

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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WORKERS PROTEST HUNDREDS OF LOST MARCELLUS SHALE GAS JOBS

Union construction workers are protesting out-of-state contractors and imported workers on another pipeline project related to the large Marcellus Shale gas find in West Virginia.

Members of Operating Engineers Local 132, Laborers Local 984 and Pipeliners 798 have been at the Energy Transfer-Bobcat site in Harrison County every work day, all day, since June 22.

The project is 14 miles of 20 inch pipeline in Doddridge and Harrison County. Energy Transfer Partners from Texas hired Leducor out of Canada to do the job.

According to Donnie Huff, Pipeline Representative for the Operating Engineers, at

least 130 out-of-state workers were counted as they went to work.

“Most were from Texas,

but we saw Louisiana, Mississippi, and Oklahoma plates too,” said Huff.

Joe Bowen, Organizer

for Laborers 984 said the 14 miles of pipeline is just a small piece of the work re-

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MEMBERS OF THE Operating Engineers, Laborers and Pipeliners start their protest at 6:00 am each day at the Energy Transfer-Bobcat project in Harrison County. Their message is Local Jobs for Local Workers.

IBEW COMPLETES \$1.2 MILLION NEW APPRENTICESHIP BUILDING

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 317 in Huntington recently completed a new \$1.2 million apprenticeship training building.

The program was able to buy a church and three houses near their Union Hall in Huntington around two years ago.

The houses were torn down and the church was renovated.

Construction began last Fall and was completed in May of this year.

G&G Builders from Putnam County was the General Contractor.

The 10,000 square foot facility has plenty of classroom and hands-on area for appren-

tices to learn. And plenty of parking.

Retractable walls give the space flexibility to have large

and small classes.

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PICTURED LAST FALL is the new Apprenticeship building under construction for IBEW 317. The \$1.2 million building was completed in May.

WORKERS COMPENSATION CONSORTIUM PROGRAM DOUBLES FOR SECOND YEAR

A Labor-Management approach to workers compensation for Building Trades members and contractors is entering its second year and seeing significant successes.

The program was launched on July 1, 2009 with 13 contractors participating. The number of contractors has now doubled with 26 in the program as of July 1, 2010.

Each of the original 13 companies stayed and an additional 13 joined over the course of the year.

The program offers an alternative to traditional workers compensation insurance that focuses on safety and quality claims handling.

“Under traditional workers compensation programs high wage companies subsidize their low wage competitors because it is a wage tax,” said Steve White, ACT Director. “Our system rewards safety companies and does not penalize good wages.”

Labor and management representatives get together regularly to study safety measures and accident trends. For example eye and hand injuries were noticed as the most common injuries.

A short refresher safety course was suggested to participating contractors and new safety glasses and gloves were made available to workers.

Another lesson learned is the value in reporting injuries, or possible injuries, immediately.

Same day reporting pro-

jects the worker from questions about where the injury took place and lets any needed medical treatment begin immediately.

“Our folks are tough and work through many strains and pains without comment

– but they need to let their supervisor know when something happens, it pays in the long run,” said White.

In addition the program incorporates drug and alcohol testing already adopted by the organized sector of the construction industry.

The effort started soon after West Virginia decided to abandon its state run workers compensation system in 2005.

On an informal basis labor and management leaders looked for ways to take advantage of the change to benefit both workers and union contractors.

Looking at actual accident data and claims cost taught the group a lot about how the workers compensation industry worked and how it failed to factor in the differences a union environment brought. “We learned only 25 cents of each premium dollar went to claims for most union contractors,” said White. “We wanted to know where the rest went to.”

The group worked with Brickstreet Insurance, the company created from the old state run program, trying to find ways to reward

safe companies and improve medical treatment for injured workers.

“WE LEARNED ONLY 25 CENTS OF EACH PREMIUM DOLLAR WENT TO CLAIMS FOR MOST UNION CONTRACTORS,” STEVE WHITE, DIRECTOR, AFFILIATED CONSTRUCTION TRADES

However Brickstreet abandoned the effort instead striking a deal with a competing contractor association of mixed union and nonunion companies.

Eventually the group teamed up with Union Labor Life Insurance Company, Roundstone Insurance, and Wells Fargo Disability Management to form its own program.

The West Virginia Workers Compensation Consortium

was formed to oversee the effort and a new insurance option for union contractors was created.

The group self-insurance approach means contractors must pay premium plus an additional deposit. The Affiliated Construction Trades has made an investment in the program by adding to the reserve fund to get the program started.

Key to the effort is the use of a “troubleshooter” whose job is to make sure an injured worker understands the process and gets the help they need.

“We want to prevent injuries first, but if they happen we want the worker to get the best treatment possible and

back to work quickly, without a lot of red tape,” said Ted Brady of Progressive Electric and Chair of the groups Safety Committee.

To get in the program a contractor must be union, participate in a drug free program, have a good safety record and pay attention to good safety practices.

Eventually companies in the program expect to see lower premiums and improved safety results on the job.

But the benefits from the program are evident by the 100% renewal rate for the first 13 companies.

“We understand workers compensation more than before, and we see the benefits a safe job brings,” said Brady.

“Good communications, early reporting and a focus on safety helps everyone involved.”



TOM HOUSEHOLDER OF American Electric Power gives a presentation at a meeting of the Workers Compensation Consortium about how AEP focuses on safety. The group looks for good practices to follow as part of their effort to improve safety.

LARGE PIPELINE, PROCESSING AND COMPRESSOR PROJECTS

MARCELLUS SHALE – BILLIONS OF DOLLARS, THOUSANDS OF LOCAL JOBS POSSIBLE

A discovery made by scientists in 2008 could mean thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in revenue for West Virginia.

The Marcellus Shale lies underneath most of West Virginia and stretches into Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York. It could contain more than 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas representing a value of about a trillion dollars.

For construction workers there are thousands of job opportunities - beyond the drilling work – in the pipeline and processing plants needed to take the gas from the well to customers. Estimates of current and proposed pipeline projects exceed \$2 billion and there are \$500 million in processing plant projects underway or in advanced planning phases.

However oil and gas companies from Oklahoma and Texas have descended upon West Virginia buying claims like a modern day gold rush. Multi-million dollar drilling, pipeline construction and processing station projects have

been going to companies they are familiar with from Texas projects but are totally new to West Virginia.

To get to the natural gas companies use horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing. In horizontal drilling, a vertical well is drilled more than a mile down, then the drill moves sideways in several directions. One well can now replace a dozen old style vertical wells.

Hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking” uses enormous amounts of chemically treated water to push the gas out of a well.

The contaminated water that comes back is taken by large tanker trucks to ponds, deep injection wells or processing plants – but only one processing facility exists in West Virginia.

Once drilled the gas must be cleaned and transported through pipelines.

Existing pipelines, compressor stations and processing plants are inadequate to treat and carry this new gas.

Gathering pipelines must be constructed to connect individual wells to processing

plants and then on to the major transmission pipelines.

Along the way the transmission lines, which can be hundreds of miles long, will require the construction of compressor, metering and control stations.

Transmission lines eventually deliver the gas to distribution pipelines, also known as gas mains, responsible for delivering gas to the service lines that run into homes.

Processing plants separate raw gas from byproducts to produce ‘pipeline quality’ dry, natural gas.

Some of the byproducts contained in the raw gas include ethane, propane, butane, and natural gasoline.

After leaving the processing plant the natural gas travels through transmission pipelines which require stations to monitor and pressurize the gas.

Compressor stations are built approximately every 50 to 60 miles along transmission pipelines to boost the pressure and maintain a steady flow.

Metering stations are also needed along the route

to monitor and manage the amount of gas.

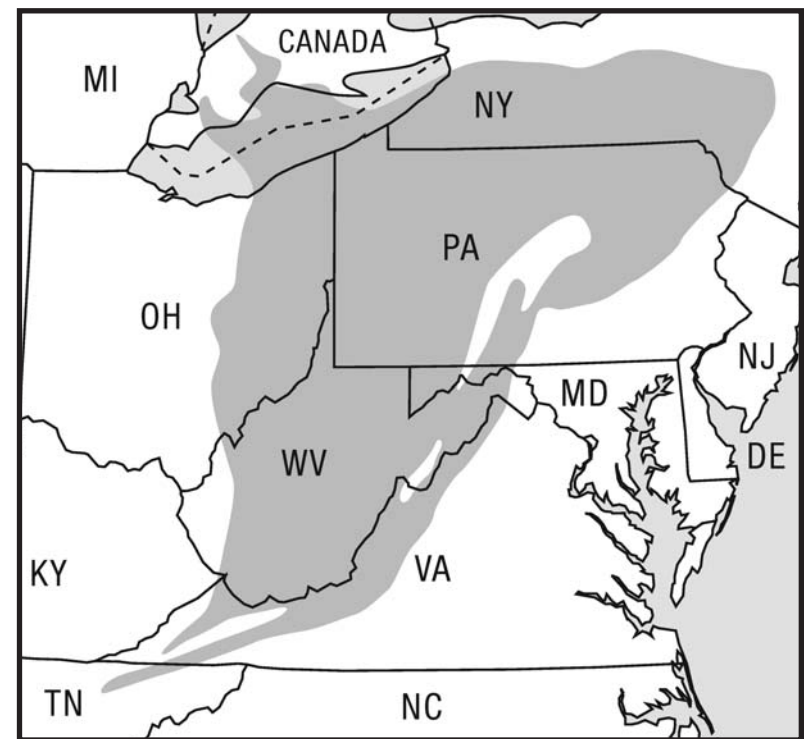
The construction of well-heads, pipelines, metering and processing stations will be at the core of job growth in the natural gas industry.

However, there will be many other jobs associated with this growing industry such as obtaining right-of-way leases from landowners, checking titles and records at county courthouses, land

surveying for pipeline routes and landscaping jobs to restore the land above the buried pipelines.

ACT is dedicated to ensuring local union labor is used to build our state’s emerging natural gas industry and the state’s water resources aren’t compromised.

We want to see it done the right way to provide local jobs for local workers and to protect our water supply.



THE MARCELLUS SHALE area includes most of West Virginia and parts of Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York.

IBEW

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The Inside Wireman program is a five year, 8,000 hours on-the-job and 900 hour classroom schedule.

Course work includes state-of-the-art instrument training, hands on motor control, conduit bending, and all aspects of the electrician trade.

trade.

A computer lab is available as well as distance learning options.

All together there are currently 73 apprentices in the program.

When they complete their apprenticeship they will also complete a two year Associated Degree program.

College credit is given for

apprenticeship plus additional core classes are taken to complete the degree.

The facility is also used by many of the 400 journeyman in the Local.

According to Tim Akers, Training Director, the program offers 80 different classes for journeyman in such areas as solar installation, OSHA 30, CPR First

Aid, instrumentation and energy conservation.

“We ran out of room and needed a better facility to handle all the new technology and different classes our member want,” said Akers.

Last year approximately 175 members took advantage of the training opportunities.

Local 317 covers two counties in Ohio, 11 in Kentucky

and six in West Virginia.

In addition, Local 317 represents outside lineman for the entire state of West Virginia.

They currently get their classroom training at the facility.

Akers hopes to provide the hands-on training for local members who currently must go to Ohio.

DORM PROJECT GOES BAD – IN MANY WAYS

Carpenters unfurled a banner in July at the Mountain State University dorm project in Beck-

ley to protest the use of out-of-state contractors.

Jim Ingledue Construction from Indiana and their affi-

ate Campus Housing Solutions are building a \$20 million student housing project.

Quality Production Construction, from Maryland and

Hanna Brothers from Indiana are two of the sub-contractors on the job.

According to Mid-Atlantic Regional Council of Carpenters Organizer Chad McCallister many of the companies have had problems with their contractor licenses and wage bonds.

“These out-of-state companies have imported their

workers from far away,” said McCallister. “Our local workers need jobs.”

In addition there have been significant reports of mold contamination on the project. According to McCallister some workers have had to go to the hospital apparently because of reactions to on-site mold.

The banner started July 1.



LETTING THE PUBLIC know about out-of-state contractors and workers at the Mountain State University dorm project are members of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council of Carpenters (from left) Raymond Smith, Randall May and Chad McCallister.

IRON WORKERS 787 JAC TAKING APPLICATIONS FOR APPRENTICESHIP

Starting Monday, August 2, Iron Workers Local 787 Joint Apprenticeship Committee (JAC) will be accepting applications for their apprenticeship program.

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 be at least 18 years old, capable of performing work of the Iron Worker trade, be a High

School Graduate or have a GED, and pass a 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. The area covered by Local 787 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.

Class consists of a variety of applications including structural, ornamental, and reinforcing, as well as mathe-

PROTEST

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

lated to the Marcellus Shale.

“The Marcellus Shale gas find means lots of wells being drilled, but that also means they need to clean and process this gas,” said Bowen.

“There are a lot of large industrial construction projects deep in the hills, and miles of pipeline to get the gas into these facilities and then out to the market.”

The protest moved to the leased offices of Energy

matics, welding, and rigging.

The Apprenticeship is a four year program starting out 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 reject-

Transfer in Bridgeport for one day, June 28, to get more public attention.

The message has been clear – Local Jobs for Local Workers.

“It doesn't make sense to bring in all these out-of-state workers when we have the skilled workforce right here to do the job,” said Larry Young, ACT Representative.

“Our unemployment rate is high and if we don't get the jobs from these projects just what does West Virginia really get?”

ed 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 Dan Slavin, Apprenticeship Coordinator, at 304-485-6231.

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

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