With the completion of the Seabrook Station Refueling Outage and the outage at Merrimack Station wrapping up any day, we are faced with members on the out-of-work list again. While a majority of members were working overtime on these two projects, our local contractors have been busy bidding work throughout the state. With work on some of these projects ready to break soon, contractors will be looking to us to supply the licensed people for the appropriate work.

Now would be the time to make sure your licenses and certifications are current or sign up for a class to receive a new certification. The work on the books is mostly in Medical Facilities and Universities. Both of these areas are heavy in Plumbing and Medical Gas. We are finding many members who have not renewed their plumbing license or let their Medical Gas certification expire. Without a plumbing license you cannot legally do plumbing for hire in the State of New Hampshire. An unlicensed plumber not only is running the risk of a misdemeanor if caught but also puts our contractors Corporate License at risk. We have an obligation to the contractor to send only licensed plumbers when they call for plumbers.

As far as the Medical Gas certification is concerned, all hospitals as well as university science labs are requiring that the med gas installers have a current certification to work on their projects. When dealing with something as important as medical gas, customers are no longer satisfied with “we have done this before” or “we install these systems all the time.” They have required that installers be certified as well as requiring that the system is certified upon completion. If we do not have the members certified to do this work we are giving up a large portion of these projects.

We are in the business of supplying qualified workers to our signatory contractors. We have made this commitment to the contractor and in turn to the developer and owner. Our success is depends on it.
The warm weather is finally here. Of course “warm” is a relative term. On the first day of May, 55 degrees at noon felt pretty good after I had to scrape frost off my car windows earlier that same morning. And with warm weather come all the outdoor activities.

The melted snow has revealed the evidence of failed good intentions. The ultimate summer activity: YARD SALES. I can’t believe how many kayaks and bikes I’ve seen propped up on mailboxes and fences with “For Sale” signs. And all the catalogs INSIDE the mailboxes! I thought Christmas was bad for junk mail! I didn’t know how much I needed a new lawnmower, every episode of “Friends” on DVD, a bug-zapper, a new backpack, new boots, a kayak, a speed boat, 7 new credit cards, patio furniture, an RV, running shoes, a swimming pool, replacement windows, and a life vest for the dog. I don’t even have a dog...maybe I need one of those, too!

It’s true, summer is the time to get outside, have some fun and get some exercise. But when did having fun turn into work? Kids today have more organized sports events than Carter has liver pills. There’s a workout health club on every other corner, open 24/7, with tons of equipment inside. And they’re always busy.

Man has always tried to find ways to do things better and easier. Since the dawn of the industrial age, we’ve measured progress by the development of labor-saving machines. Machines. Things that do our work for us. Cars so we can travel faster and farther. And now we don’t walk or peddle anywhere. Washing machines and dryers so we can clean our clothes in a couple of hours a week. And now we don’t carry a basket to the backyard to hang the linens every day. ATVs and snowmobiles so we can experience the remote wilderness and still be home for supper. Computers to figure out all our problems. Now we don’t even exercise our brains any more!

Aren’t we smart!? We have all these things to do our work and make our lives easier. So what happened? Our lives DID get easier and now we work less. Just a few generations ago, people had to grow their own food, raise their own livestock, milk their own cows, build their own houses. People would get up and start right in on the daily chores; the necessary labors of life. Cook, sew, plow, harvest, grind, bake, wash, chop wood, can for winter, build, mend, sweep, paint, repair....

How wonderful things are now! We can buy everything we need. We have more stuff than any other generation before us. How lucky we are! Our progress has created materials we don’t even know the health risks of yet. We have such abundance that we suffer from obesity and more heart disease. We can’t walk across the room any more. Of course, soon we won’t have to. We’ll have robots to fetch the TV remote for us.

And now our health is failing. We need to get some exercise. Burn some calories. Lose some weight. So we build gyms, buy work-out videos and practice boring, unproductive routines to work up a sweat because we sit at a desk all day and sit on the couch all night. All the while bemoaning “I just don’t have the time to exercise!” We’re too busy driving to work, shopping for groceries, watching the newest blockbuster movie.

I think I’d like to see us build just one more machine. I’d like to see a TV that only works when you run on a treadmill to generate the electricity to power it. Labor. Productive AND good for you!!!
UA Rep William Turner spoke at the April meeting. He gave a very informative report on the union. It was unfortunate that there were not more people in attendance. We only had 20 people.

The Summer Outing at Bear Brook is coming up fast. Saturday June 14 at 11:00 am. For tickets call the union office. For rides call me: 603-568-1962 or 603-736-4626

Our next meeting will be September 9th. At that time, annual dues will be due. It’s still only $10.00 for an entire year.

Enjoy the summer!!