



Canadian Piping Trades

UNITED ASSOCIATION

of Journeymen and Apprentices of the
Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the
United States and Canada

LOCAL UNION 488 – Edmonton

16214 – 118 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5V 1M6

Telephone (780) 452-7080 Fax (780) 452-1291

Negotiation Update



I hope you and your loved ones are doing well and have stayed warm during this cold snap. Due to the holiday season and Covid-19 our negotiations were stalled until recently.

The negotiation committee and I met on Friday February 12, 2021 to discuss a plan moving forward and to ensure we are on the same page. It has been our goal since day one to sign the best terms and conditions. We will not sign an agreement just to have it off our plate. It must be an agreement that benefits you.

Local 488 is in Group 4 with Local 720/725 (Rebar), 146 (BM), 1325 (Carpenters), 1460 (Millwrights), 424 (Electrical) and Local 1 Bricklayers (refractory). Locals 725, 1325 & 1460 have ratified.

The February 12 meeting was informative, collaborative, and positive. We discussed how double breasting affects negotiations, extra pay for alloy welders, non-union wage gaps, where our value is, and conditions. The phrase race to the bottom was brought up. I can assure you no one on the committee, or any member wants a race to the bottom. We need wages and terms that are attractive and acceptable to our members, but competitive enough to ensure our contractors will win bids. It is difficult to bargain in today's environment, as we have found out the hard way with owners looking to save money wherever they can. We have non-union and unions of convenience literally buying the project with flexible contracts and lower rates.

Regarding projects, I will speak about the IPL Heartland project. The average total package rate of non-union contractors on site is just under \$50.00/hr. and no DT. Our current total package rate is \$60.37/hour which is around 18% higher than the average non-union total package. IPL was built the first year without BTA or the UA on site. This being a major build, the UA needed to be on site. We enabled the job and our signatory contractors received over 500,000 UA man hours of work with more to come. The big question is, 'Do you enable when needed and put hundreds of your members to work or draw a line in the sand and say what we did when we had 85% of the market share?' 'They cannot build it without us. We now have less than 20% market share in new construction and have lost some long-term maintenance. This is a serious problem we need to solve to get our market share back and put our members to work.

Successful organizations adapt to the environment they are in. There is a global pandemic, investment is down, and we have a 'right to work' Provincial Government. The new US President cancelled billions of dollars of UA work (Keystone XL) with one signature and our Federal Government prefers to buy oil from Saudi Arabia rather than build refineries and pipelines in our own country. There is light at the end of the tunnel however, as there is work coming and we will need to help our contractors win this work. Please ensure you continue to show our value every day to ensure we will be the first choice.

In closing we do have challenges ahead of us which will be viewed as opportunities. We will be stronger in the future when we stick together and increase market share. Please respect and support the negotiating committee you elected, as bargaining is not easy in today's environment.

Fraternally Yours,

Rod McKay
Business Manager