



# International Brotherhood Electrical Workers

## Local #1837 Utility / Broadcasting

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### **International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union #1837 Public Hearing Testimony for the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee Newington Town Hall – Thursday, May 7, 2015**

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers supports Sea-3's Request for Exemption from the Approval and Certificate Provisions of RSA Chapter 162-H.

IBEW is proud to represent most of the workforce that handles fuel at Sea-3's facility. Currently, we have 10 members working there.

These workers are highly experienced and dedicated professionals. All but one of them has the benefit of between 15 and 40 years of experience working at Sea-3. Even the least experienced among them has been working there for five years.

We understand that many of the members of the community who are here tonight have concerns about safety at Sea-3 and what effect the proposed improvements might have on the operation.

The workers at Sea-3 have demonstrated a consistent and unrelenting focus on the safety of the facility since it first opened in 1975. To that end, management has gone above and beyond to make sure that they receive the proper training.

All employees receive two weeks initial training and then regular refresher trainings every couple of months depending on the work being done at the facility. The training includes regular reviews of the written emergency and operations procedures.

Sea-3 has all necessary gas and fire detection alarms, fire monitors with deluge guns, auto-start fire pump, portable gas detectors, and a system that provides an automatic call-in to the Newington Fire Department upon fire detection.

This laser-like focus on safety has paid off for Sea-3 and the surrounding communities. Sea-3 has never had a reportable safety incident. Not one. They have been recognized for their outstanding safety record with an award from the Safety and Health Council of Northern New England.

We've worked closely and cooperatively with the management of Sea-3 during recent years as variations in the market for propane have led to what could only be described as slow periods for the facility. We negotiated our collective bargaining agreement with the company in a manner that helped ensure the continued economic viability of their operations and therefore helped our members to avoid layoffs and continue to earn the good wages and benefits we feel they deserve.

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If the proposed improvements to Sea-3 are approved and approved without delay, the company will make a significant economic investment in the facility that will provide tremendous benefits to businesses and homeowners throughout the state. It would help stabilize New Hampshire's propane market by providing a consistent and reliable year-round supply of the most clean-burning of all fossil fuels.

This investment in the rail expansion would in turn benefit the state's economy, the local economy, and provide a boon to the Town of Newington's property tax base.

Of course, these improvements would also help provide job security to our members at Sea-3 by ensuring that the facility remains viable and profitable for years to come. Future additions to the workforce are also possible. The jobs at Sea-3 are good-paying with good benefits - quality jobs that can't easily be replaced. We hope the Committee will take the direct economic impact on both union and non-union workers at Sea-3 into account when they render their decision.

Any delay in the proposed rail expansion by conducting a comprehensive safety assessment would be redundant, unnecessary and counterproductive. They would provide an additional economic burden on a company that wishes to make improvements that will benefit our members and people across the State of New Hampshire.

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local #1837 urges the Site Evaluation Committee to expedite approval of this worthwhile project by granting the exemption request.

*Testimony respectfully submitted by Matthew Beck, IBEW Local Union #1837 Staff Organizer*