



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers **Local 1007**
11007 - 84 Street Edmonton AB T5H 1M9

Phone: (780) 429-1007 | **Fax:** (780) 425-8653 | www.ibew1007.org

Hello members,

Last week I thought I would give some updates to the members at etech and distribution in respect to what was going on with the company and the union talks. One of the attributes I stood behind in my election platform was transparency between myself and the members. Holding true to that I thought I would keep everyone up to date with any new developments as soon as I was privy to them.

The company has seen a continuous drop in work volume in streetlight and traffic work and states that it cannot sustain our current workforce. Before I took office, the company's thoughts on the above was to segregate Etech from the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) when it comes to seniority so there would be no disruption in other areas of the company. In the current state, they say they are unable to bid on new work competitively and change has to occur. Saying the wage reduction for minimal layoffs gives the best chance at keeping the doors open, while maintaining as many members as possible gainfully employed. The company came to Jimmy months ago to propose a letter of understanding (LOU) to do this and he put together a "steering committee." The committee was right to say no to what was initially proposed, however there is a lot more to the story.

When I came into the office I was also approached. I said that I would never allow our members at Etech to lose their seniority rights. That being off the table, the company still wanted to proceed in talking so in the interest of not losing permanent jobs, we did. A quick summary of the offer was 100 permanent jobs erased without a LOU. Another option was a LOU which included a wage roll back to the unregulated side of the company so they could bid on work more competitively. 30 members would still be laid off, but we would save 70 permanent jobs. If there was the opportunity to save 70 members it was an option that had to be explored. I did consult with the Members of the previous steering committee and there were differing opinions. I am fully aware 20% of wages is a huge blow, and it is unfair to these members. Essentially, these employees have put their hearts and souls into a company only to be rewarded by losing a large amount of their income while seeing no benefit other than employment. However due to the current state of affairs, the company states, in order to keep the doors open something has to be done to become more competitive with other companies who have all but shut us down.



PROVIDING SAFE, RELIABLE UNION LABOUR SINCE 1938

There have been faults on both sides, Union and Management; unfortunately, when it comes to immediate action, it always comes down to the frontline worker, who is the lifeblood of what makes a company succeed in the first place.

This is an impossible situation that the Union has never had to face before. The Etech members did not ask to be segregated from the rest; nonetheless this is what seems to have happened over the past several years. The company had every opportunity to bring this up during negotiations, and past union representatives could have pushed for change as well.

We as a Union cannot abandon the employees at Etech, nor can we hold disregard towards employees in other business units. The whole situation is unfair and unjust to all members affected. As with most situations, there are many different angles, a majority of which are not privy to most. From what I have read in the past few days, it appears a few members hold themselves in higher standing, truly believing they know the complexities of what occurs. As your representative, I'm attempting to work this out while keeping the members informed.

I understand the frustration here. That is why I approached as many of you as possible in a face to face manner to speak about the situation. I only want to be open with what is proposed and what we are up against. I heard you, and I will not move ahead with anything without speaking to you further.

I am not naive to what is happening. I have a long memory and prior experiences have not gone forgotten. I am trying to do what's best for the entire membership. I am and will continue to work tirelessly to do that. I've listened and I agree that there are many holes in this.

Thank you all for hearing what I had to say. Please continue your emails, texts and calls.

Sincerely,



Steve Southwood
Business Manager
IBEW Local Union 1007