

by Ronda Wynn, Editor

National Election Results

The latest updates:

HAPPY NEW YEAR brothers and sisters!

The Local 497 would like to welcome and congratulate our newly elected National President of the American Postal Workers Union, Jonathan Smith. He officially assumed the role on November 12, 2025 and released his first message to the APWU family on the website. He honored Mark Dimondstein for his 12 years of dedicated leadership. Moving forward, Jonathan understands that he is in for the fight and recognizes the challenges ahead, including combating privatization efforts and resisting Post Office closings and consolidations. He addressed the union family and stated in his online welcoming, "I cannot do this alone. This has to be a 'we' and not a 'me.'" He also pledged "to lead with integrity while fighting with everything he has to protect postal workers and the services they provide to the American people."

For those who would like to hear it, I am attaching the link as follows: <https://apwu.org> Remember brothers and sisters, we are all in this fight together! Stay involved! Union strong!



Some of the Local #497 Officers, Stewards and Delegates at the National Convention: Back Row: Jesus Rivera, Nancy Kenyon, Enid Rivera, Justin Deslauriers, Ronda Wynn, Annie Chamberlain. Front Row: National Maintenance Business Agent of Central Region, Stephanie Logan, Ed Rowell, and Dave Bogacz

by Ronda Wynn, Editor

APWU 2025 All Craft Conference

Keeping Informed...

On Monday, October, 6, 2025, the APWU All-Craft Conference began in Las Vegas. All Divisions of the APWU came together to discuss important updates, and provided training to all members on how to best support our contract. Changes are inevitable!! All Divisions shared a wealth of new, revised, and quantifiable knowledge for the union family to take back here at the Local #497 and use it to our advantage to protect your rights. In addition, numerous, informational training courses were taught by NBAs in all crafts. These were in the breakouts and included for maintenance, Line H, the newly established Eagle clean programs, the subcontracting grievance process, along with how to obtain strong arbitration awards to support future cases that are similar in nature. In regard to the clerks, the hot topic was Function 4. The Function 4 purpose is "to determine

workload and establish staffing levels that lead toward successfully meeting or exceeding productivity targets, improved customer satisfaction and increased revenue." In the MVS break-outs, our MVS craft director, Mario Colucci, inquired about PTF's and hold downs. This question was answered with the supporting language in the CBA, Article 39.1.J.1.

As we all are aware, privatizing has been an issue and we are in a continued fight to keep our jobs. We need your help! At the convention, there was talk that a lot of clerk supervisors are doing bargaining unit work. This is an ongoing problem and is taking work away from the craft employees. This is a paid grievance. If you see this happen, keep a record, ask for a steward and file a grievance. (continued pg.2)



Jonathan Smith, National President, has been a member of the APWU since 1978 and has served as an APWU representative in several roles since 1988 - including president of the APWU's largest local, the New York Metro Area Postal Union, from 2012 until he was newly elected as the APWU president in November 2025.



Local 497 website: type in URL apwusal.org



Local 497 new Instagram QR code

APWU 2025 All Craft Conference, October 2025

Keeping Informed... (continued)

President Mark Dimondstein was present throughout the convention. He spoke at all craft sessions. In the maintenance session, he offered remarks that reflected both the challenges and the future direction of the Postal Service. His address followed a series of all-craft sessions, where members gathered to discuss shared priorities across the union. He emphasized the importance of strong leadership during a time of significant change for postal workers and the labor movement as a whole. Furthermore, President Dimondstein congratulated Jonathan Smith on winning the election as the newly elected National President of the APWU. He stated he will be there with Jonathan during the transition time and support him.



A major focus of his remarks centered on the newly secured collective bargaining agreement. President Dimondstein highlighted that the contract was ratified with an overwhelming 95 percent approval vote, reflecting strong member support and unity. He described the agreement as a significant achievement, noting that the new CBA includes new language, which will be in **bold print** and protections that strengthen the contract.

His comments reinforced the message that while the Postal Service continues to evolve, solidarity, strong contracts, and forward-looking strategies will remain essential to protecting workers and securing the future of the union.



President Dimonstein spoke to the Maintenance division in regard to filing grievances for Article 32's... subcontracting work outside the maintenence craft.

by Ronda Wynn

Subcontracting

Grievance training for Maintenance, Article 32 violations

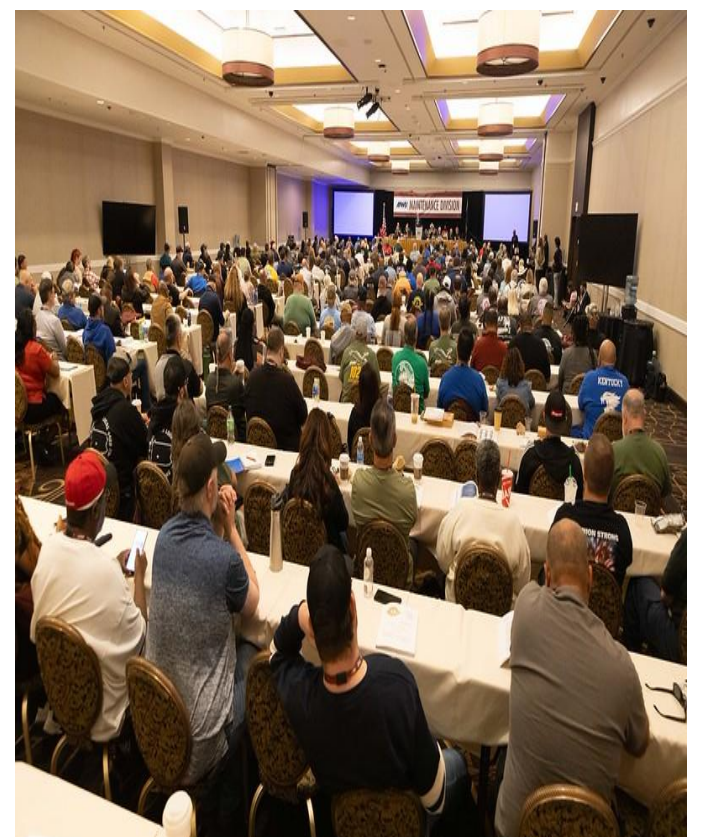
Article 32 of the USPS-APWU National governs subcontracting, requiring Management at the Postal Service to provide advance notification to the union, meet to discuss the impact, and give "due consideration" to factors like cost, efficiency, and equipment availability. It serves as a restriction on arbitrary subcontracting of bargaining unit work, requiring good faith compliance with procedural requirements. At the local level Article 32.1.C requires notification to the local union President and Maintenance Craft

Director for subcontracting decisions made at the local, or area level. Procedural Violations: Arbitrators have ruled that failing to provide proper notice or subcontracting before discussing it with the union violates Article 32, which can lead to remedies like converting contracted work back to postal maintenance craft employees.

The convention training was very helpful for the union officers and union stewards to continue to do their due diligence to protect our craft jobs! Union Strong!



At the Maitenance training session, Antonio Barnes, Maintenance Craft Director from Baltimore, MD, discussing some of the issues with Enid Rivera, Maintenance Craft Director, and Ronda Wynn, Editor & Steward. Below picture, from day 1, All Craft Session.



by Ed Rowell, President

Strengthening Our Local: Insights from the APWU All-Crafts Conference in Vegas

Overview



Officers from the Local #497 sitting in the MVS session at the conference: Mario Colucci, Charles Morin, Ed Rowell and Dave Bogacz

In October, our local leadership team attended the APWU All-Crafts Conference in Las Vegas. As the local president, my goal was to get the latest training on key issues impacting all three crafts—Clerk, Maintenance, and Motor Vehicle—so we can better tackle the many challenges we face back home. In Springfield.

The Clerk Craft sessions, I focused on LMOUs and reversion training, which are crucial topics for our members right now. I also tackled some pressing PSE-related concerns and handling the hostile environments we face.

On the Maintenance side, the Line H training and subcontracting issues were front and center, giving us the tools to address these matters effectively this month. Finally, in the Motor Vehicle craft, I had a productive conversation with Rick White, our National Business Agent for the Northeast, about the specific issues we’re dealing with in the Springfield area right now.

Overall, the conference was not just a learning experience but also a chance to build camaraderie with our local officers. We shared insights, strengthened our teamwork, and returned home more united and better prepared. This experience has certainly equipped us with the knowledge we need to advocate even more effectively for our members.

Ed Rowell, President APWU Local#497 Springfield, MA area



Dave Sarnacki, National Maintenance Business Agent training the members on Subcontracting.

My First APWU National Convention Experience

By Jay Rivera, Safety and Health Representative

Attending the APWU National Convention for the first time was one of the most eye-opening and motivating experiences. As a delegate and as our Local's Safety and Health Representative, I went into this convention eager to learn and I can honestly say I came back with more knowledge, understanding, and appreciation for our union than ever before.

One of the most valuable classes I attended was Article 32s, which relates to my craft as a Building and Equipment Mechanic, Level 9. The class was taught by Dave Sarnacki, who is not only an incredible instructor but also a member of our own Local. Dave said something that really stuck with me: "When you become a BEM 9, you are qualified! A nine, is a nine." He also made it clear that it is management's responsibility to provide the necessary training for those employees who are qualified. Another key point he shared was that before management can contract work out, there are two things the union must look for: One is that it is bargaining unit work, and two that management actually contracted it out. That class really hit home for me, especially since in our facility management seems to contract everything out without properly meeting with the union first. Learning how to identify and document these violations was empowering. It reassured me that when management tries to bypass the process, the union has the tools to grieve it and win, as long as we have the proper documentation in our case files. I left that class completely motivated gung-ho and ready to do more for my craft. I realized how important it is to stay proactive, to keep records, and to make sure management follows the contract every step of the way.

Another area I learned a lot about was Line H and the Eagle Clean Program. When I first went into those sessions, I thought to myself, "Wow, this is a lot of work!" I never realized just how much effort our maintenance stewards put into Line H documentation or how much detail our custodians put into Eagle Clean reports every day. These classes gave me a whole new level of respect for the amount of time and dedication that goes into keeping our maintenance operation running smoothly and contractually compliant, which can be demanding and occasionally stressful when dealing with management.

One of the best parts of the convention was hearing from other facilities around the country. It was reassuring to see that many of them are dealing with the same issues we are like contracting, staffing, and workload challenges. Listening to how other locals handle those problems gave me new ideas and reinforced how strong we can be when we work together and share knowledge.

If I took anything away from this convention, it is this: I came back more educated, more understanding, and with a greater appreciation for our stewards, and craft directors. The training, the people, and the discussions all reminded me why we fight so hard for what we do.



Enid Rivera, Maintenance Craft Director and Jesus (Jay) Rivera, Safety & Health representative, in Las Vegas for the All-Craft Conference

The "Husband & Wife Team" with the Local 497

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

APWU All Craft Convention Review *by Justin Deslauriers*

“I appreciate seeing the unity and the ambition to continue the fight.”

Greetings Local 497,

Firstly, I would like to take the time to throw out a large thank you to all of you, the membership. We as your Executive Board members, advocate teams and safety specialists would be unable to continue our mission to enforce the administration of our CBA without your support and organization efforts. Secondly, I would like to take the time to throw out another large thank you to President Rowell, the entire Executive Board, trustees and the advocate team who I have personally witnessed working tirelessly (much of which on our own time) to create the best argument(s) to present in arbitration for the members cases going to arbitration. The President always speaks during our meetings of things always going on regarding the work we are doing for you "behind the scenes". To capitalize on this, I will share some things that I have been involved in throughout the last few months. At the beginning of May I spent some time in advanced Postal Labor Unions Summer School (PLUSS) receiving my certificate of completion of advanced courses directed by NBA Kim Miller and NBA John Jackson. At the end of June, I attended the Arbitration Advocacy school directed by our National Research and Education Director Joyce Robinson, alongside NBA Jim DeMauro, NBA Dan Skemp, NBA Mike Morris, and NBA Rachel Warthall. This training was nothing short of the intensity I expected. Nevertheless, I received my graduation certificate and was certified by our National President to advocate for you in arbitration at the local level as well as the regional level if necessary. Make no mistake brothers and sisters, arbitration cases are piling up as a result of managements lack of regard for our rights set forth in our CBA. They violate laws, they violate contract provisions, they violate letters of intent, they violate memoranda of understanding, they violate our safety and health rights. The list is endless. The only possibility to ensure on your behalf grievances are filed in a timely manner, resolved at the lowest possible step, and negotiated in good faith by the parties' obligations from the CBA is with your assistance making us aware of violations of the CBA or potential ones at least so that we can investigate and determine the appropriate remedy. Should any grievance wind up in arbitration, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of the Step one representatives fully constructing their cases so that the advocate team can be successful with the tools you give us through evidence, testimony, and interviews.



Left to right: Jay Rivera, Ed Rowell, Justin Deslauriers, Dave Bogacz

In early October I attended the APWU All Craft Convention that shared a wealth of new and revised knowledge for the attendees to take back here with us and use to our advantage to protect your rights. Numerous courses were taught by NBAs from around the country including but not limited to Line H and Eagle clean programs, subcontracting grievance investigations, recently won arbitration awards to use as supporting evidence for future cases in similar nature, and Function 4 gaining work in installations with lead clerks. All year long we are learning more and getting more tools to use to win cases at any level for the membership. I appreciate seeing the unity and the ambition to continue the fight. I will see you all on the front lines.

Thank you for everything you do!

Justin Deslauriers

APWU Advocate Local 497/Northeast Region

Local 497 Executive Board, Area Offices

APWU Massachusetts State Executive Board, A.O.

APWU All Craft Convention Review *by Mario Colucci*

All Craft Conference Las Vegas NV October 6 – 8, 2025, was informative, conclusive, and grievance strong. The amount of information was impressive, all-in front of our eyes, well structured, and well presented. The amount of APWU local MVS Craft Division directors overwhelmed MVS Craft Director Michael O. Foster by the presents of all of us willing to step up and do what must be done for our members.

All National Business Agent (NBA) Jerome Pittman, Bruce Amey, Dyrike Shaw, Rick White, Mark Krueger, and Shana Parker presented their Time and Efforts with passion explaining that the work we do is not that easy, and by going forward with knowledge and being strong by not giving up.

Most of it all, I need to acknowledge this, I was very impressed by the Passion of NBA Mark Krueger, has earned my deepest Respect, and NBA Rick White in debt for his personal Support and personal Time.



All APWU local MVS Craft Division Directors were not afraid nor shy to ask questions from simple to the hardest, and all of them were answered, very impressive, and one of the directors was me. My free agent photographer APWU 497 Vice President Charles Morin snap this picture while stating my question to the APWU panel for clarification and stated: **“Good Morning my name is Mario Colucci from local 497 Director Springfield MASS, if a PTF is on a hold down, is Management able to remove the PTF from his hold down?”**, answer was NO. NBA Rick White walked up to me and pointed out CBA Article 39.1.J.1 states: ***The employees utilizing their seniority to select a temporary hold down assignment as above, shall work that assignment for its duration unless: they are otherwise assigned to a permanent duty assignment; it is clearly demonstrated that the employee cannot perform the assignment; the assigned work being performed by a part-time flexible in accordance with the above is needed to provide a full-time employee work to satisfy the 8-hour work guarantee; or unless that individual is otherwise needed to fill a vacant assignment for which there are no qualified employees.***, and my answer was answered, and believe me when I say this, I

was updating Chief Steward Alan Dickey as I was receiving information via Telegram.

Many thanks to APWU 497 President Ed Rowell with Vice President Charles Morin with their support during All Craft Conference training, given the opportunity to participate the All-Craft Conference October 6th, 7th, and 8th, 2025, and giving the opportunity to boost our local 497 with concrete information, concrete conclusiveness with the approach filing potent grievances.

Thank You!

Mario Colucci
APWU 497
MVS Craft Director

HAPPY RETIREMENT STU KIBBE!!!

Honoring Stu Kibbe: A Pillar of Strength for APWU Local #497

By Ronda Wynn, Editor

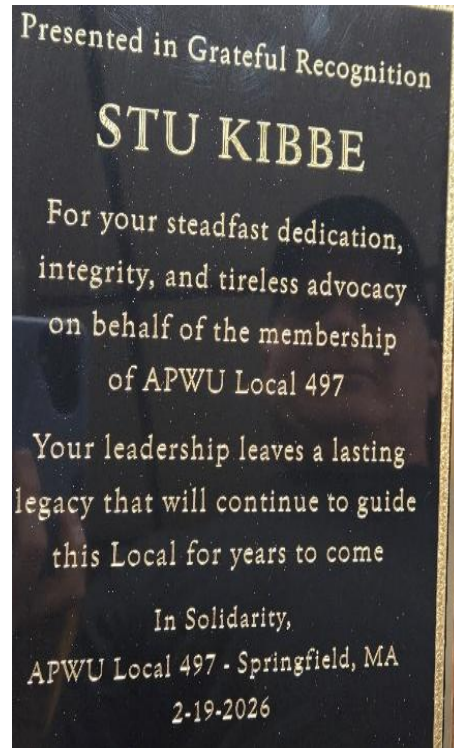
For more than four decades, Stu Kibbe has exemplified what it truly means to be union strong. With over forty years of dedicated service to the United States Postal Service, Stu’s career has been defined not only by hard work and commitment, but by unwavering advocacy on behalf of his union brothers and sisters.

As a longtime leader of APWU Local #497, Stu has guided the local with strength, integrity, and unmatched knowledge of the contract. His command of contractual language and his strategic approach to grievances have resulted in monumental wins that have protected jobs, preserved rights, and upheld dignity in the workplace. Members have relied on Stu’s expertise to navigate complex dispute and time and again, he has delivered. But Stu’s leadership extends far beyond grievance meetings. He is a tireless advocate who understands that protecting postal careers requires vigilance on every front. Whether organizing members, mentoring new stewards, or participating in rallies and community events, Stu stands firmly in defense of a strong public Postal Service. He recognizes that preserving universal service is not only about delivering mail, it is about sustaining living-wage jobs, protecting decent standards of living, and ensuring that communities across this nation continue to receive reliable, affordable service.

Stu has always been about preservation. Preservation of careers at the Postal Service, preservation of hard-fought contractual rights, and preservation of the solidarity that defines union strength. His take charge attitude, his passion for organizing, and his deep respect for the membership have made him irreplaceable!

For the brothers and sisters of the APWU, Stu Kibbe is more than a leader...he is a steadfast defender, a mentor, and a living example of what four decades of union dedication looks like. His legacy within Local #497 will continue to inspire future generations to stand up, speak out, and fight for what is right.

Thank you, Stu, for your tireless service, your leadership, and your unwavering commitment to protecting the rights and livelihoods of postal workers everywhere. We truly appreciate you and will miss you tremendously. The union door will always be open for you.



At the last local membership meeting on February 19, 2026, Ed personally wrote up a speech and presented Stu with a plaque honoring him for his 40 plus years of his leadership, “steadfast dedication, integrity and timeless advocacy” to the APWU Local 497 and his years of service to the US Postal Service.



Stu Kibbe also made a speech and presented the Local #497 with a framed news article from the Springfield Republican from the unions “DAY OF ACTION” on March 20, 2025. The membership thanked Stu for his years of service to the Local and for his gift.



Please **NOTE:** According to Article 11 in the CBA, remember, to be eligible for holiday pay, an employee must be in a pay status the last hour of the employee’s scheduled workday prior to or the first hour of the employee’s scheduled workday after the holiday.

The following eleven (11) days shall be considered **holidays** for full-time and part-time regular scheduled employees:

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| New Year’s Day | Labor Day |
| Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday | Columbus Day |
| Washington’s Birthday (Presidents’ Day) | Veterans Day |
| Memorial Day | Thanksgiving Day |
| Juneteenth National Independence Day | Christmas Day |
| Independence Day | |

CHOICE VACATION TIME



(LMOU) LOCAL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

ITEM#5 THE DURATION OF THE CHOICE VACATION PERIOD(S) ALL CRAFTS: (BMC, P&DC, Springfield Post Office) Choice vacation period will start on Saturday preceding April 30 th and end on the last Friday in September

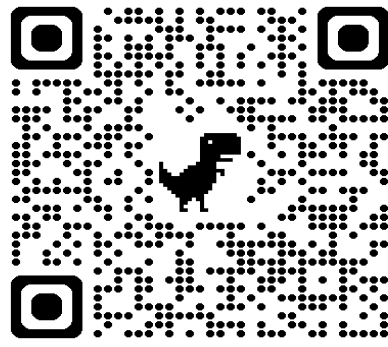
ITEM #6 THE DETERMINATION OF THE BEGINNING DAY OF AN EMPLOYEE'S VACATION PERIOD ALL CRAFT: (BMC, P&DC, Springfield Post Office) An employee's vacation period shall start on Saturday. The employee may request to the Lead Manager, Distribution Operations (MDO) his/her vacation period start on a day other than Saturday when agreed to by the appropriate Craft Director or his/her designee. Such request shall not ordinarily be denied.

ITEM #7 WHETHER EMPLOYEES AT THEIR OPTION MAY REQUEST TWO SELECTIONS DURING THE CHOICE VACATION PERIOD, IN UNITS OF EITHER 5 OR 10 DAYS ALL CRAFTS: (BMC, P&DC, Springfield Post Office) An employee may, at his/her option, request two (2) selections consisting of either one unit of five (5) continuous scheduled working days and one unit of ten (10) continuous scheduled working days or two units of five (5) continuous scheduled work days each.

WESTERN MA LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST, MARCH 6, 2026

The Western MA Legislative Breakfast is an event that brings together lawmakers, workers, and organized labor leaders to discuss labor priorities for the new term. This year it will take place on March 06, 2026 at the MGM Bellagio Ballroom in Springfield. Our local union officers, stewards, and members will attend the breakfast and will listen to enthusiastic speakers address their local concerns. The workers rely on unions to advocate for their rights, negotiate fair wages, and provide union representation between workers and management.

Check out the MA AFL-CIO website, www.massafclcio.org for important information.



Upcoming training for APWU officers and stewards:

2026 New England States Convention - Multi-State Convention for Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.

May 1, 2026 10:00 am – May 3, 2026 12:00 pm

Holiday Inn By the Bay
88 Spring St
Portland, ME 04101

Are you eligible to acquire Family Medical Leave?

Family Medical Leave Act- for SELF or FAMILY

To be eligible for leave under the act, a worker must have worked for the same covered employer for a total of **12 months** and must also have **worked for a total of 1,250 hours or more in the previous 12 months**. The federal Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 provides workers up to **12 weeks of unpaid** and job-protected leave for certain family and medical reasons, or for any “qualifying exigency” arising out of the fact that a covered military member is on active duty, or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty, in support of a contingency operation. The FMLA applies to all private-sector employers with 50 or more workers and to all public agencies—state, local and federal. The U.S. Department of Labor enforces the FMLA. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/28-fmla>

A Guide to the Family & Medical Leave Act can be found on the following URL:

<https://apwu.org/family-and-medical-leave-information/>

SAFETY FIRST

- *FOLLOW ALL SAFETY PROTOCOLS**
- *PROCEED WITH CAUTION AT ALL TIMES**
- *ASK FOR HELP WHEN LIFTING**

FILL OUT 1767'S AS NEEDED FOR SAFETY VIOLATIONS

PREVENT SLIP, TRIP, & FALL INJURIES

SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS CAN CAUSE BACK INJURIES, STRAINS AND SPRAINS, CONTUSIONS, AND FRACTURES.



How do slips, trips, and falls happen?

- Floors, bottoms, and stairways may be slippery from water or puddle fat and grease.
- Employees may trip over boxes, electrical cords, equipment, or other items that are left in aisles and walkways.
- Floors may be uneven or have depressions, or shallow holes, or uncovered floor drains that cause employees to trip.
- Falls from a higher level to a lower level.
- Stairways may have missing treads or boards, or the tread height may not be uniform.
- Elevated work surfaces may not have guardrails or toeboards.
- The distance between rungs on portable ladders may not be uniform, the ladders may not be equipped with non-slip safety feet, or employees may not be trained in the safe use of ladders.

What can employers and employees do to prevent slips, trips, and falls in the workplace?

- Keep all places of employment clean and orderly and in a sanitary condition. Working/Working Surfaces Standard 29 CFR 1910.22 (a) (1)
- Keep floors clean and dry. In addition to being a slip hazard, continually wet surfaces promote the growth of mold, fungi, and bacteria that can cause infections. 29 CFR 1910.22 (a) (2)
- Provide warning signs for wet floor areas. Accident Prevention Signs and Tags Standard 29 CFR 1910.145 (c) (2)
- Keep exits free from obstruction. Access to exits must remain clear of obstructions at all times. Exit Routes, Emergency Action Plans, and Fire Prevention Plans 29 CFR 1910.36 (b) (4)
- Provide non-slip surfaces on floors that will be wet.
- Use slip resistant footwear.
- Keep aisles and passageways clear of obstructions and tripping hazards.
- Make sure aisles are wide enough for the intended use.
- Make sure stairs have proper handrails, that treads and nosings are maintained, and that treads have a slip-resistant surface.
- Make sure that floor drains are covered by grates.
- Maintain ladders in good condition, with uniformly spaced rungs and non-slip safety feet.
- Train employees in the safe use of ladders.

DEFINITION
"Slip and fall" is a term for personal injuries that are caused when a person slips and falls on a floor, sidewalk, parking lot, or other surface. Just because a person is injured doesn't mean they will necessarily be compensated. Proving these cases can be a challenge.

CAUSES
An uneven floor, poor lighting, a slippery floor surface, or an uneven danger, such as a hole covered up by a rug, may cause a "slip and fall" accident. Circumstances surrounding a "slip and fall" accident are important when determining who may be legally responsible for any injuries.

RESPONSIBILITY (DUTY OF CARE)
As a broad general rule, if you are the owner of a parking lot or other premises, you are responsible for injuries resulting from a slip and fall on the premises. An occupier of the premises, such as a store owner who leases a store, may also be liable for injuries if the occupier has control over the premises in which the injury occurred. 29 CFR 1910.22 (a) (2)

QUESTIONS/INVITES
If you are an invited guest on a property, the owner or the occupier who invites you has the responsibility (a duty of care) to keep the premises safe and to warn you if there is any dangerous condition that might cause you harm. However, if you are working on a premise for a business purpose, the owner or occupier may owe you a higher duty of care.

EMPLOYEES
State workers compensation laws usually govern lawsuits brought by employees against employers. Under these "workers comp" laws, employers are held strictly liable for injuries suffered by employees. In return for this strict liability, the workers' compensation statute in some states limits the amount of damages that an employee can receive.

SAFETY WS-STFFS-E

BACKLIFTING SAFETY

EASY STEPS THAT PREVENT COMMON BACK SPRAINS Proper lifting techniques are essential when it comes to preventing back injuries, but perhaps more important are the proper planning techniques.

STEPS & RULES FOR A SAFE LIFTING PROCEDURE

<p>Step One</p> <p>Plan your lift</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before you lift, look at the load, and estimate its weight. Do you need to lift the item? Where is the object? Where are you moving the item to and how, and will the path require a lift? When in doubt, DO NOT LIFT ALONE. <p>RULE: Plan to lift properly.</p>	<p>Step Two</p> <p>Secure your footing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep your shoulder width apart for good balance. Take a deep breath and tighten your stomach muscles. Before you lift, position yourself so that you can lift and can control your back when lifting. <p>RULE: Make sure you have good footing when you lift to avoid a wrong posture.</p>	<p>Step Three</p> <p>Hold your knees and lift with your legs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position the knees in front of your feet. You are using the extra energy and your leg muscles. Stand at your knees and hips, not your heels. Keep your back straight, by leaning to the natural curve in your back when handling and lifting. <p>RULE: Lift smoothly and don't jerk as you lift. Breathe throughout and exhale to exhale out before your back.</p>
<p>Step Four</p> <p>Keep your feet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you bend at your knees and hug the object close to your back, it will be balanced and you can use your leg muscles to do your lifting. <p>RULE: Plan to lift 10% of your body weight or less. If you lift more, you will risk injury.</p>	<p>Step Five</p> <p>Avoid twisting to keep your center of balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep your back in alignment with your shoulders and hips. Your feet and legs should be facing the load when you are lifting. Twisting, twisting and twisting your spine will lead to serious injury. <p>RULE: It takes no more additional time to lift safely than twisting, so give it some extra time.</p>	<p>Step Six</p> <p>Be sure to use the same technique when you set your objects down.</p> <p>RULE: Safe lifting means protecting your back and yourself while you lift.</p>

ALTERNATIVE HANDLING TECHNIQUES

Whenever possible, use alternative methods for carrying or moving heavy objects or loads. These alternative methods include the use of:

- Forklifts
- Hand Trucks
- Platform Trucks

General controls to reduce lifting hazards that could prevent back injury:

- Use lift assists (hand dollies, carts, lift tables, forklifts, etc).
- Reduce size of product boxes to lighten the load.
- Arrange workspace so employee can move closer to load and perform lifts with arms close to body.
- Arrange workstation so lift is done in front of body and without twisting.
- Put handles or grips on boxes.
- Use gloves that aid in holding slippery objects.
- Whenever possible, put objects at waist level for a safer lift.

Think Safety FIRST

Remember, whether you are sitting or standing, your posture affects the amount of stress put on your back. Poor physical condition can also lead to back pain. Back safety exercises are necessary. Applying proper lifting techniques and other safety measures can significantly reduce your chance of back injury.

SAFETY WS-BKLFSE

APWU All Craft Convention for VETERANS



THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL FOR YOUR UNWAVERING SERVICE AND SACRIFICES YOU HAVE MADE FOR OUR SAFETY AND FREEDOM.



<https://apwu.org/veterans-resources-0>

If you have questions regarding APWU Veterans issues, please email veterans@apwu.org



THIS PAGE IS DEDICATED IN LOVING MEMORY**Honoring Our Union Brothers, Sisters, and Family Members**

With deep respect and heartfelt sorrow, we dedicate this memory page to the union brothers, sisters, and cherished family members who have passed on. Beyond their union titles, they were parents, spouses, grandparents, friends, and mentors. They shared laughter in the breakrooms, wisdom in difficult times, and strength when challenges arose. They believed in unity...in the power of working people standing together for justice and respect.

To the families who continue to carry their memory, we extend our deepest condolences and gratitude. Your loved ones made a lasting difference in our union and in our lives.

May we always remember

Their service

Their sacrifice

Their solidarity

Their spirit

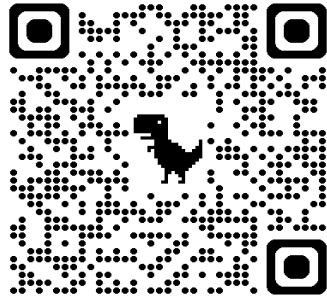
Rest in Power. Rest in Peace. You will never be forgotten.

In unity and remembrance,
Your Union Family



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

Our APWU Local #497 website can be accessed by this QR code and/or typing, apwusal.org, in the *URL*, which is address bar at TOP of page, NOT Google search.



CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE! OUR WEBMASTER, DAMIAN HEROUX, GAVE IT A WHOLE NEW LOOK!

Note from Ronda Wynn, the Editor:

This Rifle will be an online issue due to time constraints and workload. I would love to hear from our members. Please feel free to submit any input and/or articles for our Rifle. Feel free to drop any material at the Union office or email me at Ronda497editor@gmail.com.

I will review them to reassure they follow the press guidelines.

Thank you Union family!

*** REMINDER:**

Membership meeting's are every 3rd Thursday at 6:30PM at our union hall on 1124 Berkshire Ave, Springfield, MA. Please join us!

Stay warm! Warmer weather is around the corner!

