

# Discover 2007

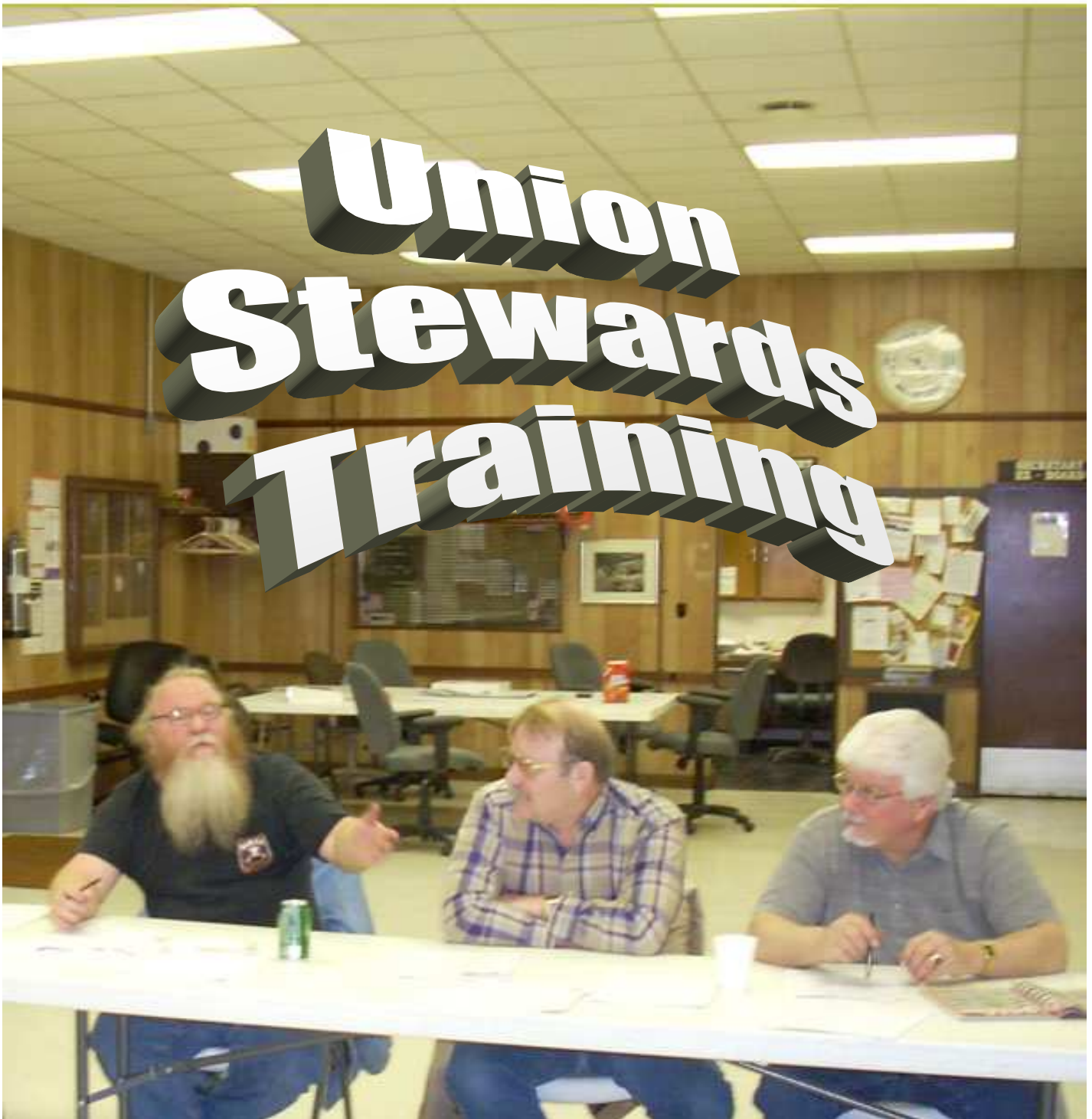
United Steelworkers

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# Union Stewards Training



**Volume 12, Issue 1**

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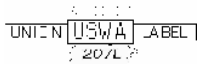
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**MARCH**

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Cover Photo by Kevin Welch. From left to right:  
Greg Campbell, Rob Greer and Dennis Montgomery



Front left to right: Ron Coldren, financial secretary, Ron Rettig, vice president Rodney Nelson, president, Kevin Welch, recording secretary, Billy Nelson, treasurer, James Gutierrez, guard, Tim Thompson, guard. Back row, left to right: Jim Desgranges, trustee, Bob Brubaker, trustee, Tim Smith, executive board member, Clifton Baxter, executive board member, Rob Greer, guide, Bob Brumbaugh, executive board member and Terri Thompson, trustee.

# Health & Safety

## Forklift Battery Changing Station Safety

Powered industrial trucks are used in many industries for a variety of applications. Due to increasing technological advancements, battery powered industrial trucks are becoming more and more prevalent. With longer run times, shorter re-charging times and reduced emissions, this type of truck is going to become even more popular. Currently, there are numerous styles of battery operated trucks that range from small, motorized pallet trucks to much larger high lift trucks. No matter what kind of truck you have, there are similar hazards associated with their batteries and their maintenance.

### Forklift Batteries

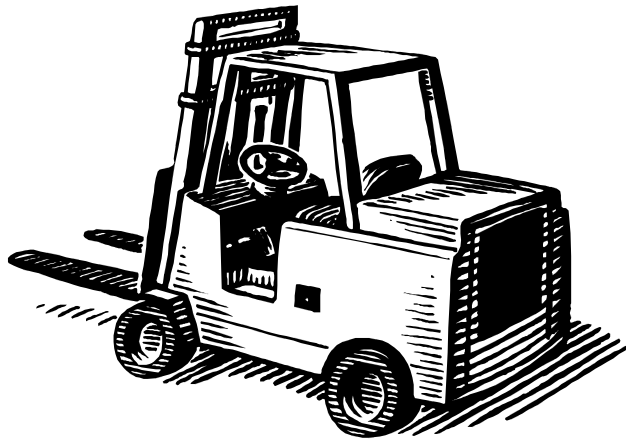
There are two styles of batteries in industrial trucks today: Lead acid or nickel-iron. Both of these batteries can pose health and safety hazards.

- Shear weight--some batteries weigh as much as 2000 lbs. or more
- Gases emitted during charging can be highly volatile
- Corrosive chemicals exist within the battery

For these reasons, battery charging stations and the employees that work around them must be properly equipped with personal protective equipment in addition to having certain safety procedures implemented.

To protect workers from danger associated with the battery's weight, the batteries should only be removed and replaced from the forklifts using a special equipped forklift or battery cart specifically designed for transporting batteries, or even an automatic battery charger.

Batteries that are being removed or replaced should be securely placed and restrained in the cart or the forklift. Use the correct tools and follow proper procedures when moving batteries.



This will ensure that the battery remains stable and does not fall.

Batteries release oxygen and hydrogen gases when they are charging. This effect, called "out gassing" is more noticeable if the battery is being over-charged. In the right concentrations, these gases can be highly explosive. Due to this "out gassing" effect, charging stations should be located in well-ventilated areas, to prevent concentrations of hydrogen and oxygen from reaching volatile levels. General or local ventila-

tion can be provided by a fume hood or an exhaust fan. If an on-board charging system is used, the industrial truck itself should be parked in a location where there is adequate ventilation.

Sulfuric acid is a common and hazardous component in a battery. In the event of a battery acid spill, neutralizing agents should be spread on the spill. These cleanup materials should be on hand at all times. After the spill is neutralized, it can be safely cleaned up and disposed of in accordance with local ordinances. Only properly trained and authorized employees should perform an acid cleanup.

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Whenever changing or servicing a battery, personal protective equipment (PPE) should be worn to prevent harm if an accident should occur. The first area of concern is the weight of the battery. To protect workers against drops, proper footwear, such as steel-toe boots should be worn.

Maintaining batteries by adding water or acid also requires appropriate protection. Chemical-resistant gloves, acid apron, eyewear and face protection are a must. They will reduce the risk of injury should an acid splash occur. As stated by OSHA 29 CFR 1910.133(a)(1), "The employer shall ensure that each affected employee uses appropriate eye or face protection when exposed to eye or

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# Health & Safety

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face hazards from flying particles, molten metal, liquid chemicals, acids or caustic liquids, chemical gases or vapors, or potentially injurious light radiation."

Face protection must meet the ANSI Z87.1-1989 specifications or be proven equally effective. Face shields are considered as secondary eye protection only. Indirect or non-vented safety goggles should also be worn to protect the eyes.

An [eye/face wash and shower](#) are other required pieces of equipment that must be in or near a battery changing area. According to [OSHA 29 CFR 1910.151](#), "...where the eyes or body of any person may be exposed to injurious corrosive materials, suitable facilities for quick drenching or flushing of the eyes and body shall be provided within the work area for immediate emergency use."

According to ANSI Z358.1-2004, the eye/face wash and shower must be within 10 seconds in distance of the hazard and on the same level as that hazard. This unit needs to be clearly identified with proper signs and adequate lighting.

## Basic Battery Charging Guidelines

In order to insure that battery changes are performed safely, certain steps should be taken. In [29 CFR 1910.178](#), OSHA has called out a basic battery charging and changing guidelines:

(g) Changing and charging stor-

age batteries.

1. Battery charging installations shall be located in areas designated for that purpose.

2. Facilities shall be provided for flushing and neutralizing spilled electrolyte, for fire protection, for protecting charging apparatus from damage by trucks, and for adequate ventilation for dispersal of fumes from gassing batteries.



3. A conveyor, overhead hoist, or equivalent material handling equipment shall be provided for handling batteries.

4. Reinstalled batteries shall be properly positioned and secured in the truck.

5. A carboy tilter or siphon shall be provided for handling electrolyte.

6. When charging batteries, acid shall be poured into water; water shall not be poured into acid.

7. Trucks shall be properly positioned and brake applied before attempting to change or charge batteries.

8. Care shall be taken to assure that vent caps are functioning. The battery (or compartment) cover(s) shall be open to dissipate heat.

9. Smoking shall be prohibited in the charging area.

10. Precautions shall be taken to prevent open flames, sparks, or electric arcs in battery charging areas.

Tools and other metallic objects shall be kept away from the top of uncovered batteries.

Resources for article:  
LSS.com

## Selecting the Correct Glove Size

When a job calls for specific hand protection it is the responsibility of the employer to make a hazard assessment and then determine the best glove for the hazards that exist in a particular application. Once a glove is found or selected for duty, the next question usually is, "What size will I need?" Often employers are required to select more than one size for various employees that may have to don hand protection for various applications.

Ordering gloves too small or too large can result in delays in getting the job done, as well as possible hand injuries. When the selected hand protection is too small, the gloves can be uncomfortable and cause hand fatigue. If the glove material is stretched beyond its capabilities it will tear or rip easily when donning or wearing the glove which is wasteful and costly, as well as increasing the possibility of injury due to an unprotected hand. A glove that is too small can compromise hand dexterity for the wearer, so the chances of the end user not wearing the glove for intended purposes is likely. Then again, when you select hand protection that is too large, a safety issue can result with gloves getting caught into moving parts of machinery or

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snagged on jagged edges. A glove that is too loose can literally be pulled off the hand, or worse, could result in pulling a glove, hand or person into moving machinery.

It is important to know how to measure the hand to get the most proper fit of the glove to the hand. Measuring the hand for correct fit will give the employee the best possible protection without compromising the task, duty or safety of the wearer.

To find the correct glove size, you will want to measure around the hand (a dominant hand measurement is preferred) with a tape measure. The dominant hand will be the right if you are right-handed and left if you are left-handed.



If the gloves you are purchasing come in numbered sizes, you can relate the inch measurement of your hand directly to the numerical size listed for the glove. Example: if the measurement taken is 8 inches, then you would select a size 8 glove. If your taken measurement is over 8 inches then it is prudent to select the next size larger in order to avoid hand fatigue from a too small glove. If the gloves you are purchasing come in lettered sizes such as XS, S, M, L, XL these can be easily translated to a numerical size for easy selection. See the table for numerical and lettered sizing relation.

Men's Sizes			Women's Sizes		
	Inch	cm		Inch	cm
XS	7	18	XS	6	15
S	7 1/2-8	20	S	6 1/2	17
M	8 1/2-9	23	M	7	18
L	9 1/2-10	25	L	7 1/2	19
XL	10 1/2-11	28	XL	8	20

Taking the time to accurately measure and select the correct size of glove for your employees is crucial in providing adequate hand protection. Without correct-fitting gloves your employees have a higher risk of remaining unprotected in the workplace which can lead to unwanted hand injuries.

Resource for article: LSS.com

Safety Committee  
Dan Radebaugh and Mike Welty

## Top 10 Effects of Globalization

10. **Manufacturing Job Loss** – Since early 2001, we've lost 17.4 percent of our manufacturing jobs. That's nearly three million family-supportive jobs!
9. **"White Collar" Job Loss** – Accountants, scientists, editors, programmers and many others are at risk of seeing their jobs head offshore due to the growing availability of technology and cheap labor. A Princeton economist recently estimated that 30 to 40 million U.S. jobs could be outsourced in the near future.
8. **Devastated Workers & Families** – The U.S. social safety net isn't properly set up for workers in this economy. Often, a job loss means losing a pension, health care and financial footing. These pressures mean severe strain and hardship for families.
7. **Depressed Wages & Benefits** – Direct competition with workers around the globe (who are often paid poverty wages) means U.S. workers are pressured to accept lower wages and fewer benefits. Globalization creates extreme income inequality.
6. **Failing Economies** – When jobs are lost, the tax base shrinks. It becomes tougher for communities and states to provide services to taxpayers.
5. **Shrinking Paychecks** – Manufacturing jobs average \$725/week, while the overall weekly average for all jobs is \$602/week.
4. **Giving Our Nation's Lawmaking Power to Corporate Entities** – We've put ourselves in a position where we've had to overhaul our domestic laws because they've been challenged at the World Trade Organization. In deals like NAFTA, we agreed to let corporations challenge any of our laws – even environmental protections!
3. **Skyrocketing Trade Deficit** – Our number of exports is dwarfed by the number of products we import. This isn't sustainable and goes hand in hand with job loss.
2. **Sweatshop Exploitation & Toxic Imports** – Globalization is encouraging companies to scan the globe to find the most exploitable workers in order to fatten wallets. Child workers, slave labor and inhumane conditions are becoming all too common. In this rush to make cheaper goods, safety standards are compromised. We are then left with toxic products flooding our market and endangering even the lives of our children.
1. **Constant Stress and Insecurity** – We now live in a world where no matter how hard we work or how dedicated we are, we can still lose our job at any time. We have to constantly live with the fear of losing our job, not being able to support our families, losing our healthcare and being forced to take a job (if we can even find one) that pays much less and immediately lowers our standard of living.

# March 4th Ohio Primary Election

Once again it is Primary Election time in the state of Ohio. In order to vote in the Primaries you must have been registered to vote by February 4th.

When voting you will need Proof of Identity.

Acceptable forms of I.D. are:

- **Bank statements,**
- **Utility bills,**
- **Paychecks and**
- **Any government-issued document showing your current address.**
- **You may also use your Ohio driver's license or Ohio photo I.D. -- even if it shows a previous address.**

(Note: You cannot use as proof of identification a notice that the board of elections mailed to



you.) If you do not have, or fail or refuse to provide, the required proof of identity, you may cast a provisional ballot.

## Provisional Voting

Provisional Voting is a safety-net used to protect your right to vote. If voter registration records have not been updated by either the voter or the county board of elections, Provisional Voting allows voters, who would otherwise not be permitted to vote, to cast a ballot and have their registration information later verified. Provisional Voting also allows voters who have moved within thirty days of an election to vote in their new precinct by completing a simple form.



**JOIN PRESIDENT CLINTON  
IN FINDLAY FOR A  
"SOLUTIONS FOR AMERICA" RALLY**

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 29  
9:45 A.M. EST**

University of Findlay  
Croy Physical Education Center  
1000 North Main Street  
Findlay, OH

You will be asked to declare your Party of Choice. This will give you a ballot with the Candidates of your declared party along with any issues on the ballot of your Precinct.

If you have any questions on your voting status or polling place please contact your Local Board of Elections.

<http://www.sos.state.oh.us/sos/id/boe.htm>

To vote absentee, go to your Local Board of Elections. Check our web site for your Local Board of Elections address.

**The right to vote  
gives us the opportunity to  
change our world.**

## **AFL-CIO Worker's Compensation Seminar**

I would like to thank the membership for sending Mike Lee and myself, David Sharninghouse, to the AFL-CIO Worker's Compensation seminar on Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>. The week long seminar covered many of the items we have to deal with here at Local 207L including such things as temporary total, permanent total, and workers rehab. The classes were intense and informative.

We also had the opportunity to meet with Joe Rugola, Ohio AFL-CIO president, and more importantly with Gary M. DeCigleo, Chair-Person of Ohio's Industrial Commission. Gary and his fellow members, William E. Thompson and Kevin R. Abrams, have the final say when it comes to WC hearings. All in all, it was a very educational experience for Mike and me.



**Gary M. DeCigleo, Chair-Person of Ohio's Industrial Commission and David Sharninghouse.**

## **Steward Training**

On February 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> the Stewards of USW Local 207 attended meetings at the Union Hall.

Rodney Nelson went over what is expected from the stewards.

After the presentation we went over plant problems: we discussed base rate problems, we have filed grievance and gave out letters of interpretations on open machines, who can bump off other people working on overtime.

This was the first time a lot of these stewards had any formal training. In the future we are going to try to keep them up to date every other month. As we get closer to contract we will try to keep them up to date each month.



You can find your union steward on our web site.

## **Regular Monthly Meeting**

**Tuesday, March 18th, 2008 at 6:45PM**

**Wednesday, March 19th, 2008 at 6:45AM**

**Wednesday, March 19th, 2008 at 6:45PM**

**Thursday, March 20th, 2008 at 6:45AM**

# NOTICE

USW LOCAL 207L SCHOLARSHIPS ARE NOW AVAILABLE FOR  
DEPENDANTS OF LOCAL 207 L MEMBERS.  
THESE SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE UNION HALL OR  
THE FORM CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM OUR WEBSITE:

Deadline is APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2008



*"I sure hope Social Security is around when I'm 65.  
I'll need it to finish paying off my college loans."*