



EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

RUNNING AN EFFECTIVE UNION LABEL COMMITTEE

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UNION LABEL GOLDEN RULE

Union members, teach your spouses.
Union parents, teach your children.
Don't forget to teach your friends and neighbors to recognize
and demand union products and services!



Introduction

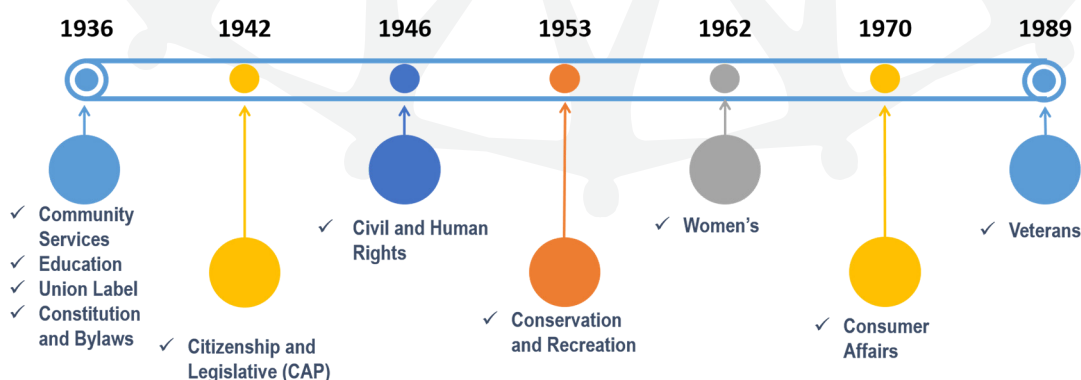
The UAW Constitution spells out that we must have ten standing committees in our local unions. This is not a recommendation but a mandate. Union label is one of the oldest standing committees. In fact, it is one of the original four named in our first Constitution. Our union has a strong view of these standing committees because we have always looked at membership as a whole. We represent people who have lives and interests that continue long after leaving work. Members live in communities, are consumers, need clean water and air. We are affected by the decisions of politicians, and we believe in fairness for all. These values are reflected in these standing committees. In addition to fulfilling the goals of our union, another benefit of standing committees is that they are also handy tools for building solidarity. Many of our rank-and-file members become activists in their locals through standing committees.

At the first UAW convention, Resolution 202 was introduced. It resolved to set up a permanent union label committee within the International Union. It also stated that all local unions shall have an appointed or elected union label committee to cooperate with the committee of the International Union, necessary to help with the critical task of carrying out principles and policies pertaining to the utilization of the buying power of our membership and uniting all workers. So, we see in the infancy of the UAW that it was a priority that the union commit to the education of our membership about the importance of supporting union products and services.

Just having a union label committee in name only is not enough. It must be an active and effective committee. An effective union label committee supports the labor movement by informing and educating workers about the products we buy as consumers. The union label committee helps to emphasize the importance of supporting those goods and services produced at union facilities by union members under union-won working conditions. They also keep members informed of union products and the availability of these products in our communities. A union label committee also brings our members' attention to those products produced under non-union conditions and by anti-union manufacturers.

The work of this committee does not need to be limited to personal consumption. As taxpayers, we can demand our hard-earned dollars be spent on quality, union-made products, like the cars used by police and other government agencies, and the school buses that transport our children.

10 MANDATED STANDING COMMITTEES



History of Union Labels

Early on, the practice of identifying goods as union-made served multiple purposes. The first example occurred in 1869. The Carpenters Union in San Francisco created a label to identify that their work was created at a mill with eight-hour workdays compared to mills requiring a ten-hour workday. The carpenters were part of the Eight-Hour League. This tactic was successfully used to educate the public about their issues.

Union labels soon were corrupted to promote other ideas, including bigotry. In the late 1800s, in San Francisco, the Cigar Makers International Union had several hundred members, all white men. They fought to keep wages high and working conditions safe in an industry that fought them at every step. In 1868, the U.S. signed a treaty with China, and within a few years, over 4,000 Chinese workers were hired and working in the cigar trade in San Francisco. They were paid a fraction of the wages of union workers. The union responded with the creation of their “white labor” union label in 1874 to distinguish the products of white labor. Those actions arose from the anti-immigrant and anti-Chinese sentiments prevalent among workers, which sadly led to racist bills such as the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. Soon their efforts were joined by the cigar manufacturers themselves, who adopted the theme of promoting white labor in what came to be called “white labels.” Other unionists rejected white labels as union labels. In 1879, union cigar workers in St. Louis created the “red label,” which became the first actual union label for cigar makers.

The Union Label and Service Trades Department (ULSTD), AFL-CIO, was founded on April 12, 1909, to promote the products and services produced in the United States by trade union members, particularly those products and services identified by a union label, shop card, store card, or service button. The department is a constitutionally mandated department of the AFL-CIO. It does not regulate the use of union labels or union bugs. Still, it works with international unions to help promote union-made goods and services and educate the public about boycotts and other campaigns against anti-union employers. It continues to publish a newsletter that is full of beneficial information. ULSTD is most known for the union label industries trade shows it hosted since 1938. Each year it would relocate from city to city and feature a wide array of union-made goods. These trade shows ended in 2008 with their last show in Detroit.

Before 1924, unions requested that employers use the union label, and many complied because they saw it as good business. In 1924, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) took it a step further. It demanded that the New York cloak industry use the union label. The campaign gained the support of the governor but soon faltered because of internal struggles within the union.

The UAW held our first convention in 1935. There, the union label committee submitted a report that said it was essential to educate UAW members and their families about UAW-made goods. The report specifically mentioned educating wives because, at the time, wives did most of the purchasing for families.



History of Union Labels

Teaching them about the importance of buying union and connecting it with their shopping power was essential in spreading the word of buying union. The initial report also pointed out that some of the supplies at the convention did not bear the union label and recommended that at the next convention, they be given supplies bearing the union label. Even then, members put a premium on “walking the walk” and leading by example.

Nine Things You Might Not Know about the Union Label

It's Old: The first modern union label was created by the Carpenter's Eight-Hour League in San Francisco, which used a stamp in 1869 for use on products made by factories employing men on the eight- (as opposed to ten-) hour day.

It serves multiple purposes: protection against anti- or non-union shops that might otherwise profess union working conditions; part of a public-relations campaign to induce customers to buy union-made products; a sign of good workmanship and quality standards; a badge of union prestige to attract new members; and a warning against trespass by competitive unions.



Union label is also called a union bug: most of us have seen these on items made by union print shops (also known as Allied Printing Trades Council).



Many UAW vehicles have UAW labels: whether on a window or in the door panel, many UAW vehicles have our bug. You can always determine if your vehicle is union made by checking out the UAW buying guide on uaw.org/cars.

Look for the union label: this is the most famous jingle in the labor movement and was sung in a commercial widely seen in the late seventies by ILGWU members (International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, now UNITE HERE). Can you remember all the words?



They are everywhere: from washing machines to baked goods, from shoes to skyscrapers, from clothing to barber shops. They are evidence of quality goods and services produced by proud American workers. Find other union goods at unionlabel.org.

Buy Union week: the ten days following Thanksgiving are designated by the AFL-CIO as “Buy Union” week to encourage union members to look for union-made goods and services when buying Holiday gifts and other items.

Union made not the same as Made in the USA: Made in the USA is a label regulated by the Federal Trade Commission but these labels can be put on goods made in American Samoa or the Northern Mariana Islands – both places with a history of labor violations.

Is it still relevant today? “Union made” means the workers have a voice in their wages and working conditions. We “vote with our wallets” every time we make a purchase, and buying union made is a way to support workplace fairness and building the middle class.





LOOK FOR THE UNION LABEL

This chart is a sample of union labels used by unions. These are also known as union bugs. We often use the term union bug because it describes the minuscule union label appearing on printed materials, which supposedly resembles a tiny insect. Many of these union labels also are trademarks of the International Unions. Our union has a strict interpretation of federal law which will not allow the UAW wheel to be used as a certification mark.

1. Actors' Equity Association (AEA)
2. Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA)
3. Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU)
4. American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)
5. American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (AFM)
6. American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA)
7. American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
8. American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
9. American Postal Workers Union (APWU)
10. American Radio Association (ARA)
11. American Train Dispatchers Association (ATDA)
12. Associated Actors and Artistes of America (4As)
 - 12a American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA)
 - 12b American Guild of Variety Artists (AGVA)
 - 12c The Guild of Italian American Actors (GIAA)
13. Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM)
14. Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (BRS)
15. California School Employees Association (CSEA)
16. Communications Workers of America (CWA)
 - 16a Association of Flight Attendants (AFA-CWA)
 - 16b Industrial Union of Electronic Workers (IUE-CWA)
 - 16c National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians (NABET-CWA)
 - 16d The Newspaper Guild (TNG-CWA)
 - 16e Printing, Publishing and Media Workers, CWA
17. Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC)
18. Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics and Allied Workers International Union (GMP)
19. International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States, Its Territories and Canada (IATSE)



20. International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers (Ironworkers)
21. International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)
22. International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers (AWIU)
23. International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) Transportation Communications International Union/IAM (TCU/IAM)
24. International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers (IBB)
25. International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)
26. International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)
27. International Longshoremen's Association (ILA)
28. International Plate Printers, Die Stammers and Engravers Union of North America
29. International Union of Allied Novelty and Production Workers (Novelty and Production Workers)
30. International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers (BAC)
31. International Union of Elevator Constructors (IUEC)
32. International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE)
33. International Union of Painters and Allied Trades of the United States and Canada (IUPAT)
34. International Union of Police Associations (IUPA)
35. Laborers' International Union of North America (LiUNA)
- 35a National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU)
36. Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (MEBA) Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS)
37. NFL Players Association (NFLPA)
38. National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA)
39. National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC)
40. National Nurses United (NNU)
41. National Taxi Workers Alliance (NTWA)
42. Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU)
43. Operative Plasterers' and Cement Masons' International Association of the United States and Canada (OPCMIA)
44. Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA)
45. Seafarers International Union of North America (SIU)
46. International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers (SMART)
47. Transport Workers Union of America (TWU)
48. UNITE HERE
49. United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada (UA)
50. United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America International Union (UAW)
51. United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW)
52. United Mine Workers of America (UMWA)
53. United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial & Service Workers International Union (USW)
54. United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers (Roofers and Waterproofers)
55. Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA)
56. Writers Guild of America, East Inc. (WGAE)

Affiliated Trade and Industrial Departments

- I. Building and Construction Trades Department
- II. Maritime Trades Department
- III. Metal Trades Department
- IV. Department for Professional Employees
- V. Transportation Trades Department
- VI. Union Label and Service Trades Department

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Bargaining and the UAW Certification Mark

The policy of the UAW is to:

"Insist that all parts, stampings, tools, dies, machinery, fixtures, accessories, and supplies used in the manufacture of articles under the jurisdiction of this International Union, bear the Union label or Union stamp of the International Union, or any other bona fide labor union." Article 54 Sec. 3

It is UAW policy to include a UAW certification mark on goods and services made by our members because we want to raise awareness about the higher quality of goods and services produced by union workers and tout the good ethics of buying union.

A certification mark is different from the UAW logo, which is also known as our wheel. That image is also known as a service mark or trademark. Service marks or trademarks cannot be used as certification marks because federal law requires that different graphics be used to certify that goods are made by, or work is done by, UAW members in a UAW-represented bargaining unit.

Advertising and certification are two separate functions. The wheel advertises what we are, but the certification is a stamp that confirms that UAW members performed the work or service. Our certification mark is called "Union Quality – UAW." It is the only image that can be used to certify that the goods or services were UAW-made.



Official UAW Certification Mark

The UAW Constitution not only requires that locals have a union label standing committee, it also states that our policy is to affix a union label on the goods we make. Many local unions have negotiated for the right to put the union label on their products. Article 54, Section 4 of the UAW Constitution states:

"It shall be the duty of all representatives, business agents and union officials to insist that the above provisions be written into all contracts between employers and the International union subject to the approval of the International Executive Board."

One of the essential things your union label committee can do is get the certification mark on your product or service. The way we do this is through contract negotiations. The servicing representative assigned to your local can help your leadership draft language to achieve this goal. It is a win-win situation when the consumer can see that the product they are purchasing is of high quality and made from a manufacturer that treats its employees fairly.

The language for agreements and contracts can be as simple as the following:

"The employer agrees to use the UAW's registered Certification Mark, "Union Quality-UAW" and design, on goods and products produced by the bargaining unit, according to the standard license granted by the International Union, UAW."

Why Should My Local Have a Union Label Committee?

These reasons have historically been used to support a union label campaign, and they are still relevant today:

- The need to educate members about supporting one another through our purchases
- The need to educate members about the power of their purse
- The need to educate consumers about quality goods
- The need to educate consumers about ethical shopping. The National Education Department has an entire workshop called “The Ethical Consumer” that covers this topic in-depth
- The need to educate consumers about job creation in the USA

Our UAW Constitution reflects the importance of encouraging people to buy union. Per the UAW Constitution Article 44, each UAW local union must have a union label committee.

The constitution elaborates in Article 54, Section 8, where it states:

“All Local unions shall have an appointed or elected union label committee that must function.”

Article 54, Section 10 of the UAW Constitution states:

“The International Executive Board shall set up a union label committee from members of the International Union to coordinate the activities of Local Union Label Committees throughout the International union. It shall be the duty of this committee to work in conjunction with the Education Department of the International Union.” As a result, the International Union, UAW does have an international Union Label Advisory Council.

Just having a union label committee in name only is not enough. It must be an active and effective committee.



What is the Union Label Committee's Duty?

The committee educates the membership about the significance of the union label. This could be done through many avenues: At meetings, in the local's newsletter, on social media, at events hosted by the local, etc. The committee creates content, such as guides, handouts, posters, etc. Knowing the union vendors in your area when it comes to printing, shopping, or even catering can be helpful to your local union that itself hosts activities. If your local or other standing committees give prizes for activities or raffles, help them identify gifts that can come from union stores or union-made products. The committee also raises awareness of boycotts. Finally, the committee supports the bargaining committee to include union label in collective bargaining.

How Should the Union Label Committee Function?

Like most standing committees, the union label committee has a chair, co-chair, recording secretary, treasurer/financial secretary, committee members, and sometimes sub-committees or task forces. According to your local union bylaws, officers are elected by members or appointed by the local union president.

The Chair

The chair usually coordinates the committee's activities and secures support for its programs from local union leadership. It is the chair's job to see that the committee accomplishes its goals. The chair should also be able to work in a coordinated fashion with other local union committees. Among other duties are: Planning the meeting agenda, conducting all meetings using Robert's Rules of Order, and submitting all plans and proposals to the local union executive board for approval.

The Co-Chair

The co-chair must understand the chair's duties. They preside at meetings in the chair's absence and assume any other assigned duties, including implementing programs and activities agreed upon by the local executive board. The co-chair also assists in the orderly transition of the committee at the close of their term or when the assignment is complete.



How Should the Union Label Committee Function?

The Recording Secretary

The recording secretary must keep accurate records of all meetings. The minutes should include but are not limited to: Dates, times, the roll call of officers or committee members, action taken from previous meeting minutes, actions from sub-committees, and any motions made by members of the union label committee. The recording secretary must also preserve all records and documents, help the chair prepare meeting agendas, and compile reports as they become necessary.

The Treasurer/Financial Secretary

The treasurer/financial secretary has the duty and obligation to receive all money raised by union label committee activities. Because these funds cannot stay in the committee's possession under Article 40, Section 4 of the UAW Constitution, it is the treasurer/financial secretary's duty to relinquish all funds to the local union's treasurer/financial secretary. The treasurer/financial secretary must also keep current on the legal requirements of fundraising and maintain accurate records of all committee transactions.

Committee Members and Sub-Committees

Committee and sub-committee members are assigned projects at the discretion of the committee chair. The duties and responsibilities are usually determined as the need arises and the purpose of the sub-committee is defined.

DID YOU KNOW?

Article 54 of the UAW Constitution not only requires that locals have a union label standing committee, but it also states that our policy is to affix a union label on the goods we make. The right to put the union label on products can be negotiated with the employer.



How to Become a Member of a Union Label Committee

According to the UAW Constitution, all standing committee members should be appointed or elected, subject to the discretion of the local union or unit workplace organization as stated in your local union bylaws. Consult your bylaws or contact your local union president regarding your local. Committee members should display initiative, energy, and a willingness to learn. Consistent with our union's values and principles, effective standing committees reflect the diversity of membership.

Successful Union Label Committees

What do successful union label committees do well? They:

Communicate - not only among members of the committee but also with the local union leadership and other committees. Many projects and activities overlap between committees. Talking and offering support to those committees will ensure success for all of us.

Ask questions - to learn as much as possible about the objectives and purpose of the standing committees in your local. Find out what needs to be done and what the priorities are for your committee. Encourage others to voice their opinions and ask questions to understand the issues from the leadership and rank-and-file perspectives clearly.

Listen - not merely to hear what is said, but to understand the attitudes and opinions of others and to increase your awareness and allow others to have a voice in committee decisions.

Accept challenges - ask for help when needed. Be prepared to look for solutions and alternatives when faced with a problem. Do not reject an idea only because "it's never been done before." Seek avenues for gathering information.

Keep at it - build on small successes and activities that give your committee credibility and pride. Encourage each other and remember that working together can accomplish more than working alone.

Seek support - local standing committee training and support are available from various national departments. Assistance is available through your local union leadership, who can contact your regional office.



Strategic Planning for Union Label Committees

Of course, successful union label committees also plan. That is because success takes more than hard work – it takes strategic planning. Strategic planning is the ability to come up with unique and insightful ideas to advance toward an outcome. Union label committees must plan both inwardly and outwardly. Inward planning is about making sure your committee functions correctly – that you have enough members, resources, and a structure. Outward planning is about making sure your committee plans activities that fit the needs of your membership. There are nine steps to strategic planning for standing committees, and they apply to both inward and outward functions.

Step One: Assess What Your Committee Has

Take an inventory to find out what your committee has. Often, when we say this, people think an inventory is of materials, such as books or computers. But your list should also include:

- Lists of committee members, current and past. Do you know how to contact them? When are they available?
- Do you have documentation of what has been done in the past? Were there any reports given to the president or published in your local's newsletter? Do you have records of past activities?
- Equipment belonging to the committee and equipment available to the committee
- What commitments have your committee made – both specifically and historically? Is there an expectation that your committee will plan or participate in an event?

In the process of gathering this information, you may discover other areas worth exploring. At the end of this process, you will know one of two things; precisely what is on hand or how much is unclear because records are now lost, or the members who had the information are now gone.

Step Two: Assess Your Committee's Communications Structure

After your first assessment, you must drill down further and assess your communication structure. As a committee, you must determine:

- How do you communicate with your fellow union members?
- When was the last time the contact information was updated?
- When was the last time the contact information was tested?



Strategic Planning for Union Label Committees

Testing is essential – it is what tells you if the system is working or not. There are easy ways to test lists – sending out holiday greetings, for example. The challenges you flag are likely also challenges for other standing committees in your local. This is a good project for your committees to work on with your local leadership.

UTILIZING SURVEYS

Another way to assess members' needs is by surveying the membership. Surveys are valuable for not only collecting data but getting buy-in from members and giving them a voice in your program. When developing a survey, keep in mind the following:

- The purpose/goal of the survey – what is the purpose, who will receive the survey, how will you use the results, and when will it happen
- Design the survey – once you understand what information you want to gather from the survey, determine the best possible way to ask the questions
- Pilot the survey – the only way to know if a survey will get the results you are looking for is to pilot or “test” the survey with a sample group. Make necessary changes from the “test” and get approval from your leadership before publishing the survey
- Distribute and collect – determine the distribution and collection method and communicate it to all those involved
- Tabulate and analyze the results – format your results into graphs, charts, or other easy-to-read figures. Record how many surveys were distributed and how many surveys were returned
- Report the findings – communicating the survey results to the people who took the time to complete the survey is essential

For more information, see UAW Publication No. 507 – Survey Design.

Step Three: Know the Laws, Know the Rules

You must know the laws and rules that cover your committee's activities. If any laws apply specifically to your committee's activities, make sure you understand them. UAW administrative letters and our Constitution also give clear instructions on fundraising, dealing with vendors, and our conduct as union representatives. If you need guidance, ask your local leadership to ask your region if specific pieces of training or documents can help your committee.



Strategic Planning for Union Label Committees

Step Four: Assess Needs and Create Goals

You must assess the membership's needs when creating union label goals. An excellent place to start is talking to your local union leadership. Speak to them about their concerns for the future of the local and the community. For example, are you noticing people purchasing big-ticket items from anti-union corporations or driving non-union vehicles? Is your community uninformed about the importance of tax dollars going towards union services and products? Once you interview your local leadership, you can assess your current union label programming. Identify past activities, how they were carried out, who was responsible, and if they were successful. Concurrently, evaluate current or ongoing initiatives and determine if they should continue or change based on participation and feedback.

Good goals are **SMART**:

Specific: What is your goal? A goal should be specific, not open-ended, or undefined. For example, instead of setting a goal to “do better as a committee,” a more specific goal would be to “increase number of members shopping at local, union companies.”

Measurable: Can success be quantified? The only way to define success is to have a yardstick to measure it against. Do not have a goal of “more people showing up at our union label picnic.” The goal should be “XX number of members coming to our picnic or 20% more participating than last year.”

Attainable: Are you setting up your committee for success? Your goal should have a reasonable chance of success. Nothing is more disappointing or frustrating than setting goals that are not met. It is a sure-fire way to have people walk away from your program.

Relevant: Does it reflect the values of the committee? Do your leadership and membership support it? Buy-in from everyone is what creates the extra effort and sense of responsibility that ensures success.

Timed: Are deadlines clear? The goal should have a start date, expected pace of work, and a target date of completion.



Strategic Planning for Union Label Committees

Step Five: Create a Plan and Implement your Plan

After determining goals, you need to move to project planning. That means thinking critically about the steps necessary to achieve your goals. Good project planning is specific: Who, what, when, where, and how. Once you have a plan, report to your local leadership, and respond to their suggestions. Remember that plans are a work in progress and may need to be adapted. You may also have to respond to new or immediate changes in circumstances. Work with your leadership to promote your committee's programs. Utilize your local's newsletter, social media pages, union meetings, flyers, signs, and your internal communication network (like Member-to-Member.)

Step Six: Grow Your Committee

Union label committees need volunteers – and that is true whether you have a full committee or not. Remember, one of your committee's goals should be to serve as an entry point for new members getting active for the first time. Keeping your committee's doors open and welcoming all volunteers is a crucial part of getting that job done. New members bring new energy, new ideas, and all of that is a good thing. Potential volunteers and new committee members are all around you.

Here are some places you might start:

- Members with skills relevant to the committee: People who love to buy union, and are active in the community
- Past volunteers: This is where sign-in sheets are beneficial
- Members who organize birthday or retirement celebrations or who are outgoing people: These are the natural organizers at work, and they make great additions to your education committee. Same with people who tend to be involved with your local's charitable, community outreach, or recreational activities
- Check out who is following your local or region's social media pages: That shows an interest in your union that can easily be translated into participation
- Retirees are a great source of knowledge and energy: Plug them in
- Who is wearing red to show solidarity? If your local does "red shirt Wednesdays", that's a great day to go up to people with fliers and talk to them about the committee



Strategic Planning for Union Label Committees

Step Seven: Train, Train, Train!

The surest way to drive away committee members/volunteers is to have nothing for them to do. Just think about yourself – how frustrating is it to volunteer for something and never get to do anything? That means that you should keep your committee's structure intact even if you do not have any upcoming programming. Union label committee members should try to attend the Standing Committees Conference held at the UAW Walter and May Reuther Family Education Center in Onaway, Michigan. This week-long conference is a great way to learn about the history of UAW union label committees and network with other local union label committees.

Step Eight: Support Committee Members

Committee members represent a spectrum of experience and skills. A best practice is that you want everyone to feel victorious, so do not set someone up to fail. We make people feel successful by starting with more straightforward assignments and build them up to challenging ones. We also guarantee success when we check in on people to see how they are doing and make sure they get their questions answered. And, if an assignment is not a good fit, find another task.

Step Nine: Debrief and Improve

Strategic planning requires that we have a clear vision of our goals and plan. But we must also constantly assess and track our results. Always bring your committee together after events to share ideas and feedback.

Track your results: It's difficult to assess the success of your union label committee unless there is a thorough understanding of what works and what doesn't.

Debrief and discuss with the entire committee: Come to consensus on areas needing improvement.

Develop a strategic plan on how to improve: Encourage members to think outside of the box.



Planning Union Label Activities for the Membership

Educating members on the importance of looking for the union label is a continuous effort. Committee projects can vary from quick and easy to large and ongoing. Here are some tips and ideas for membership activities.

Utilize Shopping Cycles

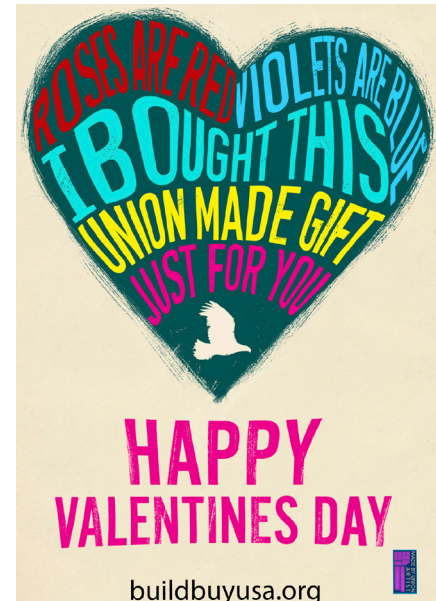
A unique benefit of the union label committee is that you have the advantage of natural shopping cycles that you can use to promote your message. Holidays, back to school, Mother's and Father's Day are occasions where you can highlight union-made goods and the importance of supporting them. Most members view this as helpful information. You can find many graphics on the Facebook pages of the AFL-CIO, UAW, and Labor 411. Always check that you are using a current graphic because this information is constantly updated.

Partnering with Other Committees

There are many opportunities to collaborate with other standing committees. Though we have specific subjects we cover separately, our goals are universal: To make our union stronger and to fight for justice for all. For instance, working with CAP, you will find that many bills introduced at the federal level are related to union label. Some things related to union label include:

- Funding of Federal Trade Commission inspectors who enforce our Made in USA labeling rules
- Laws relating to how government agencies procure goods and services. Several laws influence how they make those purchases. We're constantly working to strengthen those laws to promote union-made and USA-made goods

It is a natural fit to work with the education committee to educate members about union label awareness. Also, there is an overlap with the conservation and recreation committee regarding promoting union-made sporting goods or sharing information on discounts for unionized airlines or union hotels.



Holiday cards promoting union-made products are a great way to promote union label to family and friends.



Planning Union Label Activities for the Membership

Promote Boycott and “Do Buy” Lists

Union label committees should be aware of current boycotts. The AFL-CIO created a precise process for declaring boycotts. The Union Label & Services Trade Department administers this list which you can find on their website. Sound reasons must be given before a company is placed on the national boycott list.

You can download the boycott list or sign up to have it sent to you. Find it at: <https://aflcio.org/MadeInAmerica/afl-cio-boycott-list>.

Your committee can also promote “do buy” lists. “Do buy” lists feature products or services produced by union members. We encourage our members to consider purchasing the products listed. They are of high quality and help support the companies employing our union sisters and brothers.

Asking People to Take the Union Pledge

Distribute, explain, and collect signed copies of the union pledge (located at the end of this publication) and display them at your local union. This activity can be repeated at local community groups in conjunction with a presentation on unfair trade policies, child labor, sweatshops, or locating union-made products and services.

Do Not Forget About Services

We often focus on products, but union workers also provide services, including airline pilots, housekeeping at hotels, teachers, package deliveries and more. We should help our local union use union airlines and stay at union hotels. Your union label committee can do the research.



The AFL-CIO website is full of resources for purchasing union-made products for special events and occasions.



Planning Union Label Activities for the Community

The union label commitment is not intended to be limited to your work facility. With careful planning, the union label message can and should be carried to our families, friends, and communities in which we live. The following are some successful ideas by other UAW union label committees.

Displays – One-on-One Contact with the Public

Setting up displays at the mall and other high-traffic locations, craft shows, and civic events are helpful ways to educate our members and their families about union-made products and services. How about setting up a booth at a Labor Day celebration, an art fair, or a county fair? Pictures, handouts, catalogs, samples of products, and continually running videos are great for displays. Do not forget to take advantage of billboards alongside roads. These are great locations in the community for advertising buying union goods and services. T.V., radio, and social media spots can also carry a compelling message. Or you could even create ads that moviegoers can watch while waiting for movies to start at your local theatre. The possibilities are truly endless!

Getting the Union Label Message Out to Young People

Union label committees have successfully taken their message to an important consumer group: Junior and senior high school students. Teenagers are among the largest consumer groups in America. Setting up displays at school athletic and social events is effective. If you speak with teachers in your community, their curriculum can often be adjusted to allow presentations on topics such as child labor, sweatshops, and trade. With the increased cost of college tuition, a committee-sponsored essay scholarship contest can generate interest among students. This can be a joint project with your local union education committee, which is an excellent resource to help develop programs of this nature.

Lobbying for Tax Dollars to Go to Union Goods and Services

Union label committee members can attend school board meetings to voice their opinions on how our taxes are used in school budgets. Office equipment and supplies, sporting goods, books, and musical instruments are available from manufacturers that employ union workers. Building additions and new building construction can all be achieved using union labor. School buses, motorcycles, fire trucks, vans, and police cars are examples of vehicles that serve our communities and are purchased using precious tax dollars. Union label committees should insist that these big ticket items come from union-represented manufacturers.



How to Read a Vehicle VIN

Many times, when you attend a union event, whether at Black Lake or your local union hall, if you do not have a union-made vehicle, you must park in a different place. Your vehicle may be a Ford, General Motors, or Stellantis product. Therefore, you assume that it was manufactured in America, but that is not always the case. To help consumers understand how “American” their vehicle is, every car must display a parts-content window sticker. The country-of-origin statement has been required since 1994 by the American Automobile Labeling Act (AALA). It lists the final assembly point, source of the engine and transmission, and which countries supplied 15% or more of the vehicle’s equipment. You can also tell where your vehicle is purchased and other important information about it by reading the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN).

In 1954, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) began requiring standardized VIN’s for all road vehicles.

Most people believe the VIN is just a series of random numbers and letters. But these characters are highly structured codes that have their meaning. From the model year 1981 to the present, vehicles have a VIN made up of 17 characters (letters and numbers). The prior VIN length and format varied among vehicles.

The VIN can often be found on the lower-left corner of the dashboard, in front of the steering wheel. You can read the number by looking through the windshield on the driver’s side of the vehicle.

The VIN may also appear in several other locations:

- Front of the engine block. This should be easy to spot by popping open the hood and looking at the front of the engine.
- Front of the car frame, near the container that holds windshield washer fluid.
- Rear-wheel well. Try looking up directly above the tire.
- Inside the driver-side doorjamb. Open the door and look underneath where the side-view mirror would be located if the door was shut.
- Driver-side doorpost. Open the door and look near the spot where the door latches, not too far from the seatbelt return.
- Underneath the spare tire.

The first character of the VIN indicates the country in which the vehicle was manufactured. VIN’s starting with 1, 4, and 5 are manufactured in the United States. The vehicle manufacturer uses the third number or letter to identify what kind of vehicle it is: car, truck, bus, etc. The 10th character of the VIN indicates the model year.



How to Read a Vehicle VIN

How to Read a Vehicle Identification Number (VIN)

1 F A L P 4 2 X 9 T F 1 1 1 1 1 1

Vehicle's brand,
engine size, and type

Vehicle
Security
Code

Serial number
for the vehicle

Vehicle Manufacturer:

- B, C or D: Chrysler/Dodge
- FA, FB, FC, FD, FM, FT: Ford
- Starts with G: General Motors
- J4: Jeep
- L: Lincoln USA
- ME: Mercury USA
- NX: NUMMI USA
- P3: Plymouth USA
- YV: Mazda USA (AutoAlliance)
- ZV: Ford (AutoAlliance)

Plant that assembled
the vehicle

Vehicle Year

- Model years 1981-2000 used Letters B to Y
- Model years 2001-2009 used numbers 1 to 9
- Model years 2010-2030 will use letters again

Where the vehicle was built:

- 1, 4, 5 made in United States
- 2 made in Canada
- 3 made in Mexico
- 6 and 7 made in Oceania
- 8 and 9 made in South America
- A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H made in Africa
- J, K, L, M, N, P, and R made in Asia
- S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, and Z made in Europe



Conclusion

For information on where to find union-made products and services, tips for running your committee, and more, check out the union label standing committee page on [uaw.org](https://uaw.org/standing-committees/union-label/). Go to: <https://uaw.org/standing-committees/union-label/>

Your union label committee must be energetic, motivated, and able to analyze, plan, implement and evaluate the issues and projects to undertake. This publication, along with Publications 505, "Running Effective Standing Committees" and 518, "Member to Member: An Activist Handbook," offer methods and techniques to help build and develop your committee. Your local's union label committee chair should work with your local union president to develop a plan of action. The local union president should contact your regional servicing representative for more information or arrange for committee training.

The Union Label Pledge

We have learned how vital the union label committee is to your local, your members, and your community. Now we ask you and every member, whether on the union label committee or not, to take the union label pledge. Following that pledge is vital because our future depends on it!

The Union Label Pledge

I am a union worker. I pledge to help my union brothers and sisters by buying union products and using union services. I know that I enjoy many good things today because of the devotion and sacrifices of trade unionists before me who fought to win a better life for all working people.

I pledge to buy only those goods in the marketplace made in this country by my fellow workers and avoid the imported products of those who export production, technology, and jobs to low-wage countries, thus destroying jobs and undermining the economy of their own country.

As a trade unionist, I will not permit my union-earned dollars to profit those who refuse to allow their employees the right to the collective bargaining process or permit them to have a strong voice in determining their futures.

I pledge to look for the union label on all goods and services I use. By doing so, I help strengthen the security of those men and women who believe as I do in the goals of the free labor movement.

I demonstrate my unity with my labor brothers and sisters by observing a simple principle – **THE UNION LABEL GOLDEN RULE:** *Union members, teach your spouses. Union parents, teach your children. Don't forget to teach your friends and neighbors to recognize and demand union products and services!*





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