



“CONSTRUCTING A WAY FOR A BETTER FUTURE”

ECA NEWSLETTER

JOHNS SOAPBOX



Five Key Trends to Watch For in 2023, or GO FORTH CAREFULLY AND SUSTAINBLY IN 2023!

John’s Soapbox, I am stating the opinion of myself in this Soapbox

As you all know, I am “bullish” on our local and regional outlook for 2023. With that said, the overall 8% growth of our industry in 2022 will see some uncertainty in 2023. Although I feel we are somewhat insulated from these concerns in Northern California, they will certainly have some effect on your business practices and your forecasting. Most of you, if not all of you, are savvy enough that these “trends” are not new news, but here we are at the end of the year and it seems it is a good time for reflection on assumptions, and a good time to review your employee handbook with your Human Resources department and update it (see “News You Can Use” section of this newsletter for general laws that can affect your handbook).

Five Trends to Watch in 2023:

1: **Probable Slowdown in 2nd Half of 2023.** Many of you are going in to 2023 with healthy backlogs of work and projects for the 1st half of the year. Because of higher interest rates, and ongoing material and supplier pricing increases (as well as scarcity and uncertainty of delivery of some materials), this could impact the 2nd half of 2023 more than the 1st half. There will probably be increased competition for those projects moving through the 2023 year as well. There could be a potential slowdown of project delivery in the 2nd half of 2023. And how about the fact that PG&E is telling folks they cant get power to their projects for 18 month minimum? [PG&E tells some Sonoma County projects that power connections could take up to 18 months \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](http://northbaybusinessjournal.com)

2: **Supply Chain Issues WILL Pressure Your Bottom Line.** Over the last two years, the COVID-19 pandemic, transport bottlenecks, and geopolitical uncertainties have exposed vulnerabilities in the ordering and delivery of many (used to be) ordinary materials. This will probably continue to see bottlenecks in 2023 due to many issues-the major one being uncertainty in global markets caused by geopolitical instability. Manufacturing is going to be going through a real transformation because of the focus on climate change and how that issue plays out in various countries.

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2022

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We will also continue to see shortages in meeting demand for semiconductors in many of the products that utilize them. The expected continuance of the Russia-Ukraine conflict will continue to impact European markets as they struggle for manufacturing raw materials and energy to produce their products. Asia is in the same situation albeit a little bit better off than Europe. Bottom line, electronics, measuring devices, testing equipment and the machines that utilize those components will see uncertainty in delivery schedules. That will impact your ability to deliver projects on time and on budget in 2023.

3. "Captain Obvious" says-We Have a Labor Shortage in Our Industry! We still do and it will still continue. Particularly in the "white collar" segment and in certain specialized "blue collar" areas like maintenance workers to keep our facilities and machinery running smoothly. Companies that have had the capacity to do so have already reviewed their compensation packages and benefits and raised them to retain key employees. It is not all about a lack of workers, it is also about the aging of the boomers and their leaving the marketplace. Similarly, many of our future workers have been seriously shorted on their education through the pandemic's closing of schools and the general inept teaching of basic technical skills to the new generation of workers. Many firms are opting to hire on "character" and work ethic and do the training themselves. For larger firms, this is possible, for smaller firms it is too but poses more problems to consider. There will be times that smaller firms will have to "season" their younger employees with "on the job" training, and your estimates should consider this moving forward in 2023.

4. Digital Transformation of Tasks Will Continue to Expand. The engineering and contracting industry has been slow to adopt digital transformation and the industry cannot linger any more. As firms face higher labor and equipment costs across the board, becoming more efficient is just as important as company loyalty, hard working ethics, and a drug and alcohol-free workforce. We HAVE to be more efficient because our competitors are certainly doing so.

5. Climate Change Considerations Rule. Whether you personally believe climate change is an exercise in "virtue exercise" or whether you believe climate change rates up there with the most important issues of the day, climate change will dominate our industry more each year beginning in 2023. We are seeing projects get shelved because widening the road to relieve traffic congestion leads to additional vehicle miles travelled. That is enough to shelve projects today. Where there are constraints placed upon us, there are opportunities that arise as well. You all are smart enough to make your own company choices that will influence your customer base, your retainage of employees, and your bottom line as regards climate change issues.

Bottom Line:

Go Forth in 2023 Carefully and Sustainably!

If you are interested in diving further into the "weeds" on the subjects I posed, I offer you this link-[2023 Engineering and Construction Industry Outlook | Deloitte US](#)

That's All Folks!

John

COMMITTEE NEWS

Golf Committee—the Tournament is set for Friday July 21, 2023. We will be going back to our old favorite at Windsor Golf Course.

Spec Committee—Chairs Casey Wood of GBI and Dale Smith of RCX wanted to let you know the next Spec Committee Meeting will be held on January 18, 2023, at the NCBE Board Room from 3:30-5:00pm.

Car Show Committee— Chair Walt Turner has been planning to gear up (like the play on words?) for our Father’s Day Show and Shine Car Show at Julliard Park in Santa Rosa. Next newsletter we should announce the first Car Show meeting. We hope you are willing to get involved in the planning and we promise we will not burn you out with too many meetings! Save the date—Sunday, June 18, 2023

CR Committee—The project for the YWCA (building some concrete pathways and new storage buildings) has been postponed until springtime as a more “holistic” effort is needed according to YWCA head Madeleine Keegan. Chair Lacey, Project Manager Rod Sichel, and I all agree. We will revisit this in the spring.

As for the effort to help cleanup Santa Rosa, we will pose this to the Board in January to “adopt a green space”. I did bring up to the City Manager that the adoption by the City Council of a Project Labor Agreement will probably have an impact on the ECA’s willingness to donate time, materials, and labor to helping when the city is telling non signatory firms they cannot work on City projects. Just sayin’.

Auction Committee—Incoming President Antonio Mencarini has been busy meeting with Bricoleur Winery Director Chris Richard to see if we can have our auction at this 5-star winery on Starr Road in Windsor. We are still looking at a late September date (TBD shortly) and hope we can align costs with ambience for a really special and fresh ECA Days of Wine and Dozers Auction in 2023!

Nominating Committee— See you February 4th at the Installation and Awards Dinner!! I have been busy contacting Don Mills and Sound Ideas for the video interviews with our Award Winners. This is moving along nicely to honor Robert Lee (Hermsmeyer Hall of Fame), Ed Winters (Posthumous Hermsmeyer Hall of Fame), Ghilotti Construction Company (Contractor of the Year), and Valdivia Trucking (Affiliate of the Year) as our honorees February 4. For more information on the event itself, making your reservation and sponsorship opportunities. Click [here](#) to sponsor and [here](#) to register!

Again, thanks to Sound Ideas and Bill Wiggins, Trans Tech Consultants, for being the sponsor for the Promotional Video which we will be filming it at the Installation Dinner. The promotional video will be a group of ECA ambassadors explaining what the ECA means to them. And we will be including this very short video in future correspondents and newsletters.

Government Affairs Committee—Chair Art Deicke has been busy reaching out to candidates that were successful in the mid terms. He has specifically reached out to Victoria Fleming who beat the ECA endorsed Terry Sanders for Santa Rosa City Council. We will connect and see how we can work together moving forward! Thanks Art.

NEWS THAT YOU CAN USE:

New Laws in Effect Jan 1, 2023: Just as it is one thing to make a New Year’s resolution and another to keep it – revising policies is simple, but actually implementing the changes is what matters. Employers should check to make sure that handbooks are up to date and then ensure that the company is complying with all of the changes and any other changes in the law. For more information or assistance regarding these updates as well as how to comply with these changes, consult with your counsel or counsel of your choosing.

Click [HERE](#) for more.



The Northern California Engineering Contractors Association cordially invites you to attend our 44th Annual Installation & Awards Dinner

*DoubleTree by Hilton Sonoma Wine Country
One Doubtree Dr., Rohnert Park
Saturday, February 4, 2023*

Sustaining Member Sponsors



Premier Sponsor &
President's Reception



*President's Champagne Reception 6:00 pm
Dinner & Awards 7:00 pm
Coffee, Dessert, Port & Cigars 9:00 pm*

Welcome incoming President:
Antonio Mencarini, Ghilotti Construction &
The 2023 ECA Board of Directors

We will be also honoring
Volunteer of the Year
Jeannine Clary, Argonaut Constructors
Contractor of the Year
Dick Ghilotti, Ghilotti Construction
Affiliate of the Year
Raul Valdivia, Valdivia Trucking
The Hermsmeyer Hall of Fame Award
will be awarded to Robert Lee, Team Ghilotti
Posthumous – Ed Winters, Argonaut Constructors

To sponsor click [HERE](#). To register click [HERE](#)

Thank you to:

[Ghilotti Construction](#)—Premier Sponsor & President's Reception

[Team Ghilotti](#)— Hermsmeyer Hall of Fame Sponsor

Emergency Response Manual for 2023—2024

Now is the time to assure your ad is included!

Reserve your space, Art due December 15, 2022

Every two years ECA gathers information we believe will be valuable to city officials, our associates, business partners, and the general public.

In the event of an emergency, we would like you to have information available that will help those that need it in the fastest way possible.

Should you be in need of assistance in the following areas, our members can help you! This manual will include in alphabetical order, who to contact for: • Counties Served • Services • Equipment • Materials

Obviously, we hope that an emergency situation will not be the reason you need to contact our members, but at least this will help you if the circumstance does arise.

No cost to be included in the manual

To be included in the Emergency Response Manual click [here](#)

To have an ad in the Emergency Response Manual click [here](#)

ECA MEMBER NEWS:

Mary is Busy With the New Emergency Response Manual-believe me, you ECA firms need to contact Mary and get your firm listed under the category(s) that you want folks to be looking for you under. This manual is made available to local City and County emergency personnel, Transportation and Public Works staff, and others and they use it all the time when they need materials, trucking, or contractors in a hurry. This is a great booklet for you to advertise in as well to bring additional attention to your firm. To be included in the ERM see above.

Ghilotti Construction Company has achieved 100% employee ownership. Please watch this short video for this amazing achievement: [Ghilotti Construction Company | Santa Rosa CA | Facebook](#)

Congratulations to Richard, Willie, Brian, and all the team over there off of Todd Road. Quite an accomplishment for sustainability.



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IMPORTANT INFO:

Get Prepared Now! Here are some very useful tips from CalFire to get your own house/property “in shape” for fire season. [link](#)

Pocket Guide for CALOSHA For Contractors: Click [here](#) for the pocket guide you all need!

Roadwork in Sonoma County - Check out the County website for road info [here](#)

WORKER’S COMPENSATION

Worker’s Compensation Endorsement By ECA-

HELLO!!! HAVE YOU ASKED YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES PERSON TO CHECK OUT THE WORKERS COMP PROGRAM ECA HAS ENDORSED? Everybody likes to save money, don’t they? Doesn’t cost you a thing to consider this as an option! Jeff Okrepkie at 707-360-4338.

[Flyer](#)



George Petersen Insurance Agency

FIRE CLEAN UP LIST:

The Sonoma County Environmental Health Department, Transportation and Public Works, and James Gore’s office are utilizing the ECA as a resource for debris testing, and debris cleanup for fire victims from the Kincade Fire. Please review the list that has been provided to the fire victims and the County, of ECA Firms that are interested and listed in various categories as being helpful in the fire aftermath. This is another benefit for ECA members and if you want to be included on the list, and are not, please contact mary@nceda.org. There is no charge for this. You can access the list by clicking here: [ECA FIRE RESOURCE LIST 2022](#)

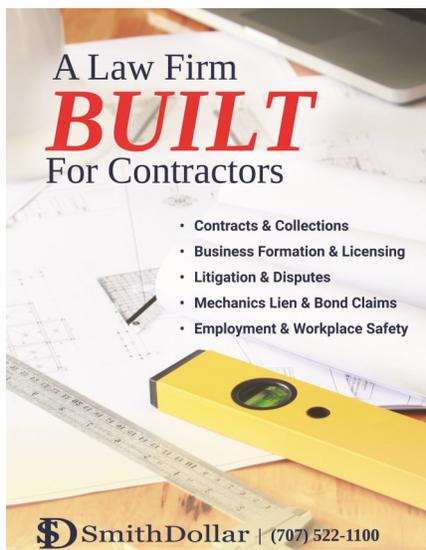
EMERGENCY RESPONSE MANUAL

Emergency Response Manual is now available online!

In the event of an emergency, we have put together this manual to help our community receive quick service from our members.

Thank you to our sponsors for helping to get this manual completed. It is sent to city and county agencies in case of an emergency so they will know who to call for services, equipment and materials.

Click [here](#) for the manual.



From the Desk of Jim Persons

HOLIDAY SAFETY

More than 20,000 people die in home accidents every year and about a third of all injuries occur there.

Holiday time can be a real killer if you do not follow safe practices -- so -- before you start to 'Deck the Hails' this year:

Check insulation on electric cords and inspect for any other damage before using them. Make sure your tree lights are approved -- look for the Underwriters Laboratory tag. Never place electrical cords under rugs and do not overload circuits, match the plug to the outlet. Use a fireplace screen and NEVER burn a Christmas tree in the fireplace. Keep candies away from the tree.



Click [HERE](#) to continue

Expert COVID-19 Safety info Available at a Discount

The Shelter in Place Orders issued by County Health Officers in Sonoma, Napa, and Mendocino - as well as the Governor, have highlighted for the building industry the need for all contractors to have an up-to-date written COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan.

This should be an addendum to your IIPP and safety meetings for COVID-19

Jim Persons, SafetyPride, an ECA member who serves as a consultant and safety instructor for ECA, is offering his services to our members and they will receive a 40% discount on his regular rates if you are a current member of ECA.

Contact Jim if you are interested in getting his help on COVID-19 related issues or other health and safety programs. email: jimpersons@safetypride.com or phone: 707-889-0881

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ON DEMAND TRAINING

On Demand Training service provides relevant and targeted training, certification, or education when you **NEED IT NOW!**

Classes can be organized quickly so you can quickly get your employees back to work. In addition, business demands require flexibility. This service provides greater flexibility and added value. Classes can be set up at your facility or at the training room in Santa Rosa

Part of this **on-demand service** is a viable alternative to **in-house training** because it is designed for situations where only **one, two, three or four** people that need training. Importantly, this training can be very cost effective. We can combine the classes with other companies that need the training or you can have your own company class.

Whether you're in search of workplace safety training to meet OSHA compliance requirements, Competent Person, Trench Safety, Confined Space, CPR/First Aid initial or update training or implementing a Safety Program ECA can help!

The best way to beat an OSHA citation is to never get one at all.

Email mary@nceca.org to set up a class today If you don't see a class you need listed please contact me.

CPR / First Aid: 3 hrs - \$95 per person

Confined Space: 3 hrs - \$150 per person

Competent Person / Trench Safety: 3 hrs - \$125 per person

Flagger Safety Training: 2 hrs - \$125 per person

Sexual Harassment—1 hr for Employees—\$25 per person ~ 2 hrs for Supervisors \$35 per person

For more information on the California law regarding sexual harassment click [here](#)

We want to highlight a member each week. What we need from you is a short paragraph on what is happening at your company. New employees, new logo, a new move, exciting new equipment! What ever you want to share about your company with our members.

Email mary@nceca.org with your spotlight information and send in photos if you have them!

Northern California Engineering Contractors Association

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