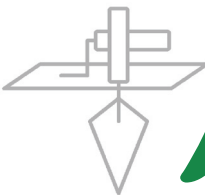
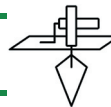


# The Cement Mixer



A Quarterly Newsletter for Northern California Cement Masons



Winter 2006 #28

## Year 2005 in Review

### HEALTH AND WELFARE PLANS



#### Prepaid Dental Plans:

Pacific Union Dental and DeltaCare PMI:

- Less out of pocket expense
- No annual maximum
- Limited network
- Orthodontic benefits extended to spouses, and dependent children \*

\* PUD excludes children under 10 years of age.

If you obtain dental services outside of your chosen Prepaid Dental Plan, you will be responsible for the entire payment.

#### Dependent Child and Extended Student Coverage:

- Your dependent child loses coverage under the Plan on the date your child becomes age 19 (or age 23, if considered a student under the Plan provisions).
- If your dependent child between ages 19 and 23 is attending an accredited educational institution, the minimum course load has been reduced from 12 to 8 units of credit, per semester.

### Electronic Deposit



If you receive benefit payments via Direct Deposit, notify the Pension of Vacation department at the Fund Office of any changes to your bank account information. Obtain an Electronic Direct Deposit Form from our website or from the Fund office, complete the necessary information and return it to our office.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

There are no notices inserted  
in this issue of the

**Cement Mixer**

### **Retired Participants**

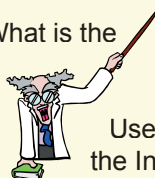
#### Medical Coverage Marketing Ads

Before you make a decision to enroll in an Individual Medical Plan offered by an HMO, compare your current Medical Plan to the proposed Individual Medical Plan.

Use the following list as a guide when comparing costs and services:

What is the

- Cost/Payment plan
- Copayment
- Office Visit Charge
- Annual Deductible
- Lifetime Maximum
- Doctor Network
- Emergency Room Cost



Use Cement Masons' *Summary of Benefits* pamphlet to assist you in comparing your Medical Plan and the Individual Medical Plan. This pamphlet is available from your Local Union or by calling the Trust Fund Office. You can also visit our website for the most recent *Benefit Comparison Sheet* that describes your current Retired Plan options.



## How Much is My Pension Worth?



One of the most commonly asked questions of the Pension Department is "How much is my pension worth?" If you are a Plan participant, and request an estimate of your pension, (See sidebar article), the Pension Plan is required to provide you with an estimate of what your pension benefit would be at Normal Retirement Age, defined as age 65. Your request for an estimate must be in writing and is not required to be given more than once a year.

Unlike a defined contribution plan, benefits under a defined benefit plan do not accrue a cash value. As you work in covered employment, you earn Years of Credited Service and Benefit Units. Credited Service and Benefit Units translate into a monthly benefit once you meet all the conditions of entitlement to a pension. These conditions include filing an application and stopping work as a Cement Mason.

When you do request an estimate of your pension benefit, we advise that it is only an estimate with certain conditions attached to it. The pension estimate most commonly provided is the Normal Retirement Age (age 65) benefit or Regular Pension. This estimated benefit is calculated only for

those Cement Masons who have attained vested status in the Plan. If you are not yet vested, we cannot calculate an estimated benefit, however, we will inform you of how many more years you have to work to become vested. (For rules on vesting, see Section 3.16 in your Pension Plan booklet.) If you are vested with less than 10 Years of Credited Service, only the Normal Retirement Age benefit applies, as you do not qualify for any other type of pension.

If you are vested with 10 or more Years of Credited Service, we can provide an estimate for an Early Retirement Pension. If you have accumulated 25 or more Benefit Units by age 55, or are age 62 with 20 or more Benefit Units, we can calculate a Service Pension benefit, which is the same as the Regular, (Normal Retirement Age) Pension. To learn more about the different types of pensions available, refer to Article 3 in your Pension Plan booklet.

The staff in the Pension Department is ready to assist you in estimating your benefit. The Fund also has a Field Benefit Representative who visits Local Unions and can provide assistance. Keep in mind, though, until you actually retire, that is, establish entitlement, file an application, and stop working as a Cement Mason, any figures quoted are only estimates.

### PLAN DEFINITIONS

If you read the article entitled "How Much is My Pension Worth?" you know a Plan Participant may request an estimate of what his benefits would be at Normal Retirement Age. This, plus certain other rights and protections are available to employees who have met the requirements for Participation in the Pension Plan.

#### *What are the requirements for becoming a Participant?*

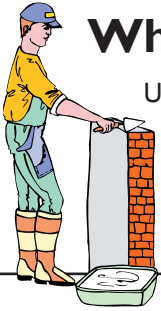
Article 2 of the Pension Plan provides that an Employee becomes a Plan Participant on August 1 or February 1 following a 12-consecutive month period during which he works at least 300 hours in Covered Employment or Continuous Non-Covered Employment with a Contributing Employer.

For example, an Employee first starts working in Covered Employment on February 1, 2004. If he works a total of 300 hours by January 31, 2005 (a full 12 months later), he would then become a Plan Participant on February 1, 2005.

Once an Employee becomes a Plan Participant, he receives Credited Service and Benefit Units for those hours he worked before becoming a Plan Participant.

#### *Can I lose Participation in the Plan?*

Yes, if you do not work at least 300 hours during a Plan Credit Year, which is February 1 through January 31 of the following year, you will incur a One-Year Break in Service and will cease being a Participant on the last day of that Plan Credit Year.



## When Does Your Eligibility Begin?

Under the Cement Masons rules for Active employees, your employer must report work hours to the Health and Welfare Trust Fund for each hour you work in covered employment. Your hours are placed into an “Hour Bank” and your eligibility for Health and Welfare coverage begins the **FIRST** day of the **SECOND** month *after* you have 300 hours in your “Hour Bank.”

Work Month	May	June	July	July Hour Bank Total (-100) H&W Deduction
Hours Employer Reported & Paid	180	130	200	510 - 100 = 410

For example if your “Hour Bank” totals 410 hours at the end of July, you have accumulated the sufficient number of hours for Health and Welfare eligibility beginning September 1.

Remember that 100 hours are taken from your Hour Bank for each month of Health and Welfare coverage.

Work Month	August	September	October	November Hour Bank Total
Bank Balance (+) Hours Employer Reported & Paid and H&W Deduction (-)	410 +170 -100	480 +160 -100	540 +120 -100	560

Note that to continue month-to-month coverage, you must maintain a *minimum* balance of 300 hours or you lose eligibility for coverage.

*For your protection, retain all paycheck stubs. If you find you have more worked hours than hours reported, contact the Local Union or the Fund Office.*

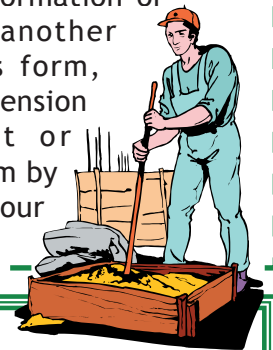
## Withholding Tax Certificate

Federal regulations require that all Pensioners receive a Withholding Certificate form. It is your right to start, stop, increase or decrease the amount of tax withheld from your monthly pension benefit at any time.

Your last election of withholding remains in effect until you file a new Withholding Certificate form.

If you want to make a change in your withholding, simply complete and sign the Withholding Certificate which will be mailed on February 3, 2006.

For more information or to request another copy of this form, contact the Pension department or print the form by logging onto our website.



## Extending Health Benefits When Coverage Ends

COBRA defines a “qualified beneficiary” as an individual who loses coverage under any one of the “qualifying events.” A qualified beneficiary can be an Active Cement Mason, his spouse, or any dependent child. A spouse and dependent child of a Retired Cement Mason are also defined as qualified beneficiaries.

“Qualifying Events” are circumstances under which you or your dependents may be eligible to continue health care coverage. If you are an Active Cement Mason, a qualifying event would include termination of your employment or a reduction in hours. If you are the spouse or dependent child of an Active Cement Mason, qualifying events are the same as those for the Active Cement Mason **plus** death of or divorce from the Cement Mason, or a child no longer meeting the Plan’s definition of a “dependent.” In the case of a Retired Cement Mason, qualifying events only apply to the spouse and dependent child and include death, divorce, or the child no longer meeting the Plan’s definition of “dependent.”

The Fund Office notifies you if the qualifying event is termination of employment or a reduction in work hours. If the qualifying event is a death, divorce, or a child losing dependent status, the qualified beneficiary should notify the Fund Office.

Monthly premiums established by the Board of Trustees change in September of every year. The premium depends on the type of coverage you elect and whether you are buying coverage for yourself or for yourself and your family. Generally, coverage is for 18 months, but can be extended to 36 months if a **second** qualifying event occurs or it may be extended to 29 months if Social Security determines that a qualified beneficiary is totally disabled.


# CALENDAR


On or About This Date	We Will Mail	You Should
January 27, 2006	February 2006 Pension Benefit Check	Retain check stub for your records
January 30, 2006	Pensioners: 1099R Tax Form	Retain for tax purposes. If not received, contact the Accounting Department (x624)
February 3, 2006	Annual Tax Notification "Withholding Certificate"	Follow instructions on form, then complete, sign and return ASAP.
February 24, 2006	March 2006 Pension Benefit Check	Retain check stub for your records
March 24, 2006	Statement of Account Work Period: 8/1/05 - 1/31/06	Verify hours, report discrepancies and retain for your records.
March 29, 2006	April 2006 Pension Benefit Check	Retain check stub for your records



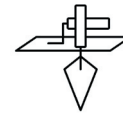



  
**The next issue of the *Cement Mixer* is**  
**scheduled to be mailed on April 15, 2006**






## Contacting The Fund Office



Cement Masons Trust Funds  
220 Campus Lane  
Fairfield, CA 94534-1499



(707) 864 - 3300  
or Toll Free  
(888) 245 - 5005



Internet Web site:  
[www.norcalcementmasons.org](http://www.norcalcementmasons.org)

The Cement Mixer is published by the Northern California Cement Masons Funds Administration, Inc. Its purpose is to provide you and your family with information about the various benefits available to eligible participants and how to effectively use those benefits. It is not intended as a substitute for official Plan documents. Your rights as a Plan Participant or Beneficiary can only be determined by consulting the Rules and Regulations of the Plans. Please submit any comments or suggestions to the address listed above.


  
**Northern California Cement Masons**  
**Funds Administration, Inc.**  
**220 Campus Lane**  
**Fairfield, CA 94534**

[www.norcalcementmasons.org](http://www.norcalcementmasons.org)

PRRRT STD  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 OMSI