunday, June 7 at their training center in Medina.

"The rodeo is for members and their families to get together and have a good time," said Chuck Parker, Business Manager for Local 132. Parker, former Training Director for the Local, recently became Business Manager after Tommy Plymale passed away from a sudden illness.

According to Parker around 400 people attended. There were five competitive events for members as well as activities for kids, and plenty of food for all.

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