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News

Manufacturing Maytag Workers Ratify New Contract; Return to Work After Seven-Day Strike

CHICAGO--More than 1,200 striking Maytag Corp. workers at a production facility in southern Illinois have returned to work after ratifying a new, five-year collective bargaining agreement with the home appliance manufacturer, a spokesman for the International Association of Machinists told BNA June 20.

Rick Lezu, directing business representative for IAM District 111, said a seven-day strike ended June 19 with union members' ratification of a new contract between IAM Local 554 and management of the Maytag plant in Herrin, Ill. Lezu said union members approved the agreement in a 657-254 vote.

Under the new contract, Lezu said production workers would receive pay increases of 50 cents per hour in the first year and 45 cents per hour during the second year. An hourly wage increase of 35 cents will be granted during the third year, and workers will receive 40-cent per hour pay raises during both the fourth and fifth years of the agreement. Lezu said workers at the Herrin plant, which manufactures washers and dryers, currently earn approximately \$12.50 per hour.

Lezu said workers walked out June 12 after rejecting what they viewed as an inferior wage package. Lezu said workers chose to strike based on their frustration with management's proposal at a time of strong profitability for the Newton, Iowa-based company. Workers also were concerned that they were being poorly compensated in comparison with Maytag production workers at other facilities. With a better wage proposal and improvements in retirement benefits, however, Lezu said members of Local 554 eagerly returned to their duties June 19.

Maytag officials could not be reached for comment on the new agreement. ▾

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