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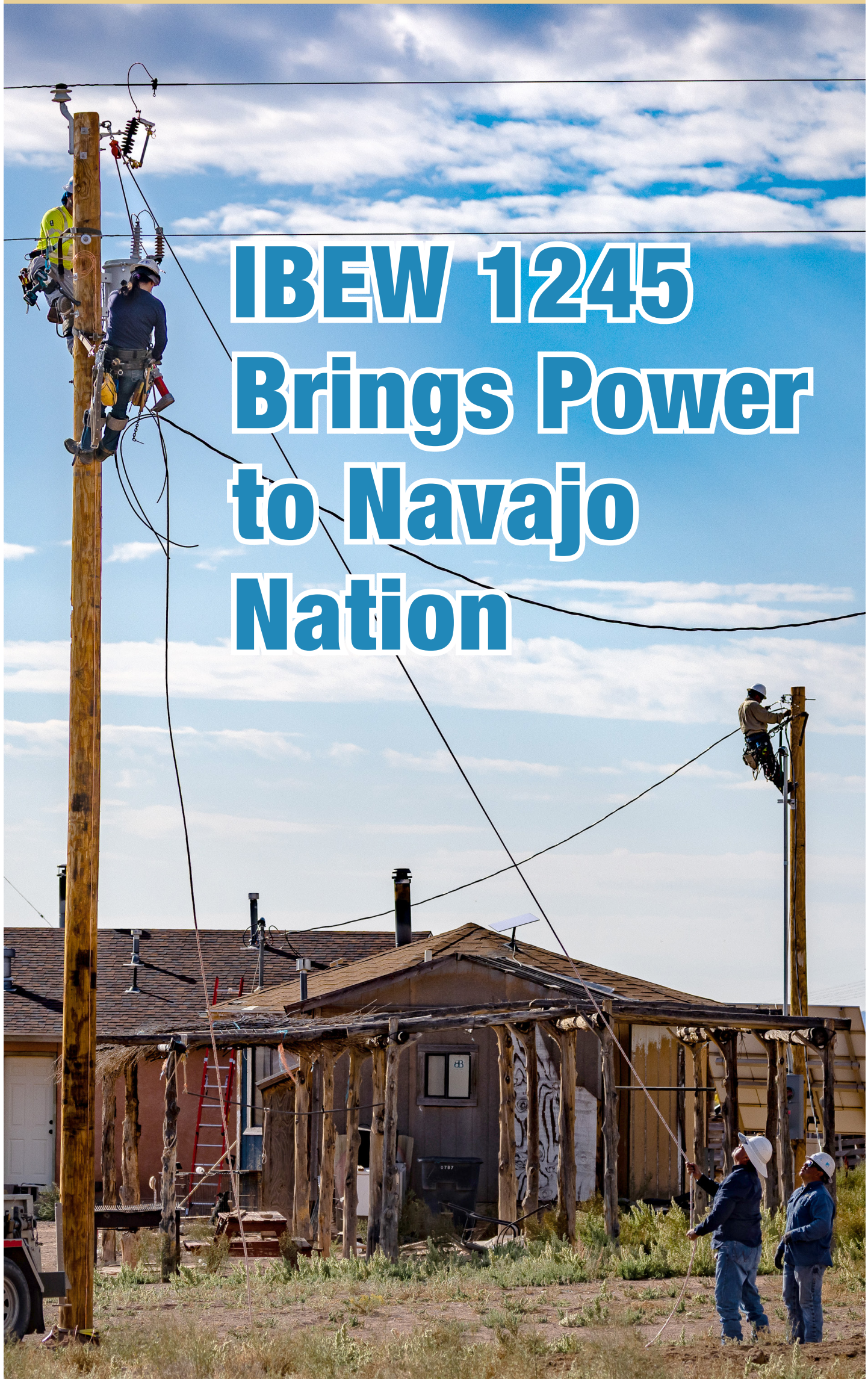
Volume 74 No.4 • Oct. – Dec. 2025 UNITY IS STRENGTH For up-to-the-minute news, see our website: www.ibew1245.com

IBEW 1245 Brings Power to Navajo Nation



IBEW 1245 member First Lastname volunteering for Light Up Navajo (LUN) | Photo by John Storey

ARCING & SPARKING

As we step into 2026, I want to highlight something that's become crystal clear this year: our union is at full throttle on every front.

Right now, more than 15 sets of negotiations are underway across our jurisdiction, including major bargaining at PG&E and SMUD. These are two of the largest and most complex contracts we negotiate, and our members have stepped up in force.

At PG&E, the General Negotiating Committee and 18 Ad Hoc subcommittees have spent months analyzing proposals, debating language, and developing counterproposals. Dozens of subject-matter experts from the field — linemen, clerical workers, substation techs, gas, hydro, vegetation management and more — are bringing firsthand knowledge into the room.

These fights are never easy. The companies always want a lot, but we're working every day to protect our members. We are committed to getting the best agreement possible, not just a quick one.

Negotiations will continue into the new year. On December 31, the PG&E contract rolls into evergreen status. The contract remains in effect. Nobody loses protections, and we continue to bargain from a position of strength.

We are also working hard at the negotiating table at SMUD. Progress is being made but it has been slow.

Bargaining strength extends beyond the table. At the CPUC, nearly 100 of our members showed up to oppose a proposal that would slow down undergrounding utility lines. Their presence forced the Commission to pause the vote.

At the Legislature, several key bills we fought for, including wildfire funding, energy storage safety, and grid reliability, were signed by the Governor. These wins mean more work for our members and stronger protections overall.

Meanwhile, our industry continues to change. We're seeing rapid expansion of AI, drones, data centers, and automation. PG&E has begun using drones for inspections, and we are negotiating contract language to ensure that this work remains union work.

Through all of this, our members continue to show what sets IBEW 1245 apart.

Thank you for the work you do every day. And thank you for representing this union with pride and strength.

-Bob

IBEW 1245 Builds Bench Strength with Three Staff Advancements

Kyle Whitman Promoted to Assistant Business Manager

Kyle Whitman

IBEW 1245 is proud to announce that longtime member and Business Representative Kyle Whitman has been promoted to Assistant Business Manager.

Whitman joined IBEW 1245 in 2002 and spent more than a decade at PG&E in General Construction and Water System operations before joining the union staff in 2015. Over the years, he has served as a Shop Steward, Ad Hoc committee member, and Exhibit XVI committee member, and has long been recognized for his deep knowledge of PG&E field operations and his steady leadership.

In his new role, Whitman will help oversee IBEW 1245's representation of PG&E Electric Operations and Power Generation. He will continue mentoring incoming Business Representative John Sandoval in the Sierra region, support multiple bargaining subcommittees, and begin handing off his responsibilities as Fact Finder.

"Our members are the best at what they do — my job is to fight for them, plain and simple," Whitman said.

Jody Castro Promoted to Assistant Business Manager

Jody Castro

Jody Castro Promoted to Assistant Business Manager IBEW 1245 is proud to announce that Business Representative and Safety Director Jody Castro has been promoted to Assistant Business Manager.

In his new role, Castro will take on all Substation-related work, while continuing to oversee 1245's internal and external safety initiatives. Castro joined IBEW in 2005 and spent most of his career as a Journeyman Substation Electrician in both GC and Division before joining the union staff in 2020. In 2022, he became IBEW 1245's first full-time Safety Director, formalizing years of grassroots safety leadership and advocacy in the field.

"Whether it's safety, substation work, or day-to-day issues on the job, my priority is making sure our people have the backing and representation they need to do their work safely and confidently."

Garrett Markwood Named Fact Finder for Bay Area and North Coast

Garrett Markwood

IBEW 1245 is pleased to announce that Garrett Markwood has been appointed Fact Finder for the Bay Area and Central Coast regions.

In this role, Markwood will investigate workplace issues, review disciplinary actions, support grievance handling, and help ensure fair and consistent contract enforcement across the region.

Markwood joined the 1245 staff in 2020 after seven years at PG&E, where he worked as a Gas Service Representative and Service Mechanic. A dedicated union activist, he has served as a Shop Steward, Safety Steward, Advisory Council member, and Election Committee member, and has twice filled in as a rotational Business Representative.

"Helping working families is an honor. That's why I do this work," Markwood said.

He currently represents PG&E members in the North Bay and Sonoma areas and looks forward to supporting members in his new capacity as Fact Finder.

John Sandoval Joins IBEW 1245 Staff

John Sandoval

IBEW 1245 is proud to welcome John Sandoval to the union staff as a Business Representative.

Sandoval comes from PG&E's Gas Department in Richmond, where he served as a Crew Lead and built a strong reputation for leadership and craftsmanship. A journeyman ARC welder, he has also subbed in as a Business Representative several times over the past two years, giving him valuable experience supporting members and working closely with 1245 staff.

Sandoval steps into this role following Kyle Whitman's promotion to Assistant Business Manager, and will now represent members in several key PG&E regions, including:

- PG&E Sierra Division
- PG&E Roseville T200/T300 and Clerical
- (Hydro, Auburn Regional Center, Grass Valley, Placerville Service Centers)
- PG&E Marysville T300

"We are excited to have John join our team," said IBEW 1245 Business Manager Bob Dean. "His experience with PG&E Division Gas and his journeyman background as an ARC welder will prove invaluable. His dedication to his IBEW brothers and sisters is evident in his passion and commitment."

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PG&E General Negotiations Continue in Earnest

by Eileen Purcell, Senior Advisor

Led by IBEW 1245 Business Manager Bob Dean and senior staff, the 25-member PG&E Bargaining Committee has spent the last two months negotiating with the Company. Collectively, committee members have invested thousands of hours analyzing proposals, collating data, and developing counter proposals which are presented at the General Negotiating Table at the Union Hall in Vacaville.

In addition to the General Negotiating Committee, eighteen (18) Ad Hoc Subcommittees meet with PG&E management weekly to review and debate proposals with a fine-tooth comb. The Ad Hoc Subcommittee members are comprised of staff, bargaining committee members and dozens of additional Subject Matter Experts(SMEs) taken from our membership.

Among other items, Ad Hoc Subcommittees are addressing:

- **3.5 Residency for Service Employees**
- **Rubber Glove Consensus Language**
- **Lineman Issues**
- **Tower**
- **Insulation and Coatings**
- **Hydro**
- **Substation**
- **Meter Tech**
- **Vegetation Management**
- **Benefits including Retiree Medical**
- **Contract Clean Up**
- **Bare handing**
- **Dispatch**
- **General Construction T 300**
- **Clerical**
- **Title 200 Gas LOP**
- **Title 300 Gas Welding LOP**
- **Title 300 Drilling LOP**
- **Gas Field Service LOP**
- **Gas System Operator LOP**

Once Ad Hoc subcommittees identify areas of alignment and/or disagreement, they return with recommendations to the General Negotiations Table where all issues will be discussed in the broader conversation including General Wage Increases, Benefits and other global issues.

"Our committee has been superb, working nonstop and bringing their expertise to the Table and to the Ad Hoc Subcommittees," said Bob Dean. He emphasized, "Getting it right is more important than getting it fast."

The current contract expired on December 31, 2025. Because a new, ratified agreement is not yet in place, the contract is currently operating under "evergreen status," meaning its terms automatically remain in effect unless either party provides notice otherwise.

Bargaining Committee members

Bargaining Committee members

SMUD General Negotiations Continue as Bargaining Committee Presses for a Fair Contract

by Kim Camatti, Business Representative

Throughout 2025, the IBEW 1245 SMUD Bargaining Committee continued meeting with SMUD management to negotiate a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for more than 550 represented employees.

The committee, which includes 12 rank-and-file members, Senior Assistant Business Manager Dylan Gottfried, and Business Representative Kim Camatti, has put in hundreds of hours reviewing proposals, analyzing data, and presenting comprehensive packages at the Table, and will keep putting in the hours, the preparation, and the pressure for as long as it takes to deliver a fair agreement.

While progress has been made on several noneconomic issues, the parties had not yet reached a final agreement on the economic package by late November.

"With rising costs of living and growing pressures on working families, we understand what our members are facing, and we're fighting for them at the bargaining table," Camatti said. "Our negotiating team has been incredible, and Chief Negotiator Dylan Gottfried has done a fantastic job leading the charge. We are all working tirelessly to secure the best possible outcome. Member involvement is critical. Attend your unit meetings, stay informed, and show management that we stand united."

Gottfried underscored that while this round of bargaining has stretched over many months — beginning June and continuing into mid-November — the committee's resolve has only deepened with time.

"Negotiations of this magnitude cannot be rushed, and they shouldn't be," Gottfried said. "Our commitment is not to speed, but to securing a contract that truly reflects the professionalism, dedication, and vital contributions that SMUD IBEW members make to SMUD and to this community every single day. It's time SMUD recognizes the true value of that contribution and acknowledges the pride and high standards each member brings to their craft and their work. We are unwavering, and we will not rest until a fair and just agreement is achieved. Together, we will push forward with relentless focus and unshakable resolve until the agreement our members have earned is secured."

He emphasized that the unity and focus of the bargaining team remains its greatest strength as the parties continue to work toward an economic package. "This committee has been steadfast, disciplined, and absolutely unrelenting," Gottfried said. "They have shown up with clarity, purpose, and an unwavering belief in the power of solidarity. And I want the membership to know that staying united and engaged is paramount. We will reach an agreement worthy of the work you do — and it's time SMUD meets that standard. We will reach that agreement together."

IBEW 1245 showing strength in numbers with SMUD

What Members Can Expect as Negotiations Continue

At recent unit meetings members asked what would happen if a new MOU had not been ratified before the current agreement's expiration date.

As the current MOU expires, "Status Quo" rules apply:

- **Your pay, hours, and benefits stay exactly the same until a new agreement is negotiated.**
- **SMUD cannot change mandatory terms and conditions of employment without bargaining with the union.**
- **The no-strike clause expires, meaning members regain certain rights that were restricted under the contract.**
- **Status Quo stays in place until either a new agreement is reached or both sides reach impasse and move into mediation, fact-finding, or arbitration.**

By freezing wages, hours, and other working conditions, Status Quo prevents either side from using sudden changes as leverage.

Meanwhile, bargaining continues uninterrupted. But if the bargaining unit decides it's time to highlight how fair treatment of SMUD's frontline workforce is essential to maintaining safe and reliable service for the community, IBEW 1245 will stand with them and help guide that effort every step of the way.

San Francisco Labor Movement Pledges to Fight for Working Families

"A worker is a worker no matter their status, their color, their language."

by Eileen Purcell, Senior Advisor & Executive Board Member of the SFCLC

The San Francisco Central Labor Council hosted its annual pre-Labor Day breakfast at the Holiday Inn in San Francisco.

Executive director Kim Tavaglione welcomed the overflow crowd of labor union affiliates and guests, including faith leaders and political allies.

Lutheran Bishop Jeff Johnson offered the invocation, preaching, "Labor Unions are not just about wages, but they are about respect and human dignity."

Michael Pappas, Executive Director of the San Francisco Interfaith Council, celebrated the renewal of a strong partnership between the faith and labor communities. "People of faith and people of labor are one and the same. We fight not just for ourselves, but for others. Labor built San Francisco. Labor Keeps our city operating. … Labor is you. Labor is me. Labor is in the pews in houses of worship and has the power to cast light in this hour of darkness." This year, more than thirty San Francisco congregations will welcome labor union speakers at worship services over the Labor Day weekend.

When keynote speaker David Huerta, President of SEIU – United Service Workers West, took the microphone, he was welcomed by a standing ovation.

In June 2025, Huerta, a longtime labor and immigrant rights advocate, was brutally knocked to the ground and arrested by masked federal agents as he observed an ICE raid at a worksite. The labor movement took to the streets in California and nationally and helped win his release. Felony conspiracy charges are still pending, and Huerta's case is widely seen as a test of a slew of constitutional rights, including freedom of speech, the right to assemble, and due process, among others. His next court appearance is scheduled for mid-September.

Born in Los Angeles, Huerta and his brother were raised by his father, a Teamster, who "showed me the value and dignity of work, which led me to the Justice for Janitors (J4J) movement." J4J was instrumental in transforming Los Angeles into a union town. A labor organizer for twenty-nine years, Huerta described himself as a second-generation Chicano whose forbears were baptized in the Mission of San Juan Bautista when California was still part of Mexico. "You will not erase us. Aqui estamos, y no nos vamos," he declared.

At the same time, he recognized the daunting challenges.

"Today, we are witnessing one of the greatest transfers of wealth in history. We are witnessing the dismantling of the public healthcare system, the dismantling of food safety, the dismantling of public education, and the militarization and terrorization of communities and the allocation of $175 billion dollars to put the Gestapo on our streets…"

Huerta's solution? "Organize and join with the next generation prepared to fight for transformative justice. … We need transformation, not just transactions – a transformation that leads to healthcare for all, a secure retirement for all, home security, a path to citizenship for our immigrant neighbors. A worker is a worker, no matter their {immigration} status, their color, their language and our job is to demand respect," he said.

IBEW 1245's Assistant Business Manager Hunter Stern, Senior Advisor Eileen Purcell, Business Representative Daniel Ahern and guest Jose Artiga at the SF Central Labor Council's 2025 Labor Day Breakfast

"In my heart, I believe that those being persecuted today, those sacrificing for a better life are the heroes of the moment. The people being targeted, they will save our democracy." He closed his remarks by thanking everyone for their solidarity and led the room in the age-old farmworker cry, "Si se puede."

Special Guest speaker, Randy Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers echoed Huerta's description of these "dangerous times" for working families.

But she also focused on the good news. "Yesterday, I was in New York where labor and civil rights leaders marched on Wall Street. This Labor Day weekend, the labor movement is sponsoring more than one thousand events across the country." Quoting Frederick Douglas, she said, "'Power concedes nothing without a demand.' We need to mobilize." She added emphatically, "We need to mobilize Trump voters. Most of the people who voted for Trump voted for him because

they wanted a better life. They wanted to shake things up. We want the same things: a good job, decent wages, good public education, accessible higher education."

She warned, "The courts will not save us. Congress will not save us. We are in a moment like never before. Only community will save us. This community. The beloved community. You are a labor town, a faith town, who knows how to struggle."

When Crisis Hits, IBEW 1245 Has Your Back

by Shannan Velayas, Communications Director

September was Suicide Prevention Month — a reminder that mental health is just as critical as physical safety. Tragically, our union family lost at least 7 members to suicide last year.

That heartbreaking reality, combined with the accidents and critical incidents our members face on the job every day, is why IBEW 1245 launched its Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) program in 2025 — to ensure no member faces crisis alone.

"The work IBEW 1245 members do is critical, dangerous, and demanding," said IBEW 1245 Business Manager Bob Dean. "Whether it's restoring power in the middle of a storm or witnessing a co-worker get injured or worse, the physical risks are real, and so are the emotional ones."

What Is CISM?

CISM is a peer-led IBEW 1245 program that offers immediate and ongoing support to members in the aftermath of trauma.

CISM is designed to decrease the severity of stress reactions after a traumatic event and prevent long-term harm like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The program is led by fellow union members who are specially trained to provide confidential, compassionate support.

CISM supports individuals and workgroups who've experienced critical incidents such as:

- Serious on-the-job injuries
- Fatalities
- Violent attacks or robberies
- Suicides
- Natural disasters, wildfires, or other traumatic events
- What to Expect When CISM Responds

When a critical incident occurs, the CISM team moves quickly. Led by Jody Castro, IBEW Safety Director and Fred Aboud, Business Representative and CISM Coordinator, the team responds right away.

Once on site or at the hospital, the CISM team explains the process, checks immediate needs, and offers support to the member, their crew, and their family. Support can take the form of a private one-on-one conversation or a group discussion with the crew, depending on what's most appropriate in the moment. In either case, members can count on a confidential, judgment-free space without pressure or expectation.

"What strikes me most is how deeply our members care for one another after a crisis," said Jody Castro, IBEW 1245 Safety Director. "They'll put a brother or sister's needs ahead of their own. CISM is about reminding them that they deserve the same support."

Why It Matters

CISIM is a program built on union values: solidarity, care, and the belief that no member should face crisis alone. And when the person sitting across from you knows your work, your risks, and your reality, it changes everything.

"We want our members to know that in those first difficult hours, and in the days after, they're not alone," said Business Rep and CISM coordinator, Fred Aboud. "We're here for them and for their families."

How to Access CISM

If you, a coworker, or your crew has experienced a traumatic incident — or if you're feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or concerned about someone's well-being — contact your Business Rep or the IBEW 1245 office at 707-237-3222 to be connected with a CISM team member.

If you or someone you know is in immediate crisis, call or text 988 or visit 988lifeline.org. All conversations are confidential, judgment-free, and focused on making sure you get the care and support you need. We're stronger together.

South San Joaquin Irrigation District informational picket, Manteca, CA September 9, 2025

SSJID Workers Hold Informational Pickets and Speak Out at Board Meetings, Demand Fair Contract

by Shannan Velayas, Communications Director | Photos by John Storey

Before the South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID) Board meeting in the Fall, SSJID workers and IBEW 1245 members rallied outside headquarters, calling for a fair contract that respects the people who keep the Valley's water flowing.

Carrying signs and standing shoulder-to-shoulder, the workers — including division managers, maintenance workers, equipment operators, mechanics, and water treatment operators — demanded that SSJID management stop slow-walking negotiations and start valuing its workforce.

The district has pushed numerous changes from the existing agreement that will reduce the overall compensation of many dedicated employees while also asking them to pick up more of the benefits cost which has a direct threat on their ability to provide for their families security. At the same time, the district has spent millions on consultants, lawyers, and PR firms to pursue an electric utility takeover —an issue we have repeatedly raised at Board meetings.

"The workers of SSJID are committed to keeping the Valley's water flowing," said René Cruz Martinez, IBEW 1245 Assistant Business Manager. "Those who stood on the informational picket line and spoke up in the boardroom showed real courage in standing up for themselves and their coworkers. The workers deserve a contract that acknowledges their vital role in this community."

Workers Testify Inside the Board Meeting

After the picket, workers packed the boardroom, and several spoke directly to SSJID directors. They voiced deep disappointment with management's proposals, which would create hardship for the employees who enjoy working for the District.

Workers reminded the board that many of them have dedicated decades of service to SSJID, building the skills and knowledge needed to keep water flowing reliably.

"After 18 years at SSJID, I couldn't sit back and watch what's happening to these workers," said Mike Hansen, SSJID heavy equipment operator who retired in June. "They don't deserve to be treated this way. Management continues to give themselves raises while asking the workforce to make sacrifices and it's not right. I came today to stand with the workers, because too many of them are afraid to speak out for fear of retaliation."

Overwhelming Rejection of Management's Proposals

When SSJID's proposals went to a vote, the results were decisive: 53 out of 54 bargaining unit members voted NO. Workers made it clear they will not accept wage and benefit cuts that they view as both disrespectful and destabilizing to the district's future.

"Management heard loud and clear: their proposals are nonstarters," said Sheila Lawton, IBEW 1245 Assistant Business Manager for the Public Sector/Private Sector. "Not one of our members voted in favor of the District package — and it shows just how united these workers are. They've dedicated their careers to keeping water flowing for this community, and they will not accept a contract that reduces overall compensation, shifts costs onto families, and undermines the stability of the district."

Op-Ed in Stockton Record

IBEW Local 1245 Business Representative Jessica Stilwell wrote an op-ed, published in the ***Stockton Record*** titled **"SSJID Workers Deserve a Fair Deal."** Scan the QR code to read the full op-ed:

Outside Line crews from Alvah Construction, working under IBEW 1245, during their Light Up Navajo volunteer mission in the Navajo Nation.

IBEW 1245 Crews Bring Light and Lasting Impact to Navajo Nation

WATCH THE VIDEO HERE

by Shannan Velayas, Communications Director | Photos by John Storey

This fall, IBEW 1245 line crews completed a month-long volunteer mission on the Navajo Nation, where thousands of families still lived without access to electricity. As part of Light Up Navajo (LUN) — a partnership between the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) and utilities across the country — crews from PG&E and Alvah Construction used their skill and solidarity to bring first-time power to families who had waited years, and in many cases generations, for electricity.

The Navajo Nation spans 27,000 square miles across Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah – larger than the state of West Virginia. Yet nearly one-third of homes still lack electricity. That means more than 10,000 Navajo families live without the basic services that most Americans take for granted, from refrigerators and lights to medical devices and internet connections.

"For most Americans, not having electricity at home is unthinkable, but thousands of families on the Navajo Nation have never had it," said IBEW 1245 Business Manager Bob Dean. "Because of the work IBEW 1245 members are doing, these families will finally experience the simple but profound moment of flipping on a light switch for the first time. That's the difference our members are making, and it will stay with them always."

Two Waves, One Mission

IBEW 1245 crews deployed in two waves throughout October.

The first cohort consisted of PG&E linemen from both General Construction and Division, who began work on September 29 and stayed through October 10. The second wave — Outside Construction linemen from Alvah Construction — arrived on October 11 and worked through October 24, marking the first year that IBEW 1245's outside construction crews joined the Light Up Navajo effort.

"As an IBEW electric construction contractor business owner and a fellow Native American, I am grateful for the opportunity to partner with the Navajo Nation through Light Up Navajo," said Cameron Hale, Owner/President/Founder of Alvah Construction. "The chance to contribute our electrical contracting skills and resources to the Navajo Nation is an honor, and we are excited to see the positive impact of our collective efforts."

On the ground, IBEW 1245 Business Representative Todd Kadota provided onsite leadership and continuity between crews, coordinating with NTUA, assisting with daily safety briefings, solving logistical challenges, and supporting members throughout the month.

"I was fortunate to work with some incredible crews out there," Kadota said. "Everyone brought their best — they worked hard, looked out for each other, and took real pride in what they were doing. It was an honor to be part of it."

The Mission: Build Line, Bring Light

The teams completed a full range of linework — framing and setting poles, stringing wire, and extending new service to remote homes. Despite the challenges of working across a vast, unfamiliar desert landscape far from home, both waves of IBEW 1245 volunteers exceeded expectations. The PG&E crews tackled rugged terrain and laid the groundwork for future line extensions, while the Alvah Construction crews were assigned to build 47 poles in two weeks, finishing the job in just six days before moving on to additional projects.

For the linemen participating in this effort, the mission is deeply personal.

"It's humbling to think that in 2025, there are families in America who can't turn on a light switch at home. I'm proud to stand with my union brothers and sisters to help close that gap. This is the kind of work that reminds you why you got into the trade," said Sal Ramos, PG&E Line Foreman from Santa Rosa.

"When I was offered the opportunity to be part of Light Up Navajo, I said yes without hesitation. In our daily work, electricity is something that's expected and often taken for granted. Knowing that our skills and craftsmanship can be used to dramatically change lives is something I don't take lightly, and I am truly grateful to contribute to such a meaningful effort," said Sebastian Blancato, Alvah Construction Line Foreman from Placerville.

"It's an honor to be part of this effort. Helping connect families to power is the kind of work that reminds me why I became a journeyman lineman—to give back to those less fortunate and take ownership in my trade," said Danny Mendoza, PG&E Journeyman Lineman from San Carlos.

"With 32 years of experience in the industry, nothing brings me greater satisfaction than restoring power and seeing the positive impact on our customers. I find it difficult to imagine that, in 2025, there are communities still without access to reliable electricity. I am sincerely grateful and humbled to have the opportunity to work alongside Alvah and my union colleagues on this project," said Shad Bales, Alvah Construction Line Foreman from Benicia.

"I'm truly honored to be part of such an important project. It's humbling to know that our work is making a lasting impact for families who have gone their entire lives without power. Something as simple as turning on a light, keeping food cold, or charging a phone will completely change daily life for them, and being able to help make that possible is an experience like no other," said Nick Pion, Alvah Construction General Foreman from Placerville.

Community, Culture, and Connection

Each rotation began with a Sunday orientation hosted by NTUA, where volunteers learned about safety, logistics, cultural awareness, and the human impact of their work. Crews heard directly from Navajo families about what power would mean for them, then met their NTUA liaisons — local foremen who guided the teams through the project areas.

At the end of each two-week rotation, the volunteers were honored at an appreciation dinner, where families and tribal leaders shared food, stories, and gratitude with the visiting crews.

IBEW 1245's participation in LUN reflected the union's longstanding values: skill, solidarity, community service, and the belief that every family deserves safe, reliable power.

As Bob Dean noted, the experience would stay with members long after the lines were energized. "Our members take pride in using their craft to make a real difference," said Dean.

PG&E IBEW 1245 linemen pause during their Light Up Navajo volunteer rotation, helping extend power to families across the Navajo Nation.

Regional Organizing Steward Trainings Mark Continued Growth and Leadership in Our Union

by Rene Cruz Martinez, Assistant Business Manager/Organizer

This year, the IBEW 1245 Organizing Team took a new approach to our summer Organizing Steward Training by breaking them into smaller regional sessions. This marks the third time we've implemented this format to increase recruitment and participation by making the training more accessible for members who may not be able to travel to our union hall in Vacaville. It also provided an important first opportunity for many of our new members to meet the organizing team and build relationships through meaningful one-on-one engagement.

As part of our leadership development efforts, we empowered our Organizing Leads to take charge of these trainings—from selecting venues and organizing food to drafting full agendas. In total, we hosted five regional trainings in San Leandro, Modesto, Fresno, Sacramento, and Reno.

Each training day was structured into two parts:

- **Training Segment: A concise overview of organizing principles and the role of organizing stewards.**
- **Networking Mixer: A space for members to connect, share experiences, and build community.**

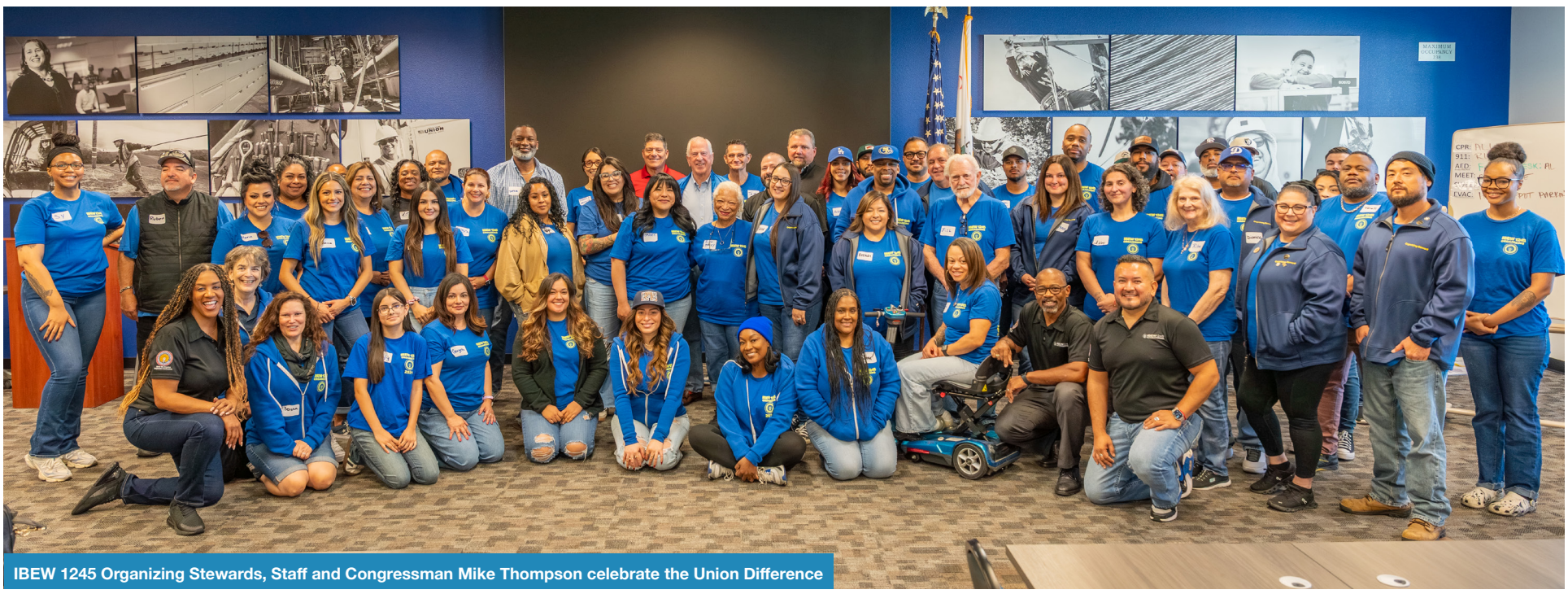
Our Organizing Leads rose to the occasion and took pride in facilitating these events. Their preparation, initiative, and execution blew us away. The recruitment outcomes were impressive, with several of the regional trainings seeing more than half of their participants as new members and first-time attendees to a union event. Our members' years of service ranged from just four months of service to veterans with over 25 years of service, as well as retirees. Together we celebrated recent wins, discussed ongoing challenges, and re-committed our stewards to collective action.

The most common feedback from new members was that they hadn't realized how much work happens behind the scenes to ensure our members are in the best possible position to succeed—whether that's at the bargaining table, in the field, or within their communities.

Our leads wrapped up the day asking our attendees to sign up to become Organizing Stewards. While becoming an Organizing Steward can feel intimidating at first, they emphasized the importance of starting small by getting involved in just one thing at a time. Through exposure, training, and mentorship, we all grow stronger together.

I felt a deep sense of pride watching our Leads facilitate these trainings. Our local's continued investment in membership engagement and training is clearly paying off. From just 28 Organizing Stewards in 2014 to 124 today, it's no surprise our program has earned national recognition from labor organizations across the country.

"I'm inspired by how our Leads step into their roles with so much heart and dedication. These trainings aren't just about learning; they're about building relationships and growing the next generation of leaders who will keep our union strong for decades to come." – Melissa Echeverria, IBEW 1245 Staff Organizer



IBEW 1245 Organizing Stewards, Staff and Congressman Mike Thompson celebrate the Union Difference

IBEW 1245 Organizing Stewards Meet at the Hall: Organizing Today to Win Tomorrow

by Eileen Purcell, Senior Advisor | Photos by Ian Lee

On a beautiful October day, seventy IBEW 1245 Organizing Stewards filled the LL Mitchell room at the Union Hall in Vacaville for the Fall Organizing Steward Training.

Assistant Business Manager and Organizing Director Rene Cruz Martinez welcomed the men and women who hailed from as far south as Lompoc, CA and as far north as Reno, NV and everywhere in between. "Thank you for volunteering your Saturday to be here! What a difference you make," he declared.

"You provide the strength behind our movement. You're kicking ass answering the call everywhere help is needed!" added Senior Assistant Business Manager Al Fortier. Nearly a third of the stewards in the room were new.

The goal of the day: to celebrate the Union Difference, stake out the challenges before us, and plan for the final three months of 2025.

The State of the Union

Senior Assistant Business Manager Ralph Armstrong kicked off by thanking the stewards on behalf of Business Manager Bob Dean, 1245's leadership and the 30,000 members "for all the hard work you've done and continue to do."

A third generation, 40-year IBEW member and journeyman lineman, Brother Armstrong started his career in the east coast before transferring to 1245 after working for his first ten years in a "Right to Work" state. "When I first started, we fought for jobs – we actually had to cut our wages to get the work. When I came out to California it was night and day, thanks in large part to the power and strength of this Local union."

Eighteen years ago, in 2007, he joined the staff and never looked back, overseeing Outside Construction, Vegetation Management and Line Clearance, among other responsibilities.

"Today, from a political standpoint, we are facing numerous challenges: a federal government hostile to labor, the government shutdown, layoffs, a country divided, attacks on unions and immigrants, A.I., drones. We'll continue to fight, at the bargaining table, at the capitol, at the worksite. Your continuing involvement is critical."

Brother Armstrong noted that in just the last few weeks, the power and strength of the Organizing program was on full display.

At the State Capitol Organizing Stewards joined IBEW 1245 leadership to secure SB 254, the Wildfire Fund, providing a modicum of financial stability, and SB 825, the Pathways Bill that established a framework for a regional energy market. Both bills help safeguard the interests of IBEW 1245 members and communities.

The Union is fighting for 1245 members who are federal employees at the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) and the US Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) who are impacted by the arbitrary and illegal stripping of contract rights overnight and by the federal government shutdown, impacting hundreds of thousands of fed-

eral workers and their families. Organizing Staff, led by Charlotte Stevens, is working with Business Representative Gerald Williams to support our members at WAPA and USBR. IBEW 1245 has joined a class action lawsuit to challenge the illegal nullification of longstanding contracts.

The union is educating our staff on immigration issues, finding ways to support our members who are wrongfully persecuted.

This year the Union is bargaining 20 contracts, including at PG&E , SMUD, and South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID) where organizing stewards have joined the picket line.

Brother Armstrong noted that the Union is addressing other threats to the work, including A.I. and drones. "We've developed model language that we are introducing at every table. " We can't beat it back. It's coming. But we want to be part of the conversation."

U.S. Congressman Mike Thompson – the Union Difference

U.S. Congressman Mike Thompson, (4th Congressional District) addressed the room thanking IBEW 1245 for the incredible work performed in the field, from building and maintaining the power grid to service centers.

"My grandmother worked for the Napa Glove factory during World War II. Most of the men were in the military or too old to serve. It was predominantly women running the business. My grandmother led the working women. Management declared, "You're going to work 24/7, but when it's all done we'll take care of you. Our door is always open." My grandmother told me they worked 24-hour shifts. When they finished the order, my grandmother went to see management. The door was locked and there was a sign that said, "Your Services are No Longer Needed." She drilled into me the need for organized labor as the only way to protect worker rights."

The Congressman decried the mass firings of workers and the government shutdown. "Every firing, every grant they've rescinded is impacting someone's family."

As for Proposition 50, he said, "We don't have a choice. I support the Independent Commission. I believe we should have it in all 50 states. But we don't. … we're not going to unilaterally disarm.

Origins

Organizer Charlotte Stevens introduced the "origins" video of the Organizing Steward program produced by the IBEW. The intergenerational leadership development program grew out of two successful contract fights in 2009 – at NV Energy and PG&E. It placed a laser beam focus on recruiting and integrating younger members into the work of the union, educating them about 1245's history and training them on how to fight at the Table, in the halls of power and in electoral politics. Most importantly, it taught them how to share their own stories and the Union difference with their co-workers at their work sites.

"Learning by doing" in real fights – contract fights, electoral battles, new organizing – at home and across the country became valuable opportunities, and cultivated solidarity and a spirit of camaraderie, supplemented by regular trainings at the Union Hall. In 2013, The IBEW 1245 Executive Board formalized the program into the Organizing Steward program. The first class was inducted in 2014. What started as twenty-eight organizing stewards has blossomed to more than one hundred twenty any given year.

Today, Organizing Stewards serve on 1245's Executive Board, Advisory Council, and Central Labor Councils; they lead trainings, staff GOTV drives, and lead the 1245 Welcome Calls to every new member. Many have joined the staff.

One of the first Organizing Stewards, Georgette Carrillo, a PG&E Service Representative II declared, "It is amazing to see how {the Organizing Program} has come from a handful of us to what it is to today: a sea of blue. We are warriors, fighting for people's rights, saving our jobs, our benefits, not just for us but for others. I bring my kids with me – educating them … it's not taught in school. I didn't know anything until I got involved."

The Union Difference: Stories & Insights from the Field

Newer Organizing Stewards shared their experience in an array of campaigns – from the Siemens Organizing Drive to Get Out the Vote (GOTV) drives at Central Labor Councils to conversations at work and at the dinner table.

PG&E Gas Service Representative, Luis Vega, shared, "One of the hardest things when I was door knocking during the Siemens campaign was dealing with people being scared when we came to the door. But letting them know I'm from the union and trying to help them get a better life … I shared my story. And I realized that everything I like about my job was something fought for by the union – whether wages, the right to bargaining, my right to safety."

Iyasha Davis, a PG&E Customer Service Representative and Women's Committee member added, "The Siemens' campaign humbles you when you hear about workers working two jobs (when we have the luxury of working one job) just to make ends meet. It made me aware that "we're covered as IBEW 1245 members. It's shocking to learn that I have security that they don't."

Brandon Fosselman, a PG&E W&R Dispatcher – Electric and Organizing Lead, reflecting on his success as a Lead, said, "I have had great teams. I don't have to ask twice. … One thing I think is important: You have to go to the Unit Meetings. …Politics is only part of the picture. …Go to the conference, get the experience so that you understand the whole picture. By me being here, by going to the capitol I'm helping my own cause. I'm protecting my job security, the wages, benefits, the stability … everything that I have personally passes it to my kids. At 42, my purpose on earth is my three kids. Union job vs non-union."

Other Organizing Stewards called in from three Central Labor Councils in Fresno, Sacramento and the North Valley where they are leading GOTV drives for the special election.

Stewards broke into regional groups to enlist volunteers for the next three weeks of GOTV and for making Welcome Calls to new IBEW 1245 members.

Representatives of the IBEW 1245 Veterans Committee, the Women's Committee and the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus (EWMC) invited all present to get involved – including in the November 7th Veterans Gala and the November 15th EWMC National Day of Service.

With the business of the day concluded, IBEW 1245 Organizers Rick Thompson and Charlotte Stevens led the raffle.

Brother Cruz Martinez closed the meeting with a moment of silence, honoring those who have passed, including: Pam Pendleton, Fred Ross, Alyssa Fernandez, Ron Borst and Jesse Hoch.

He thanked everyone for dedicating their Saturday to come together, celebrate, and recommit to the work that keeps the Union growing and strong.

1245 Honored with Alameda Labor's 2025 Solidarity Award

IBEW Local 1245 is proud to be recognized by the Alameda Labor Council with the 2025 Solidarity Award, an honor given to unions that demonstrate the power of standing together with fellow workers and strengthening the broader labor movement.

Retired Sr. Assistant Business Manager Dorothy Fortier, Sr. Assistant Business Manager Al Fortier, Organizing Stewards Luis Vega and Arnaldo Lizzaraga, Advisory Council Member Mike Patterson, and member Trevor Robertson.

Live Action Drill in Santa Rosa Pushes Boundaries of Emergency Preparedness

by Mike Tilden Business Rep.

In a powerful demonstration of emergency preparedness and inter-agency collaboration, PG&E facilitated a complex and high-impact Live Action Drill at the Santa Rosa Fire Training Center.

Assistant Business Manager Mike Adayan and Business Rep Mike Tilden attended the exercise which brought together PG&E Electric and Gas Operations, the Santa Rosa Fire Department, EMS, and IBEW members in a realistic and challenging simulation designed to test and improve coordination during crisis response.

The meticulously planned scenario simulated a high-voltage emergency: An auto accident which resulted in a 115kV transmission line coming down onto a 12kV distribution line, causing a massive overvoltage event that led to multiple wires down and underground cable faults. The cascading impact included a simulated gas leak and ignition in an intersecting trench, challenging crews to think critically and act swiftly to isolate hazards, coordinate response, and begin restoration.

One of the key highlights was a hurt-man rescue executed by Santa Rosa Troubleman, Teague Contreras, who worked tirelessly throughout the drill as the sole field Electric responder. His quick response under pressure, including securing a clearance for first responders to perform a vehicle extraction and completing a pole-top rescue, showcased the effectiveness of real-world training in preparing our crews for extreme conditions.

"I appreciated the thought, time, and effort that went into the drill," said Contreras. "It was a real test of our systems, training, and teamwork, and it showed we can perform in extreme situations safely and confidently."

The scenario was further complicated by a simulated backfeed from an improperly installed customer-owned solar system, pushing crews to troubleshoot and restore service with precision. First-step Apprentice Distribution Operator Nicole Carr also participated, gaining hands-on experience under the guidance of a seasoned Journeymen Jeremiah DeSart, Brody Barrett, and James Hutcheson and highlighting the value of these drills for all levels of experience.

"This was one of the most comprehensive and challenging drills we've executed yet," said DeSart. "We've come a long way since our first participation in April's drill in El Dorado Hills. Through collaboration with Gas leadership and Compliance teams, we've expanded these drills into truly valuable learning experiences."

IBEW 1245 Earns National Recognition at Membership Development Conference

by Rene Cruz Martinez, Assistant Business Manager / Organizer

Nearly 2,000 IBEW delegates gathered in Chicago at the end of summer for the 2025 Membership Development Conference, and IBEW 1245 was there in force. The week combined intensive pre-conference trainings, workshops, keynote addresses, and strategy sessions with union leaders from across the country.

IBEW 1245 stood out among the locals in attendance, receiving the Outstanding Achievement Award for achieving 98% Outside Construction Market Share (meaning nearly all outside line construction in our jurisdiction is done union).

That level of market share protects the wages, benefits, and safety standards of our members and the broader community, while also ensuring steady work and opportunity for the future.

The achievement reflects the extraordinary organizing success of Local 1245's members, staff, and organizing stewards in holding the line against non-union encroachment.

"With 1245 members performing 98% of outside construction work in our jurisdiction, we're protecting our members, creating steady work and training opportunities while delivering safe, reliable proj

ects that benefit the entire community," said Bob Dean, IBEW 1245 Business Manager.

"This award is a testament to the solidarity, skill and discipline of our membership in Outside Line and to our dedicated staff who work tirelessly to grow and defend our industry," said Senior Assistant Business Manager Al Fortier, who attended alongside ABMs Rene Cruz Martinez and Ethan Stonecipher, Organizers Charlotte Stevens, Melissa Echeverria, and Rick Thompson, and Organizing Stewards Kimberly Kendrick, Manuel Garcia, Gabrielle Butler, and Britney Morris, who is also IBEW 1245 Treasurer.

For many 1245 Organizing Stewards, the conference was both a learning experience and an inspiration.

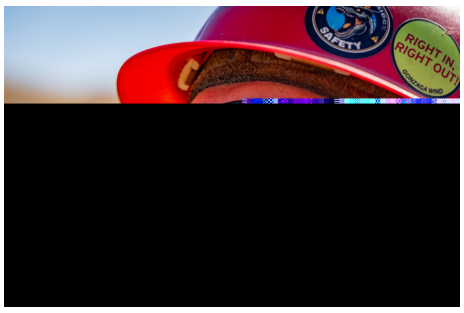
Kimberly Kendrick, Organizing Steward from Fresno: "The CORE Organizing Communication class gave me valuable tools I can bring back to my unit meetings. My biggest takeaway was to really meet people where they are—listen first, understand what barriers might exist, and don't create new ones. That approach makes it easier to connect with both current and future members and ultimately helps us achieve our organizing goals."

Britney Morris, IBEW 1245 Treasurer and Organizing Steward from Reno, Nevada: "The conference theme, Stand Up, Stand Together, really resonated with me. Hearing from leaders like AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler reminded us that the state of the unions is under attack but also energized us to keep fighting. The workshops and trainings gave me a deeper understanding of the challenges ahead and the tools we need to face them. What stayed with me most were President Kenneth Cooper's words: 'You never really lose an organizing campaign—you've educated a worker and shown them the power of standing together.' That message brought it all home: when we fight, we win."

Manuel Garcia, Organizing Steward from Fresno: "The organizer training was the most impactful part of the conference. It gave me practical tools I can use right away to spark interest, encourage participation, and strengthen leadership in my unit. The experience broadened my understanding of organizing and gave me new strategies to support our union's growth."

"Our members are the best organizers," said Assistant Business Manager Rene Cruz Martinez. "Their commitment to building solidarity and expanding union strength is why 1245 continues to lead the way nationally."

IBEW 1245 Crews Deliver Gonzaga Ridge Wind Repowering Project



by Shannan Velayas, Communications Director | Photos by John Storey

Crews from Summit Line Construction, working under IBEW 1245, are bringing new power online from a recently installed wind farm at the San Luis Reservoir outside Los Banos, CA. The project replaces older turbines with 40 modern wind turbines, expected to generate 350,000 MWh of electricity each year — enough to power 44,000 homes.

To connect that energy to the grid, workers are building a new transmission line that will tie into the existing Los Banos substation, 16 miles east of the project site. The line requires poles up to 120 feet tall, deep foundations — one set 27 feet into the ground — and the precision of crews stringing wire over the massive San Luis water channel.

"The terrain really compounds everything. Just traveling between the two sites around the reservoir can take two hours," said Bruce Weekes, a journeyman lineman leading the crew. Weekes entered the trade in the spring of 2003, graduating on a Thursday and getting married that Saturday, and has now spent 22 years building his career in linework. Under his watchful, skilled eye, the crew worked methodically through the challenges of wire pulls, sags and helicopter drops. "The team has stayed focused, and we expect to have the job wrapped up within the week," he said.

When IBEW 1245 visited, the crews had the north line installed but not sagged yet, and the middle line was halfway in. Each phase requires 4 reels of wire, and with the limited access across the reservoir, trucks were staged with just one reel each.

On the ground that day were two apprentices — a 4th-step and a 5th-step — gaining valuable field experience. Apprenticeships take about 7,000 hours of on-the-job training, roughly four years, to complete before earning Journeyman status.

John Cahill, a 4th-step apprentice from the California-Nevada JATC, says he knew right out of high school he wanted to pursue linework. Before starting his apprenticeship, he spent six months as a groundsman.

"I love doing something with a good purpose," said Cahill. "And I get to spend time outside in the elements. That makes it even better."

The crews also had to navigate strict environmental protections. The San Luis Reservoir area is home to sensitive species, including bald eagles, golden eagles, California red-legged frogs, and California tiger salamanders, as well as sensitive habitats like native grassland. Large herds of elk also roam the area. To safeguard wildlife, contractors installed measures like "frog gates" along access roads — temporary barriers designed to keep amphibians safe as crews moved equipment to and from the project site.

The San Luis Reservoir also serves as a crucial resource for Cal Fire, which regularly uses the lake to fill aircraft during fire season, a reminder of the many competing demands in this rugged region.

This project shows just how much skill and expertise it takes to deliver electricity to our homes. From seasoned linemen to apprentices learning the ropes, every step of the work demands precision, knowledge, and dedication, and IBEW 1245 members prove every day that they're the very best at what they do.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT & LCTT

by Ralph Armstrong, Senior Assistant Business Manager

Safety / Focus Items

Coming into fall and winter, our safety concerns begin to shift. The changing of weather, loss of daylight, and the inevitable Northern California rains introduce hazards and concerns, not seen in many months. We must continue to stay vigilant and on alert, for changing conditions.

The tree industry is one of the fastest growing industries, with regards to training and tools. Year over year, the industry advances. Our membership has kept up with these changes and has met the challenges associated, head on. IBEW LU 1245 members continue to lead the charge in this changing landscape.

Mental health has become a more common discussion point in previous years but is still very much not an open topic. As a membership, we must be willing to check in on one another, regardless of background or classification. There are resources available to members who need to talk with someone.

LINECO Member Assistance Program: 1-800-332-2191

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: 988

Staff Changes

After 26 years with IBEW LU 1245, Junior Ornelas officially announced his retirement. Junior has been an instrumental part of the success and growth of this group. His experience and candor will be missed tremendously.

Replacing Junior on staff will be Heriberto "Tito" Ayala. Tito comes to us from the California-Nevada JATC, serving as an instructor for the past few years. A member of LU 1245 for over 20 years, Tito brings a solid background, with training being a large part. We are very excited to have Tito aboard!

Line Clearance Tree Trimming (LCTT)

Work is full throttle across all properties. Hours have increased, in some areas, to 60+ hours per work. This has invited crews from outside of normal jurisdiction to help with the spiking workload. We must ensure that any new crew members are adhering to the safety guidelines set up here. Education of our fellow Brothers and Sisters is key!

With the increase in workload, comes an increase in issue potential. We have seen a sharp increase in grievance activity across all contracts and areas. Please remain aware of the timelines associated with any contract violation and reach out to your Business Representative or Steward if you need any clarification.

The PG&E Assessment Center in Oroville has been very busy over the previous months. While the frustration around implementation of the span of control is evident, the introduction of new training courses will ensure our members are ready for the changing times. Technology and procedures are changing rapidly in the Line Clearance space. The skilled workforce that exists must continue to evolve with the times.

If you have not already done so, please contact your company to set up an evaluation, if needed. Variances have been issued this year at different times, but the utility has assured they are done with variances. We must continue to push our contractors to be at the forefront of any training offered. If you are having issues with getting assessed, please contact your Representative.

Vegetation Management Inspectors (VMI)

We have seen an increase in workload for the VMI group. With that, an increase in audits of work being performed. Upon the triggering of an audit, the employer will have to investigate. We must continue to hold the highest quality of work as the standard of ourselves and each other.

We have been monitoring delinquencies to trust funds, as they come up. Please reach out to one of the Business Representatives if you believe your funds are delinquent or are funded incorrectly. Some of these delinquencies are simple fixes, such as incorrect name or ID numbers. Majority arise from the contractors delinquency.

Pole Test & Treat (PTT)

The PTT Information meeting is held every second Tuesday, at 7 pm via Teams. Please reach out to one of the Business Representatives for more information.

Our first date of bargaining is set for October 30, 2025. We received a fair number of proposals to consider. More information to come in the next report.

California-Nevada JATC

California Nevada JATC is still offering Fundamentals Training at their Woodland Campus. Pre-scheduled classes are offered for two weeks per month, but more classes can be added for yards or contractors who can put together a group of 8 or more. Woodland campus will be closed the week of Thanksgiving and have limited availability during the weeks of Christmas and New Years.

CDL reimbursements are still available for registered enrollees, who obtain a CDL. The following classifications are open to register for this:

- **Groundman with 6 months experience**
- **Trimmer Trainees (Start-12 months)**
- **Journeymen Tree Trimmer**
- **Foreperson (without CDL)**

Go to: calnevjatctree.wordpress.com and click on the CDL Application link.

OUTSIDE LINE CONSTRUCTION

by Ralph Armstrong, Senior Assistant Business Manager

Safety / Focus Items

The second quarter Red Book Joint Safety Meeting was held on August 23rd , at the California-Nevada JATC campus in Riverside. Contractors from across the state, and both LU 47 & 1245, discussed safety issues and concerns in the industry.

Topics included the ever-present issue of driving. We must continue focusing on this topic. At work, and at home. With the changing weather conditions, and lesser daylight hours, these new hazards must be considered. Keeping a check on your lights, tires, and ensuring you are prepared for any potential changes in weather conditions.

Another topic discussed was mental health. The construction industry is plagued by the ever present, and not often discussed, mental health crisis. Making a point to check in on one another, and encouraging someone to speak with, may make a life changing difference for someone.

In closing the meeting, LU 396 notified the group of their intention to join the committee, providing an additional ally to help ensure safety for all our members. The addition of expertise in safety regulations for Nevada will be a major addition to this group.

We have been working on a Spanish version of our Red Book & Outside Line Agreement's. These have taken a significant amount of time, due to some of the technical terminology within. This task, while cumbersome, will pay dividends with our membership. Easing access and understanding are key to knowledge.

Additionally, the latest version of the CA Red Book is in stock. Copies are available by contacting your Business Representative or picking one up at the Local Office. An online version is available on our website.

California

The yearly Autumn, work volume increase, has set in. Many contractors are working at a record capacity, members are putting in extreme hours, and daylight is winding down. This is a recipe for potential issues, if we allow ourselves to become routine. The simplest tasks are the most frequent tasks where incidents occur.

PG&E has increased workflow across all properties, after a slow start to the year. All areas have seen an uptick in work, the Bay Area leading the way. New business, pole replacement, and fire hardening are in full swing.

San Jose is slated to see a multi-year, $2 billion dollar plus project, starting in early 2026. This project will be a massive undertaking by Underground Electric Construction Company and involve many miles of transmission undergrounding through the heart of San Jose. This will be a generational project that will change the landscape of transmission throughout the state.

Contractors continue to discuss workplans, through the winter. This is a change from previous years, and, if it comes to fruition, there will be a welcome change. Weather and permitting will be a limiting factor always, but scheduled work is always a positive sign.

The Fresno Bi-Monthly Informational Meeting continues to take place on the second Tuesday of every other month, from 6pm to 8pm at Round Table Pizza at 5702 N. First St. The remaining meetings for this year will take place on July 8th, Sept 9th and Nov 11. A mass text reminder will be sent out the Monday before each meeting. Please make time to attend the meeting if you're in the area.

Nevada/Lake Tahoe

Work is picking up across all properties in Nevada. NV Energy continues to have an array of work, from green build transmission with Greenlink, to new substations, with Sierra BESS. The majority of the work is utility scale, but also some private infrastructure as well.

Greenlink continues to grow, facing some regulatory issues in the process. T&D Power has involved many subcontract companies, to keep up with the amount of work. As the line construction portion starts, we will see an influx in needs for cold step apprentices.

Dock work for Liberty Utility and Plumas Sierra continue. Teichert Line Services continue pushing along with the Plumas Sierra pole replacement package, recently awarded.

The Citadel, a data center owned by Switch, is moving forward with construction. This project is a 2,000 acre complex, with over 7.2 million square feet of data storage. This is an ongoing project that is employing many IBEW members, both inside and outside construction.

Traffic Control

Our Traffic Control group has continued with its growth. This work group has grown into the most skilled workforce in this space, and is proving to be the number one choice of our construction vendors.

As our membership continues to grow, we must maintain the high standards that have gotten us to this point. Safety violations, in any capacity, must not be tolerated. We must ensure that ALL OF US are in this together, to get home safely.

Currently, discussion is happening to implement a Traffic Control training program. This effort, a joint venture with IBEW and NECA representation, has been a long-time want of LU 1245, and we are thrilled to see the forward progress on this. While we are moving forward, reasonable expectations are held close.

The continued success depends on our members' continued diligence, and dedication, to performing every task with intent and safety at front. As new employees are brought into this space to learn and advance their knowledge, our experienced membership should continue with education and proper instruction.

California-Nevada JATC

The JATC has recently closed applications for the Substation Tech Apprenticeship programs. Over 250 applications were submitted during the open time frame. This number pales in comparison to the Lineman Apprenticeship, which sees around 1500 applications in the same time frame. Substations continue to be the backbone of the electrical infrastructure, providing stable, good paying jobs. More large-scale projects are substations specific. If you, or someone you know, are interested in a career change, substations may be for you.

The Civil Subcommittee has made some forward progress regarding LEM and Groundman training. This subcommittee, IBEW and NECA Contractors together, have been developing comprehensive civil / trenching safety. These modules are developing nicely, including the addition of driving specific items, with hope of offering classes sometime in 2026.

We must continue to set the bar with our apprentices, in the field and the classroom. Ensuring that our apprentices are supported and trained correctly, is the sure way to improve the quality of craftsmanship for many generations to come. We must take pride in our apprentices, to make strong Journeymen.

CPR & First Aid

CPR and First Aid classes are scheduled for the second Friday of every month at the Woodland and Riverside facilities. If you are interested and want to sign up for this class, visit **calnevjatc.org** ,click on the Web Services tab, then Class Schedule. If you do not already have a web account with the JATC, you will need to create one. Class availability is based on a first-come, first-served basis.

Injured Workers Fund (IWF)

As of September 30, 2025, the balance of the Fund was $596,677.78. Since June 1, 2025, the Fund has paid out $131,958.83 in disability and parental leave claims.

The Summary Plan Description (SPD) and Application can be found at **ibew1245.com/outside-line-injured-workers-fund**.

Dispatch

Third Quarter Totals
- **Journeyman Lineman: 967**
- **Line Equipment Man: 278**
- **Groundman: 809**
- **Traffic Control Technician: 115**

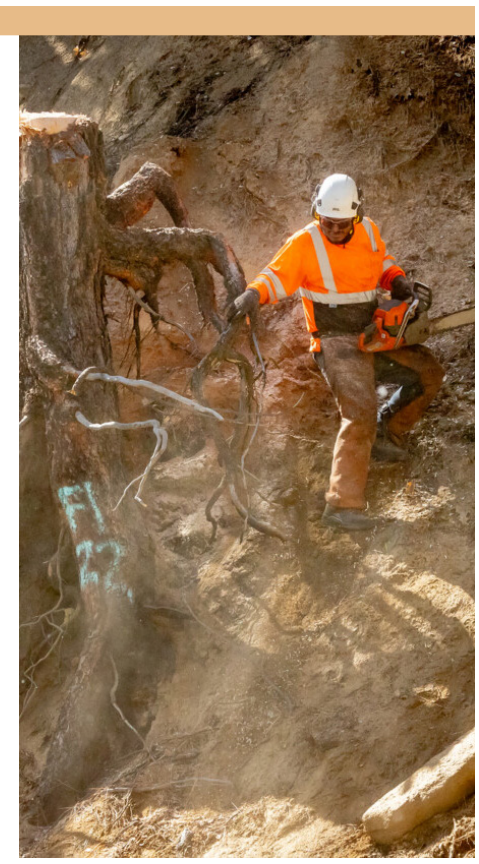
Year to Date Totals
- **Journeyman Lineman: 2063**
- **Line Equipment Man: 932**
- **Groundman: 1872**
- **Traffic Control Technician: 327**

Organizing

California Outside Line Construction Agreement
- **CJ Drilling, Inc.**
- **EPS Technology, Inc.**
- **Ryno Works, Inc.**
- **T. Line Construction LLC**

Traffic Control Agreement
- **LDH Services LLC**

Traffic Signal and Street Light Maintenance
- **Branson Industries LLC**



IBEW 1245 Tree Crews Play Critical Role in Garnet Fire Recovery

By Shannan Velayas, Communications Director | Photos by John Storey

When the Garnet Fire tore through Fresno County's Sierra National Forest last month, it left behind a charred landscape, downed trees, and damaged infrastructure. Although containment has now reached 100%, the work of restoring the area and protecting the grid continued well into the Fall.

That's where IBEW 1245 members come in — including line clearance tree trimmers.

Every day, nearly 20 tree crews — including Arbor Works, Rancho Tree Service, Wright Tree Service, and PG&E vegetation crews — are working along line crews, operators, and traffic control to restore safe access and protect the power coming out of the Helms hydroelectric plant at Wishon Reservoir, at an elevation of nearly 6,000 feet.

First Site: Clearing a 250-Year-Old Hazard

On the east side of the fire zone, IBEW 1245 visited an Arbor Works crew assigned to hazard tree removal. Perched high above the canyon and within sight of PG&E helicopter staging areas, the crew was working on a massive pine, estimated at more than 250 years old.

The tree was burned and unstable, within striking distance of the lines. Arbor Works Field Foreman Hugo Uribe, who has been in the trade since 1998 and was part of the first tree company organized into IBEW 1245, was overseeing the removal. He directed how the crew bucked and moved the sections safely, keeping the job moving step by step.

When asked if he enjoys the work, he smiled and said: "My dad did this work before me, and he told me, if you like your job, you never work. That's how I feel."

With precision and speed, the crew fired up their chainsaws, bucked and limbed the tree, and had the roadway cleared within an hour, opening the way for PG&E trucks and equipment.

Second Site: Teamwork in Action

We then followed the Arbor Works crew to a second site where another hazard tree stood within strike potential to the only road connecting staging yards, helicopter pads, and crews heading in and out of the canyon.

To control the fall, a crew member launched a line into the canopy using a "big shot" sling shot device, setting a tag line so the tree could be guided safely once the cuts began. After the chainsaws did their work, Arbor Works equipment operator Sean McClinden brought in his skid steer to clear the road.

McClinden has been doing this work for four years, after previously working in the oil and gas fields. What he likes most, he says, is both the equipment and the bigger picture. "There's something patriotic about building America's infrastructure… you're doing it for the country and for the people," he said. "Anytime you mix in Tonka trucks, hard work, and good pay, and you can't go wrong," he added grinning.

As he's gotten older, McClinden says he's also come to value what the union has meant for him and his family. "The benefits that 1245 has fought for really matter for my family and I," he said.

PG&E Crews and Traffic Control

While tree crews cleared hazards, PG&E line crews worked quickly nearby to rebuild the burned power lines. New wire was already strung in sections, and at a staging area high above the canyon, crews were busy preparing material to replace what was lost in the fire. Their work ensures customers throughout the service area don't go without power in their homes and businesses.

Supporting all of it is traffic control, essential to keeping the roads safe as crews and equipment move constantly up and down the mountain. Erik Valadez, a PG&E traffic control worker assigned to Arbor Works, summed it up simply: "It's pretty cool to be part of all the lines of work PG&E does. We get to see it all and help keep everyone safe."

Union Pride

"Tree trimmers do great work in some of the toughest conditions, and they deserve strong representation," said 1245 Senior Business Rep Francisco (Cisco) Ferreyra, a tree trimmer himself with 19 years in vegetation management. "I'm proud to be one of them, and even prouder to stand up for these members every day."

The recovery effort will continue for months as crews contend with rugged terrain, long travel times, and the changing weather of the Sierra. But whether climbing, cutting, operating, or directing traffic, IBEW 1245 members are proud to be on the front lines of fire recovery, protecting California's grid and the families and businesses who depend on it.

President Cecelia De La Torre and 1245 members meeting with Sen. Monique Limón as our priorities advanced.

End-of-session view: 1245 staff in the gallery as our priority bills cross the finish line

Members meeting with California Assemblymember Liz Ortega at the Capitol during the final days of the legislative session.

IBEW 1245 Key Bills Become California Law

by Shannan Velayas, Communications Director

With the 2025 legislative session now concluded, several priority bills championed by IBEW 1245 have made it through the Legislature and were eagerly signed by Governor Newsom on Friday September 12.

Each of these measures represents months of advocacy by our members, leaders, and allies, both in the halls of the Capitol and on the ground across California.

IBEW 1245-Backed Wins

Wildfire Fund & Consumer Protections (SB 254 – Becker) – Extends and strengthens California's Wildfire Fund, ensuring victims have the resources they need to rebuild while holding utilities accountable. The final package also fixed provisions that could have harmed workers and ratepayers, reflecting the persistent advocacy of IBEW 1245.

Energy Storage Safety (SB 283 – Laird) – Establishes strong safety standards for large-scale battery storage projects, protecting frontline workers and surrounding communities.

Regional Grid & Pathways Initiative (AB 825 – Petrie Norris) – Advances a more reliable, affordable, and cleaner Western power grid by allowing California to coordinate with neighboring states. The measure helps secure the long-term future of the grid while supporting union jobs.

Cap-and-Trade Reauthorization (AB 1207 – Irwin) – Extends California's cap-and-trade program, which generates billions of dollars for clean energy investments that translate into real work for IBEW 1245 members.

IBEW 1245: On the Ground and Inside the Capitol

From early committee hearings through the fast-paced end-of-session sprint, IBEW 1245 members and leaders put in the work to make sure lawmakers understood the real-world impact of these bills. Our delegation met face-to-face with legislators, testified in hearings, tracked last-minute amendments, and worked the phones to keep these measures moving.

"This was a critical year for our members and the communities we serve," said Bob Dean, IBEW 1245 Business Manager. "We fought to strengthen the Wildfire Fund, advance safety, and build a more reliable and affordable grid, and we delivered. These are real wins that will create more work for our members and protect Californians."

"End of session is a test of preparation, relationships, and discipline. Our members and leaders stayed focused on what matters…safety, reliability, and jobs," said Hunter Stern, Assistant Business Manager. "These bills provide billions in funding for work performed by1245 members and the IBEW as a whole. A great finish!"

Additionally, the Governor has signed a Carbon Dioxide Pipeline bill (SB 614 – Stern) that legalizes the transmission of carbon dioxide in pipelines throughout California. This could allow alternative use of the natural gas pipeline system. Governor Newsom also signed SB 840 – Limon that specifies set future contributions rates to California investment in greenhouse gas reduction work.

MID Lineworkers Leap Into Action to Save Trapped Driver from Canal

by Jessica Stillwell, Business Representative

Two IBEW 1245 members, Jimmy Boere and Brian Szuggar, with the Modesto Irrigation District (MID) are being recognized for their bravery and quick action that helped save a man's life after a vehicle plunged into a canal in north Modesto.

In the early morning hours of October 4, Modesto Fire Department crews responded to reports of a truck submerged in the canal near the 5800 block of Sisk Road. When firefighters arrived, they found an MID employee already in the water, standing on the vehicle and assisting the trapped driver.

According to Battalion Chief Jim Black, the MID worker had jumped into the cold canal without hesitation to reach the man."He reported the patient was confused and cold. He took off his own sweater to keep the patient warm," Chief Black said. "Between the fire crews and the MID employee, they placed a life jacket on the patient, then pulled him out and safely secured him on the roof of the truck."

Firefighters were then able to fully extricate the driver using a stokes basket and ladder. The patient was treated at the scene and transported to a nearby hospital.

When fire crews thanked the MID employee for his heroic actions, he humbly replied, "I saw him there and immediately knew I had to help."

In recognition of their courage, the Modesto Irrigation District Board of Directors passed a Resolution of Commendation honoringJimmy Boere and Brian Szuggar.

The resolution praised their "extraordinary courage and presence of mind," noting that both men were performing scheduled outage work nearby when they were alerted to the emergency.

"Their swift actions, bravery, and selflessness exemplify the highest standards of public service and community care," the resolution states. "Their heroism reflects great credit on themselves, their families, and the District."

Thanks to their quick response and willingness to act without hesitation, what could have been a tragic event ended with a life saved.

IBEW 1245 members and Modesto Irrigation District lineworkers Jimmy Boere and Brian Szuggar were honored by the MID Board of Directors for their heroic actions rescuing a man trapped in a submerged truck in a Modesto canal. Pictured with MID leadership and Board members following the presentation of a Resolution of Commendation recognizing their courage and quick response.

Their swift actions, bravery, and selflessness exemplify the highest standards of public service and community care... Their heroism reflects great credit on themselves, their families, and the District.

President Cecelia De La Torre swears in the Advisory Council Members, Jed Cruz, Roberto Arredondo and Sandi Busse.

Advisory Council Meets in Nevada for 4th Quarter Meeting, Honors Retirees and Welcomes New Members

by Shannan Velayas, Communications Director

Reno, NV — IBEW 1245's Executive Board, Advisory Council, staff, and guests gathered on Saturday, October 25 for the union's final Advisory Council meeting of 2025. President Cecelia De La Torre opened the meeting by welcoming members and expressing gratitude for their commitment and participation. She noted that Reno holds a special significance for IBEW 1245, as it is the one location outside of the Union Hall in Vacaville where the Advisory Council convenes each year, a reflection of the union's large geographic footprint across two states.

New Members Sworn In and Retirees Honored

Three new Advisory Council members — Jed Cruz, Sandi Busse, and Roberto Arredondo — were sworn in by President De La Torre.

The meeting also included a warm welcome to several Nevada retirees, who presented the Advisory Council with a large banner map of the United States adorned with pins from IBEW locals across the country. The gift, provided on behalf of the late Ron Borst, a longtime member, will be displayed at the union hall in Vacaville as a lasting symbol of unity and connection across generations of IBEW 1245 members.

Representing the Retirees Club and presenting the gift were Chair Bob Vieira (lineman), Vice Chair Rita Weisshaar (Customer Service Billing Department, NV Energy), Frank Istrice (equipment mechanic), Tom Bird (lineman) and his wife Sue Bird, and Dana Moler (retired lineman).

Business Manager's Report: Negotiations, Safety, and Service

In his report, Business Manager Bob Dean noted that more than 20 sets of negotiations are currently underway, including major bargaining with PG&E and SMUD.

"Behind the scense there is a lot of work going on on behalf of our members, with working groups and meeting and we've got some of the best and brightest minds at the table — making sure our members are protected and our contracts stay strong," said Dean.

Dean added that both PG&E and SMUD have come to the table with big asks, but the union's position remains clear. For more information, please see IBEW 1245's latest communication on negotiations.

"The companies want a lot," he said. "We're fighting for our members, and we're not backing down."

Staffing Updates: Dean also introduced several staff updates: Kyle Whitman and Jody Castro were named new Assistant Business Managers, John Sandoval has taken over as a new Business Rep, and Garrett Markweed was appointed as PG&E Fact Finder.

On the safety front, Jody Castro briefed the Council on a recent apprentice lineman injury that remains under investigation, stressing the importance of constant vigilance and proper oversight on every job. Francisco "Cisco" Ferreyra, business representative for vegetation management members, reported on a separate incident in which a member fell 25 feet during a tree-trimming operation. Both reports underscored a sobering reality: the work our members perform is inherently dangerous, and safety must remain our highest priority.

Light Up Navajo: Service Beyond the Local

Dean provided an update on Light Up Navajo, the volunteer electrification project where IBEW 1245 linemen brought power to families who have never had electricity.

"Roughly 10,000 homes on the Navajo Nation still don't have electricity," Dean said, noting that at the current pace, it could take 25 years to complete the work. He emphasized that discussions are underway with local partners and utility companies across the country to accelerate the effort.

Dean commended Business Representative Todd Kadota, who originally volunteered for two weeks but stayed for a full month to help coordinate crews and work alongside NTUA line workers. He highlighted the overwhelming response from 1245 members, many of whom jumped at the opportunity to volunteer their skills for such meaningful work.

Industry Trends: AI, Drones, and the Future of Work

Dean also addressed the growing impact of artificial intelligence, drones, and robotics in the utility industry. He noted that PG&E has begun purchasing drones for inspections, and that Local 1245 is negotiating contract language to ensure this work, and the data analysis that comes with it, remains union work.

"There's a bill on the books now that says no disciplinary action can be taken based on AI alone — a human has to be involved," Dean said. "But this technology is changing fast, and we must stay ahead of it."

Mental Health: Looking Out for Each Other

Advisory Council member Iyasha Davis (Central Area Clerical), Jody Castro, who leads 1245's CISM program, and Business Manager Bob Dean led a discussion on mental health and suicide prevention in the trades. They emphasized a sobering reality: the construction industry has one of the highest suicide rates of any profession — second only to the military.

Members were encouraged to continue checking in on one another, both on and off the job, and were reminded of available resources:

- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: Call or text 988 or visit org**
- **Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741-741**
- **Veterans Crisis Line: Dial 988, then press 1**

Dean also reminded members that PG&E's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available and offers confidential counseling and mental health support services.

Reports and Updates from the Field

Laquania "Q" Thompson, 1245 Organizing Steward lead and President of the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus Solano Chapter (EWMC), shared updates on upcoming EWMC Days of Service on November 15 and 22 and encouraged members to participate and help spread the word. Those interested can email EWMCSolanoCountyChapter@gmail.com.

Advisory Council Member David Williams honored longtime member Paul Schargus, who was part of Local 1245 for over 44 years. Williams shared one of Paul's favorite sayings, "Enjoy crawling through the weeds to get to the roses."

Business Representative Fred Aboud reported that new substation construction and large-scale data center projects are increasing across the jurisdiction, creating more opportunities for skilled union work.

To close, Business Manager Bob Dean highlighted the busy months ahead and reminded members that the next Advisory Council meeting will be held on January 24, 2026.

"We've got a lot on our plate," Dean said. "But that's a good thing. It means our members are active, our union is strong, and we're making a difference, together."

Laquania "Q" Thompson, 1245 Organizing Steward Lead speaks to the IBEW 1245 Advisory Council.

IBEW 1245 Women's Committee Luncheon Attendees

Rooted and Rising: IBEW 1245 Women's Committee Luncheon

by Shannan Velayas, Communications Director

On Saturday, August 16, 2025, the IBEW 1245 Women's Committee gathered sisters, supporters, and new faces for its annual Rooted and Rising Luncheon — a day dedicated to celebrating women in the trades, uplifting each other, and inspiring the next generation to join IBEW 1245.

The committee, chaired by Nicole Brooks, IBEW 1245 Business Representative, includes a diverse group of members from across the union — linemen, tree trimmers, welders, clerks, inspectors, customer service reps, electricians, and more. Each committee member was encouraged to bring others with them, creating space for women curious about the trades to see firsthand what IBEW 1245 is all about.

"This luncheon is about lifting each other up and showing what's possible. Every woman here is breaking ground in her own way, and together we're building a future where women are not just present in the trades, we are leading,"

said Nicole Brooks, Chair, IBEW 1245 Women's Committee

Among the new faces was Alexandria Lesniack, who was invited by committee member Julie Brousseau, Traffic Control Tech 1/Lead, Outside Line. Alexandria has spent the past three years doing residential work and is eager to explore becoming a lineman.

Business Manager Bob Dean welcomed attendees and reminded everyone that while the union provides the space, the Women's Committee is truly member-led.

"This work matters because when women see other women in the trades, they know there's a place for them here. That visibility changes lives and builds our future," said Bob Dean, IBEW 1245 Business Manager.

The luncheon also honored Sheila Lawton, IBEW 1245 Assistant Business Manager, with the Trailblazer Award. A 27-year member of IBEW 1245, Sheila has spent the past 16 years at the bargaining table, earning respect for her ability to secure strong contracts. She reflected on the challenges she faced along the way and inspired the audience with her story of resilience and leadership.

Attendees were also deeply moved by guest speaker Jessica Downey, Journeyman Lineman from IBEW Local 77. Jessica shared her remarkable journey of becoming a lineman and her fight back after a serious accident that led to the amputation of her leg. Her story of perseverance, courage, and strength brought the room to its feet in a standing ovation.

Throughout the luncheon, committee members spoke about breaking barriers and building solidarity.

> *"I've met amazing women who inspire me every day. It shows what's possible when we stand together."*
> *— Sandra Martinez, Leak Surveyor, NV Energy.*

"As the only woman working at the wastewater treatment plant in Willits, I want other women to see that there are opportunities outside of the box, and that there's a place for them here in the trades,"

said Nicole Caldwell, Waste Water Treatment Plant Operator III, City of Willits.

The Rooted and Rising Luncheon showcased the solidarity, resilience, and leadership of the women of IBEW 1245 — and their commitment to opening doors for the next generation.

Building the Future in the Silver State

October 23, 2025

IBEW 1245 Women's Committee Inspires Students at Northern Nevada Construction Career Day

IBEW 1245's Women's Committee joined forces with industry and community partners to help inspire the next generation of skilled tradesworkers at this year's Northern Nevada Construction Career Day, held in Reno.

The annual event brings together hundreds of high school students from across the region to explore hands-on career opportunities in construction, energy, and related fields. For many students, it's their first chance to meet tradespeople face-to-face and see what a career in the skilled trades can offer.

Representing IBEW 1245 were Women's Committee Chair Nicole Brookes and Sandra Martinez, a Leak Survey Technician at NV Energy and proud IBEW 1245 member. Throughout the day, they spoke with students about the wide range of careers available in the electrical industry and shared their personal experiences working in the field.

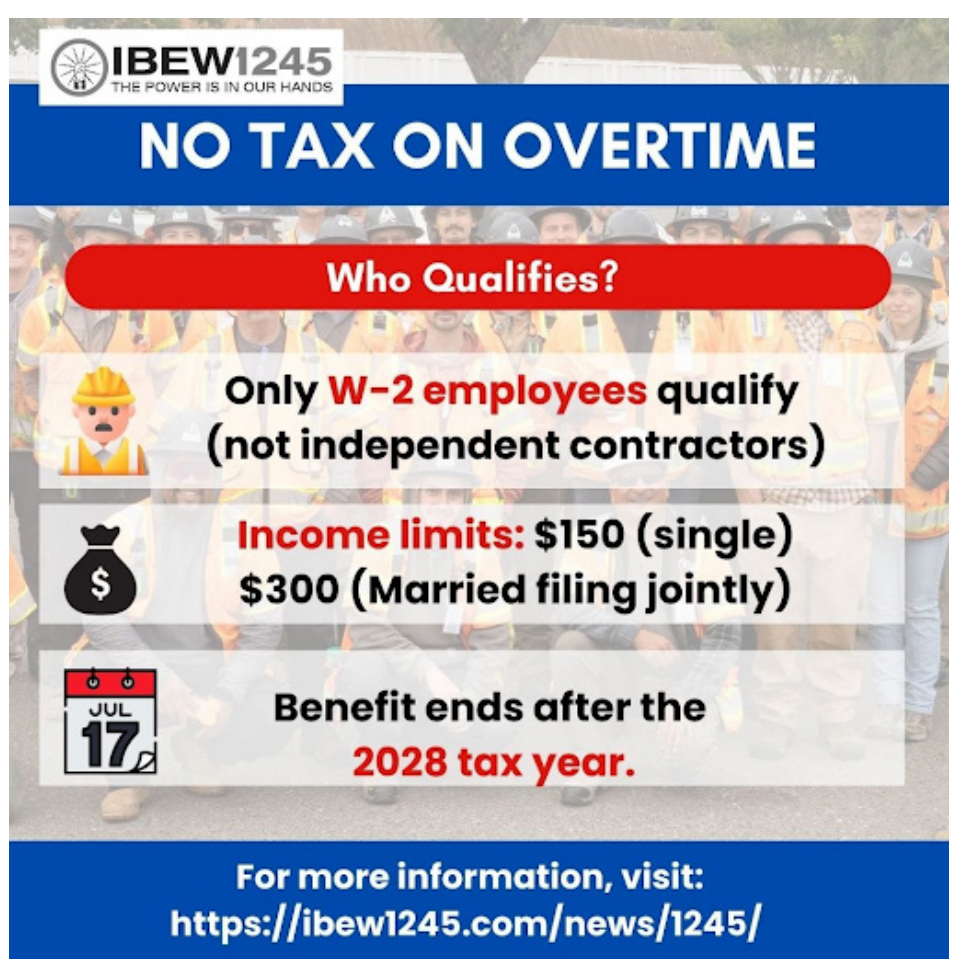
> *"It's about giving them the confidence to see themselves in the trades, and the 1245 Women's Committee was proud to be a part of it."*
> *— Nicole Brooks, Chair, IBEW 1245 Women's Committee"*

IBEW 1245 also partnered with Christine Hull, Executive Director of the Nevada Builders Alliance; JJ Phoenix, Director of Nevada YouthBuild; and Brittany Hunter, YouthBuild Crew Leader, who attended with her all-female Cohort 3 YouthBuild team.

From interactive demonstrations to one-on-one conversations, the day underscored a shared goal: building the future by investing in the next generation.

As the demand for skilled workers continues to rise across Nevada and beyond, the IBEW 1245 Women's Committee remains committed to outreach, mentorship, and leadership development — ensuring that young people, especially young women, see a place for themselves in the power and construction trades.

IBEW 1245 Women's Committee at Northern Nevada Construction Career Day



IBEW 1245 Honors Veterans Through Service at Annual Sacramento Stand Down

by Mike Tilden, Business Representative

The IBEW 1245 Veterans Committee proudly joined forces with dozens of community partners at this year's Sacramento Veteran Stand Down, held September 30th to October 2nd at the Volunteers of America Veterans Service Center at Mather Field. Over three days, the event delivered life-changing resources for at-risk and homeless veterans across Northern California.

Opening ceremonies included remarks from Sacramento County Supervisor Pat Hume, who recognized the partners and volunteers powering the Stand Down and underscored the county's commitment to connecting Veterans with housing, health services, and dignified employment.

Organized by the Sacramento Stand Down Association, the event brought together more than 40 organizations and service providers to offer on-site medical, dental, and vision care, haircuts, housing and employment support, and essential supplies including pet supplies, clothing, and cold-weather gear free of charge to those who have proudly served our nation.

Outside, a long line of tents and service vehicles demonstrated the scale of collaboration and compassion that defines the Sacramento Stand Down each year. "This event shows them that there is hope," said Max Baumgartner, an Emeritus Board Member with the Stand Down. "No one who served this country should ever have to live on the street."

IBEW Local 1245's Veterans Committee hosted a booth throughout the event, engaging with fellow Veterans and sharing information about the benefits of union careers in the electrical industry. Committee members Kaycee King, Steve Ramirez, Neil Norris, and Mike Tilden distributed IBEW 1245 materials and helped Veterans navigate pathways toward good union jobs with family-supporting wages and benefits.

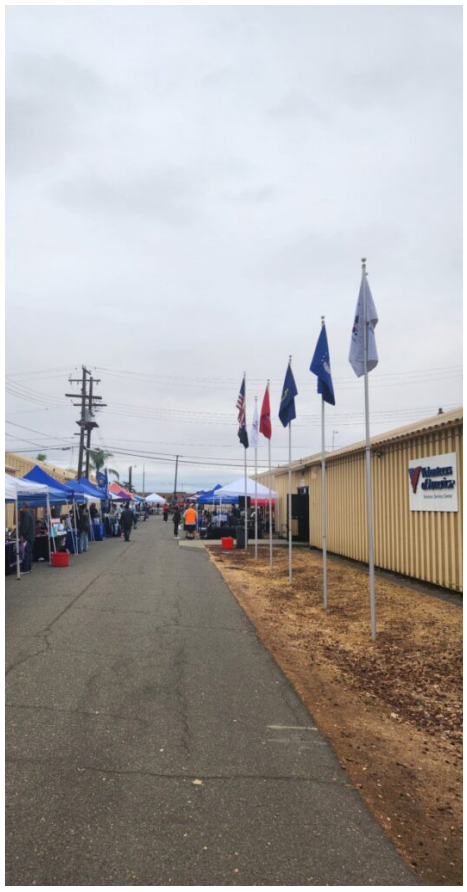
> *"Assisting our country's Veterans however I'm able to is something I greatly enjoy doing."*
> *— Steve Ramirez, Veterans Committee & IBEW 1245 E-Board Member*

Veterans Committee and IBEW 1245 E-Board Member Steve Ramirez commented. "I'm especially honored to represent IBEW 1245 in this capacity and look forward to continuing to do so at future events."

"Events like this are exactly why our Committee exists," said Veterans Committee Chair Mike Tilden. "It's about making sure every Veteran knows they have a place in our IBEW family, and a chance to build a stable, dignified career once they come home."

Last year's Stand Down served more than 540 veterans, many of whom were connected to permanent housing or new job opportunities, and organizers expected this year's turnout to surpass that milestone.

The IBEW 1245 Veterans Committee remains committed to its guiding mission: Leave No Veteran Behind. By partnering with organizations like Volunteers of America and the Sacramento Stand Down Association, the Committee continues to honor that promise one Veteran at a time.



IBEW 1245 Veterans Committee Engages with Hundreds at Yuba/Sutter Veterans Stand Down

By Mike Tilden, Business Representative

On August 15, members of the IBEW 1245 Veterans Committee proudly participated in the 25th annual Yuba-Sutter Veterans Stand Down, held at the Yuba Sutter Fairgrounds in Yuba City, California.

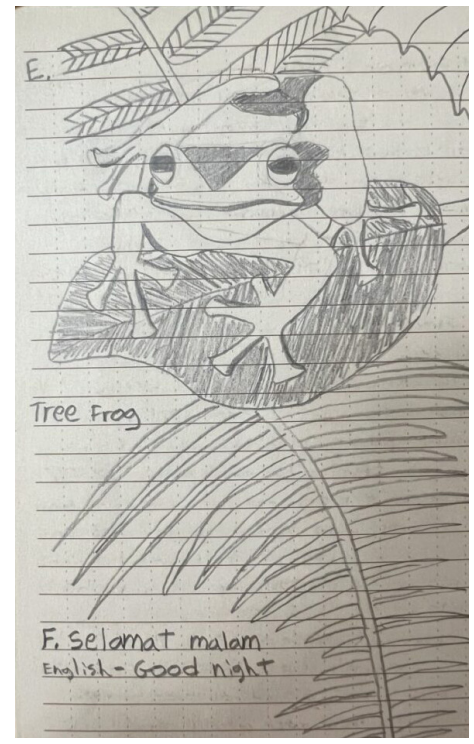
Committee members Neil Norris (PG&E), Kaycee King (PG&E), Steve Ramirez (PG&E), and Rafael Burgos (SMUD) represented IBEW 1245 at the event, which provided critical services to Veterans of all ages and backgrounds. Attendees had access to on-site medical, dental, and vision care, DMV services, free meals, clothing, and dozens of community and organizational resources.

The Veterans Committee hosted a dedicated booth adorned with IBEW 1245 banners and stocked with union swag and informational pamphlets. Throughout the day, committee members spoke with hundreds of fellow Veterans, ranging from those currently serving to retirees, about the role of IBEW 1245, the benefits of Union membership, and the many potential career paths within the Brotherhood and Sisterhood.

In addition to connecting with individual Veterans, the committee also networked with other organizations and vendors in attendance. Conversations focused on building relationships, identifying opportunities for collaboration, and exploring ways to support future Veteran-focused events and fundraisers.

"Events like this allow us to meet Veterans where they are, provide information about life-changing opportunities, and strengthen bonds with other organizations serving the Veteran community," said Mike Tilden, Business Rep and chair of the Veterans Committee. "This was a very successful event, and we're excited to build on the connections we made to expand our outreach at future Veteran events."

The IBEW 1245 Veterans Committee remains committed to supporting and engaging with Veterans across our region, ensuring they have access to opportunities, resources, and a strong community of solidarity.



1245 Member Master Arborist Sees the World Through the Trees

by Shannan Velayas, Communications Director

Andrew Birrell is a Vegetation Operations Inspector for PG&E, a board-certified Master Arborist, and a proud IBEW 1245 grass-roots member. Based at the Geyserville Service Center, he's spent years making tough calls about trees — when to prune, when to preserve, and when removal is the safest option. His work blends science, environmental stewardship, and public safety and plays a key role in PG&E's efforts to be a sustainability leader in the utility industry.

Earlier this summer, Birrell traded the familiar California hillsides for the Island of Borneo which is home to one of the oldest and most biodiverse rainforests on Earth, southeast of the Malay Peninsula and southwest of the Philippines.

Borneo's rainforests are an ecological treasure, estimated at 131 million years old and home to thousands of plant species and rare wildlife, from orangutans to clouded leopards.

Nearly 11,000 species of flowering plants grow on Borneo — about a third found nowhere else on Earth. In a single hectare patch of lowland forest, scientists have recorded over 700 tree species. That's as many as in all of North America.

But this ancient canopy is disappearing fast. In the last 50 years, Borneo has lost more than half its rainforest to deforestation and widespread oil palm expansion. From the air, the endless green has been carved up into neat rows of oil palm as well as dusty roads, all with increased vulnerability of wildfires that can burn deep into carbon-rich peat soils.

"Borneo is awe-inspiring and heartbreaking at the same time," Birrell said as he described the sheer scale of what's been lost to large-scale development, changing land use, and the palm oil industry.

For Birrell, the parallels between Borneo and California are clear. In both places, trees are vital to life. They anchor ecosystems, support wildlife, sustain communities, cool the planet, purify the air, and store vast amounts of carbon. Ironically, the same climate change that heightens the importance of these trees is also intensifying wildfires. Vegetation management practices, like trimming or removing trees, which are intended to reduce fire risks, can inadvertently release stored carbon and further impact the climate. This makes PG&E's leadership in sustainable vegetation management, and Birrell's role in it, even more critical.

Birrell's expertise comes from decades in the field and formal training. He earned his Master Arborist credential through the International Society of Arboriculture, and he's not done learning. The trip was part of a two-week program through his advanced coursework in forestry and environmental management.

Vegetation management is no longer just routine maintenance. It's a critical part of adapting to a changing climate. IBEW 1245 Business Manager Bob Dean put it this way: "Our vegetation management crews are on the front lines of what's ahead," Dean said. "They're already dealing with hotter summers, shifting weather patterns, and growing demand on the grid. The work they're doing today is helping to preserve our communities and our planet for the future."

Looking ahead, Birrell sees several keys to improving the work: expanding the use of remote sensing to pinpoint risks, consistent, high-quality training, and improving efficiency in the field. He notes that while the past four years have brought relatively favorable weather, California's decade-long drought before that is a reminder of how quickly conditions can change. On top of that, last year brought the highest number of extreme-heat days on record, and the rapid growth of AI data centers is pushing electricity demand to new highs.

"I love my job," Birrell said. "It's a chance to protect the planet, keep people safe, and advocate for both the trees and the workers who care for them. The choices, actions and decisions we make locally in California — about how we manage vegetation, protect ecosystems, and meet our energy needs — can have far-reaching impacts on a global scale. Every decision is important, and that's what keeps me committed to this work."

Good News on Benefits for IBEW 1245 Members at PG&E

For years, members have asked for more flexibility in their 401(k) options — and until recently, PG&E was unwilling to discuss changes outside of General Negotiations. Thanks to the persistence of IBEW 1245, those long-standing requests are finally becoming a reality at the start of 2026.

Beginning January 1, 2026, two important improvements to the PG&E Retirement Savings Plan (RSP 401(k)) will go into effect under LA 25-16:

Roth 401(k) Option

IBEW 1245 represented employees will be able to contribute to a Roth 401(k). Unlike pre-tax and after-tax contributions, Roth contributions grow tax-free — and qualified withdrawals in retirement may also be tax-free.

Increased Contribution Limit

Members will have the option to contribute up to 50% of pay (compared to the current 20% cap). This added flexibility allows members to save at the pace that best matches their financial goals.

Peer-to-Peer Safety Groups Hit New Marks in 2025

Safety Steward Participation Grows 147% Since 2021

by Shannan Velayas, Communications Director

IBEW 1245's Peer-to-Peer Safety Committees achieved major growth in 2025, reaching more than 4,000 members across the jurisdiction — the largest engagement since the program began in 2009. The number of Safety Stewards has also grown dramatically, from roughly 150 in 2021 to more than 370 today, reflecting a powerful, member-driven commitment to safety culture.

The four committees — Hold the Pull (HTP), Keep the Clearance (KTC), Regulate the Voltage (RTV), and Control the Pressure (CTP) — delivered safety messages at apprenticeship classes, unit meetings, job sites, yards, and safety summits — often reaching hundreds of members at a single event. They also strengthened partnerships with outside utilities, including NV Energy and municipal partners, helping spread the peer-led safety culture to new regions.

"With over 350 Safety Stewards, the peer groups are making a difference for our members and their families," said Peer-to-Peer Coordinator and Business Representative Fred Aboud. "Peer-led safety saves lives. Thank you to Business Manager Bob Dean for the continuous support of these programs."

2025 marked the retirement of longtime peer leader Ernie Peña, one of the original members involved in launching the program. His leadership helped shape the peer-to-peer culture that exists today, a legacy that will continue to protect future generations.

RTV attended PG&E's Monterey Substation Safety Summit.

CTP joined more than 250 members at the Sacramento GC Gas Safety Summit

Hold the Pull (HTP)

Chair: Brady Brunson • Recorder: Mike Van Egmond

HTP introduced a new approach this year by meeting crews directly on job sites, prompting more open conversations about hazards, mental health, and real-world challenges. They delivered dozens of pitches — from apprentice classes in Livermore to yard visits in Oakland and Richmond, large unit meetings in Fresno and San Francisco, and a joint visit to Wheeler & Wells Rural Electric in Nevada.

Control the Pressure (CTP)

Co-Chairs: Kevin Foster & Mike Gauchi & Lamont Presley • Recorder: Nilda Holguin

CTP elevated the "if you see something, say something" message through powerful peer testimony from members who survived workplace assaults and trauma, turning lived experience into life-saving lessons. The committee had a standout year, with major presence at Gas System Operations & Maintenance (GSOM), Gas Pipeline Operations & Maintenance (GPOM), and GC Traffic & Spoils Safety Summits, as well as NV Energy presentations on joint trench hazards. They also led Mod 0 sessions for new hires on complacency, hostile customer safety, and speaking up.

Keep the Clearance (KTC)

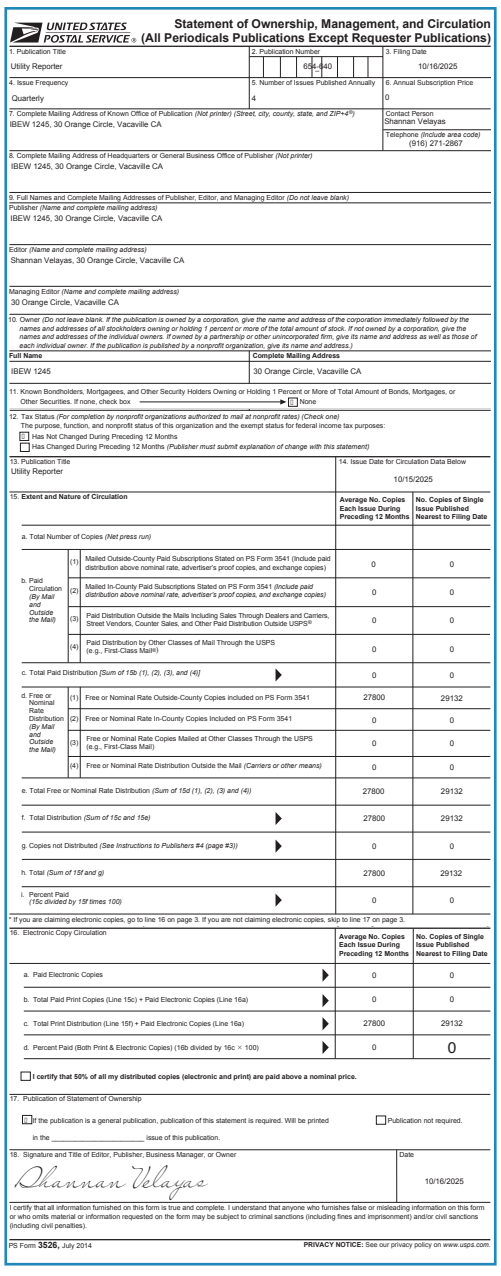
Chair: Jose Paredes • Recorder: Russ Gordon

KTC continued to expand its outreach in 2025, bringing its safety message to vegetation management crews across multiple regions. The committee delivered presentations at safety summits, unit meetings, and job sites, strengthening awareness around the unique hazards of remote terrain, steep ground, and high-fire areas. Their steady presence kept safety front and center in one of the most high-risk classifications, reinforcing the importance of vigilance and peer support throughout the year.

Regulate the Voltage (RTV)

Chair: Brad Early • Recorder: Josh Halliburton

RTV significantly expanded its footprint in 2025, visiting utility operations across California and Nevada and delivering presentations at PG&E safety summits in Monterey, Desabla Hydro, West Bay, Tracy, and Colusa. Also, the committee expanded into hydro operations for the first time and strengthened cross-utility partnerships, connecting workers across multiple utilities and job classifications. The programs continue to grow across classifications and geography, and other IBEW locals have reached out asking how to replicate the model in their own jurisdictions.



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE — Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

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10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)

Full Name	Complete Mailing Address
IBEW 1245	30 Orange Circle, Vacaville CA

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12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one)
The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes:
☒ Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
☐ Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)

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i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		0	0

* If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.

16. Electronic Copy Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Paid Electronic Copies	0	0
b. Total Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	0	0
c. Total Print Distribution (Line 15f) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	27800	29132
d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c × 100)	0	0

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I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

PS Form 3526, July 2014 — PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy policy on www.usps.com.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- **11 APRIL** — South Valley Golf Tournament
- **18 APRIL** — Clay Shoot
- **02 MAY** — Soccer Tournament
- **15 AUG** — Nevada Golf Tournament *(tentative)*
- **12 APRIL** — North Valley Golf Tournament

FIND YOUR UNIT MEETING

Use our easy meeting-lookup tool at:

ibew1245.com/unit-meetings

2025 IBEW LOCAL 1245 SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST RULES

Visit **ibew1245.com/scholarships** to learn more.

The purpose of this contest is to provide scholarship aid for colleges, community colleges and trade schools, thereby providing financial assistance toward the attainment of a higher education.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ALL APPLICANTS FOR ALL SCHOLARSHIPS

Applicant must be the child, grandchild or spouse of an IBEW 1245 member or retiree club member who is current and in good standing. **The Veterans scholarship is for IBEW Local 1245 members who are veterans.**

Applicant will be required to submit the completed scholarship application, two letters of recommendation from a non-relative instructor, principal, counselor or supervisor, and an essay, **not to exceed 500-words**, on the subject designated by the Executive Board. Essays must be submitted on 8 1/2" x 11" paper, on one side, preferably typed and doubled spaced, **with applicant's written signature at the conclusion of the essay, and the essay topic at the beginning of the essay**.

Completed application packets must be mailed to: IBEW Local Union 1245, Attn: 2026 Scholarship Committee (TA), P.O. Box 2547, Vacaville, CA 95696, and be **postmarked no later than the first Monday in March (March 2, 2026)**.

The scholarship will be made only to that candidate who intends to enroll full-time in an institution that is certified by their State Department of Education and accredited by the Local Accrediting Association.

Payment(s) will be paid directly to the college upon presentation of proof of enrollment and tuition costs to IBEW Local Union 1245, Attn: 2026 Scholarship Committee (TA), PO Box 2547,Vacaville, CA 95696, or tfa3@ibew1245.com.

Responsibility of Scholarship Recipient: Scholarship winner must begin their studies in their next term or, at the very latest, in January of the following year.

Scholarship applications may be obtained from the Local 1245 website: www.ibew1245.com/scholarships.

Scholarship winners and their families will be invited to the April Advisory Council meeting, at IBEW LU 1245's expense, to read their essays and have lunch with the Executive Board, Advisory Council and Local Union Leadership. Scholarship recipients will be presented with a suitable certificate or plaque to commemorate their win.

Scholarships winners are not eligible to apply for additional scholarships.

SCHOLARSHIPS WILL BE AWARDED AS FOLLOWS:

❑ **Roger Stalcup Community College Scholarship (2): Eligibility: See Eligibility for all applicants for all scholarships.**

Award: Two winners will be selected to receive **up to $1,500.00**, for **up to two semesters**, which must be used for Community College tuition and course materials.

❑ **IBEW 1245 Survivor's Scholarship (1):**

Eligibility: Applicant must be the surviving child, grandchild or spouse of an IBEW 1245 member or retiree club member who was current and in good standing at the time of their death.

Award: One winner will be selected to receive a one-time scholarship, of **up to $5,000.00**, which must be used for trade school, community college or university tuition. The payment will be made directly to the school after LU 1245 Scholarship Committee receives proof of enrollment and cost of tuition. Enrollment letter must include student ID number.

continuted on next page

THE ESSAY TOPIC FOR THE 2026 SCHOLARSHIPS IS:

"How have nonunion workers benefited from union collective bargaining?"

Mail to: IBEW LOCAL UNION 1245, Attn: 2026 Scholarship Committee (TA), P.O. Box 2547, Vacaville, CA 95696 I Telephone: (707) 452-2718

SELECT ONE (1) SCHOLARSHIP:

❑ **Roger Stalcup Community College Scholarship (2)**

❑ **IBEW 1245 Survivor's Scholarship (1)**

❑ **IBEW 1245 Veteran's Scholarship (1)**

Ronald T. Weakley IBEW 1245 Scholarships (2):

❑ **Electrical Line Worker Scholarship**

❑ **Vocational Trade School Scholarship:**

I hereby make application to enter the

_____

Scholarship contest sponsored by IBEW Local Union 1245, AFL-CIO.

Personal Information

Name: Last, First, MI — Date of Birth

10-Digit Telephone #

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Name of Parent

Parent Employer — Employer HQ Locaiton

High School (Graduated or Will Graduate From) — (Graduation or Expected Graduation Date)

High School Location — GPA (N/A for Veterans Scholarship)

College or Trade School I expect to attend. — Location

Candidate's Signature — **Date**

School Official: This is to certify that the above-named candidate is currently enrolled as a student and will be graduating in 2026.

School Name — Graduation Date

School Official's Signature and Position

This is to certify that I am a member in good standing of IBEW Local Union 1245 and the Candidate whose name is signed to this application is my

Relationship to Member (and has or will graduate during the term ending)

Parent's Signature — **Card No.** — **Date**

Veteran's Information (for IBEW LU 1245 members applying for this scholarship): List information about your service in the US Armed Forces, including branch, dates of service, deployment locations. Attach a copy of your DD214.

Were you horoably discharged?

College and Career Information:

Name and location of college you have or will have attended for at least one year as of **December 2025**. (If more than one, list the college most recently attended)

Attendance Dates — Major/Field of Study

Test Scores: SAT: ACT: GRE: LSAT: MCAT:

If you will be entering Graduate School in the Spring of 2026, please provide additional information about your college degrees, certifications, and work experience (as applicable):

(Anticipated Graduation Date)

Briefly outline your career goals while addressing the following: Explain why you want to pursue a college education. How will this education contribute towards your immediate and/or long-term career plans?

List Employment and extracurricular activities (internships, sports, clubs):

Employment

Employment

Activities

Activities

List community service activity and awards:

Community Service

Community Service:

Awards

Financial Need:

Anticipated amount of funding needed: $

Total household income — Total number of people in household

How did you learn about the IBEW Local 1245 Scholarships?

DID YOU REMEMBER TO:

❑ **Complete the application?**

❑ **Obtain all signatures?**

❑ **Attach your essay?**

❑ **Attach two non-relative letters of reference?**

❑ **Attach your DD214? (LU 1245 veteran scholarship applicants only)**

❑ **IBEW 1245 Veteran's Scholarship (1):**

Eligibility: Applicant must be an IBEW 1245 member or retiree club member in good standing **AND** an honorably discharged veteran of a branch of the United States Armed Forces or Reserves. Applicants must also provide a copy of their DD214 documentation.

Award: One winner will be selected for a one-time scholarship, **up to $5,000.00**, which must be used for trade school, community college or university tuition. **The payment will be made directly to the school after the LU 1245 Scholarship Committee receives proof of enrollment and cost of tuition. Enrollment letter must include student ID number**.

❑ **Ronald T. Weakley IBEW 1245 Scholarships (2):**

❑ **Electrical Line Worker Scholarship: Eligibility: See Eligibility for all applicants for all scholarships**

Award: One winner will be selected to receive a scholarship **up to a total of $10,000.00**. The recipient will initially receive up to $2,500.00 to be used for tuition for an approved electrical line worker program (i.e. VOLTA). Following verification of completion of the program AND **1,000 hours worked in the electrical line trade in IBEW 1245's jurisdiction** AND verification of attendance at ten (10) IBEW 1245 unit meetings within an 18-month period, the recipient will receive up to $7,500.00 toward reimbursement of tuition and required materials. The payment will be made directly to the school after the LU 1245 Scholarship Committee receives proof of enrollment and cost of tuition.

❑ **Vocational Trade School Scholarship: Eligibility: See Eligibility for all applicants for all scholarships**

Award: One winner will be selected to receive a one-time scholarship **up to $1,000.00**. Trade school certification must be a union-based occupation within the scope of work IBEW 1245 members perform. The payment will be made directly to the school after the LU 1245 Scholarship Committee receives proof of enrollment and cost of tuition.

AL SANDOVAL MEMORIAL COMPETITIVE SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

The purpose of this contest is to provide a grant for scholarships to colleges and junior colleges, thereby making financial assistance toward the attainment of a higher education.

The scholarship will be as follows:

1. Two thousand five hundred dollars ($2,500.00) per year, up to four (4) years, as long as a C (2.0) average is maintained, the student is full-time, and the parent maintains their membership in good standing in Local Union 1245.
2. In order to be a candidate in this contest, you must be a son or daughter, natural, legally adopted or a legal ward of a member of Local Union 1245. You must also be a high school student who has graduated or is graduating in (the year of the contest). **A copy of your diploma or a letter from your high school stating that you will graduate in 2026 must be attached to your scholarship application.**
3. The Scholarship Grant will be made only to that candidate who intends to enroll full-time in any college certified by their State Department of Education and accredited by the Local Accrediting Association.

   Responsibility of Scholarship Recipient: Scholarship winner must begin their studies in their next term or, at the very latest, in January of the following year.
4. Applications may be downloaded from the IBEW Local 1245 website (see link below). (**www.ibew1245.com/scholarships**).
5. **Checks will be paid directly to the college upon receipt of the official transcript from your college or university, confirming full-time student status and GPA. Email transcript to: tfa3@ibew1245.com.**
6. All applications shall be accompanied by a written essay, **not to exceed five hundred (500) words**, on the subject designated by the Executive Board.
7. Essays should be submitted on 8 1/2" x 11" paper, on one side, preferably typed and doubled spaced with applicant's written signature at the conclusion of the essay.
8. **Applications and essays must be mailed to I.B.E.W., Local Union 1245, Attn: 2026 Sandoval Scholarship Committee (TA), P.O. Box 2547, Vacaville, California 95696, by REGISTERED CERTIFIED MAIL ONLY, and be postmarked no later than the first Monday in March of each year. (March 2, 2026) NO ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS**
9. Each year the scholarship shall be presented at the Advisory Council meeting in April; the winner and their parents shall be invited, at Local Union expense, to receive the Scholarship Award.
10. A suitable trophy, plaque or certificate shall be purchased by the Local Union to be presented to the scholarship recipient.

THE ESSAY TOPIC FOR THE 2026 AL SANDOVAL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS IS:

"How have nonunion workers benefited from union collective bargaining?"

APPLICATION FOR THE 2026 AL SANDOVAL MEMORIAL COMPETITIVE SCHOLARSHIP

Sponsored by

LOCAL UNION 1245

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS, AFL CIO

Mail to: IBEW Local 1245, Attn: 2026 Sandoval Scholarship Committee (TA), P.O. Box 2547, Vacaville, CA 95696
NO ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS I Telephone: (707) 452-2718

I hereby make application to enter the Al Sandoval Competitive Scholarship Contest sponsored by Local Union 1245, I.B.E.W., AFL CIO

Name: Last, First, MI — Date of Birth

10-Digit Telephone #

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Name of Parent

Parent Employer — Employer HQ Location

High School Student Will Graduate From — High School Location

College or University Expected to Attended — Location

Candidate's Signature — **Date**

School Official: This is to certify that the above-named candidate is currently enrolled as a student and will be graduating in 2026.

School Name — Graduation Date

School Official's Signature and Position

This is to certify that I am a member in good standing of IBEW Local Union 1245 and the Candidate whose name is signed to this application is my

Relationship to Member — Graduation Date

Parent's Name (PLEASE PRINT) — **Card No.**

Parent's Signature — **Date**

Congratulations to Apprentice Lineman and IBEW 1245 member Mauricio Jiménez — winner of the 4th Quarter IBEW 1245 Photo Contest!

Mauricio, who works for Par Western Line Contractor LLC, captured this jaw-dropping moment from the ground: a plane soaring directly overhead as line crews worked skillfully on the power lines.

All of the submitted photos were outstanding — thank you to every member who shared their work and their view from the field. Keep the shots coming!

Submit your photos:

The winning entry receives $500 and is featured in the Utility Reporter.

Send submissions to membermedia@ibew1245.com