

# WESTERNER

Omaha Works  
November/December 1986





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Nov./Dec. 1986

Vol. 30, No. 9

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## On the cover

Is that Dick Winter swinging from those rafters? Well, not exactly. Yes, it is Dick Winter, an industrial engineer associate in Dept. 476. But he's working in those rafters. Winter is one of many Cornhusker Chapter Pioneers who are volunteering their free time to help refurbish a former church building for the South Omaha Girls Club. Under the Pioneers' direction, the club's dream is becoming reality. A story and pictures begin on Page 6.

## WESTERNER

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# Tax Reform Act affects AT&T people

The effect on AT&T of the most comprehensive reform of the Internal Revenue Code since 1954 will be mixed, say company tax experts.

To the corporation, the Tax Reform Act of 1986 means a lower corporate tax rate starting in 1987. However, analysts predict that for a company like AT&T, which invests heavily in plant equipment, it also will cost hundreds of millions of dollars because the investment tax credit has been repealed.

The law will bear a direct impact on AT&T employees, too. It will affect employee benefits as it will affect benefits offered by every corporation in the United States.

The reform came about to help raise tax revenues and to ensure that more U.S. workers are covered by employee benefit plans. The law seeks to make sure that such tax-favored plans as savings plans, pension plans and 401(K) plans are used primarily for retirement.

Although AT&T, like most companies, already offers plans

with broad employee coverage, changes will be introduced to bring more companies into compliance. Highlights of the major changes, which are effective next year, and what they mean to AT&T employees are explained on these pages. If you have questions and need more information, you should call Jim Williams (Ext. 3598) or Duane Iwanski (Ext. 3592) in the benefits office.

**Individual retirement accounts (IRAs).** Before 1982, IRAs were available only to people not covered by a company pension plan. But revised IRA rules that year opened the tax-deferred savings plan to all workers, allowing a yearly maximum contribution of \$2,000 (\$2,250 for a spousal IRA when one spouse did not have earned income). The deposit and interest could accumulate tax-free until withdrawal.

Now that's all changed. The new tax law returns the IRA almost — but not quite — to its pre-1982 status. People not

These past months have been very important to me as I have had the opportunity to get to know many of you better. We have experienced our share of difficulties, but I think we have enjoyed successes, too.

What has impressed me most in our daily contact is your enthusiasm in offering ideas to make the Works an even better place in which to work, and your willingness to roll up your sleeves to get the job done. A combination of your dedication

and hard work assures us of a solid future.

At this time I would like to thank all of you for your extraordinary efforts even when the challenges seemed overwhelming. You have made me feel proud and glad to be back here in Omaha, and I'm looking forward to working together with you in the year ahead.

My wish is that the joy and peace of the holiday season remain with you and your families throughout 1987.

Manufacturing vice-president



gible for a company pension-plan will be able to continue with their IRAs as they have been, with no changes. But the new law makes a distinction among pension-covered employees — like AT&T employees — based on income. An employee is considered covered, even if the benefits are not yet vested.

If you earn more than \$35,000 in adjusted gross income — or \$50,000 for couples — you can still contribute to an IRA but you will not be able to deduct IRA contributions. Couples with incomes between \$40,000 and \$50,000 (between \$25,000 and \$35,000 for single taxpayers) will be able to take only partial deductions for their contributions.

However, if you are a married employee and you and your spouse together earn less than \$40,000 (or single and earning less than \$25,000), you will be able to earn the full deduction on IRA contributions — just like those without pension plans — and still participate in AT&T's pension plan.

For everyone, even those denied a tax deduction on the contribution itself, the interest



*QUESTION, PLEASE . . . Jim Williams of the Works benefits office can answer Elizabeth Leggit's (Dept. 246) questions about the company savings plan, but any transactions must be conducted through American Transtech.*

that accumulates on an IRA remains deferred until withdrawal.

**New withdrawal penalties.**

The 10 percent early withdrawal penalties that apply to IRAs

will be extended to the taxable portion of early withdrawals from all qualified savings plans, which includes AT&T's savings plans.

However, after-tax employee  
(Continued on Page 4)

## Who to call to conduct transactions

Who is American Transtech and why is their phone number so important?

Jim Williams of the Works benefits office reminds employees that American Transtech is now the recordkeeper for AT&T's savings plans. Any transactions involving these savings plans must be made through American Transtech by calling its Transaction Process-

ing Center toll free at 1-800-952-0077.

For example, after Dec. 15 if an employee wants to withdraw his vested amount of savings for plan year 1984, he must call the "800" number — **not** the Works benefits office. However, Williams and Duane Iwanski of the benefits office will continue to answer questions about the plans, although they cannot handle transactions.

Basically, the Transaction Processing Center handles the following types of account transactions:

- Transfer of past investment balances
- Change in current invest-

ment direction

- Transfer between plans
- Withdrawal of funds
- Distribution of account
- Revocation of VCP contributions

To help save time when you call, have a copy of your most current statement of account handy. Review your prospectus and understand the action you wish to take. And be ready to provide the American Transtech representative with the following information: full name, Social Security number, the savings plan involved, type of transaction, and the specific change or request you want to make.



# New law affects benefits

(Continued from Page 3)

contributions accumulated as of Dec. 31, 1986, may be withdrawn at any time without penalty.

**401(K) plans.** Contributions to 401(K) plans will be limited to \$7,000 annually per employee, compared to the current limit of \$30,000.

**Voluntary contribution plans (VCPs).** Voluntary contribution plans like AT&T's will no longer be able to accept tax-deductible contributions.

**Lump-sum distributions.** Ten-year forward averaging — which allows an employee to calculate the current taxes on a lump-sum distribution as if it were spread over 10 years — will drop to five-year averaging.

However, if you turned 50 years old by Jan. 1, 1986, you can choose either 10-year forward averaging or five-year forward averaging. Forward averaging may be used only once.

**Vesting for pensions and savings plans.** Beginning Jan. 1, 1989, employees will be vested in their pension plans sooner than under current law, which allows companies to vest their employees in one of several ways.

Companies will have to choose one of two vesting schedules: (1) Vest employees after five years of service or (2) partially vest them after three years and increase vesting gradually until full vesting at seven years.

The new vesting rules also will affect savings plans: Under the new rules, a fully vested employee will be entitled to all company contributions to the savings plan.



*REACH OUT AND TOUCH SOMEONE . . . Works employees reached out for their individual campaign packets during United Way rallies held in the auditorium. Pledges to the drive amounted to more than a half-million dollars.*

## \$ .5 million raised

# United Way Drive ends

What kind of impact does a business like the Omaha Works have on the community? Plenty.

This year the United Way of the Midlands raised \$11.5 million in support of agencies and organizations throughout the metropolitan area. Employees of the Omaha Works and Cornhusker Pioneer life members contributed \$562,000 toward that amount.

When one considers that the metropolitan area approaches 500,000 in population, the 3,700-plus population of the Works has contributed an extraordinary share of the total proportionately.

More than \$28,000 of the pledged money has been earmarked, according to employee preference, to go toward Omaha's surrounding cities of Lincoln,

Fremont and Wahoo.

As in past years, Works employees who participated in the in-house campaign had a chance to win prizes. Top prize were awarded to Stanley Vachal of Dept. 538 and Lili Carlson of Dept. 284.

Vachal won a \$600 shopping spree at J.C. Penney's, and he said his children already know how the money should be spent. "They tell me I have to get a VCR," he said when presented his gift certificate.

Carlson isn't sure how she will spend her \$300 certificate. But the avid doll collector doesn't think she will have any problem making her decision.

Plant and factory engineering manager John Graf was in charge of this year's in-house United Way drive.



# etc.

## Suggestion awards

Johnnie Smyth is proof that even seemingly simple ideas are worthwhile to turn in to the employee suggestion award program. He recently was presented a \$6,940 award by proposing that wire footage be increased on bobbins used in the braided shielding area (Dept. 284).

Now department operators don't have to change the bobbins as frequently nor do they run out of bobbins.

Wally Dring and Carl Soby of Dept. 544 also are glad they turned in an idea which resulted in joint awards of \$2,195 each. They suggested a way to improve plating and tinning wire by simplifying central tin plater operations. Their idea considerably reduces maintenance on the plater, too.

Other suggestion awards that have been presented recently include a \$970 award to David Howell of Dept. 541, and a \$200 award to Duane Hamilton of Dept. 284.



Johnnie Smyth



Carl Soby



Wally Dring

## Lowder honored

Senior staff engineer Len Lowder has been awarded the annual J. L. Higgins Award in recognition of his contributions toward protecting Nebraska's environment. Lowder is the 21st recipient of the award presented by the Nebraska Department of Environmental Control.

He has served on numerous environmental boards and councils including the Nebraska Water Pollution Control Association, the Nebraska Coalition on Hazardous Waste, and the Nebraska Industrial Council on Environment (the latter two of which he co-founded).

## WEOMA officers named

New officers will oversee WEOMA Club activities starting Jan. 1, 1987. Rex Stewart will be president; Bill Lawson, vice-president; Sharon Kluck,

treasurer; and Jim Allen, assistant treasurer.

Additionally, three directors have been named to serve three-year terms: Ken Deman, Dee Kelly and Linda Chollett.

## For the children

There will be plenty of smiles on youngsters' faces this holiday season thanks to the generosity of Omaha Works employees and their families. The Dress-a-Doll and Mitten Tree projects completed another successful year.

Employees dressed 800 dolls and contributed 3,215 mittens, hats and scarves. The dolls and the apparel have been given to the Salvation Army, which will distribute them to needy families before Christmas.

Figures for the annual toy drive — this year renamed the AT&T Toy Drive — were not available at Westerner deadline time. The toys also go to needy children in the Omaha area.



*CAPS 'N MITTENS . . . Members of the Mitten Tree committee pose by the display of more than 3,000 knitted items. From left (front row) are Jean Belmudez, Naomi Blazka, (back row) Peg Iliff, Charlie Distefano, Doris Olsen, Mary Griff and Sharon Carpenter, who heads the committee.*



# Girls Club takes shape

Some Saturdays are "pizza days" and some Saturdays are "chicken days." But regardless of what is on tap when lunch break rolls around, every Saturday is workday for the dozens of Cornhusker Chapter Pioneers who are turning the dream of a new South Omaha Girls Club into reality.

Last year the Cornhusker Chapter of the Telephone Pioneers of America adopted a project which would move the South Omaha Girls Club out of its cramped, rented space at

the LaFern Williams Center into a totally refurbished former church building at 30th and S streets. Since December of last year, active and life member Pioneers have volunteered their evenings and weekends to remodel the structure according to an architect's specifications.

The project, according to coordinator Dewey Ehrenberg, is by far the chapter's largest endeavor. Yet it is typical of fellowship and service to the community that have been hallmarks of the Telephone

Pioneers of America. Nationally, the Pioneers celebrated their 75th anniversary in November.

When the work is completed, the Girls Club will occupy between 6,000 and 7,000 square feet of space. It will include full kitchen facilities, counseling rooms, classroom and recreation areas, laundry space and library.

Ehrenberg said the square footage includes what used to be the St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church, the church basement, and the basement of an attached parsonage. A caretaker for the club will live in the former parsonage quarters.

"We're working against a \$256,000 total budget to renovate and rebuild the facility," Ehrenberg said. That figure would be much higher if the Pioneers weren't donating their labor.

Toward that budget the Pioneer chapter also has donated

(Continued on Page 8)

*HMM, NOW LET'S SEE . . . Dewey Ehrenberg (from left) and Ron Siwa go over blueprints for the South Omaha Girls Club remodeling project. On the opposite page, Pioneer life member Gerry Alfons gives a fresh coat of paint to one of the building's windows.*









# Pioneers renovate building

(Continued from Page 6)  
\$30,000, Ehrenberg said. The balance is provided out of the Girls Club funds.

## Foreman, too

Although the club has hired an architect to design and draw up plans for the renovation, the Pioneers are doing the rest. They even have hired a retired construction superintendent to serve as a full-time foreman. He is on the job to direct outside contractors and in general to watch over the interests of the Pioneers especially during weekdays.

Outside contractors have been hired to do such things as build a new roof, repair the brick work, make structural improvements, provide the basement subfloor plumbing and to bring exterior electrical lines to the building.

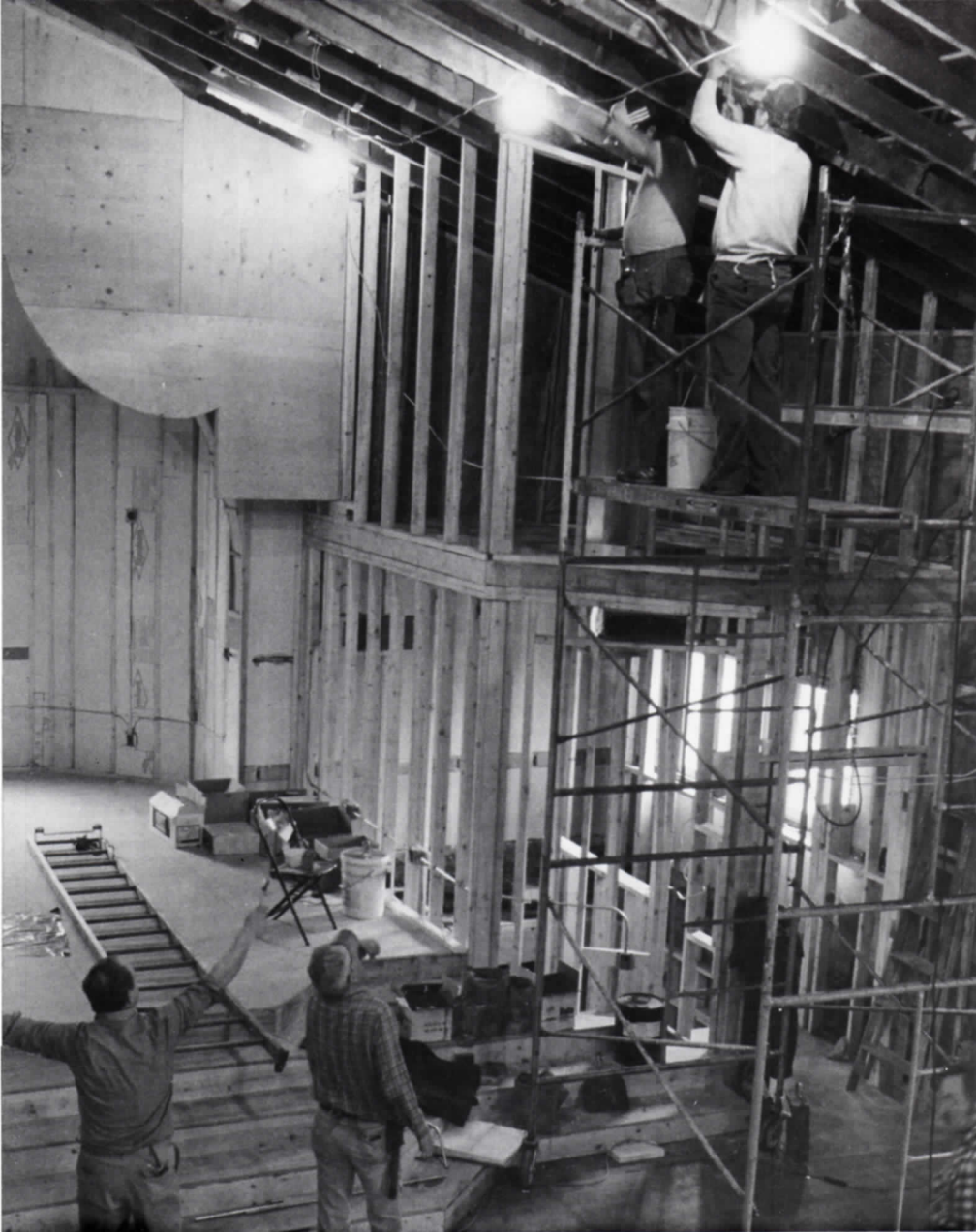
Still, between 80 to 85 Pioneers have managed to log approximately 5,600 volunteer hours as of mid-November. The renovation began in December 1985 when Cornhusker Pioneers "totally gutted the church," Ehrenberg said.

The Pioneers used oversized dumpsters to dispose of debris (to date they have filled 24 dumpsters). By mid-February the gutting was complete and remodeling work could begin.

The resources of Omaha Works employees were tapped to help draw up internal plumbing and electrical plans. The Pioneer volunteers did all of the carpentry work, including the framework for the various rooms.

This is where ingenuity and individual skills came to the forefront, Ehrenberg noted. For example, the library area also will double as a stage for future plays the girls might present. Volunteers built the steps to an elevated platform, and pieced together large sheets of plywood

Westerner



*THIS IS HOW . . . Dick Winter and Bob Attebery install electrical conduit (top photo) while floor supervisors Ron Siwa and Dewey Ehrenberg give directions. In the background is the area for the combination library/stage. Meanwhile, Charlie Couch installs an outlet box elsewhere in the building.*



# Service anniversaries

## 40 years

L. N. McKenna 12/30  
D. L. Stalker 12/13

## 35 years

C. S. Stewart 11/17

## 30 years

W. C. Becher 11/6  
D. I. Bergers 11/7  
R. M. Cartwright 11/19  
Y. L. Christensen 11/19  
W. F. Foxworthy 11/5  
W. J. Heskin 11/12  
E. P. Kealy 11/5  
L. N. Keiser 11/28  
W. H. Kinsley 11/12  
O. E. Kollars 11/19  
D. D. Kovar 11/26  
J. C. Marinus 11/26  
R. L. Mass 11/5  
W. E. Montalbano 11/26  
E. R. Neiderheiser 11/12  
H. W. Noble 11/26  
W. A. Peterson 11/19  
S. Puchalski 11/24

to make the sculptured framework from which heavy stage curtains will hang.

For a counseling area, Pioneer workers fashioned extravagant-looking sliding wood panels at a fraction of the cost by using door panels and plywood.

## Each offers specialty

Volunteers installed all of the electrical conduit and ran the wiring inside the church as well as put in the hot and cold water lines above the basement floor. Outside, they did some landscaping work, painting, sidewalk repairs and playground preparation work.

"It's difficult to single out any one volunteer, because each has made a unique contribution to the project," Ehrenberg said. Without the enthusiasm and teamwork volunteers have shown so far, a project such as this would be impossible to carry out, he added.

The Pioneers hope to have all remodeling work finished by February 1987.

G. L. Ricker 11/16  
J. P. Rinn Jr. 11/20  
J. W. Smith 11/1  
J. C. Subbert 11/12  
K. C. Watkins 11/28  
L. Wiegert 11/26  
W. A. York 11/20  
B. W. Abel 12/4  
E. E. Allen Jr. 12/10  
R. M. Allen 12/10  
E. V. Arnone 12/31  
J. H. Berry 12/7  
S. J. Caniglia 12/3  
R. L. Coffman 12/24  
R. H. Dohse 12/27  
G. H. Geerdes 12/5  
R. L. Hansen 12/24  
G. M. Hazard 12/10  
R. W. Hogg 12/5  
M. B. Johnson 12/31  
G. C. Lund 12/10  
W. E. Petersen 12/3  
J. R. Roth 12/31  
R. G. Selvig 12/14  
R. H. Skoge 12/3  
L. W. Swoboda 12/3  
D. T. Talty 12/20

## 25 years

G. C. Bailey 11/23  
S. S. Bruning 11/23  
J. L. Cartwright 11/6  
L. S. Detmers 11/20  
E. W. Jarrett 11/30  
D. R. Kramer 11/1  
L. W. Olsen 11/17  
R. J. Pellerito 11/13  
C. W. Tramp 11/13  
R. J. Gartigas 12/11  
J. L. Gemar 12/17  
R. K. Kahnk 12/5  
D. P. Kelly 12/1  
P. M. Lysenko 12/6  
W. W. Petersen 12/29  
B. W. Sales 12/27  
T. M. Schulte 12/28  
R. L. Wegener 12/31

## 20 years

T. G. Blair Jr. 11/30  
D. B. Carper 11/21  
J. P. Chafin 11/12  
B. B. Johnson 11/9  
E. Kowalczyk 11/27  
J. J. LaPesh 11/7  
E. R. Nath 11/15  
M. D. Nickell 11/21  
B. R. Rington 11/16  
R. E. O'Connell 11/14  
S. W. Ostrand 11/26  
E. B. Willis 11/21  
L. G. Armenta 12/17  
H. J. Bergmann 12/5  
L. U. Carlson 12/12  
E. K. Evans 12/13  
J. K. Eystone 12/14  
G. G. Gould 12/20  
J. G. Neely 12/27

## 15 years

R. L. Baker 11/29  
L. E. Cherry 11/28  
H. L. Cotton 11/16  
J. W. Davis 11/15  
M. R. Kobjerowski 11/5  
L. Landrum 11/8  
A. H. Young 11/8  
M. C. Lyons 12/2  
B. A. Mischke 12/20  
P. K. Reding 12/14

## 10 years

B. P. Frizzell 11/21  
D. E. Mason 11/20  
R. M. DeChriste 12/13



*DON'T TAKE THAT PICTURE! . . . Bob Attebery and Orv Olson were caught taking a break during a Saturday session.*



# Retirements

More than the usual number of retiring employees are pictured on these pages because the bulk of them chose to accept the company's recent Supplementary Income Protection Plan (SIPP) offering. Their retirements went into effect in November.

Not pictured:

Anne Zavodny — 27 years  
 Shirley Moedlhammer—  
 24 years  
 Eleanor Hunt — 30 years  
 Elaine Anderson — 37 years  
 Marge Warren — 20 years  
 Bob Donahoo — 42 years  
 Duane Ahrens — 29 years  
 Lee Allen — 40 years  
 Dale Brahatcek — 30 years  
 William Heskin — 30 years  
 LaVern Hunt — 28 years

Albert Guthrie — 28 years  
 Heinz Feuerberg — 28 years  
 Elmer Owen — 28 years  
 Robert Krupicka — 28 years  
 Howard Suter — 21 years  
 Dan Talty — 29 years  
 Clement Orsi — 29 years  
 William Jones — 29 years  
 Blanche Hofmann — 33 years  
 Willard Reeve — 34 years  
 Jamie "Bogie" Fleming — 25  
 years



*Chuck Hughes*  
29 years



*Bill Abel*  
29 years



*William Mott*  
29 years



*Wallace Williams*  
28 years



*Ruth Ann Foster*  
41 years



*John Phalen*  
27 years



*Donald Kaar*  
30 years



*Max Engler*  
34 years



*Ed Sohl*  
21 years



*Maxine Phelps*  
25 years



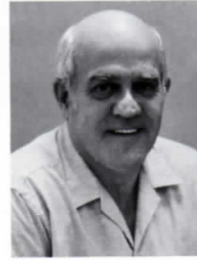
*Kenneth Melies*  
29 years



*William Rohmeyer*  
28 years



*Maxine Tatreau*  
20 years



*Harold Noble*  
30 years



*Curt Morse*  
39 years



*Boone McDonald*  
26 years



*Dana Livingston*  
26 years



*Fritz Donahoo*  
20 years



*Bernie Kinnamon*  
35 years



*Eugene Dixon*  
29 years

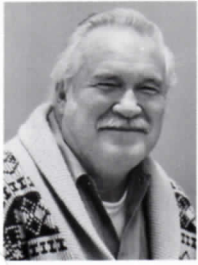


*Tom Payne*  
27 years



*Page Nolan*  
35.964 years





*Raymond  
Pertna  
27 years*



*Bobbie Gelger  
28 years*



*George Ricker  
30 years*



*William  
Brazeel  
27 years*



*Henry Johnson  
28 years*



*Willi Strack  
24 years*



*Jim Meek  
28 years*



*Don Whitehill  
28 years*



*Roger Payne  
29 years*



*Joseph Kocsis  
28 years*



*Richard Rinne  
27 years*



*Shirley Gilbert  
20 years*



*Bill Lewis  
30 years*



*Herbert  
Brettinger  
28 years*



*Robert  
Fitzgerald  
21 years*



*Al Weaver  
29 years*



*Dick Ballentine  
37 years*



*Floyd  
Hermanson  
31 years*

## Equal opportunity policy

The Omaha Works, like all other locations of AT&T, is an equal opportunity employer.

It is AT&T's policy to provide equal opportunity for all employees and employee applicants and to administer all conditions and privileges of employment, compensation, training, transfer, advancement and termination of employment practices without discrimination because of race, religion, color, national origin, sex or age (except where sex or age is a bona fide occupational qualification). This policy also

applies without discrimination to handicapped persons, disabled veterans and Vietnam Era veterans.

Equal opportunity, however, may not be adequate to ensure employment and promotion of minorities, women, handicapped persons and disabled and Vietnam Era veterans. For that reason, an affirmative action program also is in effect to seek out such persons and encourage and assist them in attaining a position affording equal opportunity. In other words, efforts are made to see that minorities, women, handicapped persons and disabled and Vietnam Era veterans who are qualified have an equal opportunity to be employed and advanced in employment.

These special efforts are prescribed in the AT&T Technologies Standardized Model

National Affirmative Action Program and the AT&T Model National Affirmative Action Program for Handicapped Individuals, Special Disabled Veterans and Veterans of the Vietnam Era.

The Omaha Works firmly supports AT&T's commitment to full compliance with these programs. Gene Saab, department chief of personnel, heads equal opportunity programs at the Works. Assisting him is an equal opportunity investigator, Gail Merrick (Ext. 3597), who is available to discuss the company's policy or programs with employees.

Any Omaha Works employee who thinks he or she is not being afforded equal opportunity under the applicable laws and regulations should contact Merrick for assistance.





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## Last frame

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In the event of an emergency, how well to Omaha fire and police personnel know the layout of the Omaha Works?

They are much more familiar

with it now since two day-long briefings were held here during October.

Representatives of the city's fire and police departments, emergency response teams and environmental groups were invited to the briefings to acquaint them with the layout of the Omaha Works.

Senior staff engineer Len Lowder took one of the groups of visitors throughout the plant,

including a hazardous waste storage area. They were shown the types of hazardous materials used in manufacturing processes, normal working areas, entrances to roads leading to the plant's internal mall area, and possible evacuation routes.

During their visit, firetrucks were lined up in front of the administration building, ready in the event of an outside emergency call.



**AT&T**  
Network Systems

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