1/10/2013:  PSE Representation Petition FAQ Updates

Q-What happens next?

A-On January 10, 2013 PERC held an investigation hearing with PSE and EWU. Based on the hearing, PERC decided to schedule an election. PERC will be mailing out the ballots on or about January 16, 2013. Ballots will be due back to PERC by February 7, 2013.

Q-If there is an election, how will it be conducted?

A-The election will be conducted by secret ballot. Neither the union, EWU nor fellow employees will know how any individual votes. The union will be certified as the bargaining agent for all of the positions within the bargaining unit if 51% of those who vote choose union representation. This means that if only 20 employees out of an eligible group of 100 participate in the election and submit their vote, a majority of the 20 votes (or 11 votes) would decide the election. It is anticipated PERC will count the ballots on February 8, 2013.

Q-If the union prevails in the election, what happens next?

A-The union and EWU will sit down and bargain for a new labor agreement that covers the positions included within the bargaining unit defined by PERC. Bargaining would cover wages, hours and working conditions.

Q- Will my wages and benefits change if I’m represented by a union?

A-Collective bargaining does not require either party to agree to the proposals presented by the other party. Therefore, no one can guarantee what the outcome of negotiations will be. EWU will negotiate in good faith with the union if the employees choose union representation; however, EWU is not required to agree to grant any particular wage or benefit. Nor is it required to give greater wage increases to represented employees than to non-represented employees.

Q – If a position becomes represented by a union, can an employee decide to “opt-out” of union representation?

A - No. Once the union represents an employee’s position, the employee no longer has an individual way to withdraw it from union representation. The underlying concept is that once there has been an election at which all employees have the opportunity to vote, everyone should be bound by the results of the election.
Q: Is PSE affiliated with a larger, national union?

A: Yes, PSE is affiliated with Service Employees International Union (SEIU).