

BUY UNION

Need some electrical work done? Here's \$200 to help you get it done with a union professional

As part of a campaign to win back residential work, IBEW Local 48 is ready to contribute \$200 toward your next home electrical project.

IBEW Local 48 is ready to contribute \$200 toward your next home electrical project. That's how committed the union is to the value of union work — and the goal of recapturing residential market share.

The offer is part of the union's "Qualified Electricians" program, which was launched in 2014 as Plus 5 PDX. At plus5pdx.org, you provide your name, address and other contact information, and they mail you the coupon. The coupon is good for \$200 of work from any of the union residential contractors listed on the web site — no matter how small the project.

Since October 2015, 536 homeowners have taken Local 48 up on the offer, and the union has paid out \$103,000 to contractors. Local 48 organizer Ray Lister says that resulted in almost \$1 million in new work for union contractors. It could be as



HOME IMPROVEMENT: IBEW Local 48 member Timothy Dyck on the job.

small as a ceiling fan replacement or simple repair job, or as big as a major remodel or new construction. Most projects are under \$1,000, Lister said.

"Everybody's got something around the house they've been

putting off," Lister said. "If our shop goes out there, they build a relationship. They realize we're affordable.... They're going to get a professional out there who knows what they're doing."

The Plus5PDX web site

doesn't mention the work will be done by a union contractor, but that's what makes its claim of "qualified electricians" rock solid: IBEW's joint union-employer training program is unsurpassed. And those doing the




work make a living wage and benefits. Last but not least, the program also offers a 5-year warranty over and above the standard one-year warranty.

Local 48 is trying to get the word out about the offer through social media and through booths at Portland home and garden shows.


Lister says IBEW members used to do substantially all of the local residential electrical work, but in recent years, as the union focused on commercial and industrial work, it lost market share in the small residential market. Lister thinks union electricians may be performing as little as 15 to 20 percent of local residential work. Plus5 could be a step toward a comeback.



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NATIONAL

Trump proposes to privatize Bonneville Power and air traffic control

In his first-year budget proposal, President Trump is calling for privatizing the nation's air traffic control operations — and selling off publicly owned transmission assets, including those operated by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

The air traffic control proposal calls for spinning off air traffic operations from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and placing them under an "independent, non-governmental organization." National Air Traffic Controllers Association, the union that represents the FAA's 14,000 controllers, supports the privatization. But the American Federation of Government Employees opposes it. FAA operates and maintains the current system, which safely transports two million passengers on about 70,000 flights per day. The Congressional Budget Office says privatizing the air traffic control system would in-

crease the nation's deficit by \$20 billion over 10 years. And the Department of Defense says it has serious concerns about the impact privatization would have on national defense — specifically on critical military assets managed jointly by the Pentagon and FAA, including drones, communication systems, and surveillance.

Meanwhile, the proposal to privatize federal power has met with opposition from local members of Congress.

"Public power customers in the Pacific Northwest have paid for the system, and their investment should not be put up for sale," said Oregon U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden.

BPA operates three-quarters of the region's high-voltage transmission system, which it uses to market power from 31 hydroelectric dams in the Columbia River Basin. The Trump budget summary proposes raising \$4.9 billion for the U.S. Treasury by selling the BPA's transmission assets from 2018 to 2027.