

3rd and Lander Teamsters poised for possible strike

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Workers at Republic Services' 3rd and Lander transfer station in downtown Seattle voted to authorize a strike on Tuesday, February 2, in an effort to protect their pension. A strike at the SODO district facility would have a ripple effect upon recycling and sanitation services throughout the Puget Sound. The thirteen workers at the facility deal with potentially hazardous solid waste and recycling materials that are delivered from all over the city.

“These workers know an assault on their pension when they see it and they are ready to defend themselves,” said Teamsters Local 117 Secretary-Treasurer, Tracey A. Thompson. “This is not just about the thirteen workers in this facility. The retirement security of all workers in the solid waste and recycling industries is at stake.”

Approximately 750 workers from two Teamsters Locals – Local 117 and Local 174 – in King County alone bring waste and recycling deliveries to the Republic-owned facility. “A strike at 3rd and Lander would likely exacerbate dangerous working conditions at the facility and it would cause waste and recycling drivers throughout the area to deposit their cargo at other locations,” Thompson said.

Republic (formerly Allied Waste) issued its Last, Best, and Final offer to its employees at the 3rd and Lander facility on January 27. Given the Company's insistence on contract language that could significantly erode the workers' pensions, the Union rejected the offer outright and the thirteen workers at the facility voted to authorize a strike.

“This is an example of a large company that is doing well financially taking advantage of the economic crisis in a way that would punish workers and threaten their retirement security,” Thompson said.

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