

Another Strike Possible

As Strike Ends Workers Continue to Bargain!

1,300 PeaceHealth workers who went on strike on Monday, October 23rd, returned to work. These workers had organized a five-day Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) strike to protest actions by management that the union says were illegal and violated the union rights of their workers. These healthcare workers, who are members of the Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals (OFNHP, AFT Local 5017), have been negotiating their next union contract for months and say that management pushed them onto the picket line through bad faith bargaining and by making unilateral changes to their contracts.

"This strike was a direct result of management violating the labor



Previous PeaceHealth strike from October 23rd

rights of its workers, refusing to negotiate in productive ways, and making unilateral changes that undermined the legally protected status of our members," says Jonathan Baker, OFNHP President. These workers make up three of the four bargaining units currently negotiating with PeaceHealth

for a new contract, including the Lab Professionals at PeaceHealth St. John and the Tech and Service and Maintenance units at PeaceHealth Southwest. In Eugene, the Tech unit has been negotiating with PeaceHealth Sacred Heart, focusing on the same issues that the PeaceHealth workers up north

have been negotiating over, such as short staffing and living wages. All of the units say that management has been refusing to address concerns over low wages, which they say is making it difficult to attract and retain qualified staff and, ultimately, limiting patient access. If the Techs at PeaceHealth Sacred

Heart do not see acceptable movement regarding staffing and wage proposals from management over the next couple of weeks, they could set up a strike authorization vote and, ultimately, walk out on strike themselves.

The units returned to the bargaining table this week, with PeaceHealth St. John at the table yesterday and other PeaceHealth Southwest workers negotiating today and the 7th. Each one of those units reserve the right to strike again if adequate progress is not made at the bargaining table. Instead of trying to avoid last week's strike, management chose to cancel all bargaining dates, offer strike breaking workers upwards of \$8,000 a week, and threatened to cancel the health insurance of the striking workers. Despite holding a press conference on the 23rd stating that the hospital would run at "100%" during the strike, PeaceHealth was only able to secure fewer than 200 replacement workers to cover the 1,300 employees walking the picket line.

Two People Rescued from Different Elevator Cars

PF&R Responds to Downtown Portland Building

Portland Fire & Rescue successfully rescued two individuals from different inoperable elevator cars this week in the Wells Fargo Center building in Downtown Portland. PF&R responded to reports of individual stuck in an elevator with a single truck company. As they were working with building personnel to aid in gaining access to assess the situation the elevator service company arrived, and the scene was transferred to the elevator technicians. After an hour of working through all possible options to get the elevator car to operate and discovering that there was another elevator with an occupied car also stuck, a call was again made to the emergency dispatch center and a high angle rope rescue call was initiated. This called in 16 rope technicians from Portland Fire along with the initial responding truck company totaling 20 firefighters on scene. A rope system was set in place with a rescuer lowered to each inoperable elevator car and each occupant was safely removed and returned to the lobby.

In buildings as tall as the Wells Fargo Center, there are multiple



Rescue Pic 1: Early establishing a high point for ease of entry and removal of personnel through the elevator door. (Photo Courtesy of Portland Fire & Rescue)

elevator shafts where cars only the second floor through floor 20. The only doors that access these elevators are in the lobby along with floor 21 and above. This technical rescue team was forced to establish their entry point into the elevator shafts on the 21st floor. The occupant of the first car

was estimated to be on or around the 3rd floor level. The tech team set up to lower a rescuer using specialized equipment and ropes to the elevator car. The overhead hatch was opened with the assistance of the elevator technician on site. (The freight elevator was

located just next to the shaft of this inoperable car allowing the technician to manually operate the car and stop where needed to provide tools and assistance to the rescuer on the elevator car in the next shaft over.) The uninjured occupant was connected to the rope system and removed from the inoperable car. Using safety equipment carried down by the rescuer, the nimble occupant was able to transfer over to the freight elevator and be taken to the lobby nearly 4 ½ hours after the car inexplicably stopped descending.

The team then raised the rescuer to Floor 21 and set the rope system in the adjacent elevator shaft to perform the second rescue. The rescuer was lowered to the second inoperable car which was estimated to be only 30' to 40' below the entry point. The rescuer contacted the second uninjured occupant, and they were raised to the floor of entry and safely brought onto the floor away from the open door to the elevator shaft. The occupant was removed from the system, escorted to the lobby, and exited the building. This individual was stuck for a similar length of time, closing in on 5 hours. In discussions with the elevator technicians, it is unknown why either of the elevator cars stopped and if these are random or are related to one another.