500 Coke Employees at Six Western Washington Locations Strike

Local News

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Aberdeen, WA - Approximately 500 Coke employees from 6 Teamster Locals across Western Washington went on strike at 5 P.M. Monday afternoon in response to the Company's surveillance and intimidation of its employees and its refusal to bargain a contract in good faith.The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is investigating the company for serious and repeated violations of federal labor law, including "surface bargaining", surveillance of its employees, and threatening to retaliate against workers for engaging in protected activities."The last thing we wanted is a strike, but Coke has left us no alternative," said Tracey A. Thompson, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 117 and lead negotiator for the Union. "The Company's refusal to bargain a contract has resulted in hardship for 500 Coke employees and their families and the disruption of its own operations."

"The Union will not tolerate Coke engaging in surveillance of its employees, including taking photographs of employees who have engaged in activities that are protected under federal labor law," Thompson added.Negotiations between Coke and a coalition of six Teamsters Local Unions called Washington Teamsters United have been underway since April, but the company refused to bargain with the Union for over 10 weeks, and then began an aggressive campaign of unfair labor practices. Key issues in bargaining include the Company's desire to eliminate health care for Coke retirees and to raise the share of the cost employees pay on their health care premiums by 800%.In 2009, the Coca-Cola Company's revenues were over $30 billion. The Coca-Cola Co. employs 92,800 worldwide. CCE's revenues were over $21 billion. CCE employs 70,000 worldwide. Washington Teamsters United, which includes Teamsters Local Unions 38, 117, 174, 252, 313, and 589, represents approximately 500 Coke employees at six Western Washington area locations, in Bellevue, Marysville, Fife, Tacoma, Aberdeen and Bremerton.