

CHICAGO TEAMSTERS JOINT COUNCIL 25



NEWS»

NEW MEMBERS AWARDED \$25K IN BACK PAY FOLLOWING ELECTION

Local 754 Defends Distribution Drivers Over Eliminated Raises

More than a dozen workers with distributor E.A. Sween have received \$25,000 in back pay after Teamsters Local 754 challenged the company's denial of employee wage increases.

Last summer, nearly 40 workers with E.A. Sween, which distributes products to Chicagoland area 7-Eleven stores, voted to join Local 754 by a four-to-one margin. Following the election, management chose to withhold expected wage increases for roughly 40 percent of the bargaining unit, who were entitled to receive anniversary raises.

"Management's actions were viewed as entirely retaliatory against employees who voted to join the Teamsters and those who would be most affected by the lost wages," said Floyd Prusinski, Local 754 Secretary-Treasurer. "Before the union even had an opportunity to negotiate a contract for the new members, our representatives went to bat to defend these workers."

Following unfair labor practice charges which Local 754 filed against E.A. Sween last year, the National Labor Relations Board issued its final settlement this summer, awarding affected employees gross back pay for the denied wage increases. Senior-most employees received approximately \$2,500 each. Additionally, Board agents mandated that all workers in the unit begin receiving higher wages following first- and second-year employment anniversaries.

"The union made sure notices were also posted throughout the worksite detailing management's new promise not to interrogate workers interested in unionizing or threaten to withhold their wages," Prusinski said. "While it's always rewarding to secure the wages our members deserve, the Teamsters viewed this as an opportunity to remind all workers of their rights on the job."

The Teamsters are continuing to negotiate the first contract for its members at E.A. Sween.

Teamsters Local 754 represents approximately 1,000 men and women throughout Illinois, working in the dairy, processing, delivery and clerical industries.