



DOL News Brief

June 30, 2011

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UBB Explosion Was Preventable

The department's Mine Safety and Health Administration held a public briefing in Beaver, W.Va., this week to present its findings to date from



the agency's investigation into the cause of the explosion at Massey Energy's Upper Big Branch Mine. Kevin Stricklin, MSHA administrator for coal mine safety and health, outlined what the agency believes caused the worst mine disaster in four decades. Hundreds of people came to the MSHA Academy to listen, learn and ask questions. MSHA Assistant Secretary Joseph Main, Deputy Assistant Secretary Dr. Gregory Wagner and Solicitor of Labor M. Patricia Smith were also on hand. In a recorded message to mining families, Secretary Solis said, "The tragedy at Upper Big Branch was preventable. Mine safety is the responsibility of the mine operator, and we know that government inspectors can't be in every mine during every shift. When basic safety systems are not maintained and regulations are ignored, those responsible must be held accountable."

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [View the Power Point Presentation](#)
- [Listen to the Press Conference](#)
- [View the UBB Single-source Page](#)
- [Watch the Secretary's Video Message](#)

What's Hot

Shining Light on Solar Careers

As solar power becomes more cost-effective, it has the potential to make up a larger share of growing U.S. energy needs. More solar power will mean a growing need for more trained workers to build and install solar panels and construct solar power plants. The Bureau of Labor Statistics this week released a new report, "Careers in Solar Power," which provides information on the process of generating solar power and details emerging job opportunities in the growing solar industry. The report is the second publication in BLS' green careers series.



- [Read the Report](#)

\$5.5 Million in Grants for Mentoring Young Parents

Community and faith-based organizations in Los Angeles, Calif.; Asheville, N.C.; Birmingham, Ala.; and Worcester, Mass., received \$5.5 million in DOL grants to provide intensive mentoring services for low-income young parents. In making the announcement, Secretary Solis said, "We know that the bonds and skills developed through mentoring relationships can make a difference in the education, career development, and health and safety of young people. These funds will enable grantees currently serving these parents to establish mentoring programs so young people can receive this important extra support."

- [Read the News Release](#)

Young Adults Get Second Chance Through \$17 Million in Grants

Young people who dropped out of high school or spent time in the juvenile justice system will get a second chance to put their lives back on track under grants announced Thursday. YouthBuild USA and the Mid-Atlantic Network of Youth and Family Services are receiving grants from the department of \$8.5 million each to provide meaningful service opportunities to at-risk individuals ages 18-24. "These grants will support underserved young adults looking to improve their lives and join the workforce," said Secretary Solis. "This is an investment not only in these young people, but also in their families and communities."

- [Read the News Release](#)

The Name Says It All



The Los Angeles Board of Education recently voted to rename the East Los Angeles Star Academy in the L.A. Unified School District in honor

of Secretary Solis, in recognition of her contributions to public education, environmental

Around DOL

OSHA Builds Alliances with Industry to Protect Workers

Aiming to protect the safety and health of those who work on scaffolds by keeping them

conservation and protection, and humanitarian and civil rights efforts. The high school, currently under construction, will be called the Hilda L. Solis Learning Academy. "Secretary Solis has a powerful personal story of hard work. Her achievements in public service make her an excellent role model for our students," said Board Member Yolie Flores, who represents the district where the school is located.

Accountability for Trading Partners

During opening remarks to the Labor Advisory Committee for Trade Negotiations and Trade Policy on Tuesday, Secretary Solis discussed the



department's efforts with America's trading partners to ensure that they respect fundamental labor rights and provide acceptable working conditions in their countries. While acknowledging there are tremendous challenges ahead, she made it clear that our government has a responsibility to ensure that American workers affected by foreign competition have access to Trade Adjustment Assistance in order to adapt and succeed in the global economy. "The Department of Labor is committed to working with the U.S. Trade Representative and other agencies to advocate for fair treatment of American manufacturers, workers and innovators," Solis said. U.S. Trade Ambassador Ron Kirk also participated in the meeting with labor leaders. Earlier in the week, Solis and Kirk co-penned an op-ed for The Hill asking Congress to renew a robust TAA program and outlining many of the misconceptions about the current program.

- [View the Slideshow](#)
- [Read the Op-ed](#)

Jobs Creation Focus at CGI

The global philanthropy started by President Bill Clinton held its first-ever meeting this week focused on creating jobs right here in the United States. The Clinton Global Initiative convened leaders from business, nonprofits and government Wednesday in Chicago to develop new ideas for driving domestic economic growth. Topics included education, green buildings, the health care workforce, manufacturing, rural development, service corps, small business growth, smart infrastructure and workforce training. Deputy Secretary Seth Harris led a

from falls and other deadly hazards, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration on Wednesday renewed an important alliance with the Scaffold Industry Association.



"The materials developed through our alliance are valuable resources for training and educating workers on the hazards they can face in their jobs and how they can be prevented," said OSHA Assistant Secretary Dr. David Michaels. Additionally, the agency renewed another

alliance for worker safety last week with the Sealant Waterproofing & Restoration Institute. It will ensure that the group's members, including small businesses, receive information, guidance and training resources to address falls and other hazards facing workers in that industry.

- [Learn About OSHA's Alliance Program](#)

Transgender Workers Face Severe Job Discrimination

In the largest survey ever conducted of transgender Americans, 90 percent of survey respondents reported facing harassment or discrimination on the job, while 26 percent said they had been fired because of their transgender status. The national survey, conducted by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Center For



Transgender Equality, found that 41 percent of transgender individuals had attempted suicide because of their treatment by society, dwarfing the national average of 1.6 percent. Senior DOL staff attended a briefing on the sobering report at the department on Thursday in an effort to educate employees and strategize ways to improve the lives of these Americans.

- [Read the Executive Summary of the Report](#)

DOL Contracts with Businesses Owned by Wounded Warriors

To honor the extraordinary service rendered to the United States by military veterans disabled in the line of duty, the department makes it a priority to contract with service-disabled, veteran-owned small businesses. DOL was recognized this week by the National Veteran Small Business Coalition for awarding more than three percent of its contracts to qualified businesses fitting this description during the last fiscal year. The department also was recognized for its efforts to educate and support this sector through one-on-one counseling, match-making and vendor outreach sessions.

DOL Working for You

Education Key to Green Job Offer for Washington Worker

When Greg Matlock was laid off from his production supervisor position after eight years on the job, he decided that green jobs were the key to a better life for his family. He received help through the WorkSource Colville dislocated worker program in Washington state, part of the national One-Stop employment and training system. Matlock enrolled in a private training school, where he studied electrical, mechanical and hydraulic concepts with an eye toward a career in renewable energy. He graduated with a wind turbine technician



discussion focused on meeting skills demand through innovative workforce development programs. The group discussed ways to better measure the performance, efficiency and outcomes of worker training programs.

Job Corps Students Battle Fires



The 2011 fire season has been one of the worst on record. Job Corps, which provides training in firefighting at many of its U.S. Forest Service centers,

has been on the front lines in many areas. Recently in Arizona, Job Corps students from Centennial (Nampa, Idaho), Anaconda (Anaconda, Mont.), Kicking Horse (Ronan, Mont.), Harpers Ferry (Harpers Ferry, W.Va.), Timber Lake (Estacada, Ore.) and other centers have provided assistance to veteran fire teams. "The firefighting program has made a difference at Centennial," said director Michelle Woods. "Students participate in this program because they want to help others and have an interest in firefighting. Our students gain maturity, teamwork skills and experience."

Heat Campaign Hits Philly Waves

Magnolia (Maggie) Torres, compliance officer with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Philadelphia District



Office, recently discussed the department's ongoing heat campaign on the Puerto Rican Panorama television show, which addresses the needs and concerns of the fast-growing Hispanic population throughout the Philadelphia metro area. Torres, a former potato field worker who understands first-hand the impact of working in hot conditions, remains committed to educating workers about the necessity of water, rest and shade to prevent heat-related illnesses.

- [Read Torres' Blog Entry](#)

OFCCP Hits the Jersey Shore

When employers work with the Labor Department and affirmative action experts, the result is often more fair and diverse workplaces. On Tuesday in Atlantic City, Office

certificate and took a job in the recycling industry. His new company, Matlock said, "appreciated the fact that I decided to go back to school to better myself" even though he already had a strong background in production. The training "gave me an education in an in-demand job with future career growth," he added.

WIA Helps Worker Start Business Helping Others



Laraine Schigotzki did very well for herself – first in real estate property management and then in environmental sales and recycling. But when the economy forced her layoff, New Jersey's Workforce Investment Act dislocated worker program helped Schigotzki learn enough about nutrition and health counseling to think about opening her own business. She first took courses to be licensed by her state in skin care. Training in nutrition and health counseling followed, and she earned certification as a holistic health professional. Schigotzki now owns To Your Health Holistic Spa & Wellness

Center in Brick, N.J., where, she said, "I live every day to help people" through counseling and workshops. "I am deeply grateful for the opportunity the program gave me to find out what I wanted to do for the rest of my life."

ETA Funds 'Energize' Georgia Job-Seekers

Using funds provided by the Employment and Training Administration, the Georgia Energy & Industrial Construction Consortium has launched a new website to encourage individuals to consider careers in energy industries. The site has separate Web pages focused on youth, military and careers for women, as well as workers looking to transition into the field. The goal is to connect the resources of the state's technical colleges and universities with the needs of industry. "The energy field is alive with well-paying, important careers, and there is an anticipation of a shortage of workers as older workers retire from this field," said Helen Parker, ETA regional administrator.

- Visit <http://www.getintoenergy.com>

DOL in Action

Florida Electrical Contractor to Pay 85 Employees Back Wages

Industrial Energy Services in Pensacola, Fla., has agreed to pay \$174,719 in back wages to 85 employees following a Wage and Hour Division investigation that found violations of the minimum wage, overtime and record-keeping provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. As a result of losing its line of credit, the company had a shortage of cash to cover the payroll. Additionally, it did not pay time and one-half workers' regular rates of pay for hours exceeding 40 hours in a week, as required. The company also failed to record the actual number of hours worked by field employees.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Nearly \$56,000 in Pay Recovered for Florida Auto Dealership Workers

The Wage and Hour Division has recovered \$55,807 in back wages for 17 employees of McKenzie Motors, a Buick GMC dealership in Milton, Fla., following an investigation that found 15 sales people were paid weekly and monthly commissions regardless of the number of hours they worked. Two other employees were improperly classified as exempt from overtime and, as a result, did not receive proper compensation.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Texas Manufacturing Company Cited for 29 Safety Violations



of Federal Contract Compliance Programs Director Patricia Shiu gave the keynote speech at the 2011 Access, Equity and Diversity Summit of the American Association for Affirmative Action. She addressed an audience of private sector employers and diversity officers from academic institutions about the importance of affirmative action in today's world. Shiu noted OFCCP's intention to partner with organizations like the 4A to improve her agency's working relationship with institutions of higher education.

Beating the Heat in Dallas



The Occupational Safety and Health Administration provided five Spanish-speaking volunteers for Univision television's phone bank program in

Dallas to raise awareness about the dangers of heat illness for outdoor workers. The volunteers answered viewer questions about their rights on the job, such as how often they can take breaks and how best to stay hydrated. OSHA representatives fielded complaints from construction workers who were not provided access to water or a shaded break area.

- [Learn More about the Heat Campaign](#)
- [View the Slideshow](#)

What 'Fiduciary' Means To You

In an effort to ensure that those who purport to be fiduciary experts have the expertise needed to offer workers sound retirement investment



advice, Employee Benefits Security Administration Assistant Secretary Phyllis Borzi is making the rounds as part of a campaign to redefine the term "fiduciary." On Tuesday, she joined officials from the Treasury Department at the Insured Retirement Institute's Government, Legal & Regulatory Conference to stress her accountability message. That talk followed a trip last week to Chicago to address the Great Lakes Benefit Conference. "The security of American retirement plans depends on its fiduciaries," Borzi

Hobbs Bonded Fiber Inc. in Waco, Texas, has been cited with 29 serious violations following an Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspection that found the company failed to develop and implement a respiratory program, provide training for employees entering confined spaces where an oxygen deficiency may exist and provide a station for employees to wash their eyes. About 160 workers at the site specialize in manufacturing nonwoven products for industrial and consumer markets. Proposed penalties total \$161,000.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Focus on Back Wages Begins in South Florida Fields

The Wage and Hour Division is conducting an enforcement initiative focusing on the agricultural industry, beginning in South Florida and continuing up the East Coast. The goal is to increase compliance among employers and remind workers of their rights. The effort began in March, during the green bean harvest, and already has recovered \$670,770 in back wages for about 590 agricultural workers, and assess nearly \$130,000 in penalties.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Read the News Release](#) en Español

Mississippi Lumber Company Fined Following Electrocution

Graham Lumber Co. has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for 15 safety and health violations totaling \$41,310 following the electrocution of a worker at the company's Fulton, Miss., sawmill. "This fatality could have been prevented had the employer provided proper training, procedures and protective equipment to safeguard workers against safety hazards," said Clyde Payne, OSHA's area director.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Alabama Lumber Mill Cited After Fatality

KyKenKee Inc. in Vance, Ala., has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for 15 safety and health violations totaling \$121,400 after a worker was killed when a log fell off a conveyor belt perched 13 feet above him and struck him in the head. Employees interviewed indicated that logs rolling off the conveyor were an ongoing hazard, but the company had not addressed the problem.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Mine Inspectors Target Repeat Offenders

Federal inspectors issued more than 400 safety and health citations to 19 mines around the country last month as part of the Mine Safety and Health Administration's ongoing impact inspection program. The initiative targeting mines with a poor compliance record began in April 2010 following an explosion at West Virginia's Upper Big Branch Mine that killed 29 miners. "MSHA inspectors will not hesitate to use all of the enforcement tools at their disposal to bring these mines into compliance," said Joseph Main, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Worker Exploitation Lands Californian 4-Year Prison Sentence

The department worked with state and local authorities in California to get

said. "The Employee Retirement Income Security Act protects retirement benefits by holding important plan actors to fiduciary standards, protecting workers and retirees from conflicts of interest and providing remedies for violations. So, it's vitally important that when we define important terms, like who is a fiduciary, we get it right."

- [View the Slideshow](#)

Workers with Disabilities

The department's Bureau of Labor Statistics recently published "Persons with a Disability: Labor Force Characteristics – 2010." Last year, 18.6 percent of individuals with a disability were employed compared to 63.5 percent of those without a disability. In 2010, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities was 14.8 percent, about the same as the prior year. Nearly one-third of workers with a disability were employed part-time, compared with about one-fifth of those with no disability; and individuals with a disability were more likely to be self-employed than those with no disability.

- [Read the News Release](#)

VETS Hiring Fair in NYC



To help military veterans find work, the Veterans' Employment and Training Service co-sponsored a job fair last Friday at the Intrepid Museum in

New York. Thousands of veterans had the opportunity to meet prospective employers and receive advice on resume-building and job interviewing strategies. The fair was co-sponsored by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Veterans on Wall Street and New York financial firms. "Veterans should

know that we recognize, respect and value their talents," said Assistant Secretary for VETS Raymond Jefferson.



"Today represents the beginning of a new public-private partnership to connect that veteran talent with employers." Jefferson will attend a July 15 veterans hiring fair at Sony Studios in L.A.

Dallas Forum Educates 150 Employers, Advocacy Groups

About 150 employers, advocacy groups and community-based organizations participated in the department's informational and outreach

justice on behalf of workers exploited by Monica Ung, the owner and president of NBC General Contractor Corp. This week, Ung was sentenced to serve four years in a California state prison and pay fines and restitution for her failure to give her employees prevailing wages, overtime pay, sick leave, health care and other statutory benefits required by law. The case was investigated by the Employee Benefits Security Administration and prosecuted by the Alameda County District Attorney's Office. NBC falsely issued certified payroll reports that stated incorrect hours worked, amounts paid and employee names. This action resulted in payroll losses to 43 workers identified as victims in the case between 1999 and 2008.

- [Read the Alameda County District Attorney's Office Release](#)

Nearly \$84 Million to Help Farmworkers

The department announced \$83,941,360 in grants through the National Farmworker Jobs Program to combat the chronic unemployment and underemployment experienced by migrant and seasonal farmworkers. A total of \$78,253,180 will go to 52 organizations across the country that provide training, employment and support services for farmworkers and their families. An additional \$5,688,600 will go to 16 organizations to provide temporary or permanent housing assistance. "Agricultural workers face significant barriers to stable employment, and all too often it is their families who pay the price," said Secretary Solis. "These grants address this reality by not only helping workers improve and expand their job skills, but also by providing housing and other crucial support services."

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Read the Secretary's Blog Entry](#)

Cincinnati Animal Hospital Lands in DOL Doghouse

The department has received payment from Hamilton Avenue Animal Hospital of Greater Cincinnati to restore \$42,627 in back wages plus an equal amount in liquidated damages to 21 workers. A civil contempt suit was filed following an investigation by the Wage and Hour Division that disclosed willful and repeat violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act's overtime pay and record-keeping provisions. Animal handlers at the hospital routinely worked more than 40 hours a week. They would receive a check for their full wages and then be forced to repay the hospital owners in cash for the overtime hours that they worked. If they didn't comply, the Latino workers were threatened with deportation. "The Hamilton Avenue Animal Hospital and its owners clearly understood their legal obligations, but they took advantage of workers they believed would not stand up for their rights," said Secretary Solis.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Quality Stamping Products Cited for 27 Safety and Health Violations

Quality Stamping Products Co. in Cleveland has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for 27 safety and health – including one willful – violations. These include failing to report two amputation injuries that occurred at the company's metal stamping plant, and lacking required hazard communication and training. The company is facing \$426,100 in proposed penalties.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Georgia Food Distributor Pays Workers Back Wages

A federal district court has ordered Chueng Kong Holding Inc., doing business as United Food, and owner Xin Guo, also known as Victor Gua, to pay 41 employees a total of \$311,905 in back wages. The decision resolves a lawsuit filed by the department alleging willful violations of the minimum wage, overtime and record-keeping provisions of the Fair Labor Standards

forum on Wednesday at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. At the forum, participants learned about employment laws that affect workers' wages, health benefits and job safety, as well as affirmative action and veterans' re-employment rights. "This forum represents the department's continued commitment to ensure that good jobs are within the grasp of everyone," said Melissa Speer, regional director of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs.

Action Plan is Back

A new directive to outline the process by which federal supply and service contractors can apply for Functional Affirmative Action Program agreements was released by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs this week. "The FAAP is back and is better than before," said OFCCP Director Patricia Shiu. "Over the past year, I have listened to comments from the contractor community and employee groups, and determined that this is a useful tool for ensuring that federal contractors and subcontractors meet their obligations to provide equal employment opportunity for everyone. I am pleased to share updated guidance that responds to the feedback we received while also renewing our commitment to ensuring discrimination-free workplaces." Now expiration dates of FAAP agreements will expire in three years, at which point a renewal will have to be approved by OFCCP.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Upcoming Deadlines & Events

Check out the grant opportunities with DOL.

- [Open Funding Opportunities](#)

REMINDER: Preliminary Regulatory Reform Plan Review to Close July 1
Earlier this year, President Obama issued an executive order that outlined his vision for a 21st century regulatory system. Each federal agency will review regulations and remove those that are out-of-date, unnecessary, duplicative, confusing or overly burdensome. The Labor Department released a preliminary plan open for public comment through July 1.

- [Make a Comment](#)
- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Read the Deputy Secretary's Blog Entry](#)
- [Read the Executive Order](#)

EBSA — Health Benefits Laws Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [July 20-21 — Indianapolis, IN](#)

Act. Chueng Kong Holding is a wholesale food distributor based in Georgia.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Displaced California Auto Workers Get a Lift

About 4,455 workers affected by the closure of New United Motors Manufacturing Inc. in Fremont, Calif., and 39 of its supplier companies will receive re-employment and training services under an \$8 million National Emergency Grant. "This will result in continued support services and job training for auto industry workers in Fremont who lost their jobs through no fault of their own," said Secretary Solis. "As our economy continues to improve, this grant will benefit employers, too, by providing grant participants with the skills and credentials that match 21st century needs."

- [Read the News Release](#)

C & K Rentals to Pay More Than \$433,000 in Back Wages

An investigation by the Wage and Hour Division found that C & K Rentals in Cuero, Texas, misclassified employees as independent contractors, failed to keep accurate records and underpaid its workers in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act. C & K has agreed to pay \$433,426 in minimum wage and overtime back wages to 124 gate guards and oil equipment cleaners, and has committed to maintaining future compliance with the FLSA.

- [Read the News Release](#)

San Antonio Countertop Maker Cited for Endangering Workers

Delta Granite and Marble in San Antonio has been cited by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration with 10 serious and one other-than-serious violation after an investigation found that employees were exposed to excessive levels of respirable silica while fabricating marble and granite countertops. The inspection was part of OSHA's National Emphasis Program for Crystalline Silica to reduce occupational exposure to respirable silica. Proposed penalties total \$42,000.

- [Read the News Release](#)

Houston Restaurant Workers Paid for 91-Hour Workweeks

Ernesto Enterprises Corp. and Jonathan Enterprises Corp., doing business as Taconmadre Mariachi & Grill in Houston will pay 72 workers \$275,706 in minimum and overtime back wages following a Wage and Hour Division investigation that found Fair Labor Standards Act violations. "This employer took advantage of vulnerable workers by failing to pay them the federal minimum wage," said Regional Administrator Cynthia Watson. "Employees worked up to 91 hours in a week without overtime compensation. These practices are illegal and unacceptable."

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Read the News Release](#) En Español

Big Grants to Make Big Difference for Laid-Off Californians

Workers in 20 California counties will be the beneficiaries of a \$45,080,077 National Emergency Grant to assist with re-employment services. More than 5,880 workers affected by layoffs at a number of private and public sector employers will be eligible for job training and support services to find new work. In a separate grant, the department awarded \$3,435,544 for re-employment and training services to workers affected by layoffs in Tulare County, Calif. "The economy of California has been hit especially hard by the recession, impacting both public and private sector workers," said Secretary Solis. "These grants will give workers access to re-employment and retraining services for jobs in growing sectors of the state's economy."

- [Read the News Release for 20 Counties](#)
- [Read the News Release on Tulare County](#)

OFCCP — ABC's of the AAP

- [July 22 — Los Angeles, CA](#)

OFCCP — Community Outreach and Education Event

- [July 7 — Richmond, VA](#)
- [July 21 — Richmond, VA](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Construction Contractors

- [July 20 — San Diego, CA](#)

OFCCP — Compliance Assistance Seminar for Supply & Service Contractors

- [July 21 — Seattle, WA](#)

OFCCP — DOL Forum - Informational Outreach & Forum for Civil Rights and Faith-Based Organizations

- [July 26 — Philadelphia, PA](#)

OFCCP — DOL Forum - League of United Latin American Citizens' 82nd Annual National Convention

- [July 1 — Cincinnati, OH](#)

OFCCP — Outreach Assistance for New Federal (Non-Construction) Contractors

- [July 20 — Philadelphia, PA](#)

OFCCP — Outreach to Minority and Women's Community-based Organizations

- [July 28 — Baltimore, MD](#)

OLMS — Compliance Assistance Seminar

- [July 14 — Charlotte, NC](#)

OSHA — New York Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPPI) Worker Protection Summit

- [July 9 — Flushing, NY](#)

OWCP — Town Hall Meetings to assist Nuclear Weapons Workers

- [July 13 — Amherst, NY](#)

WHD — Prevailing Wage Conference 2011

- [July 12-14 — Phoenix, AZ](#)
- [July 20-21 — Honolulu, HI](#)

Follow USDOL on 

- New on the Blog - The Heat Campaign from a Former Field

Workers Get Emergency Lifeline Following Floods

Dislocated workers in Missouri, Massachusetts, Illinois and Vermont received a critical boost after severe storms and flooding wreaked havoc in their communities. The department awarded four National Emergency Grants in the amounts of \$13,964,651, \$3 million, \$2 million and \$1,201,250, respectively, to assist with ongoing clean-up and recovery efforts, and to create temporary jobs for eligible workers.

- [Read the Missouri News Release](#)
- [Read the Massachusetts News Release](#)
- [Read the Illinois News Release](#)
- [Read the Vermont News Release](#)

Aid Goes to Laid-off Laborers in Delaware, Iowa, Minnesota and Maine

Laid-off workers in Delaware, Iowa, Minnesota and Maine will receive job training and support services to help them find new jobs under a series of grants announced by DOL this week. In Delaware, 550 workers will benefit from a \$1,995,170 National Emergency Grant to help Valero Energy Corp. employees get back on their feet. In Iowa, more than 100 workers who lost manufacturing jobs in Cresco and Dubuque can take advantage of \$117,454 in National Emergency Grant aid. In Minnesota, 175 Tyco Electronic workers in Eden Prairie and Shakopee will share \$557,433 in benefits in conjunction with training they will receive under Trade Adjustment Assistance. In Maine, 60 workers impacted by the closure of Associated Grocers in Gardiner will benefit from a \$337,897 grant focused on employment and training services.

- [Read the Delaware News Release](#)
- [Read the Iowa News Release](#)
- [Read the Minnesota News Release](#)
- [Read the Maine News Release](#)

Mexican Restaurant to Fork Over Nearly \$250,000 to Exploited Texans

Houston-based Taqueria de Jalisco will pay 63 cashiers, kitchen and wait staff \$249,805 in back wages following an investigation by the department's Wage and Hour Division, which found violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act at two of the company's restaurants in Houston and one in Pasadena, Texas. Investigators determined that the company paid the workers less than the minimum wage for all hours worked and made illegal deductions from tipped employees' wages for items such as lost silverware. Additionally, employees who worked more than 40 hours in a week were not paid overtime.

- [Read the News Release](#)
- [Read the News Release](#) En Español

Spotlight on States: Washington

Washington State Receives \$97.7 Million in UI Modernization Funds

Washington state qualified for \$97,729,219 in unemployment insurance modernization funds this week by expanding current provisions of state law to include workers who become unemployed because of compelling family or safety reasons. Secretary Solis joined Gov. Christine Gregoire and Rep. Jim McDermott on a Wednesday press teleconference to announce the funds. "These provisions will allow eligible workers who follow a spouse whose job has moved, are taking care of an ill family member, or who have left a job to escape domestic violence to receive crucial unemployment

Worker's Perspective

insurance benefits," said Solis.

<http://bit.ly/jKEX6L> about 4 hours ago

- DOL awards grant to assist workers affected by layoffs in central and southern California [06/30/2011]

<http://1.usa.gov/mqZWxA> about 5 hours ago

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