



### IBEW Local No. 1 Achieves Safety Milestone

▶ ACCORDING TO THE U.S. Department of Labor, construction fatalities increased 2.8 percent in 2006 to 1,226 from 1,192 in 2005. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) estimates that of the 350 electrical-related fatalities in that period, 143 were construction workers.

According to Steve Schoemehl, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local No. 1 business manager, more than half of the electrocutions suffered by electrical workers involved direct or indirect contact with live electrical equipment, indicating that proper lockout/tagout and de-energizing procedures could have saved lives.

"While we recognize that construction can be a dangerous profession at times, we believe these tragedies are preventable if safety is made a

priority," Schoemehl said.

To combat the dangers, Local No. 1 in St. Louis has achieved a major safety milestone. All 3,400 IBEW Local No. 1 construction work force journey workers and apprentices have achieved OSHA 10-Hour Safety Certification, and 70 percent of them attained OSHA 30-Hour Safety Certification.

The 100 percent OSHA 10 certification includes all commercial and residential wiremen, communication technicians and apprentices. All supervisory personnel, including foremen, general foremen and project managers, received OSHA 30-Hour training, as well.

The curriculum includes electrical safety, fall protection, personal protective and lifesaving equipment, materials handling, hand and power tool safety, scaf-

folding, heavy equipment operation, and excavation.

The training, completed at an estimated cost of \$1.7 million, took place at the St. Louis Electrical Industry Training Center, which is jointly operated by IBEW Local No. 1 and the St. Louis



Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA). Together, they form the Electrical Connection industry partnership.

"We challenged the St. Louis union construction industry in 2006 to become the safest work force in the

country, and the Electrical Connection exceeded expectations," said Jim LaMantia, executive direct of PRIDE of St. Louis, Inc., the region's labor-management organization.

"The fact that most electricians sought the more intense OSHA 30-Hour certification demonstrates their commitment to the highest standards of safety. That kind of dedication is a tremendous asset when it comes to selling St. Louis as a great place to build," LaMantia said.

All future apprentices in every NECA/IBEW Local No. 1 program will be trained at the OSHA 30 level and will receive expedited OSHA 10 certification in the first few weeks of their apprenticeship. The center trains more than 1,200 members seeking higher skills annually.