



**CWA LOCAL 7290 RETIREES CHAPTER  
AFL-CIO BUILDING, 5418 S. 27<sup>TH</sup> ST. SUITE 8  
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**Members:**

There has been much going on in the Installation bargaining unit this past couple of months.

As you may know, a buyout was offered. I'm told the company said they had 600 surplus, out of a little over 1300! They negotiated with the Union a 5 years on service, 5 years on age, and 2 years pay for those whose service totaled 30 years, with 1 years pay if less than 30 years. . The 2 sides agreed that if 300 took the offer, there would be no short timing in 2010 and if 400 took the offer, there would be no short timing in 2011 as well. Last number I heard was that 397 took the offer. CWA was trying to convince the company to say that was close enough to 400 and to pledge no short timing in 2011. I don't know at this point if the Union was successful or not. Things obviously look ominous for 2012 when the present contract expires. Many feel the company will take a hard line and try to break the Union. The company appears to want to go almost exclusively to subcontractors. Subcontracting has been going on despite grievances and a lawsuit by CWA. The contract plainly states that any Installation work in Alcatel-Lucent belongs to the CWA represented Installers. As you may know, there were quite a few Installers who had over 20 year's service and were in their 40's in age. Many of these took the buyout. Some were extended for as much as 90 days! Typical company action—we're in a desperate surplus situation, but we need some people to stay!! At the CWA Communications and Technologies meeting this past week, the National made a presentation on the absolute necessity of the Installation Locals to merge into one Local. Some Locals, like 7290, are down below 25 members. You cannot function when a Local is that small. Some Locals have a good amount of money in the bank. I have always said a Union Local is not a bank. You should be using that money to protect your members, and promote unionism in general. I've heard former and present Local President's say they "took care of the member's money". What they should have been doing is using that money to take care of their members. Case in point—last summer when Alcatel-Lucent subcontracted the 911 system in Omaha and Council Bluffs, 7290 protested this with informational picketing, engaging local, state, and Federal political office holders, and in general raised Hell. Your 7290 Retiree Chapter participated in that, and we engaged the AFL-CIO as well. We had great support, and Alcatel-Lucent had to answer some tough inquiries from political office holders from the Mayor of Omaha, City Council, County government, state senators, and a U.S. Senator. We did not win the work but we fought hard. We know this same subcontracting activity was going on elsewhere in the country, yet not one other Local did a damn thing about it! 7290 and a couple of other Locals have always been very supportive of COPE. We always hit well over our quota ever since check off came in. Most Installation Locals are woefully lacking in this area. Most Installation Locals do not even do what the CWA constitution requires, many because they are too small, yet they refuse to merge. If this attitude prevails, the Installation bargaining unit will be history in the near future! Naturally this affects us all. No contract, no retiree benefits!