

1 Happy New Year to All Covington MeadWestvaco Employees!

A New Year's Update from CPU 675:

Since October 28, 2007, the great majority of Covington employees have supported Covington Paperworkers Union Local 675 as their representative for all matters relating to their employment. We have waited patiently for the federal government to schedule an election to formally certify CPU 675 as the representative of the bargaining unit. During that time, we have tolerated a lot of disrespect and harassment from the Steelworkers. The USW does not care about Covington. The only reason they are here now is because they do not want the nationwide embarrassment of the CPU 675 getting a better deal. So the Steelworkers do everything they can to block an election that lets us move on and bargain as a united group, even though that hurts people. The election is coming, and the CPU 675 is striking back.

One of our primary concerns has always been the risk that the Steelworkers may attempt some sort of bargaining with the company prior to an election, even though they are a minority union that has lost the support of nearly all of the employees. Attempting to mess with our rights and futures now – when Covington employees support a different representative – would be the ultimate slap in our face. We still need the election to get federal government certification and start bargaining. But ongoing actions by the Steelworkers demand a stand to protect Covington. **So we have formally proven to the company what everyone in Covington already knows: that CPU 675 is in fact the majority representative, and the Steelworkers are the minority.** Under federal law, the company can not bargain with the USW, a minority union. If the Steelworkers attempt to force the company to bargain behind your backs, they risk forcing the company to abandon the old contract now. We hope that the Steelworkers are not that reckless before the election, but we would not be surprised. The USW will *always* put its interests above Covington.

The reason the Steelworkers are so loud, the reason they use fear tactics instead of meaningful promises, is because they are losing and getting desperate. Here are some updates:

- **CPU 675 has defeated the unfair labor charge that the Steelworkers filed against us.** After getting the facts, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) was going to dismiss the charge – our vote to leave was fair, overwhelming, and for the right reasons – so the Steelworkers had to withdraw it. But they are so desperate, that they then re-filed the exact same charge the next day! Don't worry, it won't work. But it shows the USW knows it will lose the election.
- Tony Markland has been elected West Mill Vice President of CPU 675. Tony has always fought hard for Covington employees. We believe he has the abilities and consistent loyalty to all Covington employees really need right now.
- The CPU 675 still receives questions from many employees due to USW misinformation or rumors. Beginning next week, we will be posting answers and updates on our website, www.local675.com.
- One rumor that needs to end now is the USW's threat that members of CPU 675 will ever be personally responsible for paying the fees of the union's lawyers. **This is completely false: no member will have personal liability for our union's legal bills.** Don't believe such garbage.

We don't invade your homes; so please come to us with questions. But rest assured that CPU 675 is doing everything possible to secure your futures. After the election, we will pursue a contract we can all be proud of. When USW President Gerard visits Covington, he could only say one thing to ensure a better future for Covington: that when he goes back to Pittsburgh, he will take the Steelworkers with him.