



MONDAY MORNING NEWS



"Hello, Mayor's office?"

**GOOD MORNING
MARCH 1, 2021**

MEETINGS

- 3/2/21 – Drug Free Workplace Training – 1
- 3/4/21 – Drug Free Workplace Training – 2
- 3/12/21 – “Virtual” Safety Meeting
- 3/16/21 – 3/25/21 – Microsoft Project Training

SEATTLE QFC STORE CLOSURES – RESULT OF CITY COUNCIL “HAZARD PAY”

The Quality Food Center closures announced this past week will affect 109 employees, according to a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification filed Thursday with the state Employment Security Department. QFC, a Kroger Co. brand, said that it was [permanently closing two stores](#) in Seattle, citing the Seattle hazard pay mandate that went into effect February 3rd.

"We had no intentions of closing these two stores before the City Council's bill went into effect," said QFC spokesperson Tiffany Sanders. "They've tied our hands. We either have to go further and further into debt or close the stores, and it's just tragic."

Sanders, who said the Seattle stores are the most expensive to operate, noted that QFC has spent more than \$300,000 between the two stores on remodels in the last few years. She said the company intended to continue that work until the hazard pay bill, which raises hourly pay for front-line grocery workers by \$4, passed the council in late January.

The two “underperforming” stores, located at 416 15th Ave. E. in Capitol Hill and 8400 35th Ave. NE in Wedgwood, will close April 24th. “These two stores were already struggling, and the Seattle City Council decision made it impossible for us to run a financially sustainable business,” Sanders told the Business Journal. According to the agreement with the union, QFC is mandated to report to the state how many employees could be affected by the closures, Sanders said. “We're trying our best to transfer and find places for all of the affected employees.”

While Kroger has seen sales increase over the pandemic, so too has its expenses, Sanders said, noting that Kroger has spent \$1.5 billion on employees in bonuses and safety measures over the last year. "That money has all gone right back into it. We've kept two pennies of every dollar in profit. The rest of that money goes to paying the rent, cost of goods, which is 77 cents of every dollar. Grocery stores operate on a very small margin."

The wage increase applies to grocery businesses with 500 or more worldwide employees and those that are either more than 10,000 square feet and primarily sell groceries or more than 85,000 square feet, with 30% or more of the sales floor area dedicated to groceries. It does not affect convenience stores, food marts or farmers markets.

QFC said Tuesday its average hourly wage in Seattle is about \$20 an hour, and total compensation is over \$25 an hour, including health care and pension benefits. In all, QFC employs about 6,100 people across 61 stores.

This is not the first time Cincinnati-based Kroger, the nation's largest operator of traditional supermarkets, has closed stores in response to legislation that requires grocers to pay front-line workers a higher hourly wage during the pandemic. It announced this month it will permanently close two stores in Long Beach, California, in April.

UPCOMING "VIRTUAL" NECA SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING – MARCH 12TH

Mark your calendars for our upcoming "virtual" Safety Committee Meeting on Friday, March 12th, starting at 10:00 AM. We will be hosting a guest speaker from Littelfuse, Inc who will present on Arc-Flash Mitigation Measures. The presentation will cover a wide variety of arc flash topics, including a basic overview of the risks associated with an arc-flash event, the importance of arc-flash hazard assessments and updates to the IEEE 1584-2018 standard. The training will also include an overview of available options to reduce incident energy along with their relative ROI.

This is a great opportunity to learn about some of the latest development being made toward arc flash prevention and reducing the severity of incidents. This meeting is open to anyone in your firm that would like to attend. For those that wish to attend **Please RSVP to PSC NECA Director of Safety, Justin Thayer at justin@necaseattle.org.**

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY – 1872 – YELLOWSTONE PARK ESTABLISHED

President Grant signs the bill creating the nation's first national park at Yellowstone. Native Americans had lived and hunted in the region that would become Yellowstone for hundreds of years before the first Anglo explorers arrived. Abundant game and mountain streams teeming with fish attracted the Indians to the region, though the awe-inspiring geysers, canyons, and gurgling mud pots also fascinated them.

John Colter, the famous mountain man, was the first Anglo to travel through the area. After journeying with **Lewis and Clark** to the Pacific, Colter joined a party of fur trappers to explore the wilderness. In 1807, he explored part of the Yellowstone plateau and returned with fantastic stories of steaming geysers and bubbling cauldrons. Some doubters accused the mountain man of telling tall tales and jokingly dubbed the area "Colter's Hell."

Before the [Civil War](#), only a handful of trappers and hunters ventured into the area, and it remained largely a mystery. In 1869, the Folsom-Cook expedition made the first formal exploration, followed a year later by a much more thorough reconnaissance by the Washburn-Langford-Doane expedition. The key to Yellowstone's future as a national park, though, was the 1871 exploration under the direction of the government geologist Ferdinand Hayden. Hayden brought along William Jackson, a pioneering photographer, and Thomas Moran, a brilliant landscape artist, to make a visual record of the expedition. Their images provided the first visual proof of Yellowstone's wonders and caught the attention of the U.S. Congress.

Early in 1872, Congress moved to set aside some 2 million acres of public land straddling the future states of [Wyoming](#), [Montana](#) and [Idaho](#) as America's first national park. President Grant signed the bill into law on this day in 1872. The Yellowstone Act of 1872 designated the region as a public "pleasuring-ground," which would be preserved "from injury or spoilation, of all timber, mineral deposits, natural curiosities, or wonders within."

For a nation bent on settling and exploiting the West, the creation of Yellowstone was surprising. Many congressmen gave it their support simply because they believed the rugged and isolated region was of little economic value. Yet the Yellowstone Act of 1872 set a precedent and popularized the idea of preserving sections of the public domain for use as public parks. Congress went on to designate dozens of other national parks, and the idea spread to other nations around the world.

"Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. If it stops moving, subsidize it."

Ronald Reagan

As of Friday, February 26th, there are 389 JW on Book 1 and 184 JW on Book 2. There are currently 41 Commercial Apprentices, 3 S&C Apprentices, and 0 Residential Apprentices available for dispatch. There are 15 First Period Commercial Bootcamp graduates available for dispatch. There will be 16 Limited Energy Bootcamp graduates available for dispatch on April 6th.