

## **Carpenters Union and Contractors Announce Landmark Substance Abuse Testing and Assistance Program**

For Immediate Release:

September 1, 2006

Contact: John Goetz  
217-787-1384  
James Dalluge  
217-744-1831

Springfield, IL...Construction labor and management today announced that they are working together in central Illinois to improve construction site safety and to ensure high quality craftsmanship for area customers. John Goetz from the Central Illinois Builders of AGC (Contractors), and James Dalluge from the Mid-Central Illinois Regional Council of Carpenters (Union), along with several area state legislators, today unveiled a landmark Substance Abuse Testing and Assistance Program.

“We came together out of concern for the safety of our workers and developed a program that solidifies our commitment to establishing and maintaining a drug-free workplace for every employee,” said Goetz, President of R. D. Lawrence Construction Co. and chairman of the substance abuse program. “Because of our joint collaboration, we have put in place a Substance Abuse Testing and Assistance Program Policy that will provide consistent, fair and manageable procedures for drug and alcohol screening of employees that will be accepted by participating employers and job site owners.”

Goetz said the types of testing conducted under the new Substance Abuse Testing and Assistance program include: pre-employment, pre-access, random, post accident/incident testing, reasonable cause/suspicion, periodic, return to work, and probationary status/follow-up testing.

“When an employee comes to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol they place themselves and co-workers at risk for injury or death,” said Dalluge, Executive Secretary Treasurer of the Mid-Central Illinois Regional Council of Carpenters. “Removing impaired workers from construction sites will lower job related injuries, accidents and deaths which will lessen insurance costs. It will also increase productivity and job quality, while reducing absenteeism and tardiness. I believe this policy will save some families from the various hardships brought on by substance abuse. I am proud we took this step and hope other trades will follow our example.”

Dallage said the program will not be popular with some workers, but says the intention is to help employees - not punish them. "A key component of our new policy is to encourage employees with substance abuse problems to seek professional care and assistance. The Employee Assistance Referral Program provides coverage to employees seeking treatment and recovery from their addiction."

The Mid-Central Illinois Regional Council of Carpenters, and its 10 affiliated Locals represent over 3,500 union carpenters and millwrights employed by 883 employers throughout 41 central Illinois counties with a total membership of 4,880 covering floor layers, mill cabinet lathers, Heavy and Highway construction and industrial workers.

The contractor involvement in this program is led by three central Illinois construction associations – Central Illinois Builders of AGC, The Greater Peoria Contractors and Suppliers Association, and the Builders Association of Tazewell County. These trade associations represent union commercial contractors in central Illinois. Many of the contractors who build structures that the public depends upon – such as schools, government and medical facilities, restaurants and retail establishments – are built by contractors who are members of these associations. These trade associations have been working diligently to establish a substance abuse testing program with the union trades for the past six years.

State Representative Raymond Poe (R-Springfield) said he is pleased that the two sides worked together to put forth a new policy that will benefit the employees, contractors, and the public. "This policy is good for the entire construction industry. I am proud that central Illinois labor and management have been able to work together so well to address this critical issue, and I hope others will follow their lead."

#####