As this newsletter goes to print we are in the third week of this year’s legislative session. There have been 1300 bills introduced this session, many of interest to organized labor, the building trades and our industry. We have attended hearings on bills pertaining to; workers comp compliance, classification of employee and independent contractor, regulating residential and remodeling contractors, membership of the state building code review board, professional membership on occupational regulatory boards like the plumbers board. We also attended hearings on requiring the plumbing board to study the feasibility of reestablishing reciprocity with neighboring states and on SB 116 establishing a committee to study the licensing and regulation of fuel gas fitters by the state Fire Marshal.

The gas fitter legislation is our primary focus at this time. Currently the Fire Marshal’s office is reviewing draft rules for the licensure of gas fitters under Amelia’s Law. After several meetings with the Fire Marshal it is still unclear what educational requirements will need to be met to satisfy the licensing requirements or whether testing will be required of everyone applying for a gas fitters license. There is also the issue of specialty licenses and the different requirements for each specialty license. As the law is currently written there are six specialty licenses. The basic license is the gas piping installer

(continued page 2)

Work in the area continues to be extremely slow with more layoffs than hirings. Work on the road has picked up with the start of the outage cycles. Welders are in demand for all the work on the road. We have members on the road in Nevada, Arizona, Minnesota, Washington, Nebraska, Utah, DC, Georgia, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Iowa.

We currently have:
* 127 working for local contractors
* 13 working local for out of town contractors
* 38 working on the road
* 63 out of work

Millstone Nuclear plant in Waterford, CT. will be hiring over the next month for a 35-day outage and you will be required to hold a Connecticut State Fitters License. I have all the paperwork and as long as your application is in, you will be eligible to go.

Pilgrim Nuclear Plant in Plymouth, MA. will be hiring next month and anyone interested in going needs to pick up their PHQ’s and have them ready when they get the call. The outage is scheduled for 21 days.

We are going to be holding a rally at CMC on February 27 from 4-6 pm and will meet at West High School and walk to CMC. Everyone is encouraged to attend. Please call if you would like more information.
This specialty license allows you to install piping from the point of delivery to gas utilization equipment. From this point you would need either an LP or a Natural Gas Installation Technicians specialty license to actually install gas utilization equipment. Then an LP or a Natural Gas Service Technicians license to do any service including start up on the equipment. It is our feeling that this law is very confusing not only to the people working in the field but also for the public it is meant to protect.

We have worked with the plumbing board and the newly formed Plumbers, Fuel Gas Fitters and HVAC Association of New Hampshire to introduce legislation to amend Amelia's Law and make it more consumer and industry friendly. Senator Lou D'Allesandro has sponsored SB 210, which would transfer the regulation of fuel gas fitters to the plumbing board and change the licensing categories. SB 210 transfers the licensing and regulation of gas fitters to a self regulated board changing the make up of the current plumbing board to that of 3 plumbers, 2 gas fitters and 2 consumers. SB 210 also allows for grandfathering of individuals who can show a minimum of two years working as a gas fitter. It also changes the license structure from the current 6 licenses to the same 3 license structure that has been used in the plumbing and electrical industry for years; apprentice fuel gas fitter, journeyman fuel gas fitter and master fuel gas fitter. We believe this legislation would be a much easier and safer approach to licensing than the current law.

SB 210 is tentatively scheduled to be heard on March 7th. It is important that we have a good turn out in support of the bill. I am asking that you take the time to attend the hearing and sign up in support of this legislation. Any member who wants a copy of SB 210 can get it on the state web site or stop by the hall. It is important that we make our voice heard on this issue.

2007 Plumbing Seminars:

May 7 * August 6 * November 5

All seminars begin at 6 pm.
Current NH Plumbing License and UA Membership card required for registration.

REMINDER TO ALL UA CERTIFIED WELDERS AND MEDICAL GAS INSTALLERS…
CONTINUITY IS REQUIRED EVERY SIX (6) MONTHS. IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO SATISFY THIS REQUIREMENT ON THE JOB, YOU MAY DO SO HERE AT THE HALL!

All members are encouraged to access the UA website www.ua.org. There is a bundle of exciting information available in the “members only” section.

In preparing for our future…
We are looking for members to assist with our training program for the following areas: Rigging, HVAC, Oxy-Fuel Torch Cutting, Tubing bending, Pipefitting and the various Plumbing courses.

Is there any interest in mini-training sessions for members to brush up on their skills or for those members who wish to add to their skills???

ANY INTEREST FOR A UA WELD TEST EVENT? LOOKING FOR 10 – 14 MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN A MARCH TESTING EVENT!

ALL OF YOUR SUGGESTIONS ARE WELCOMED!
We are hoping to have it as complete as possible by the time we activate it and make it accessible, but we know that this is a work in progress. As we go along, we’ll certainly discover things to fix, add, delete, etc... But we do have lots of great ideas already. We will still be mailing out this newsletter, but we’ll also place all our back issues on the site. We’ll be able to post notices on the site when meetings are cancelled because of bad weather. We’ll have a calendar that tracks everything going on in the hall. We will have an area where you can post ‘change of address’ info: type it in once to us and we get it to all the other offices. We’ll have an area for the contract and the wage rates. We’ll have an area for the contractor to go to get their remittance report forms. We’ll even have a form for the ‘Skills Sheet’ that Steve has been asking you all to complete when you stop in the office.

There are going to be links to the UA website and the NH AFL-CIO website. There will be union related news articles from around the country and locally. There will be an area devoted just to political issues in New Hampshire where you can read what’s going on and contact your representatives.

Whoa! That’s a lot of stuff! But we know that you will appreciate it. We know you’ll use it. And we know you’ll have lots of ideas and suggestions. And that’s what makes it worth it.

Office Bits & Bytes

Mo Demers
Office Administrator

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