

Unity **CWA & IBEW • Coast-to-Coast** @Verizon

October 1, 2007 – Please post and share

“We just want the same rights”

VZB Charged With Spying, Discrimination, and Threats

The National Labor Relations Board has issued formal complaints against VZB for “interfering with, restraining and coercing employees in the exercise of rights guaranteed in [federal law].” According to the complaints, VZB managers tried to discourage union organizing by, among other things, “threaten[ing] employees with lay-off for supporting the union,” “prohibiting union solicitations and distributions, while permitting nonunion solicitations and distributions,” and “engag[ing] in surveillance of employees to discover their union activities.”



**VZB senior tech
Dave Rogol**

The complaints were issued in two separate cases after investigations of charges filed by workers at Verizon Business’ Monsey, NY, and Pittsburgh, PA, facilities.

“We just want to have the same job protections and rights that so-called ‘core’ Verizon employees have.

Instead, management has subjected us to its propaganda machine and interfered with our rights on the job. Top management should recognize our union and begin bargaining for the good jobs and respect we deserve,” said Dave Rogol, a Senior Technician at VZB from Charlton, MA.

“Now Verizon should honor the neutrality and union recognition procedure that so many other Verizon employees have benefited from,” said CWA District One Vice President Chris Shelton.

NLRB hearings on the complaints are set for late October and early November. (NLRB Cases 6-CA-35571, 6-CA-35613, and 2-CA-38216; to read the complaints, visit www.FreeChoiceAtVerizon.com.)

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Let’s Get Ready!

The Countdown Begins: 312 Days to Expiration

We’re getting ready! August 2 began the one-year countdown to expiration of the Verizon East contracts, which also have huge implications for future Verizon West contracts.

On that day, IBEW and CWA members rallied at Verizon’s New England headquarters in Boston, in Upland, CA, Richmond, VA, Baltimore, MD and Morgantown, WV. Members also gathered at garages and workplaces throughout Verizon’s footprint.

“Union members are getting prepared now because the next collective bargaining agreement offers us our best chance to refocus management on *making Verizon work for everyone*: customers, employees and investors alike,” said IBEW Local 2222 Business Manager Myles Calvey.



Celebrating Labor Day, Building Our Power

Over Labor Day weekend, members fanned out across the country collecting pledges to switch to a union wireless carrier and spreading the word about our other concerns at Verizon. Just some of the locations: a labor breakfast in Dallas; the Maryland State Fair; Joplin, MO; Boston; and an AFL-CIO picnic in Georgia. In Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Altoona, PA, hundreds of t-shirted CWA members distributed thousands of flyers supporting a “Broadband for All” provision in a proposed bill that would give VZ a statewide franchise.

IBEW Local 827 in New Jersey and CWA Locals in Pennsylvania and Delaware also started practicing for next year with informational picketing, garage meetings, and call center stand-ups—just in case.



Hundreds of CWA District 13 members wore t-shirts supporting high-speed Internet and high-def cable TV for all Pennsylvanians

Thousands Sign On to “Get Union Wireless”



Thanks to efforts like those over Labor Day, we’ve collected thousands of pledges not to use Verizon Wireless until management ends its union-busting. Current users of Verizon Wireless are pledging to drop VZW when their contract ends and switch to union carrier AT&T.

- Washington, D.C., Jobs with Justice (supported by members of CWA Local 2336) organized an action outside the Verizon Wireless Arena. Passersby posed with cell phone mascots and filled out switch cards to tell Verizon Wireless to stop union busting.
- When AFSCME Local 3299 (a statewide union of more than 15,000 University of California employees) found out about VZW’s track

record of union-busting, it dropped its cell phone contract and switched to a union cell phone carrier. All right, AFSCME 3299!

You can help get the word out by downloading the flyer from the www.getunionwireless.org website.

VZB Techs Petition for More Full-Time Jobs and Challenge Company to Live Up to Its Promises

Sixty-five VZB techs signed a letter to VZB President John Killian and HR head Robert Toohey grieving management’s decision to hire a lot of outside contractors. The techs also asked management to stop hiring techs from the outside at similar or sometimes even higher rates of pay than techs who have been with the company for years.

When the techs began to form their union, VZB claimed it was a new company that would listen to their concerns. The letter was sent in late August.

Almost a month later, still no response from VZB management.

Keep up to date on efforts by VZB workers to win collective bargaining rights by visiting www.freechoiceatverizon.com

Excerpt. Read the full letter at FreeChoiceAtVerizon.com

[W]e have been told by management that Verizon is a “new” company, and that we should give management a “chance” to take care of any concerns we may have. We want to take you up on your offer

Many techs are frustrated that the company has begun to hire techs from the outside . . . at a much higher rate of pay than employees who have worked for the company for years. This is unfair, especially to the Techs who have shown years of loyalty to the company.

We also have been alarmed that management has increased the use of contractors in VZB in New England.

We hope that management reconsider these recent actions, and begin to recognize that Verizon Business wouldn’t be the great company it is without its hard working and dedicated technicians.

Stop the Sale Update

The movement in all three Northern New England states to oppose the proposed sale of Verizon to FairPoint keeps growing. A recent opinion survey showed that after learning specific details about FairPoint's small size, fragile finances, and plans to only provide outmoded DSL service, more than 60% of the public thought the buyout was a "bad idea" or a "very bad idea."

Stop the Verizon \$700 Million Tax Rip-Off

If Verizon is successful in selling its New England lines to FairPoint, Verizon will avoid up to \$700 million in taxes by exploiting an obscure tax loophole. In fact, Verizon can't use the loophole unless it sells to a tiny buyer, like heavily indebted, under-resourced FairPoint.

Congress needs to close this unfair loophole! Stay tuned to find out how you can help.

PUC staff in NH seeks conditions that could "jinx the deal"

The New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission staff has proposed a long list of financial and operational conditions that would be needed to reduce the substantial risks of the sale of Verizon's landlines to FairPoint. "The risks, particularly with respect to the financial viability of FairPoint, far outweigh the benefits of this transaction, and in its present form the transfer from Verizon to FairPoint cannot be found to be in the public good," the staff recommendation said.

IBEW and CWA urge "no" vote at FairPoint annual meeting

Two CWA union leaders and representatives of the IBEW recently traveled to Charlotte, NC, to attend FairPoint's annual meeting. They told FairPoint CEO Gene Johnson that the proposed FairPoint deal "posed unacceptably high risks" that could "leave shareholders holding a costly bag" of customer complaints, antiquated equipment and potentially expensive PUC findings. Each FairPoint shareholder received a souvenir paper bag.



CWA L. 1400 N.H. District VP Cassie Xintaras and Local President Cheryl Ahern at the FairPoint Annual Meeting

Four Electrocution Deaths Prompt Electrical Safety Agreement

Four Verizon technicians and union brothers have been killed in electrocution accidents over the last year and a half, and others have been seriously injured.

Because of a settlement pushed by CWA after the electrocution death of a technician last year, Verizon in Maryland will train members on a full array of electrical safety and health issues.

The agreement between Verizon and Maryland's Occupational Safety and Health division requires the company to conduct training on power line contact with vehicles and aerial lifts, identifying electrical hazards, health effects from exposure to electrical power and how to resolve hazards.

"No settlement agreement can begin to make up for the loss of our member, Marvin Benson, but by requiring training for all techs, it honors his memory and will save other lives," Dist. 2 President Pete Catucci said. "Our job now is to make sure that CWA has input into the training and that it's as effective as it can possibly be."

Oops! Note about Virginia telephone deregulation protests

Our article in the last issue of Unity@Verizon on the VA deregulation hearing mentioned only CWA Local 2201 members. We left out Locals 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2222, and 2275. Our apologies.

Visit Unity@Verizon on the web for more! www.cwa-union.org/verizon

What's happening in your area? Send information and photos to unityatverizon@cwa-union.org and we'll publish them here.



Tear Down the Wall at Verizon!

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