

Grievance file

Hi-way callous toward hands

PORTLAND -- The state Highway Division is showing a callous disregard for the safety of its employes especially concerning protection for their hands.

A grievance initiated in May by OSEA Employee Representative Roger Yockey on behalf of seven employes on the Milwaukie bridge crew has now reached the office of Executive Department Personnel Division grievance coordinator George Sanders

after having been dealt with in a totally unsatisfactory manner by Highway's labor relations head Gene Huntley.

Highway appears to be ignoring its own safety directives. One says, "When handling materials such as wood, metal, cable or other items which are apt to have slivers or cut or puncture hands, gloves should be worn. Gloves are available through the storeroom." Elsewhere, the Department of Transportation's

maintenance guide says, regarding guard rail repair and parks employes handling garbage cans, says gloves shall be worn.

In his Aug. 30 letter to Sanders, Yockey notes that the maintenance employes "handle materials every day which may cut, puncture, i.e. hurt, injure their hands. And these workers cannot afford to buy gloves which cost them money and which wear out regularly and have to be replaced."

In addition to protection for the workers' hands from the materials they handle daily, another matter of safety is a concern for these employes who work high over the Willamette River. At one point Highway management mentioned that it would provide rubber gloves. Rubber gloves, however, are bulky and relatively inflexible and would present an additional hazard to employes working bridge maintenance.

Both the state Central

Agreement and the OSEA-ODOT agency agreement require that the employer provide protective clothing. In his letter appealing the grievance to Huntley, Yockey noted "OSEA's concern is for the safety of the workers and the Central Agreement and the Agency Agreement both provide for the safety and health of employes. In this matter, gloves are essential for the protection of workers' hands and the employer shall provide those gloves."

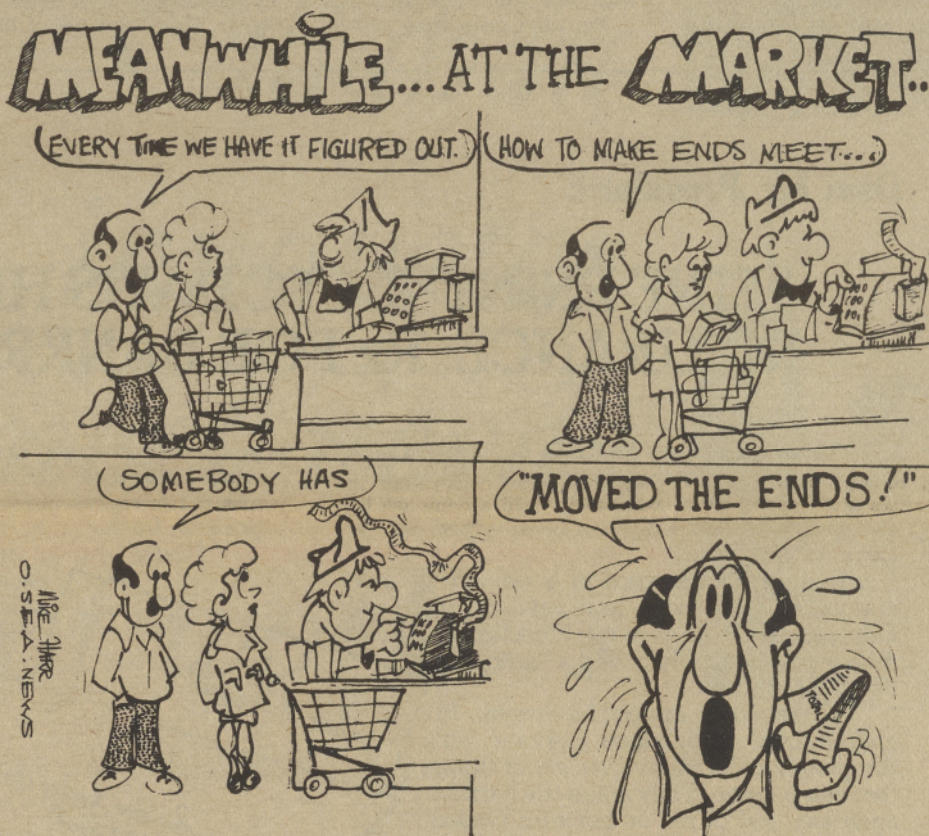
Soiled overalls grievied

COQUILLE -- The OSEA agency agreement with the Department of Transportation says that coveralls and protective clothing worn by employes who work with tar, grease, paint, ink, or asphalt will be cleaned and maintained by the agency.

When employes on the bridge, extra and maintenance crews here and in Klamath Falls and North Bend were not having the clothes cleaned they initiated a grievance with the help of OSEA Job Representatives Dick Downs here, Mark Robinson in North Bend and District 4 Director Lyle Swearingen in Klamath Falls.

Highway management acknowledged all along that they are aware of contract Article 16, Section 3, but that wasn't cleaning the clothing. As OSEA Employee Representative Maria Steinhauer said in a July 7 letter to Highway labor relations head Gene Huntley: "The acknowledgement from (maintenance engineer R.L.) Schroeder... that the employer (DOT) is responsible for providing and maintaining protective clothing as agreed to by DOT in the collective bargaining agreement effective since March of 1978 does not resolve the grievance. There is no question but that DOT agreed in Article 16 to provide and maintain protective clothing. The grievance arose because DOT has failed to live up to that agreement. Coveralls have not been maintained. The laundering of protective clothing must commence immediately. (It should have commenced over four months ago.)"

By Aug. 1, the crews in the field still had seen no action, Steinhauer said in an appeal of the grievance to Executive Department Personnel Division grievance coordinator George Sanders. Finally, four months after the grievance was filed and six months after the contract was in effect, there was some evidence from the field that the coveralls were finally being laundered, with special attention going to those areas where OSEA members Swearingen, Downs and Robinson had started the grievance.



Water board pact improves pension

COOS BAY -- Improvement of the retirement plan was the biggest issue in the settlement of the contract between OSEA and the Coos Bay / North Bend Water Board.

Some employes were retiring on \$80 a month after 20 years with the water board, noted OSEA Employee Representative Jim Barnes, who saw the negotiations through mediation. The employer's contribution was upped from three percent of an employe's monthly salary per month to six and one-half percent. "It was a major concession on the part of the employer," Barnes said.

Mediator John Vale was "excellent," Barnes said. Management negotiator was Eric Carlson whom OSEA confronts at Marion County and elsewhere.

While retirement was the key, several language problems were corrected changing "mays" to "shalls."

Pay was increased by 43 cents an hour across the board. That amounts to approximately a nine percent increase at the bottom of the scale and six percent at the top.

The health and welfare package now includes complete hospital, dental and life insurance for employes and the dependents. The dental coverage and the dependents coverage is new. At one point a management counter proposal came back to the OSEA side without the "s" on dependents; that was changed.

The two-year agreement begins back at July 1 and contains a wage reopener at the midterm.

Other elements in the agreement are fair share and dues check off. Employes for the first time have a meaningful right to look at their personnel records; they may carry over vacation time; they receive a personal leave day and a grievance procedure ending in

binding arbitration.

The water board employes "are a good bunch of guys," said Barnes. "They're pretty well informed as to what they have in their contract and what they want."

"The local president Bryan Ducker and the negotiating team kept everything going," Barnes said. "They showed a lot of leadership. They explained and clarified things that were not completely understood by (Education and Research Director) John Lurd or myself," he said.

In negotiations elsewhere:

- State Fair is at impasse over the workweek. Mediation has been requested;
- Mental Health negotiations begin in early September. These negotiations, like the Childrens Service Division earlier, will be done in a coalition of Fairview, Eastern Oregon Hospital, Dammasch and the State Hospital. More

DMV uniforms on way

Uniforms for motor vehicle representatives in the Motor Vehicles Division has moved several steps closer with the appointment of a labor-management committee.

To fulfill a MVD agency contract provision, the agency was granted \$60,000 from the legislative Emergency Board to buy uniforms. However, after the cost of buying the various uniforms for every employe was added up, the total came to around \$79,000. Meetings of the labor-management committee presently are under way to find ways to bring the cost of the uniforms to within the amount let by the E-Board.

OSEA members representing labor on the committee are Linda Burnett of Albany and Chuck Paresi and Nancy Nelson of Portland. They are joined by OSEA Employee Representative Roger Yockey and Director of Field Services Gordon Webb.

coalitions will be used where working conditions are so similar, said OSEA Assistant to the Executive Director Tom Gallagher;

- Department of Education Special Schools negotiations are going along;
- Jackson County has settled and ratified its contract;
- The Bureau of Labor contract is settled and to the membership for ratification;
- Health Sciences Center and Portland State University are both open and negotiations will start this month;
- Oregon State Correctional Institution is at factfinding over the related issues of job bidding and women's rights;
- Agriculture will be going in to negotiate a two-year agreement;
- Workers' Compensation has been settled; and
- the Myrtle Point Police Department contract is still being negotiated.