

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



Furloughs, furloughs, furloughs

In the last issue of *The Unit 12 Tribune*, we referenced the Dec. 19, 2008 letter to state workers from Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. He proposed taking away two state holidays, furloughing two days a month, laying-off the bottom 20 percent, etc. Currently, we are dealing with two days a month being furloughed. Judge Patrick Marlette ruled in the governor's favor, supporting his plan to furlough workers due to the state's fiscal emergency.

The furlough program began in the first February 2009 pay period and will continue through the June 2010 pay period. During that time, all state employees will have two unpaid days off each month.

THIS PROGRAM IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE THROUGH COURT OR LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND THROUGH BARGAINING

Initially, it was supposed to be all state employees, but apparently, nine constitutional offices are exempt, including the Attorney General, Department of Justice, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education, State Controller, State Treasurer, Secretary of State, Lieutenant Governor and the Board of Equalization. This makes up about 15,000 employees. The governor is currently suing to have them included in the furlough process. Keep in mind, all these lawsuits and appeals are financed with taxpayer money.

Most government offices will be closed on the first and third Fridays of each month. If the operation cannot be closed, and they have an *approved*, self-directed furlough plan, there are other options available. Everyone, with the exception of the above referenced employees, will have two unpaid days off each month.

The furlough program does not affect leave accruals, medical benefits, dental benefits, lump-sum payments, retirement benefits, military-leave compensation, supplemental pay, disability-leave payments, IDL, NDI or involuntary leave. However, when an employee returns to partial work, the hours will be affected.

There are other variations, such as intermittent employees.

Basic furlough schedule

The normal furlough schedule for employees who work five days a week, eight hours a day (5/8/40): Monday-Thursday: 8 hours; Friday: Furlough (first and third week of the month)*

The normal schedule for employees who work four days a week, 10 hours a day (4/10/40):

The first and third weeks are worked as usual; the second and fourth weeks are worked four days a week, eight hours a day.

The normal schedule for employees working nine days in a two-week period – eight nine-hour days and an eight-hour day – (9/8/80):

Your furlough day will be every other Friday, which is already off, but now will be unpaid.

**There are numerous exceptions to the first and third Friday furlough schedule.*

Furloughs will have no cash value and may not be cashed out. The furlough days are the equivalent of 34 days over the next 17 months.

There are many questions surrounding these furloughs, as we have 24/7 facilities and staggered and overlapping shifts. **We advise all Unit 12 employees to keep track of your time. Don't rely on management to do it for you.** There is a lot of confusion and, as stated earlier, schedules are subject to change. Each department is scheduling the Alternate Work Schedules (AWS) differently. If your shift is changed, please contact the union.

Operating Engineers Local 3 has been conducting meetings throughout the state explaining the furlough program. Unfortunately, the state does not have all the answers or this program fully worked out. Please pose necessary questions, so we can get answers.



Business Agent Angelo Cellini, second from right, meets with a Napa Sign, Maintenance and Landscape crew during a furlough meeting on Feb. 5.

Unit 12 efforts a success – budget passes



Unit 12 members were among those protesting California's inability to pass a state budget on Feb. 10.

Pictured here are some of our own.

