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EXECUTIVE ORDER REVOLUTIONIZES ROLE OF FEDERAL LABOR UNIONS

President Clinton issued an Executive Order this month mandating that agency heads bargain with federal employee unions over matters that heretofore were declared non-negotiable by EPA management: the number, grades and types of employees or positions assigned to any organizational subdivision or work project, and the technology, methods and means of performing work. The change in labor relations at federal agencies is nothing short of revolutionary.

Unions will now have a real say in the composition and structure of organizations undergoing reorganization. EPA management will be required to involve the Union very early in planning reorganizations, and the Union will be the vehicle to convey professional opinions of working-level staff as to how the work should be done, who is needed to do the work and how performance can be measured.

Bargaining over technology and means of doing work, in conjunction with bargaining over organizational structure, opens the door for EPA workers to have real influence over how we carry out the public's business.

UNION LEADERS MEET WITH SECURITY, DC POLICE REGARDING WATERCIDE CRIME

Drive-By Shootings Related to Drug War

The September drive-by shootings in the housing projects near Waterside were a result of a power struggle between local drug lords, according to the Metropolitan Police Department. Local 2050 officials met on October 13 with Jim Jackson, Labor Relations, Ann Linnertz of EPA Security, and Lt. Beverly Medlock of Metro PD to discuss security issues. The arrest of Drug Lord Wayne Perry created a power vacuum and the drive-by shootings are what the police termed "internal business," between the local drug lords. EPA employees should not be affected unless they happen into the line of fire. **TO AVOID BECOMING AN UNINTENDED VICTIM, DO NOT PARK OR WALK EAST OF THIRD STREET.** In a recent "sweep" of the area, 45 arrests have been made. Most of the most violent offenders have either been arrested or there are warrants out for their arrest.

According to EPA Security, the employee dunkings in "Lake EPA" and the stonings of EPA employees have been stopped through cooperation with neighborhood schools and the police.

Membership Meeting -- Featuring Efforts for New Building -- To Be Held October 19. Security Meeting To be Announced

Local 2050 will hold further discussions of the current crime situation at the next membership meeting on October 19, in Conference Room C of Crystal Station, at 12 Noon. (Membership meetings are open to all interested or prospective members.) The meeting will also discuss lobbying efforts for EPA's new building. A general meeting on Security is also planned (time and place to be announced) sponsored by Local 2050, EPA Security, and the Metropolitan Police Department. Thanks to Jim Jackson for making arrangements.

PERSUASION NEEDED: DELEGATE NORTON HOLDING UP NEW BUILDING FOR EPA

by James Handley

Prospects for EPA's proposed new headquarters at the Federal Triangle building depend on Congress, and to date, delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton has opposed EPA's occupancy of the Federal Triangle location; she favors an International Trade Center. Norton sits on the House Public Works and Transportation Committee chaired by Norman Manetta of California, and is vice chair of the subcommittee on Public Buildings and Grounds. Norton has apparently influenced Manetta, and her subcommittee must approve the funding for EPA to occupy the federal triangle building. On the Senate side, Max Baucus, chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works committee reportedly favors EPA's occupancy of the Federal Triangle building. Thus, we ask that members, particularly those who live in DC, write to Delegate Norton. Her address is:

Eleanor Holmes Norton
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The telephone number is 225-8050. I would appreciate copies of your letters. Please also contact me if you're a DC resident and would be interested in a meeting with Norton. I'd like to get several groups of EPA employees, particularly DC residents, to go to her office to discuss this.

The EPA cabinet bill was considered a possible vehicle for putting EPA into the Federal Triangle Building, but the Clinton Administration is pressing for a stripped-down bill without amendments, and supporters are concerned that opening up the bill to any amendments would prevent its passage. (Proposed amendments include provisions for an independent science advisory board, and rules on the use of risk assessment. See Legislative Updates.)

Getting a location is only the beginning; the union plans to press for features that make the new location healthier and more productive for EPA employees. We hope to make this a model for healthy and energy-efficient design for government buildings. I've been compiling information on design alternatives, and on the causes of sick building syndrome and other problems experienced by occupants of modern office buildings, and will be writing about these matters in future issues.

The new building will be on our agenda for the next Membership Meeting on at noon on Tuesday October 19, at Crystal Station, Conference Room C, and we plan special discussion of this issue after the regular membership meeting.

UNIONS MEET WITH CHIEF OF STAFF ATERNO

In the first a series of monthly meetings between EPA's Unions and 12th floor officials, Bill Hirzy, AFGE Local 3331 President Carolyn Lowe and Jim Jackson met with the Administrator's Chief of Staff Kathy Aterno on September 23. Hirzy conveyed to Aterno the Union's request to bargain on a uniform, Headquarters-wide program to deal with the 14/15/SES downsizing ordered by the President. He noted that letting each AA-ship develop a different program would be unworkable, and violative of the Union's right to bargain over a single program for the entire Headquarters bargaining unit. Hirzy also urged that staff-level employees especially scientists, be exempted from the downsizing, consistent with Vice-President Gore's recommendations to eliminate excessive management, not working-level employees.

Hirzy also requested bargaining over a new set of reduction-in-force rules. Under existing rules, each AA-ship is considered an independent "area of consideration" for RIFs so a person rified from one AA-ship has no right to bump or retreat into a job in another AA-ship. If RIFs are coming, the Union wants all Headquarters employees to have bump and retreat access to all Headquarters FTE slots.

Complaints over harassment of EPA employees to pay Diners Club bills before they received reimbursement were related to Aterno. The Union asked that the Administrator order the Financial Management office to halt the practice and adhere to the collective bargaining agreement.

Hirzy raised the case of Dr. William Marcus, who won a whistleblower trial last December in which he was awarded reinstatement, back pay, benefits and \$50,000 in damages. Dr. Marcus is still without redress and Hirzy asked that EPA rehire Marcus immediately without waiting for the Secretary of Labor to ratify the trial judge's decision. Ironically, Margaret

Stasikowski and Tudor Davies, the individuals who illegally fired Dr. Marcus and who were discredited by the trial judge, remain on the public payroll while the Marcus remains unemployed and without medical benefits, etc.

Hirzy requested a seat for the Union on the National Performance Review Implementation Steering Committee for EPA.

At Hirzy's request, the 12th floor will be assisting in fundraising efforts for EPA's child development center and Aterno graciously offered her personal help.

Aterno was asked to investigate the case of Richard Emory, who received reprisals under the Bush administration when he uncovered Department of Justice refusals to prosecute environmental crimes.

"TOTAL RECALL" -- THE WTI SAGA CONTINUES by Dwight Welch

"Total Recall" is a rally planned in Lafayette Park on November 6, 1993 at 10:00 AM to protest the siting of the Waste Technologies Industries (WTI) incinerator in East Liverpool, Ohio. The rally, planned by Terri Swearingen and her activist group, the Tri-State Environmental Council, will return copies of Mr. Gore's book to him with letters protesting the handling of WTI.

A classic example of Environmental Inequity, the WTI incinerator is built on the flood plain of the Ohio River, over a major aquifer, 1,100 ft from an elementary school, 320 ft from residential housing in a poor neighborhood. EPA's permit for the incinerator will allow it to dump tons of lead and other toxins into an atmosphere which suffers temperature inversions two-thirds of the year.

Ms. Swearingen and the Tri-State Environmental Council took over EPA Administrator Bill Reilly's Office last year to protest the WTI incinerator and debated Regional Administrator Valdis Adamkis on ABC's Nightline. Swearingen notes that Clinton and Gore promised an "environmental presidency" and to "put people first." Many people hoped Clinton and Gore's call for a halt to the construction of the WTI incinerator heralded the end of an era when corporate influence prevailed over than the health and safety of the people. According to Swearingen, "the people must act now to hold them to their word, or there will be no change, no 'putting people first,' and no rebirth of honest government."

For more information on the rally contact Beth Knapp 216-6935 or Niaz Dorry, at Greenpeace, 202/319-2520.

EPA's handling of the WTI incinerator will be discussed at the Protecting Integrity and Ethics Conference sponsored by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility on November 5th and 6th

in Bethesda.

ALEX VARELA ELECTED AS LOCAL 2050 VICE-PRESIDENT

Alex Varela, an OE-attorney, long-time union member and EPA activist on many fronts, has joined the Executive Board as a Vice President and will serve as a Steward. Mr. Varela has also been quite active in the Hispanic Advisory Council and has developed particular expertise on the subject of Environmental Equity. His insights and wit will be welcome additions to the Board.

VERMONT MEETING OF CARPET VICTIMS' PHYSICIANS

Bill Hirzy attended a weekend meeting last month in Vermont with Rep. Bernard Sanders (I-VT), his staff, Dr. Rosalind Anderson and several physicians who have been treating carpet toxicity victims. The physicians, Drs. Doris Rapp, Al Whorl, Gunnar Heuser, and Al Johnson have drafted a letter to Administrator Browner relating their experiences with carpet victims and imploring her to take aggressive steps to protect the public from carpet hazards. These physicians are also serving as a focal point for other medical practitioners to bring their professional prestige to bear on this public policy issue.

Rep. Sanders has been working with the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI), the New York Attorney General and others to develop an effective warning program to alert consumers to the possibilities of injuries like those suffered by EPA employees. Sanders reports that CRI is making great strides to improve its public information program.

Hirzy reviewed for the meeting participants the history of EPA and CPSC's activities regarding carpet issues, and outlined a proposal for research and policy to protect the public.

CARPET TOXICITY RESEARCH CONFERENCE by Bill Hirzy

Results of carpet toxicity testing by Monsanto, DuPont, EPA (by contractor Manntech, Inc.), Anderson Laboratories (AL) and University of Pittsburgh (by Yves Alarie) were reported on September 15 at an open meeting at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Arlington, VA. Each laboratory presented its work; peer reviewers Michael Gill, Al Hodgson, Roger Orcutt and Richard Schlessinger then commented on the work, followed by a general discussion among the reviewers and laboratory practitioners. Written comments and questions from the large public audience were entertained at the close of the presentations.

The conference was called to reconcile differences in results and methods between EPA/MannTech and AL when they tested samples of the same carpet and reported on that work to Congress in June of this year, and additional laboratories (Dow, DuPont and Monsanto) reported their results.

Frustratingly, neither EPA/MannTech, Monsanto nor DuPont followed the same protocol as AL and Prof. Alarie, so the reasons for disparate results observed remain unresolved. Peer reviewers noted that different sources of animals, different diets, and different exposure regimens were used and they cautioned that viral infections and exposures to ammonia can affect survival of test animals. The reviewers also suggested inclusion of chemical analysis in the research, which has been absent to date. They noted that something real must be going on because "mice don't just drop dead."

I asked EPA/MannTech about the issue of chemical analysis, "Since emissions testing by various laboratories has shown that 4-phenylcyclohexene, 4-vinylcyclohexene, styrene and toluene are the principal components of carpet off gassing, when will you test a synthetic atmosphere approximating that of the off gassing mixture?" EPA/MannTech replied that it had no plans to test a synthetic atmosphere because it, "wouldn't know what end points to look for, and wouldn't know how to interpret negative results."

That disingenuous answer and past performance suggest where and how we might start reinventing EPA/MannTech.

LOCAL 2050 PRESIDENT-ELECT MEETS WITH B.I.G. PRESIDENT

In the first of a series of planned leadership meetings, Dwight Welch, met in September with Brooks Hamlin, President of Blacks in Government (BIG). This began a program undertaken by Local 2050 to gather input from civil rights and other employee groups about employees' concerns. BIG's prominence made it a logical choice for the first leadership meeting.

Mr. Hamlin invited Local 2050 to attend the monthly Ethnic Community Forum which would be more efficient than meeting separately with individual groups. Mr. Welch described some Local 2050 issues of interest to BIG, including cultural diversity, environmental inequity, and the Early Environments Scholarship Fund to provide scholarship funds for children of lower-salaried employees.

Hamlin related key findings of Workshop 2000 on cultural diversity which recently met in Fredericksburg, VA: Of the 300 SES positions at EPA, only 12 are held by people of color. People of color were also under-represented in the 220 recent promotions to GM-14 and

above. GS-12 seems to be a "glass ceiling" for most Afro-American employees at EPA.

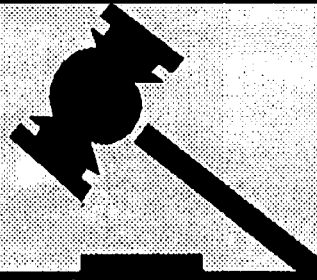
BIG is pursuing a Leadership Training Program, Cultural Diversity, and, Mr. Hamlin emphasized, Cultural Equality. Hamlin expressed interest in the Environmental Equity issue and was enthusiastic about the Early Environments Scholarship Program.

Mr. Hamlin plans to notify Mr. Welch of the Ethnic Community Forum meeting and copy us on BIG's letter to the Administrator outlining steps BIG recommends for employment and promotional equality at EPA. This initial meeting between BIG and Local 2050 promises a cooperative and productive relationship.

Member Services

CHIEF STEWARD'S

REPORT



Performance Evaluations - Not Unlike Taxes

It's that time of the year again. The air is crisp, the leaves are starting to change colors and it's time for performance appraisals. For those of you with good managers who judge people fairly and give you meaningful supervision throughout the year - congratulations, it will probably be a relatively painless, perhaps even constructive exercise. But what about the rest us? Well, here is some advice on some concerns with the performance evaluation process.

First, as much as you may dislike doing it, your self-appraisal is an official part of the performance evaluation process. Prepare your self-appraisal now. Review your projects and files for the year and summarize what you have worked on and how you have been successful. It's easier for your supervisor to give you a good rating when you have documented your performance.

Many employees, as well as managers, are under the misconception that ratings of fully satisfactory and above are not grievable. You can file a grievance, through the Union. A common complaint is that performance has previously been consistently found at "exceeds expectations" or "outstanding," and there was no reason for a lower rating this time. Your logic is pretty good here, but your

evaluation is based on your work during this past year. Find work you have performed that is of the same consistent quality as in the past, and be prepared to substantiate how your current work is of the same quality. Are your performance standards objective? Apply them if they are. Are they subjective? Arguably they are not proper, but apply them as best you can. We can discuss the propriety of the standards later if we have to challenge the rating.

Did your lower-than-expected rating come as a surprise? Your supervisor has an affirmative obligation to provide you progress reviews throughout the year on how well you are meeting the standards of your performance agreement. Did you receive a Mid-year evaluation in April? Supervisors must, at a minimum, conduct a midyear progress review with each employee in April. Other considerations for the evaluation process include the assumptions that are part of your standards. Was work assigned to you? Were appropriate support and resources provided? These factors determine whether the work, and its quality, were under your control.

While it is your supervisor's responsibility to know and comply with the performance management system, you should acquaint yourself with its requirements so you can help yourself and help your supervisor do a better job. You are more likely to have your rights respected if you know how the system is supposed to work. You can go to the Office of Human Resource Management ("Personnel" in plain English), Client Services Division in room 3020 of the Mall to get the relevant materials. Request the Performance Management 3151 Manual, March 1991. (I suggest you review Chapter 1 and concentrate on Chapter 2.) You may also want copies of the OPM regulations found at 5 CFR Part 430. You can call OHRM at 260-3266 to request these materials.

This is also the time of year when you should be establishing a new performance agreement. Again, your participation in the process increases your chances of making it a meaningful and fair one. Management has a legal duty to consult with you on your standards before they are established. Consider what you need to do your job, then include all of them under "assumptions." Try to include objective criteria, such as time and quantity, in your standards so they can be fairly applied. You will be much better off next year if you and your supervisor reach agreement on what is expected of your work now.

Do you believe you have been discriminated against for unpopular views about science or law or for a refusal to "go along to get along?" Such misconduct would constitute a prohibited personnel practice. Similarly, your supervisor cannot lower your rating, nor deny you reasonable time for exercising your rights by learning about the performance management system and participating in it. Likewise, you cannot be discriminated against for engaging in Union

activities.

Even if you are unhappy about your performance evaluation rating, go ahead and sign it. It's like a speeding ticket; you don't like it, but you are not admitting guilt by signing. You also are entitled to write comments on the appraisal as to why you think it was unfair or unjustified. You can contact me at (703) 308-8507 if you want advice on the performance evaluation process and if you want to discuss taking some action to challenge your rating or requesting reconsideration.

YOUR STEWARD CORPS

In addition to myself as Chief Steward, I am happy to announce that the following members have agreed to offer their services and have been appointed as Stewards: President William Hirzy, President-Elect Dwight Welch, Vice-President Alex Varela, Alex Arce, William Coniglio, Dr. James Goodyear and James Murphy. These stewards are available to answer your questions and to help convey your concerns to the Union's Executive Board.

We are striving to have a steward from each organizational office represented by the local. Traditionally stewards in this local have represented members in grievances and counseled them in EEO matters. While this function will continue to be important, it is only one of the stewards' roles. As a steward for your office, you would help communicate the concerns of your office to the officers of the local through the Chief Steward, and in turn, you would help communicate information from the Local Executive Board to the members in your office. This way, the membership and the officers can be appraised of concerns and problems and be in a position to take timely actions, rather than reacting to a management fait accompli. One of the roles for stewards which will be of increasing importance, will be to represent your office when there are reorganizations and moves. Stewards may directly participate in such negotiations. Other roles will include counseling employees on alternative workspace availability, workmen's compensation and other questions of employee rights and benefits.

Every employee has the right to join or assist a labor union without fear of penalty or reprisal, and each employee shall be protected in the exercise of such right. You are allowed to use official time, with the approval of the union and management, to engage in union activities. Please call me if you are interested in taking an active role in shaping EPA and helping your fellow employees.

BAD MOVES BY OGC

by Steven Spiegel

Last month we reported that the OGC move to Rosslyn began badly with late notice from management of the move, but was later redeemed by a spirit of cooperation by some members of management. We also reported that after reaching an agreement-in-principle, some parts of management started to renege on the deal and it was necessary to put the move on hold, albeit for only a few hours, until the deal was put back together.

Apparently this did not sit well with OGC upper management who decided to hold over sixty employees hostage in the next move by ordering them to pack up for a move without having notified the Union of the move. Then management blamed the Union for the delay when the move was postponed because management failed to obey the law. For the prior move, OGC management only allowed fourteen days for negotiations to take place. NFFE 2050 informed OGC management that this was not a legally adequate period for good-faith negotiations. We nevertheless made great efforts to negotiate within the limited time so the move could proceed. For the currently scheduled move, the same OGC managers left zero days to negotiate before the move, conduct that can only be characterized as bad faith.

This is a familiar management ploy: create a situation that frustrates its employees and then blame the Union when management has blatantly violated the law. We can only hope the incoming General Counsel will clean house and put an end to such counter-productive tactics. In the meantime, the office responsible for advising the rest of the Agency on compliance with labor laws has unnecessarily wasted the time of their employees and everyone else involved in a petty power play. NFFE local 2050 is taking steps to seek partial redress for this abominable conduct and prevent its recurrence.

HEALTH AND SAFETY NEWS

by Dwight Welch

BROKEN WATER PIPE EMPTIES SEVERAL FLOORS OF EAST TOWER

A corroded pipe carrying coolant water in one of the HVAC systems in the East Tower cleared out employees on floors 4 through 7 on September 16. According to the Health and Safety Office, the coolant water contains no anti-corrosion chemicals (the water had been previously tested by Health and Safety), and they knew of no asbestos-containing materials involved. Supervisors were allowed to grant administrative leave or relocate employees to other floors.

IPM TREATMENT EFFECTIVE, BUT CRYSTAL MALL EMPLOYEES STILL EXPOSED Spraying in Adjacent Areas Continues

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) treatment recommended by the Cockroach QAT (see last month's Fishbowl report) has considerably reduced cockroach counts observed in sticky traps in Crystal Mall. Avermectin which starves roaches by killing their digestive symbiotes, reduced the totals in 10 traps over four day pre- and post-treatment samplings from 43 to 12. Further counts are planned, to monitor the effect of the control agent which has a delayed kill time. Sampling will also be conducted above ceilings, where the pest control folks report that bugs are running rampant. Obnoxious odors and chemical toxicity typical of conventional pest treatments were avoided by the QAT's state-of-the-art IPM approach, and as a result, the Union received absolutely no complaints of pesticide odors.

Further efforts are planned to gain cooperation of the landlord, Charles E. Smith Companies. Smith surcharged EPA an extra \$5,000 for the safer IPM treatment in Crystal Mall and continues to have solvent-based Baygon routinely sprayed in hallways, restrooms, and lobbies and floors occupied by the Navy and Patent Office. Because the space occupied by EPA employees shares a common ventilation system with these areas, EPA employees are regularly exposed by these sprayings. The QAT intends to tackle this problem next.

President-Elect Dwight Welch nominated the QAT team for recognition by OPP management because the treatment was a good example of employees, management, and the Unions working harmoniously to solve a shared problem.

Late Update: Some CM-2 EPA employees are still seeing numerous tiny cockroaches. These cockroach nymphs are the result of egg cases left behind by the preceding and now largely deceased adult generation. Since a heavy-duty residual insecticide was not used, it will be a short while before these cockroaches die. One of the trade-offs of IPM is that while it provides freedom from exposure to toxic chemicals, control takes a little longer. Avermectin, the control agent used, reaches its highest cockroach control 4 months after treatment.

HEALTH AND SAFETY WALKTHROUGH REVEALS UNHEALTHFUL INDOOR AIR FOR ADMINISTRATOR'S STAFF ON 11th FLOOR

Periodic walkthroughs by the combined Union-Management Health and Safety Team revealed unhealthy indoor air quality conditions for some of the Administrator's staff -- not on the 12th floor where the high profile folks sit, but on the 11th floor of the West Tower. The Health and Safety Team encountered offices with an air

exchange which could only be described (generously) as stagnant. There were numerous complaints of infections, headaches, eye irritation, and other symptoms of sick building syndrome. One employee in particular was suffering from what seemed to be advanced multiple chemical sensitivity. She has been taken from the building by ambulance on a number of prior occasions and her infections have not responded to high doses of antibiotics. Kirby Biggs, Health and Safety VP for AFGE Local 3331 took her name, and will provide assistance to her in what may be a life-threatening situation. Wake up, Carol Browner, this building is killing us and it's happening to your own staff!

Legislative Updates

CABINET STATUS

The Clinton administration hopes for a bill to elevate the EPA to Cabinet-level that addresses "structural, management issues," but avoids policy concerns. Administration officials are trying "to keep this bill as limited as possible when it goes to the House floor." They are concerned that the measure, the only major environmental bill expected to win passage of both houses during this session, could be viewed as a legislative vehicle for other environmental initiatives. Legislators may be tempted to address a variety of issues in the bill, such as pesticide regulation, private property rights, risk assessment, Superfund reform, and wetlands. Increasing pressure by House Republicans to allow unlimited amendments for all legislation may create even more obstacles for passage of a bill to elevate EPA to Cabinet-level. Concerned House sources say they are working hard to reach an agreement between opposing parties on the amendments issue.

POSSIBLE BUY-OUTS FOR EPA EMPLOYEES

On October 1, 1993, the Clinton Administration sent Congress legislation to allow about 100,000 civilian employees to get Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments (VSIPs). This is part of the Administration's efforts to reduce federal employees by 252,000. VSIPs would equal severance entitlements up to \$25,000. EPA will decide when and to whom they will offer the buyouts. Buyouts would be offered during a 90-day period and would probably come early in this new fiscal year to save the most money. Taking a buyout will mean forfeiting severance pay and if you choose to begin receiving a pension now under the Civil Service Retirement System, a 2 percent reduction of pension benefits for each year you are under 55. It is expected that the buyout procedures will be negotiated with your local, so let us know your concerns.

More Flexibility in Training for Federal Employees

In addition to the early-outs being proposed by the Clinton Administration, additional flexibility in training is being proposed in legislation sent to Congress October 1. Employees would no longer need to show that training is related to their current position or one to which they could be promoted, but could get government-subsidized training in other areas related to their agency's mission.

House-Senate Conference Agrees on EPA's Budget

Conferees for the House and Senate reported on Oct. 1 that they had reached agreement on a compromise measure to fund EPA for FY '94.

E-MAIL - YOUR ACCESS TO EPA

All-In-1 E-mail not only provides a means of communicating with the officers of your local, it also provides access to information from all parts of EPA. You can receive excellent daily news updates from the EPA library concerning legislative developments on the statutes your office implements, on the progress of EPA's move to cabinet status and a host of other environmental developments. The Administrator's Update is available on E-mail, and it has been used to disseminate information on the Office of Enforcement reorganization. Job announcements are posted each week under Human Resources Issues & Information. And if you are up to reading it, you can even get an electronic copy of Al Gore's report on reinventing government from the library over E-mail. Did I mention you can also access Internet? Welcome to Cyberspace. It's easy to get on E-mail. Contact the E-mail coordinator in your office about getting an E-mail box. It is EPA policy for all EPA employees to have an E-mail box. And remember, with your own box you can send and receive messages and Wordperfect documents to and from NFFE 2050. The next introductory training is scheduled for November 9, 1993 - contact the WIC and your training coordinator.

PRESIDENT AND PRESIDENT ELECT TAKE TQM TRAINING

Local 2050 officers Bill Hirzy and Dwight Welch recently took the Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP) TQM training course. Although the two officers have been on the cutting edge of these changes (going the extra step of pushing for worker democracy), Bill and Dwight felt it would be good to experience the same training that others in the Agency are getting. The OPP course, taught with great enthusiasm by Chuck Trichilo and Steve Potts, is two days longer than the standard course; the extra time allows more participation in TQM exercises. Chuck and Steve also keep the course interesting with injections of humor to demonstrate TQM

principles including film clips from the "Three Stooges", "Laurel and Hardy", and "Saturday Night Live". If you need to be TQMed, this is the course to take.

Opinion and Commentary:

WE GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS PLACE

by Dwight Welch

Tired of drive-by shootings, muggings, employees being taken hostage, and assaults by Lake EPA? Does Watercide Mall make you physically ill due to poor indoor air quality? Would you like to tell Eleanor Holmes-Norton how you feel about her opposition to EPA's occupancy of the Federal Triangle Building? Do you believe EPA might save money by renting/buying space outside of the most dangerous city in the world?

We are tired of lame excuses. Watercide Mall is a public embarrassment to an Agency that should be setting the example to the world of what an ideal office environment should be. For information, contact Dwight Welch (202) 260-2383, James Handley (202) 546-5692, or Fresteh Toghrol (703) 308-7887. We are planning a brain-storming session after the membership meeting on October 19.

Do you really want wall to wall carpeting?

by William Coniglio

Each day thousands of people leave their private homes and congregate in the massive energy-efficient buildings just like the 401 "M" street address where we spend most of our waking hours. On the outside these buildings appear to be modern and clean. But on the inside they are a nightmare of tracked-in dirt, ambient dust, deteriorating food crumbs, decaying carpet and furniture, cleaning fluids, polishes, corrosion inhibitors, germicides, and insecticides. Some people who enter the building are ill while others have been in contact with sick family or friends. Each day millions of cells die and fall off of every person who enters the building. These dead cells and the bacteria attached to them become the food for mites, insects and fungi. The indoor environment, untouched by sunshine and protected from temperature extremes, becomes the living space where bacteria and microbes which hitchhike to work on employees and visitors spread their spores and try to establish themselves. Over time, the inside of an office building becomes a complex ecosystem. Today we are aware that many of these man-made ecosystems created for "energy efficiency, beauty, least cost and high occupancy rates" no longer nurture their human inhabitants. The buildings themselves have

become places where workers become "sick".

Scientific evidence is mounting to show that wall to wall carpeting, once a symbol of "success" in our culture, is one of the major factors contributing to an inhospitable indoor environment. Wall-to-wall rugs provide the physical environment where dust and detritus accumulate. Bacteria, fungus, mites and insects conduct the cycles of unseen life by breaking down the detritus shed by employees and the compounds used to make the walls, furniture and rugs. Each organism in turn, secretes the chemical byproducts of metabolism and reproduction and dies, contributing detritus of another kind. The vapors and dusts from wall-to-wall carpeting contain the organisms and chemicals which employees must resist in order to stay healthy.

Vacuuming removes some of the larger particles, if you can get the rugs vacuumed, but it does not make wall-to-wall carpeting clean. Neither can shampooing. The area can not be thoroughly cleaned unless the rug is lifted from the floor, washed, beaten or exposed to sunlight and the floors must also be washed. Imagine the accumulation of chemical and biological detritus on a wall to wall carpet when thousands of people have spent hundreds of hours over tens of years.

What benefits result from the use of wall to wall carpeting? Warmer floors in well heated modern buildings? Lower sound levels? Non skid surfaces? These issues can be handled without risking illness. Wall to wall carpeting is not a meaningful symbol of success. Limit the use of carpeting to reception areas. Tile is easier to clean and the cost is less.

[Editor's note: NFFE local 2050 has long been active in calling attention to the health hazards of carpet. We have worked with Dr. Rosalind Anderson who has testified before Congress about her experiments in which new carpet samples made with styrene-butadiene latex caused neurotoxic effects and deaths in laboratory mice exposed to carpet fumes. Local 2050 petitioned EPA to list 4-PC, one of the toxins emitted by latex carpet, as a toxic substance under TSCA. This effort resulted in the "carpet policy dialog" in which local 2050 President, Dr. Hirzy participated last year. Unfortunately he was thwarted in his efforts to get the carpet industry to provide adequate consumer warnings. Local 2050 is considering further efforts in conjunction with the NY Attorney General, to renew our petition EPA under TSCA. We would welcome the assistance of bargaining unit members, especially attorneys with a knowledge of TSCA, who would be interested in helping with this project.]

NAFTA THREATENS EMPLOYEE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

by James Handley

The proposed North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between the U.S., Canada and Mexico, represents far more than an agreement about how goods move from one country to another. NAFTA, combined with GATT (the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) which governs world wide trade, are expected by many economists to have more impact on the U.S. economy than any other policy or legislation for decades. Unfortunately for most U.S. workers and for the environmental protections that have been so hard-won in this country, the impact would be mostly negative.

Economic Effects:

The basic economic premise of "free trade" is that certain places have "comparative advantage" over other places in the production of particular goods. For example, one can obviously grow more oranges in Florida than in Maine. It's equally obvious that one can grow more potatoes in Maine than in Florida. Thus, people in Florida and Maine will both have better diets if they trade. The same principle applies globally. But it has limits. Most "natural" advantages, such as climate, are already being pretty well tapped by trade. The new "free-trade" agreements seek to take advantage of differences, not in climate or natural resources, but in legal constraints. They seek to find places where lower wages are legal, or where environmental or worker protection laws are lax or where taxes are lower so that production is cheaper.

This presents big problems for employees both in the U.S. and developing countries such as Mexico. The basis of a half century of progress for U.S. employees has been the understanding that employees are also consumers. Henry Ford said, "If they [employees] can't buy cars, I can't sell them." That insight led to current U.S. labor laws, many of which evolved during and after the Great Depression. These laws represent a compromise between business owners and employees: Corporations accepted the need for collective bargaining, child labor laws, shorter working hours, increased safety, health and retirement benefits and a general rise in the standard of living, and in exchange, labor accepted corporate ownership, management and profits.

Now, however, multi-national business owners want to get out of this bargain; they seek to avoid the middle class's demands for higher wages, increased benefits, and greater protection for health and the environment by moving production to countries where there is no middle class and these restrictions do not exist. They can then import their products to middle class consumers in the U.S. and other developed countries. As Henry Ford recognized, there's a flaw in that logic: if wages in developed countries continue to

stagnate or decline, and unemployment continues to climb, demand will slacken, and eventually, so will business profits.

In Mexico, as in many of the "target" countries for "free trade," democracy and worker rights are a mirage. Carlos de Salinas is the head of a corrupt, half century old one-party system, and workers have little or no ability to choose jobs, let alone bargain over wages. NAFTA would make the situation worse. NAFTA would create no incentives for democracy because any challenge to Salinas would be seen as a threat to "free trade." Similarly, if workers began to organize for living wages, the basis for "free trade" would be jeopardized. Because NAFTA would make the government even more dependant upon trade with the U.S. it will be encouraged financially, if not militarily, to continue to suppress any dissent. Thus, democracy and human rights must precede free trade because they will not follow from it.

Environmental Effects:

NAFTA would provide businesses the opportunity to "shop" for more favorable environmental laws. But it would do much more. Treaties take precedence over domestic laws, and NAFTA's provisions can invalidate U.S. domestic health, safety, and environmental legal standards that are more "trade-restrictive" than necessary to achieve "legitimate" objectives. The NAFTA structure parallels that of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) which ruled that standards in the Marine Mammal Protection Act to protect dolphins from being caught in tuna nets were an impermissible barrier to trade. When a country claims that it is at a disadvantage because of another country's laws, the challenged country must show that its laws represent the least trade restrictive measures needed to achieve their objectives. Decisions would be made by an unelected trade bureaucracy that is not accountable to citizens. As just one example, standards such as the fuel economy standards for automobiles are likely to be targeted by Canada and Mexico as a restriction of trade under NAFTA since they represent a barrier to less efficient imported automobiles. Similarly, laws protecting biodiversity, requiring recycling, and protecting natural resources could also be invalidated as trade restrictions.

The environmental situation south of the border would also be made worse by NAFTA. President Clinton has expressed the hope that increased trade will generate the funds for environmental protection in Mexico. This is wishful thinking, at best. NAFTA lacks adequate funding for sanitary water, and other infrastructure for communities that will grow rapidly as a result of NAFTA. The Mexican border region, currently a ten mile wide free trade zone, has become an environmental nightmare; it is just a preview of the tragic consequences when there is a surge of trade and population without funding mechanisms for even the basic human necessities.

Clinton's "Side Agreements" Don't Solve NAFTA's Problems

President Clinton promised to strengthen environmental protections and worker protections in the NAFTA by negotiating side agreements. Environmental groups pressed for mechanisms to enforce environmental laws. Unfortunately, the Environmental Commission created by the side agreements has very limited power to compel compliance with environmental laws. While this token seems to have satisfied some environmental groups, many are still fighting NAFTA because they recognize that the side agreements are sugar coating for what will be a very bitter pill.

What you can do:

The world's largest corporations are spending millions to lobby Congress for passage of NAFTA. It is crucial for Congress and President Clinton to hear about your concerns over NAFTA. Last year, President Bush got Congress to grant "fast-track" authority for NAFTA, which precludes Congressional amendments to the treaty. So Congress must "take it or leave it." As now written, NAFTA is fatally flawed. It should be re-negotiated to protect workers and the environment. Input from EPA employees is particularly relevant on the issue of environmental protection. I urge you to write to your U.S. representative, Senators, and the President and consider identifying yourself as an EPA employee concerned about environmental protection. I'd appreciate copies of your letters. You can also call your representative at 225-3121, Senators at 224-3121 and the White House comment line at 456-1111.

For more information about NAFTA or how you can help defeat it, call John Audley at the Sierra Club at 547-1141 or Lori Wallach at Public Citizen at 833-3000.

Facts About Early Environments

Early Environments, Inc., a non-profit child development center located at the Environmental Protection Agency, primarily serves children of EPA and other federal government employees. **Early Environments** is committed to providing a quality learning experience for toddlers and pre-school children. We believe that children learn through active, experimental and creative play. Our curriculum is designed to meet the individual needs of each child. Important facts about **Early Environments** include:

- * Quality child care costs money. The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is vital to the continuation of quality child care at EPA;
- * Scholarship funds totaling \$12,000 will be distributed this year. Additional support from CFC will increase our support to families in need of scholarship assistance. This year, our goal is to markedly increase scholarship assistance;
- * **Early Environments** is entirely self-supporting through tuition, donations, and fund raising activities. Contributions from the CFC are second only to tuition as the most important source of revenue;
- * Care is provided from 7 am to 6 pm, 52 weeks a year to meet the needs of today's working parents;
- * **Early Environments** offers each child a nutritious breakfast, hot lunch, and snack;
- * Each class is led by an experienced teacher with a degree in Early Childhood Education, each with a trained assistant.
- * For further information or a tour of the Center, call Elizabeth Lee, Center Director, at 260-7290.

You Have A Choice: Put CFC To Work Where You Do

Early Environments Child

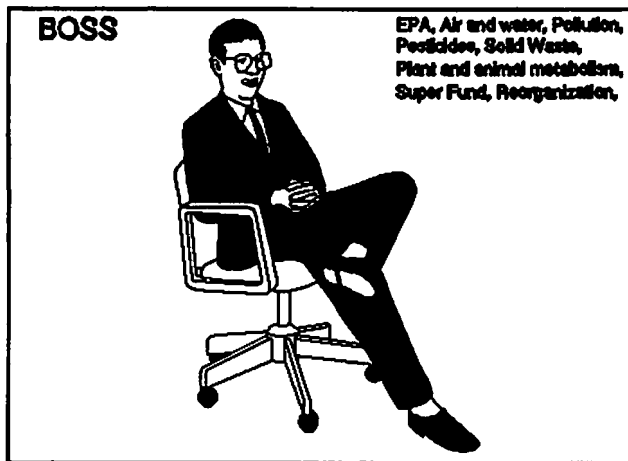
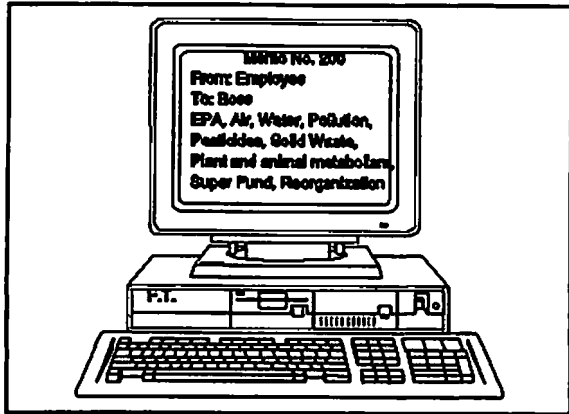
Development Center

CFC NUMBER: 2115

NFFE 2050 Recruits New Members

(Flier Design by Freshteh Togrol)

Hard working EPA professionals: Are you frustrated by unresponsive managers? Looking for a place where your voice can truly be heard? Join your union today. We know how you feel and want to work with you to make EPA better!!



Please fill out the membership form attached to this issue of the Fishbowl and mail it to your Union.

COMPLETE SECTIONS MARKED "X"
**REQUEST FOR PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS
 FOR LABOR ORGANIZATION DUES**

Standard Form No. 1187
 Revised January 1979
 Office of Personnel Management
 FPM Chapter 550

Privacy Act Statement

Section 5525 of Title 5 United States Code (Allotments and Assignments of Pay) permits Federal agencies to collect this information. This completed form is used to request that labor organization dues be deducted from your pay and to notify your labor organization of the deduction. Completing this form is voluntary, but it may not be processed if all requested information is not provided.

This record may be disclosed outside your agency to: 1) the Department of Treasury to make proper financial adjustments; 2) a Congressional office if you make an inquiry to that office related to this record; 3) a court or an appropriate Government agency if the Government is party to a legal suit; 4) an appropriate law enforcement agency if we become aware of a legal violation; 5) an organization which is a designated collection agent of a particular labor organization; and 6) other Federal agencies for management, statistical and other official functions (without your personal identification).

Executive Order 9397 allows Federal agencies to use the social security number (SSN) as an individual identifier to avoid confusion caused by employees with the same or similar names. Supplying your SSN is voluntary, but failure to provide it, when it is used as the employee identification number, may mean that payroll deductions cannot be processed.

Your agency shall provide an additional statement if it uses the information furnished on this form for purposes other than those mentioned above.

1. Name of Employee (<i>Print—Last, First, Middle</i>) X	2. Employee I.D. Number (<i>SSN or Other</i>) X	3. Timekeeper Number X
4. Home Address (<i>Street Number, City, State and ZIP Code</i>) X	5. Name of Agency (<i>Include Bureau, Division, Branch or Other Designation</i>) X	

Section A—For Use By Labor Organization

Name of Labor Organization (*Indicate Local, Branch, Lodge or Other Appropriate Identification*)

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES LOCAL _____

I hereby certify that the regular dues of this organization for the above named member are currently established at \$ _____ per (biweekly pay period) (calendar month). (*Strike out whichever period is not appropriate, based on arrangement with the employee's agency.*)

Signature and Title of Authorized Official	Date (<i>Month, Day, Year</i>)
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Section B—Authorization By Employee

I hereby authorize the above named agency to deduct from my pay each pay period, or the first full pay period of each month, the amount certified above as the regular dues of the (Name of Labor Organization) _____ and to remit such amount to that labor organization in accordance with its arrangements with my employing agency. I further authorize any change in the amount to be deducted which is certified by the above named labor organization as a uniform change in its dues structure.

I understand that this authorization, if for a biweekly deduction, will become effective the pay period following its receipt in the payroll office of my employing agency; and that, if for a monthly deduction, it will become effective the first full pay period of the calendar month following its receipt in the payroll office of my employing agency. I further understand that Standard Form 1188, Cancellation of Payroll Deductions for Labor Organization Dues, is available from my employing agency, and that I may cancel this authorization by filing Standard Form 1188 or other written cancellation request with the payroll office of my employing agency. Such cancellation will not be effective, however, until the first full pay period which begins on or after the next established cancellation date of the calendar year after the cancellation is received in the payroll office.

Signature of Employee X	Date (<i>Month, Day, Year</i>) X
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FOR COMPLETION BY AGENCY ONLY—The above named employee and labor organization meet the requirements for dues withholding. (Mark the appropriate box. If "Yes", send this form to payroll. If "No", return this form to the labor organization.)

YES	NO
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