



NEWS»

CHICAGO ALLOWS COMPANIES TO PAY SUBSTANDARD WAGES Teamsters Take to the Streets to Monitor Subcontractors, Hired Trucks

Teamsters rallied to enforce area standards on job sites throughout Chicago as Mayor Richard Daley forced union workers to take an unpaid furlough day on June 11, 2010.

In areas where Teamsters are serving as operators and laborers, the City of Chicago is using private hired trucks to perform union work. On Friday, Teamsters took to the streets to notify the public of these and other unmonitored trucking firms and subcontractors, which currently pay workers substandard wages and benefits.

“City officials are either failing to enforce or monitor regulations on companies they hire to perform our members’ work,” said William P. Logan, Teamsters Local 700 Assistant Trustee.

“When a company is allowed to pay substandard wages, the practice only encourages other businesses to do the same. It threatens the entire workforce and, ultimately, taxpayers at large.”

Scores of Teamsters—including members of Local 700, which represents more than 13,000 public employees—spoke with workers at nine different job sites. In locations where workers were not being paid area standard wages and benefits, the union posted public notices and began picketing.

By end of day Friday, multiple trucking companies hired to perform Department of Transportation and Water and Sewer Department work were found to be out of compliance with area standard prevailing wage rates.

The Teamsters have vowed to continue to monitor job sites across Chicago until city officials ensure workers are paid the wages and benefits they deserve.

“In some locations, the City of Chicago is allowing workers to be severely underpaid,” said Logan. “In cases where we find employers and hired trucks are not in compliance with area standards, the Teamsters will be filing formal prevailing wage complaints with the Illinois Department of Labor.”

As Chicago continues to employ subcontractors, public employees with the Department of Water Management have been forced to take multiple unpaid furlough days in less than three months. In response, the membership of Local 700 has already approved the use of an unfair labor practice strike, if such action becomes necessary in the union’s fight to force the city to honor its contract.

Teamsters are planning to monitor job sites on a weekly basis to enforce area standards.