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**DUES INCREASE for 2016**



**IBEW LOCAL 343 UNION**

Third Quarter Newsletter 2015  
 July, August, September

# Groundwire

**Business Manager...  
 Derek Mensink**



I would like to start out by thanking the membership for your participation. It has been a pleasure to move around our jurisdiction to discuss issues and negotiations for 2015. Many of you participated in surveys that were handed out and also joining us for a day at our "Think Tank" meeting. It was all very valuable and extremely needed information going forward.

As many of you know our new agreement has been voted on and allocated. The membership voted the new contract by 93%. It was a true testament of how labor and management can come to a seamless compromise.

With four years of contract agreed upon, there is a lot of work left to do. We will continue to rely on you, the membership, to develop and grow IBEW Local 343. There are many things we need do to continue to move forward.

Some of the things we need to build on are: community involvement, getting involved with local politics (school boards – commissioners – township boards) and promoting IBEW electricians to all. We need to continue to grow our market-share. Market-share comes in many different forms. It obviously begins with union contractors and union electricians being the very best.

It also grows with organizing. Organizing comes in many different methods. It is a necessity to continue organizing non-signatory electrical contractors and their non-union employees.

The other major way to gain market-share is organizing work. IBEW 343 and signatory contractors will continue to work together to solidify new accounts, new markets and being proactive on upcoming projects. With our memberships hard work - the relentless motivation of Local 343's staff and organizers – our commitment to work with our contractors to be successful – There is no doubt this local will strive and grow.

I hope you all have a safe and enjoyable summer.

Best regards,  
 Derek Mensink

- Dates to Remember:**
- 07/01/15: 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Union Dues DUE
  - 07/03/15: Local 343 Offices CLOSED (Independence Day- Observed Holiday)
  - 07/09/15: Union Meeting, Owatonna Eagle's Club
  - 7/30/15: RSVP's DUE for Picnic
  - 08/08/15: Summer Picnic, Goodview, MN (flyer enclosed)
  - 08/13/15: Union Meeting, Owatonna Eagle's Club
  - 09/07/15: Local 343 Offices CLOSED (Labor Day)
  - 09/10/15: Union Meeting/New Member Swear-In, Local 343 Hall, Rochester
  - 10/1/15: 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Union Dues DUE

**REMINDER: Keep Us Informed**  
 Please remember to notify us if any of your contact information changes. (i.e., mailing address, home phone number, cell phone number, email address)  
 If you keep us updated, we can keep YOU updated!

**Rochester Rep Report >>> Chad Katzung**

The work picture is slowly ramping up as we get into the summer months. Most of the school remodels are in full swing and will possibly be looking for more manpower as they progress. Some of the new schools in the surrounding area have also begun. They have started to move dirt for the new Byron school. Walls are up on the Kasson school addition and the bids have been let on the new Stewartville School with work starting soon on that project. The Mayo Civic Center is in full swing and will hopefully be looking for more manpower soon.

One of the major tasks we've been working on is prevailing wage surveys for the state of Minnesota. The surveys for the state were completed on June 5 and our attention has now turned to completing the surveys for the Federal Prevailing wage. The reports will be due by late summer or early fall.



Some of the federal rates are as low as \$14.00 per hour. It's critical we get our rates set as the prevailing wage rate in our jurisdiction so our contractors are able to compete with the non-union. We need as many surveys as we can get for all the jobs we have in our jurisdiction to set the rates. I ask all of our members to encourage their contractor to go to our web site to fill out the prevailing wage form for all the projects they have worked on.  
 In solidarity  
 Chad Katzung

**\*2016 UNION DUES\***

"A" Members \$108.00/Qtr  
 "BA" Members \$60.00/Qtr

**DUE the 1<sup>st</sup> of EVERY Quarter (Jan. 1, Apr. 1, Jul. 1, Oct. 1)**

**\$20.00 Late fee each month you are late**

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**2015 UNION DUES**

"A" Members \$105.00/Qtr  
 "BA" Members \$57.00/Qtr

**If you have received a letter from NEBF stating your years of work service and have not carefully reviewed it, please do so. If you feel there are years you have worked, but not received credit, please contact Bonnie at the 343 Hall. There have been two cases already where members did not get credit for a year, and the reason is the contractor had put the incorrect Social Security Number on the payroll (NEBF) report**

**If you are thinking of retiring: NEBF Application should be completed and mailed approximately four (4) months prior to your retirement date.**

**IBEW Application should be completed approximately two (2) months prior to your retirement date.**  
 Call Bonnie with any questions

**Unemployment!**

**If you are drawing unemployment, you must be on our books to indicate you are actively seeking work. The unemployment office does do random audits.**

**Mankato Rep Report...Shane Meier**



Owatonna Area: There are two projects that will be coming up sometime in the near future. They are the county garages which did get some state funding so prevailing wages will apply to this project, and a new power plant is being discussed with Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency to go out by Industrial Park.

Mankato Area: The work picture is still going good in the area; there have been a couple projects bid lately but not a ton of projects. There will be another bid for the MSU Cafeteria project coming up soon and the New Ulm School project bid and Paul's Electric was apparently low on that project. The Civic Center Project is starting to move along at a good pace now and look for calls to be coming in on that project over the next couple of months. The Profinium Project (Seven Story) has ended but the Mixed Use and Ridley Project have been moving along. In my last conversation with Calpine they were looking for Generals and to start putting bid packages together for all of the trades as they have already purchased a boiler for this project. The Clinical Science Building up at MSU is moving along but don't expect calls coming in for this project until later this year.

St. Peter: The work is moving along at the State Hospital as the walls are up on one of the buildings and currently they are prepping to start putting the walls up on the second building, talking with the contractor on this project about manpower needs is still up in the air because other projects for them are wrapping up.

Western Minnesota: There is a lot of working going on in this area with a lot of school bond referendums that need to be completed by the start of this school year, and the ethanol plant is doing some building improvements and expansions.

Limited Energy Agreement: We are currently in negotiations with this State Wide Agreement and hoping to have a contract vote coming in the next couple of weeks as this contract also ends in June.

Organizing: We're still having weekly meetings with a lot of people interested in the apprenticeship program and calls from open shop journeymen interested in the IBEW. I hope everyone is having a good summer and has a great 4th of July!  
 In Solidarity,  
 Shane Meier

## Contact Us:

Derek Mensink, Business Manager:  
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507-2827081 x112  
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## Organizing Department Report... by Andy Kuisle



Since the last newsletter, the organizing efforts of Local 343 have been rewarded with a new signatory contractor. Doug's Electric of Austin, MN has chosen to hire skilled union labor, and take advantage of the training that Local 343 has to offer. If you see the owners or workers of Doug's Electric around Austin, or if you get the opportunity to go to work there in the upcoming years, please welcome them into our organization and thank them for choosing to join the IBEW.

Recently, there have been more and more members calling me and the rest of the staff with tips and pieces of information about where the nonunion is working in our jurisdiction. Thank you to all who have called in, as it is extremely important that we all work together to promote the union and inform the nonunion of its merits.

As the summer rolls on, I would expect that many of you will run into nonunion apprentices and journeymen that you know or have been acquainted with before at various social functions. I hope that if the talk turns to work, that you take the opportunity to explain that you are a proud Union member, and why you see the benefits of being a Union Electrician. In order for the nonunion to make a decision to join/not join the union, they must first be informed by real facts and not the garbage that we see or hear in the media about Unions.

Brothers and Sisters, work safe, and enjoy your summer.  
Andy Kuisle

## Compliance Officer Report.. Jim Backus



Hello Brothers and Sisters!! The busy season is fast approaching! During the summer many jobs have prevailing wage associated with the specifications. This is normally when there are state or federal funds associated with the job. State law requires that payroll records are subject to the open records law and anyone can review them. These payroll records are a certified record from the contractor. We work very closely with the Fair Contracting Foundation (FCF) in requesting these records. Once they arrive they are reviewed for proper date/times, proper classifications, proper pay and proper benefit distribution. Along with the payroll records, I monitor the job sites, which can be very time consuming, and document information by photographing various events at that job site. Any of the information that can be proven to be inaccurate, on the certified payroll, would result in a complaint being filed with the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (MNDOLI).

I have also been busy in assisting Andy in Organizing by house calling at night.

This is very valuable as Organizing & Enforcement can go hand in hand. At the end of April, while house calling a non-union apprentice, I learned of a violation of state law. The apprentice was being paid by a company from out of state and not by the contractor he was working for here in Minnesota. This is in violation of statute 326B.33 subd 12(a). I filed a complaint with MNDOLI regarding this. The next morning I was notified that MNDOLI did open a file on this and assigned a Senior Investigator. I have not heard any result of this investigation yet. Again, if anyone knows of any violations or if anyone has any questions please feel free to contact me. My email is JimB@ibewlocal343.org or you can call me at 507-951-8267. Have a Safe Summer!!

In Solidarity,  
Jim Backus

## Our Condolences:

Retired Brother **John G. Trapp** of Kenyon, MN passed away May 19, 2015. John had been a member since March 1981

Retired Brother **Bernie M. Sivertson** of Montgomery, TX passed away May 13, 2015. Bernie had been a member since December 1958

## Retirements:

Mike J. Bracht – Retired 1/1/14  
James E. Stanton – Retired 4/1/14  
Alert L. Thofson – Retired 5/31/14  
Frederick F. Boucsein – Retired 3/1/15  
Rodney R. Allen – Retired 6/20/15

## Sparky Fishing Opener Results 6/13/15

Thank you to the Supply House Contributors:  
Border States Electric, Warner Electric, GraybaR and  
Viking Electric  
Contractors that participated: Foster Electric

### Winners:

Biggest Rough Fish – Kevin Farmer (1# 9oz Sheephead)  
Biggest Northern/Walleye/Bass – Brad Lockwood Boat  
Mike Thompson – 8 oz. Crappie

Grand Prize -Gas Grill Donated by Border Sates Electric –  
Winner~ Kevin Farmer

Special Thanks to IBEW Local 343 for Sponsoring This  
Event! Submitted by John Powrie



On Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 19 new hires were Sworn-In as New Members of IBEW Local 343  
WELCOME to our 13 newest Apprentices and our 6 newest JIWs!

**DON'T FORGET TO RSVP FOR THE SUMMER PICNIC – SATURDAY, AUGUST 8<sup>TH</sup> –  
NOON – 5PM - GOODVIEW, MN  
\*FLYER ENCLOSED\***



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