

# THE ACT REPORT

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The ACT Foundation is a division of The West Virginia State Building and Construction Trades Council. Steve Burton, President; Dave Efaw, Secretary-Treasurer; Steve White, Director.

Charleston - (304) 345-7570  
Toll Free - (800) 930-9675  
www.actwv.org



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## ILLEGAL WORKERS AT DOMINION PLANT IN VIRGINIA INSULATORS LOCAL 2 PROTESTS USE OF LOW WAGE LABOR

Members of Insulators Local 2 protested the use of low wage labor at the Dominion Power's Mt. Storm plant in Grant County earlier this year.

Suspicion the workers were illegal has been fueled by a recent news report of arrests made of the same company's workers at a Dominion plant in Virginia.

According to Local 2 Business Representative Tom Mulholland members of Local 2 set up a picket line at Dominion Power's Mount Storm Power Plant in March to advise the public that ISI, (an insulation and sheet metal contractor) was paying less than industry standard in the area.

"It's just a matter of simple

economics that the standard wages and benefits paid by ISI tend to adversely af-

fect other local employees working in the construction industry in this area," said

Mulholland.

It didn't take long for Do-  
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PROTESTING THE USE of low wage, imported labor at the Mount Storm Power Station in Grant County are members of Insulators Local 2 (from left) Rusty Jones, Jon Michael, Steve Lewis, Marvin Grubbs, Jason Yeater, and Curt Suite.

## SAFETY, COMMUNICATION, COOPERATION NEW UNION-BASED WORKERS COMPENSATION PROGRAM STARTS

Starting July 1 Union contractors have a new option for workers compensation coverage in West Virginia.

Union contractors and the WV State Building Trades have started a new workers compensation insurance program called the WV Workers Compensation Consortium which is designed to improve work site safety and lower premium rates.

The group has teamed with two insurance companies to provide an option only available to union contractors who

maintain good safety practices.

The program is backed by Union Labor Life Insurance Company and Roundstone

obvious.

In addition the program will focus on improved care for injured workers and a commitment to cut through

er" position, a role filled by ACT Research Director Lesly Messina, will be available to any injured worker.

"Our goal is to avoid injuries first, but if a worker does get hurt they should get the best care as soon as possible with a goal of getting back on the job," said Steve White, ACT Director.

According to White the new program is just the latest step in a four year effort started in 2005 when Governor Joe Manchin decided to end the state run workers compensation program and allow

Insurance.

For workers the benefits of a strong safety program are

red-tape when dealing with medical issues.

A special "Trouble-Shoot-

*Continued on p. 3*

*"UNION CONTRACTORS CAN NOW BUY THEIR WORKERS COMPENSATION COVERAGE WITHOUT SUBSIDIZING LOW WAGE, UNSAFE COMPETITORS," JIM CERRA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KANAWHA VALLEY BUILDERS ASSOCIATION*

\$130 MILLION, 23 TURBINE PROJECT**PINNACLE WIND FARM SUPPORT NEEDED**

Support letters are needed for a proposed 23 turbine wind farm in Mineral County.

The project developer, US Wind Force, filed their application with the West Virginia Public Service Commission (PSC) for a Siting Certificate in March and the process is now in the comment phase.

US Wind Force has committed to use local union workers to build the \$130 million, 60 megawatt project which will be located about 2 ½ miles southwest of Keyser on Green Mountain.

Around 150 much need-

ed construction jobs will be created as well as \$433,000 per year in property taxes to Mineral County, 70% of which will go to the school system.

“This is another good project for our area and our members,” said Natalie Stone, Executive Secretary of the North Central WV Building Trades Council.

“We need to show our sup-

port to make sure this project gets approved.”

the permit application itself.

Currently the PSC is looking for public input and Stone is urging members to send letters of support.

A public hearing will be

“We need to let the PSC know these jobs are important to us” said Stone.

To get more detailed information about the project, visit the project web site, [www.uswindforce.com](http://www.uswindforce.com), or stop by one of the community information repositories at the Keyser Public Library, the Elk Garden Community School, or the Piedmont Public Library. A complete copy of the Siting Certificate Application is on file at each of these locations.

**Letters of support should be addressed to:**

Sandra Squire, Executive Secretary  
Public Service Commission of WV

PO Box 812

201 Brooks Street

Charleston, WV 25323

Re: Pinnacle Wind Farm – Case No. 09-0360-E-CS

Over the last six years, US Wind Force has been collecting wind data, surveying, securing real estate, conducting engineering and environmental studies, and developing

held later in the process to allow for verbal comment.

**LOCAL 2**

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

minion to get the Grant County Sheriff's office to order the picketers to leave, but thanks to ACT attorney Vince Trevelli, they were able to return at a later date.

Trevelli contacted Grant County Prosecuting Attorney Dennis DiBenedetto and got him to inform the sheriff's office we were within our rights to express free speech.

According to Mulholland ISI is owned by David Bowen Hyatt and is based in Hopewell, VA.

Mulholland was able to obtain worker's social security numbers and found that 32 of 35 ISI workers were using numbers that appeared to belong to other people.

This led him to believe the workers were in the country illegally.

Mulholland contacted Agent Patrick Kelly from the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement office in Charleston, but he is unaware of any action taken by the agency.

According to a June 13

news report five workers for the same contractor were turned away from Dominion's Chesterfield Power Station in Virginia for having problems with their identification.

Two of the workers were arrested.

A report in the Richmond Times-Dispatch Chesterfield County police arrested Berlin Romero Perez Marroquin and Victor Joel Reyes Ruiz for identification fraud and possession of fake identification cards.

Unfortunately the likelihood of action by the federal agency tasked with enforcing such laws in West Virginia, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement office, is low.

According to Mulholland ISI is still on Dominions projects and has a maintenance contract for insulation, sheet metal, and scaffold work at all of Dominion's fossil fuel plants.

“Local 2 is grateful for the support received from other building trade members while picketing and will always remember their overwhelming solidarity,” said Mulholland.

**CARPENTERS BANNER FIRST NATIONAL BANK IN LEWISBURG**

LETTING THE PUBLIC know local workers are not building First National Bank's project in Lewisburg are Carpenter members (from left) Bob Malesky, Doug Heaster, and Chad McCallister.

“The bank counts on local residents as customers, we feel in turn they should use local workers to build their project,” said McCallister. According to McCallister the bank hired an out-of-state contractor who brought in workers for the job.



# PLUMBERS & STEAMFITTERS 486 TAKING APPLICATIONS FOR WV APPRENTICESHIP

U A Local 486 Plumbers & Steamfitters Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee will be accepting applications for their Martinsburg, WV apprenticeship.

Applications will be accepted through July 31, 2009.

The program teaches pipefitting, plumbing, welding, HVAC and CAD skills. Starting pay is \$18.10 plus benefits.

Applications can be sub-

mitted at 5521 Tabler Station Road, Inwood, WV 25428, Monday through Friday from 8:00 to 3:00.

If you would like an application mailed or have any questions, please call 1-866-760-4860 and press "0" for

the operator. Our website is [www.486school.com](http://www.486school.com).

Applicants must have a high school diploma or GED and a valid drivers license. Applicants should live in Allegany, Washington, or Frederick Counties in MD or

Berkeley, Jefferson or Morgan Counties in WV.

A math test, as well as a physical and drug screening will be required.

No applicant shall be rejected because of race, creed, color, sex or national origin.

## WORKERS

*CONTINUED FROM P. 1*

private sector companies to sell the coverage, much like auto and home policies are sold.

Leaders from the Building Trades and Contractors

groups started to meet that year to find ways to make the most of the changes.

C.R. Neighborgall IV, President of Neighborgall Construction, has been one of the leading contractor advocates of the new program.

"As an employer we value

this partnership with employees and their union leadership which makes it a strong program," said Neighborgall. "It's the workers that suffer the injuries and we need their involvement to make this program a success."

Neighborgall also notes

the program is focused on long term gains, its not about a quick fix to a complex problem.

"Union contractors can now buy their workers compensation coverage without subsidizing low wage, unsafe competitors," said Jim Cerra, Executive Director of the Kanawha Valley Builders Association and one of the key program supporters.

"We realized early on most insurance companies have a system that makes high wage contractors subsidize their low wage competitors," said Cerra.

BrickStreet Insurance was the sole provider of insurance coverage until July 1 of last year.

Since then employers have been able to get their workers compensation from any licensed company.

Not all union employers are in the program, only a dozen or so companies chose to get in for the July 1 start date.

Other are taking a wait-and-see approach. "But the longer they wait the longer they will have to subsidize their low wage competitors," said Cerra.

## LONGVIEW PROJECT RECEIVES OSHA SAFETY AWARD



RECEIVING RECOGNITION FOR safety on the Longview Power project in Morgantown are job site stewards from crafts affiliated with the North Central WV Building Trades Council. The Star Worksite VPP (Voluntary Protection Programs) is OSHA's official recognition of the outstanding efforts of employers and employees who have achieved exemplary occupational safety and health. The award focuses on efforts made and an accident rate less than the national average but does not signify a perfect safety record.

## Mark Your Calendars



Rally  
Sunday, August 2 | 1 PM  
State Capitol Complex

Labor's Perspective on Health Care Reform and  
The Employee Free Choice Act

Featured Guest Speaker  
AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer **Rich Trumka**

Join Working Families from across West Virginia in a fun filled afternoon: Music by **Morning Star** | Activities for the children  
Free hot dogs & Beverages

For additional information contact: **West Virginia AFL-CIO**  
(304) 344-3557 or [wvafclcio@wvafclcio.org](mailto:wvafclcio@wvafclcio.org) | [www.wvafclcio.org](http://www.wvafclcio.org)

IMPROVED CREDIT SCORES SAVE MONEY**UNION TRADES FEDERAL CREDIT UNION  
LAUNCHES FREE EDUCATION EFFORT**

Union Trades FCU (Federal Credit Union) is sponsoring free credit education classes for all participating unions and their members.

The classes focus on credit scores, how they affect your finances and how to get the best score.

“We offer advice that can potentially save people thousands of dollars in interest over their lifetimes,” said Seth Amos, Marketing Manager for Union Trades FCU.

Amos, along with Charleston Branch Manager Lora Upton, has been going to apprentice classes to give advice and counseling on how to build and improve credit scores.

Some highlights of the class include who can view your credit report, what infor-

mation it discloses, the components that make up your score, tips to build or repair credit, and major pitfalls to avoid.

This class is not only good for apprentices it can benefit anyone in any financial condition.

In only 3 months Amos has given free credit score counseling to over 400 apprentices.

“One thing we encourage everyone to do is pull their own credit report from [annualcreditreport.com](http://annualcreditreport.com) and view what is actually reported,” said Amos.

By doing so you can make sure there are no errors and verify no one has stolen your identity.

Another message Amos delivers is - if you wait until you need credit it's too late to try and fix it. It takes several

months and sometimes years to improve poor credit history.

Those with poor or no credit are encouraged to begin building or repairing their credit score immediately so when they need credit to qualify for something they will have a better chance of being approved

The classes also give an opportunity to talk about history of Union Trades FCU and the products and services offered.

Union Trades FCU is owned by its members, who for the most part are also members of construction unions in West Virginia as well as their family members.

Also discussed is how credit unions compare to banks.

Credit unions are member owned and not-for-profit in-

stitutions; whereas banks are owned by stockholders and are profit driven.

However, like a bank, deposits at Union Trades FCU are federally insured up to \$250,000 on each persons account and up to \$500,000 for

a couple.

To learn more about this free credit education service offered by Union Trades FCU contact Seth Amos at (304) 485-1421 ext. 309 or Lora Upton at (304) 344-0194.

ACT Foundation  
600 Leon Sullivan Way  
Charleston, WV 25301  
(304) 345-7570

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SETH AMOS (left) along with Craig Phillips, Apprenticeship Coordinator for Boilermakers Local 667 lead a discussion about credit scores with Boilermaker apprentices. The free class is sponsored by Union Trades Federal Credit Union.

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toll free 1 888 524-1421  
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600 Leon Sullivan Way, Suite 101  
Charleston, WV 25301  
(304) 344-0194 fax 344-0195  
toll free 1 800 450-8530  
[receptionchas@uniontradesfcu.com](mailto:receptionchas@uniontradesfcu.com)