

# THE WORKLOAD ISSUE

Janitors know all too well that heavy workloads are a problem in our industry. Many of us are asked to clean more in less time, and to work alone. Heavy workloads can make this a dangerous job. Did you know that janitorial ranks **#6 in likelihood of being injured on the job** according to Washington State Department of Labor & Industry's Prevention Index? Janitorial also consistently ranks in the **top 10 for accepted workers compensation claims**, and there is an important gender issue here, too—**Women janitors make up only 1/3 of the janitorial workforce, but account for more than 1/2 of compensable workers' compensation claims.**

## Union Pushes for Workload Study in Olympia

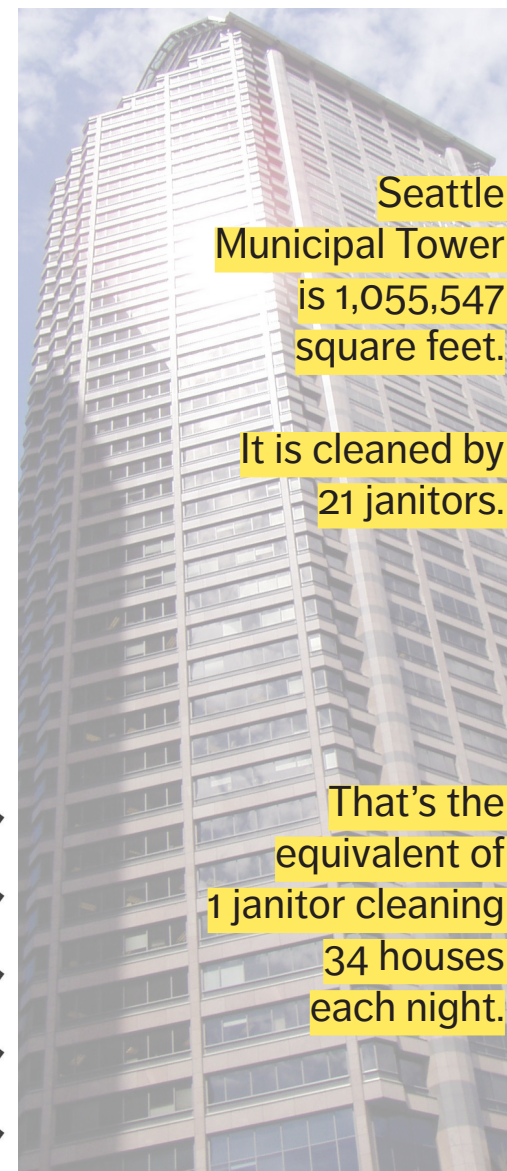
Those of us who have been fighting for justice for janitors in Washington State know that our union has been trying to make the job safer by raising industry standards for a long time. In 2013, we commissioned a study by the University of Washington to look at the high rates of injuries in janitorial. That was one step. The next step is to get a state-sponsored study that could lead to new regulations for the industry. That's why we've been going to Olympia to try to convince lawmakers that the state needs to study janitorial workload and injuries now.

## Janitors Speak Out

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, our union went to Olympia for a senate hearing on SB-6227, the bill that would initiate a workload study for janitors. Three of our janitorial members, Amir Kalabic, Maria de Lourdes Carrillo Sánchez, and Kim Lee, testified in front of the senate, telling personal stories about their work to educate the senators on what janitors face. After their testimony, the bill passed the Senate and is now headed to the House. Check out our Facebook page @SEIU6 to read a report on the hearing by *The Chronicle* newspaper, and to watch video of our members' testimony.

## Share Your Story

As a union, we have strength in numbers. The more of us who speak out, the better our chances of raising the standards across our industries. Do you have a workload story you'd like to share? We want to hear it! Contact your organizer or call our union at 206-448-7348 and ask to speak to Erin. You can also send us a message on Facebook!



SEIU6 Janitor Kim Lee

"I dance with a mop in 19 full bathrooms every night. There's a lot of vandalism in the building. I have bathrooms explode. It's frustrating when you have to go to work every night knowing that you can't get any help. I have to put a lot of physical effort into cleaning these bathrooms, and when you're almost 60 years old that is not an easy thing to do. But I do it anyway because the uniform I wear, I wear proud. If it wasn't for SEIU6 making sure we get complete safety and things we need, we wouldn't be in these jobs."



SEIU6 Janitor Jeff Vossler

"There was a party on my floor with a big liquor cleanup—lots of empty bottles, broken bottles, and beer on the floor. The trash was extremely heavy, and when I tried to get it on the elevator, it got stuck. I didn't have anyone I could call for help. I jerked it loose, and it popped up and landed on my foot. It broke two of my toes. If I hadn't been alone up there, I wouldn't have been injured."



SEIU6 Janitor Maria de Lourdes Carrillo Sánchez

"We janitors face a lot of pressure to finish the work faster and faster everyday. There is pressure to complete 10 hours' work in just 8 hours, causing me and others to skip breaks and lunches. My health has suffered from the increased workload. I have to lift heavy boxes of toilet paper and boxes of paper towels. In 2016, I was diagnosed with a hernia and had surgery. I am scheduled to go back to the doctor as I am afraid that the hernia is back."



SEIU6 Janitor Nhung Nguyen

"My work is very detailed. I only clean 1 floor, but I clean every single thing: the trash cans, the floors, the computers, the door jambs, the corners of the ceiling, the sinks, the baseboards—and it all must be cleaned perfectly and exactly on time. When there is a big party in the office, I have to do all of my regular work and the extra work too without any help. On a normal day I come home tired and sore. On days when there is extra work, I come home and I can barely lift my limbs to change out of my work clothes."



SEIU6 Janitor Amir Kalabic

"Our job is dangerous because we are pushed to work fast. We have one surgery room that has a lot of blood and needles that we need to pick up by hand—each needle, each blade, every drop of blood, from the ceiling to the floor. They give you 5-7 minutes to get one bathroom done, but if you have a patient who's lost a lot of blood, you need much more time to make the place safe again. We've had janitors get injured from the trash bag because people throw needles and blades in there; it's a serious issue for us."

## It's Tax Time

Remember that your union dues may be tax-deductible.

Ask your tax-preparer!

New SEIU Member Benefit:

**FREE COLLEGE**



Every SEIU member is eligible to earn an accredited college degree online for free—and so are our family members!

For more information or to enroll today, visit <https://www.seiumb.com/shopping-discounts/seiu-free-college-benefit.htm> or call our union at 206-448-7348

**Spring Registration**

Last Day to Register:  
3/16/2018

Spring Classes Begin:  
3/19/2018



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# News at 6

FEBRUARY 2018

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## Word from Our Union

### JANITORS GO PUBLIC WITH WORKLOAD ISSUE

SEIU6 Janitors are raising awareness on how much work janitors do—and how fast.

Lucia Vazquez has **4 minutes to clean each bathroom** during her 8-hour shift.

“I clean 20 floors of bathrooms every night, 6 bathrooms on each floor. That includes wiping everything down, changing the soap, checking the paper towels.”

Janitors, what’s your workload like? Read all about workload inside!



SEIU6 Janitors Lucia Vazquez and Ma Cruz de Villar de Amador discussed workload on Univision Seattle. Check out the video on Facebook @SEIU6!

### SECURITY CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS BEGIN

Officers are fighting for:

- Higher wages
- Improved/family medical
- More paid time off

Want to get involved?  
Contact Greg at  
206- 850-0539  
or email  
gramirez@seiu6.org



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## Word from Our Union

### MEET OUR NEW UNION LEADERS

New Executive Board Sworn-In on January 13

More than 900 members cast votes in the 2017 union election, making it the highest-turnout election in SEIU6 history. Our newly elected leaders are now sworn-in and ready to fight for our members!



Our union’s new Executive Board was inaugurated by State Senator Rebecca Saldaña at the General Membership Meeting on January 13.



—President Sergio Salinas

“I am proud to have this leadership team that reflects who we are and where we came from. This is the team that will lead the fight for better lives for our airport workers, our security officers, and for the historic legacy of the janitors who founded our union. Let’s turn the page, build our union, protect our house. Nobody is going to fight this fight for us; we have to do it ourselves.”

*This is your union! If you have any questions or comments, please e-mail Fred Prockiw at [fprockiw@seiu6.org](mailto:fprockiw@seiu6.org)*



—Secretary-Treasurer Zenia Javalera

“As your Secretary-Treasurer, I will ensure that our union lives up to its values of transparency, accountability, and unity. I’m ready to fight for our security officers’ contract campaign, our airport workers’ contract campaign, and for our janitors when the janitorial contract comes up. When we fight, we win!”



—Vice President Adriana Luz Almejo

“I am proud to serve our union as Vice President on our leadership team. Unity is so important, because when we stick together, we can win big things. Let’s use our strength in numbers to push for the best contracts for security officers, janitors, and airport workers!”



—Vice President Tulu Dinagde

“Our union has won important victories, like full-family healthcare for janitors. Let’s keep fighting for a better future!”