



Deadline Time for Verizon, Unions

Talks to avert strike down to the wire.

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Union contracts at Verizon East (former NYNEX and Bell Atlantic) will expire on Aug. 2, and there has been no public indication of progress on key sticking points between Verizon and the CWA and IBEW. Union members have authorized a strike, which could start on Aug. 3 if a new contract is not agreed (see "[Verizon at Brink of Strike](#)").

The unions are providing a [running update](#) on the negotiations, from their perspective. Excerpts follow:

Verizon Northeast (former NYNEX), July 25.

CWA/IBEW 2213 and IBEW New England resumed negotiations with Verizon this morning in Rye, New York. ...The focus of today's meeting was on the marketing department side of Verizon. The Unions has (sic) raised the issue of the jobs of the future during numerous bargaining sessions since the beginning of these talks. No progress has been made on this important matter.

Our contracts expire on Saturday (sic), August 3rd. Strike preparation continues on both the National and Local Union levels. Members should be contacting their Locals about picketing and strike duty assignments if they have not already done so.

Verizon Mid-Atlantic (former Bell Atlantic), July 28

The Unions and the Company met today and the Company provided counter-proposals to the Unions' health care proposal made in earlier meetings. The meeting adjourned and the Union will assess the counter-proposals and prepare a response.

Only a few more days remain until the contract expiration and we are still far apart on all critical issues and without any agreement on any issue. While it is still possible an agreement can be reached, it is most important that we are ready in the event this contract has to be negotiated in the street.

This contract is about the future. It will do us no good to win wages and benefits and then lose our jobs. Our members have made it clear that they understand and support our bargaining agenda. Special notice: Alpha Units and Moonlight Units are to stay on stand-by. Absolutely no jumping the gun. These units must act at the same time when the signal is given.

Meanwhile, Verizon is starting this week to install FiOS in New York City in the midst of an intensive marketing campaign. A strike that disrupts growth of FiOS in this market, and elsewhere, will be inconvenient for Verizon's wireline business which increasingly relies on FiOS to compensate for decreases in local phone lines and DSL connections.

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