



Warehouse Union Local 6

INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE & WAREHOUSE UNION

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Brooke Levin, Director of Public Works
250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Suite 4314
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Brooke Levin,

We are concerned about the slow pace of development of Waste Management of Alameda County's customer service call center.

As you know, as part of the MM&O franchise agreement awarded to Waste Management by the Oakland City Council, the company is obligated to re-open the call center in Alameda County. Our understanding is that Waste Management plans to locate the call center at the company's 98th Avenue headquarters.

Prior to being outsourced in 2009, there were about 40 Customer Service employees at the 98th Avenue location. Those workers were members of ILWU Local 6 and were covered under our Office Clerical contract with Waste Management. Currently, the Local 6 Office Clerical contract covers about 20 employees at the company's headquarters, who do Billing, Dispatch, and Customer Service.

The 10 employees the company has said it plans to hire will be filling positions that, until Waste Management outsourced the Call Center, had been covered by the Local 6 contract. They should be members of the Office Clerical unit covered by the *current* collective bargaining agreement we have with the company, which already covers other Customer Service workers. Waste Management would like the 10 new hires – some of whom may well be *returning* to their previously outsourced jobs – to be subject to a new, separate agreement, which would change the pension benefit that is included in the current ILWU Local 6 contract covering other clerical workers at the headquarters.

Despite numerous requests since January, Waste Management consistently has refused to meet with Local 6 representatives to discuss this issue. Since the beginning of the year, the company has agreed to only one meeting with Local 6 – and that was with the company's attorney. Area Vice President Barry Skolnick has never responded directly to requests to meet with Local 6. Waste Management has told us that the company's position is that the Local 6 contract in place now is not applicable to new hires.

It is our understanding that the allocation provided in the MM&O franchise agreement between the city of Oakland and Waste Management is sufficient to pay for the existing union contract and that the contract in place now applies to the new (returning) Customer Service positions.

We understand that Waste Management has informed at least some members of the City Council that, until the company has a new agreement with the union, the call center will not be completed and new (returning) employees will not be hired. This is nothing more than foot dragging. There is a Local 6 Office Clerical contract in place at the Waste Management headquarters which did, does currently – and should in the future – cover all customer service employees, including the new hires.

Despite the company's contention, Local 6 never agreed to change any terms or conditions of employment for Customer Service employees at Waste Management – employees over which we have jurisdiction.

Given the contentious and protracted negotiation process Local 6 has come to expect from Waste Management, we certainly have no interest in taking on a *second* Office Clerical contract, which would entail an additional, separate bargaining process. This would be the fourth ILWU Local 6 contract with Waste Management, as the Local also represents recycling workers and landfill workers employed by the company.

The company has stated that the training period for new customer service representatives will take six weeks. At this point, we are only two weeks from the commencement of the new franchise agreements.

We urge the Council to hold Waste Management accountable to its obligations under the MM&O franchise agreement and require that the company complete the customer service center and hire and train employees immediately so that they are ready to serve Oakland residents on July 1.

Thank you for your consideration.

Fred Pecker

Fred Pecker, Secretary Treasurer

cc: Mayor Libby Schaaf
Council Member Dan Kalb
Council Member Abel Guillen
Council President Lynette Gibson McElhaney
Council Member Annie Campbell Washington
Council Member Noel Gallo
Council Member Desley Brooks
Council Member Larry Reid
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