Union Proposes Safety Improvements at Verizon

Technicians brought a number of health and safety concerns to the union, and we’re working to find solutions and get management to make changes.

Members raised three big health and safety problems: the strain of lifting manhole covers, the use of a carcinogenic product to reduce lead dust, and the weight of the Fios toolbag.

Local 1110 Vice President Al Russo sits on the statewide Tier One Safety Committee which includes union and company representatives. Tier Two Safety Committees cover Manhattan and the Bronx, one for inside workers and one for outside forces. The Tier Two Safety Committee includes 1101 Business Agents Bill Stefandel, Ken Spatta, Pete Torres, Val Valentino, and Josey Allgor, and Chief Stewards Frank Calisi, Mike Cefalo, Pete Ficorelli, Joe Peloso, Robert Pignatello, and Assistant to the President Ken Beckett. The Tier Three Safety Committees include shop stewards and local management for each respective shop.

A manhole lift that works
A manhole cover can weigh up to 300 pounds. For years technicians have raised concerns about the strain on their backs. Union safety reps approached management with a new design for a manhole cover lift, which is user friendly and would alleviate the need for technicians to lift the covers manually. The manhole lift is in the trial phase now. Union reps and technicians at West 47 Street recently trialed the manhole cover lift and suggested changes, which the vendor is working on incorporating.

A non-carcinogenic leadstop
In a class at West 26 Street on lead safety removal Verizon was using a product to reduce lead dust that came in an aerosol can with a warning about carcinogens. Technicians in the class brought it to the Executive Board’s attention.

“We found a product called Leadstop,” said VP Al Russo. “It was better

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Local 1101 and 1105 Memberships to Vote on Proposed Merger

CWA Local 1101 and CWA Local 1105 members will be voting soon on whether Local 1105 should merge into Local 1101. (See official election notice below).

CWA Local 1105 represents more than 1700 members in the commercial, communication and sales departments at Verizon. The majority of Local 1105 members are Representatives in the Verizon Commercial Department. They also have members in the TRG contract, at Dex Media and other employers. Local 1105 members currently work alongside CWA plant members in a number of locations, including 204 Second Avenue, 395 Flatbush Ave, and Garden City Long Island.

The Local 1101 Executive Board voted unanimously for the merger, and is recommending a YES vote.

“This will be good for members of both Locals,” 1101 President Keith Purce said. “It will help strengthen our collective bargaining power, and will make our union stronger overall.

Safety Committees

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than the original product, but still carcinogenic. We asked the company that produced it to change the formula to make it green and non-carcinogenic, and then we brought that to the Tier One Safety Committee.” Verizon agreed to replace the original product with the new Leadstop.

A more ergonomic toolbag

Walking up five flights of stairs is hard enough. Try doing it with a 50 pound toolbag, standard for Verizon Fios techs. Technicians experiencing back, neck and shoulder issues raised this safety concern.

The Union brought it the company’s attention at Tier Two and proposed a stair-climbing cart with the toolbag to lessen the strain. The Company agreed and the toolbags are being trialed in the FIOS shops now.
Janice Reed has been Chief Steward at Arms Acres for more than 10 years and a steward for more than 20. She’s retiring in August. She’s been a leader in the union since Local 1101 organized Arms Acres and Conifer Park in 1996.

Janice has been on the CWA Bargaining Committee for the last four contracts. “She took a lot of heat when the contract talks weren’t moving along,” said Gloria VanTassel, a retired case manager of 18 years who returned to Arms Acres three years ago. “People wanted to see things happen right away. She’d explain, this is part of the negotiation process. It doesn’t happen overnight. They listen to her, because she’s thought of so highly,” Gloria said.

Allen Taylor, a Milieu Counselor and Recovery Coach at Arms Acres for 17 years and a steward there described Janice’s role this way. “Janice walks quietly but carries a big stick.” Conifer Park Chief Steward Chris Pulley described meeting Janice for the first time at bargaining. “She was one of the strongest voices at the table.” Jerome Paredes, Local 1101 VP agreed. “Janice is extremely knowledgeable and a fierce negotiator. She fights hard every single day to police the contract and ensure that our members’ rights are not violated.”

Robin Kett, Senior Cook at Arms Acres, has known Janice for the 28 years she’s been at the facility. “She’s always been someone you could talk to. She’s very honest, and very insightful.” Robin talked about Janice’s knack for getting other people to speak up. She’d get you to do and say what needed to be said, to be that voice. But it’s not all work. “Janice is funny,” Robin chuckled. “She’s always laughing, always has a good come-back.”

“I have good stewards” Janice said. “We work as a team. They know no matter what time of day or night it is, they can call me. If I didn’t have people to lean on, I wouldn’t be the Chief I am today. I got so much support from people who were here early on – Donna Sharron, Jimmy Trainor, Joe McAleer and Pat LaScala. And I’ve gotten tremendous support from the leadership now, Ken (Spatta) and Jerome (Paredes). Keith (Purce) has always been there when I needed him.”

Every member we spoke to said ‘You can call Janice day or night, and she’ll be there for you.’ “Janice treats all the members at Arms Acres like family and protects them like a mother protects her children,” Jerome said.

“When I became a Chief Steward Janice made herself available to me whenever I needed her,” Chris said. “She helped me so much those first few months.” Allen described Janice as a straight shooter. “Janice always tells you the truth. It’s either going to work or it isn’t.” He was quiet for a minute. “When my wife died of cancer, Janice gave me a week of her time so I could be with my family. I have six kids. She gave me time that you don’t get back. I wish I could give all the time back that I owe her. But I can’t.”

“I think when they made Janice they broke the mold,” Gloria said. “Her heart is so big. She treats everyone equally, patient or co-worker. She’s just a remarkable person.”

“If I had to choose two words to describe how I feel about Janice, they would be love and respect,” Jerome said. “Her work ethic and determination is unparalleled and will be greatly missed. I wish her all the best in retirement.”

“Janice is the epitome of a Chief Steward - strong, tenacious and compassionate,” said Keith Purce, CWA Local 1101 President. “Local 1101, your Executive Board, and our entire membership will miss you dearly.”
Central Office Equipment Installation (COEI) Stewards, Chief Steward Bill Cordova and Business Agent Josey Allgor met with the new second level manager for COEI at Local 1101 recently.

What does COEI do? “We build from the ceiling to the floor,” said George Bloom, COEI technician and Shop Steward. “We install all of the equipment that makes your telephone, television, and internet work, except for the power and switch.”

Mike Hunter is also a Shop Steward in COEI. “I like that we’re part of every big move that Verizon makes,” Mike said. When Verizon went into FIOS, we started seeing large orders of large bandwidth being installed. We get to see the direction the company’s going firsthand, whether it be wireless, FiOS or 5G.”

“The biggest issue we have in COEI is constantly filing grievances on contracting out of work,” said Bloom. Hunter agreed.

“They want to contract out a large part of our work but nobody’s going to protect the network better than Verizon workers.”

Stewards discussed the contracting issue with management at the meeting, and other issues like study materials for Materiel Equipment Technicians who want to upgrade to Materiel Systems Technicians, tools, and problems with pay. “It was really useful,” Bloom said. “Josey (Allgor) put in a lot of to help us collaborate together and go in with a game plan, and present the major concerns our members had presented to us.”
Local 1101 members at USIC who tone and mark the streets for National Grid, Con Edison, PSE&G and other companies voted overwhelmingly to ratify a new contract in April. The contract includes a significant wage increase, improvements in scheduling and the grievance procedure, and paid rest time.

It was a hard fought battle. Workers at USIC beat back two decertification votes over the past 2 and a half years. Their tenacity and determination to remain union and members of CWA Local 1101 held strong and their hard work paid off. They won a much stronger contract which makes USIC work in NYC and Long Island a career path, not just a job.

Not long after the ratification, 14 USIC workers from Hudson Valley became part of CWA 1101 as well. CWA filed for an election in May to represent the Hudson Valley USIC workers after securing an overwhelming majority on cards. At first, the company rejected our demand for neutrality and card check, but then agreed to voluntarily recognize CWA Local 1101.

The 14 new members will be covered by the same contract as the NYC and Long Island USIC workers. Many of these new members will see life-changing raises as a result of being in CWA Local 1101.

Vice President Al Russo, Business Agent Ken Spatta, District 1 Staff Representative John Dempsey, USIC locators Tony Morales and Michael Hackett were on the bargaining team, and Organizer Keith Hogarty worked on the Hudson Valley organizing campaign.

Top two photos, USIC Stewards trainings. Bottom: New 1101 members from USIC Hudson Valley group.
Local 1101 Equity Committee is on the Move!

Equity Committee members have been busy. They helped fundraise for the Scholarship Golf Outing, and they organized the trip to the Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington DC. They initiated the Spotlight in the Generator, honoring 1101 members who are active in social justice, political, and community efforts. The first Spotlight is in this Generator honoring Danny McNamara. (see below)

This summer the Committee is helping build the Local 1101 Family and Friend's picnic Saturday Aug 10 at FDR Park in Yorktown Heights, and we'll be organizing soon for the African American Day parade in Harlem on September 15. Join us! Contact Ken Spatta at 914-572-1101 or Ken Beckett at 917-679-0138 if you want to get involved.

Go to local1101.org/committees to see the Equity Committee mission statement.

Spotlight: Dan McNamara

Danny McNamara is a Verizon lineman out of 500 Zerega Avenue in the Bronx with 22 years on the job. He's also a volunteer firefighter with the Silver Lake Fire Department in Middletown NY. Volunteer firefighters there are certified fireman, and get the same training as paid fireman - First Aid, CPR, Command scene classes. All of that proved crucial earlier this year when Danny's co-worker Nick Bucci suffered a serious injury.

Danny's crew was replacing a cable strand when a tractor trailer came through the work area and dislodged the strand. Nick was in the bucket, and the strand whipped across his face and hit him in the arm. He had a serious laceration to the face, and a severely broken arm.

Danny and the other members of his crew – Nelson Roldan, Ray Clementz, and Bobby Monday – leapt into action. They closed the face wound and stabilized his arm. They kept him calm until paramedics arrived 35 minutes later. If it hadn't been for Danny's firefighter training and the crew's quick actions, the doctor's agreed Nick would have lost his arm. Great job guys. Way to stay calm under pressure. Get well soon Nick.
Talking Safety at Verizon Business

Catalina Rios (photo right below) is one of the VZB Stewards, and the first woman steward for the division. She described a recent safety meeting the stewards, Chief, and Business Agent had with management. “We talked about the importance of using only Verizon-issued ladders. We work in a lot of different co-locator sites, and there are often ladders there. But you don’t know the condition of those ladders, and that’s why we should never use them. I’ve been emphasizing that to my workgroup.”

Women’s Committee
Remembering the Past, Building for the Future

Local 1101 Women’s Committee members joined a commemoration of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire of 1911, where 146 people, mostly young women immigrant workers, died in a fire. The tragedy sparked outrage and galvanized efforts to pass health and safety protections and fire safety laws.

Women’s committee members also collected clothing for women at Covenant House in midtown Manhattan, and came together with other 1101 members at the May 1 International Workers day rally at Columbus Circle.

We’re organizing a group to march in the October 20 Orchard Beach Breast Cancer march. If you’re interested in participating or joining the Women’s Committee, contact Josey Allgor or Heather Trainor at 212-633-2666. All are welcome.
We asked Local 1101 members at the AT&T Call Center in Paramus how they like working there, and what the union means for their job. Quotes are on the next page (10).

Top Row: Lauren Benton, Richetta Oliver, Chief Stewards Nikki and Bill Nebeling
Middle Row: Melisa Southall, Jacqueline Brown
Bottom Row: Ken Meluso, Steward Salvatore Grande, Damian Adams

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We asked Local 1101 members who work at the AT&T Mobility Call Center in Paramus, New Jersey how they like working there, and what the union means to them. Here’s what they said.

Lauren Benton, 14 year, ATS. “I love the job security, the benefits for me and my family and the constant support from our union. I enjoy the team I work with in ATS and look forward to overcoming new challenges in my work.”

Richetta Oliver, 11 years, ATS. “I love the diversity we’re exposed to, the strength of our union membership. We have a voice, a grievance procedure, and we’re making more than nonunion employees. We’ll continue to work together and have a solid union presence here in Paramus.”

Chief Steward Nikki Watson, 6 years, ATS. “I love being a Chief here because I’m able to talk to members about what’s going on, where we stand as a union, where AT&T stands, why we’re fighting. AT&T is giving our work away any way they can and we have to stand together against that.”

Chief Steward Bill Nebeling, 18 years, ATS. “When we first became union people weren’t as gung ho as they are today. We have a lot more communication through the steward trees, from the Local and the Executive Board, and because we are talking to members every day. A lot more issues are getting addressed and the feedback from members is very positive.”

Ken Meluso, 2 years, NBS. “I love being here as a member of CWA Local 1101. The work we do to support and help our customers and each other makes it a pleasure to come here. Our union stewards are always full of knowledge and here to help.”

Steward Salvatore Grande, 12 years, Fraud Department. “We’re fighting corporate greed every day for the betterment of our families.”

Damian Adams 14 years, ATS. “I love learning about all the new technology. My coworkers are like family to me and I’ve made life-long friends here.”

Steward Teshona Brimley, 9 years, NBS. “I love working with the members and am always here to help resolve their issues. I like to make a difference. I like that members come to me and I feel good about that.”

Lavana Wilson, 6 years, NBS. “I love working at the Paramus Call Center and love the people I work with. I have great benefits and a 401K.”

Daryll West, 11 years, ATS. “We have a great union and I’m able to provide for my family. Our chiefs and E-board work hard to keep us gainfully employed.”

Paul Freeman, 13 years, ASCS. “The current 350 jobs would not be here if it were not for CWA. We fought and got the best contract we have ever had, especially for call center workers. We’re guaranteed work. We have to continue to fight and stick together.”

Syheem Farrar, 11 years, ATS. “We’re a family here and I love working with my family. The chiefs here always have my back.”

John Organo, 18 years, NBS. “I do First Net which is our future. I like being a part of the future of AT&T. My Union gives me a voice and job security.”

Evelyn Garland, 11 years, ATS. “We have a great working environment. The union is always looking to improve our conditions and resolve our concerns. There is such wonderful diversity here in Paramus, there’s work, opportunity to learn new things and better ourselves.”

ATS - Advanced Technical Support
NBS - National Business Support
ASCS - Advanced Solutions Customer Support
LIU Post Adjunct Professors Fight for Pay Parity

Vice President Jerome Paredes, Business Agent Ken Spatta, and Chief Steward Dr Geoffrey Lasky met after a grievance at LIU Post, where they discussed pay discrepancies among adjunct professors at the University. There have been a number of changes in LIU’s management, so they were also there to meet the new management team and talk about the union/management relationship.

“We’re working on building increased steward participation,” said Spatta. “We want to make sure all the adjunct faculty know their union representatives and know the rights they have as union members. We’ll continue working to bring a union presence to LIU Post.”

Years of Hard Work Paid Off!
New York Passes Call Center Bill

Since 2006, greedy companies like AT&T and Verizon have eliminated 40,000 call center jobs in New York State and sent the work to low-wage areas in the U.S. and overseas. We’ve been fighting for years for legislation to protect call center workers and penalize companies that send jobs out of New York. And we did it!

The NY Call Center Jobs Act passed the NY State Legislature in June. The bill requires call center employers to notify the Department of Labor if they intend to relocate at least 30% of call volume in a year. Those companies would lose all grants, loans, tax benefits, and state contracts. The bill also ensures that all state business-related call center work is performed by New York State companies.

Thanks everyone who did their part!

Local1101 Member Named Valedictorian

Glen Guild was named Valedictorian of the first graduating class of CUNY’s new School of Labor & Urban Studies in June, 2019. Glen, a field technician at Jerome Avenue garage, is a second generation member of CWA Local 1101.

Glen started taking classes in the CUNY/Cornell Labor Studies certificate program as part of Local 1101’s Education Program. He went on to pursue a bachelor’s degree in Urban & Community Studies with a concentration in Labor Studies, and is the School of Labor & Urban Studies’ first Valedictorian.

Congratulations Glen!
Parking Production Assistants who work on NYC TV and movie sets joined CWA Local 1101 last year and ratified a first contract in January. Now we've got to get everyone signed up to be in the union! Not an easy task when PPAs work for multiple production units on job sites all across the city.

PPA leaders are traveling to different production sites, signing up members, giving them a copy of the contract and a new member packet and making sure they know their rights. Derek Lawrence is the first PPA Union Steward for CWA Local 1101.

If you're a PPA and haven't joined the union yet, contact CWA Local 1101 at 212-633-2666. We are stronger together!
The Local 1101 Ed Dempsey Scholarship Golf Outing raises funds for the Local’s Scholarship Fund. Congratulations to this year’s winners below. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the event a huge success, to the vendors who sponsored it, and to everyone who participated. Special shout out to our own Joe Marks who did a bang up job with the bar-b-que.

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<tr>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Sponsoring member</th>
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<td>Ed Dempsey Scholarship winner</td>
<td>Norman Lambe</td>
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<td>Caitlin Lambe</td>
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Local 1101 Scholarship winners:

- Darryl Jones
- Shannon Barry
- Christine Whelan
- Kamma LaGattuta-Pennetti
- Nicolette Sardo
- Amani Boyce
- Angelina Schiaffo
- Jordan Vallone
- Nicolette Auld-Griffith
- Mia Comunale
- Naomi Moore
- Frank J. Scoca
- Janelle Boss
- Elpida Manolas
- Svhania Vazquez
- Frank Davis-Jones
- Robert Whelan
- Benita LaGattuta
- Joseph Sardo
- Fitzgerald Boyce
- Duane Schiaffo
- Michael Vallone
- Darien Griffith
- Dan Comunale
- Wendy Moore
- Frank Scoca
- Bryan Boss
- George Manolas
- Israel Vazquez

The Scholarship Committee is Sec-Treas Kevin Condy, VP Jerome Paredes, and BA Pete Torres

Retirees Are Ready

Above: Retired Members Council prepares for proposed Local 1101 & 1105 merger by honoring our own RMC Liaison to 1105, Denice Hawley. All CWA retirees have always been welcome at all of our meetings and events. Above right: 1101 RMC retirees “fundraising” on the third hole at the golf outing. We are always grateful to the Local and all participants for giving us this opportunity each year, and everyone’s generosity.
Verizon members
Have Kids In Summer Camp?

The Verizon Summer Camp Reimbursement Program is a bargained-for benefit, negotiated between Verizon and CWA. The fund will reimburse up to $600 per child, for up to two children, for summer day camp and overnight programs for kids under 15 years old. Applications are due August 23, 2019. For more information go to www.regionalwfrc.com or call Local 1101 at 212-633-2666.

Attention All Local 1101 CWA Members

Call me now to schedule your complimentary one-hour consultation to:
- Learn winning tax strategies to help you pay less taxes and save more money.
- Let me personally review your last two years’ tax returns to see why you may have paid more taxes than you should have.
- Discuss the new SECURE Act and how it will affect your retirement decisions.

You work hard so you can make more money; I work hard so you can keep more money.

Now is the time to take control! Visit our website at metcaptax.com or call us at (718) 225-1500.

McMahon Chiropractic

Dr. McMahon has been providing care for the members of CWA Local 1101 for over 15 years.

There is no out-of-pocket expense with The BCBS MEP-HCP health plan.

Mention the Generator and get a free Tempur-Pedic pillow on your first visit.

Chiropractic is effective treatment for:
Neck, Shoulder, Arm, Back, and Leg Pain / Arthritis / Sciatica
Herniated or Bulging Disc / Sports Injuries / Tingling
Numbness / Pinched Nerves / Migraines / Headaches

Disability Specialist with Sedgwick and FMLA.
Private Dental Program for CWA 1101 Members and Their Families

Recommended by your Executive Board.
New York Dental Management Group has been serving CWA members and their families for over 40 years. Many of our members have already enjoyed the quality care and comfortable environments they provide.
Call for your check-up to prevent any dental emergencies.

$1000 off Invisalign treatment for CWA members and family!

Free bleaching kit for all new patients!

Your insurance is accepted as payment in full for most of your preventative and basic care.

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Parkside Dental Care
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New York, NY 10022
(212)223-4229

Nassau
The Geller Dental Group
2140 Bellmore Ave.
Bellmore, NY 11710
(516)785-4744

Suffolk
Central Suffolk Dental
500 Portion Rd. Suite 3
Ronkonkoma, NY 11779
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Bronx/Westchester
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Yonkers, NY 10708
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