

Labor agency wants Beckley firm cited for contempt

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The National Labor Relations Board has asked a federal appeals court in Richmond, Va., to cite a Beckley company working on the federal women's prison in Alderson for civil contempt and fine it \$50,000.

The NLRB said Beckley Mechanical Inc. has ignored orders from the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to negotiate in good faith with Sheet Metal Workers International Association Local Union No. 33.

The petition filed by the NLRB on Oct. 17 accuses Beckley Mechanical of ignoring a March 22, 2001, order by the court to participate in collective bargaining, to cease giving pay increases without negotiating with the union first and to give the union requested information.

It also charges that the company violated a Nov. 8, 2002, order directing it to provide information on the company subcontracting employee work and cease from changing work conditions without notifying or bargaining with the union.

Union members plan to protest the company's actions today at noon in front of the federal building in Charleston.

The company's president, Bill Mahaffey, refused to comment on the filing and directed inquiries to the company's lawyer, Fred Holroyd, who could not be reached for comment.

The NLRB is an independent federal agency charged with monitoring union elections and resolving labor disputes.

The company is a subcontractor on the construction of an addition to the federal prison camp for women in Alderson. It is installing plumbing and heating. The federal agency with which Beckley Mechanical is contracted could not be determined Monday.

The petition said Beckley Mechanical omitted information about work it did through a subcontractor for a December 2002 project.

It also accuses the company of changing its travel-pay policy to pay employees for one way of travel when the job site was more than 50 miles from the office without negotiating with the union first. The NLRB also said the company gave an employee a \$2.50-an-hour wage increase without telling or negotiating with the union.

The NLRB also wants the court to order Beckley Mechanical to comply with the court's orders and impose a \$5,000 fine for each instance the company has violated the court's orders as well as \$250 for each day the violations have continued.

That would be in addition to the \$50,000 fine that the court would hold until the company complies with the court's orders.

Steve White, director of the Charleston-based Affiliated Construction Trades Foundation, said the company should not be allowed to work on federal contracts until it has resolved its problems with the NLRB.

"They should be in the prison, not working on it," White said.