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# ECA NEWSLETTER

## JOHNS SOAPBOX



**John is travelling and in meetings so enjoy this article from Dan Walters from Cal Matters**

### **California Legislature whiffs on insurance crisis, punting to Newsom and Lara**

Before the California Legislature adjourned this month, it managed to fulfill most of wishes of majority Democrats’ favorite interest groups, [most notably labor unions](#).

However, legislators left town [without doing anything concrete](#) about something that threatens the psychic and economic wellbeing of millions of homeowners and those who aspire to ownership: the rapidly shrinking availability of residential fire insurance.

One by one, [insurers have been reducing or eliminating their exposure](#) in California, having paid out billions of dollars to cover losses from years of major wildfires and, they say, facing a fire threat that is likely to increase with climate change.

With Gov. Gavin Newsom and [Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara](#) involved in the background, there were weeks of private negotiations among legislators, insurance lobbyists and other stakeholders on how to bolster the state’s insurance market.

However, the negotiations ended a week before the Legislature adjourned without agreement, signaled when state Sen. [Bill Dodd](#), a Democrat whose Napa-centered district is one of the state’s most fire-prone regions, sent a text message: “Deal is dead. Very frustrating.”

The discussions revolved about changing the way insurers calculate risk, from basing it on past experience to including potential future risk. Such a change would probably increase premiums and legislators wanted ironclad assurances that the companies would continue writing policies in fire-prone areas if the change was made. As the session ended, there were public assurances that the issue would not be forgotten.

“We hear loud and clear from our residents that access to insurance is a problem,” Assembly Speaker [Robert Rivas](#) said in a statement.

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MARY KENNEDY CABRERA

Continued from page 1

The Legislature's departure punted the issue, at least for a few months, to Lara and Newsom, who said, "We can do a lot of things. And I'm very mindful. We can do all of that."

However, Newsom didn't list any specifics. Last Thursday, he issued an [executive order](#) urging Lara to "take action to stabilize and improve California's property insurance marketplace."

Almost immediately, [Lara issued new rate-setting regulations](#), which he had described earlier as "a package of regulatory solutions that will streamline the department's rate review process, opening it equitably to public input – not just the entrenched interests that have benefited materially from the status quo."

Newsom, Lara and the regulations drew praise from the American Property Casualty Insurance Association, which said, "Everyone understands that California's insurance market is in a spiraling crisis that requires immediate policy solutions to protect consumer access to the coverage they need."

Given industry support, it's likely that [the new regulations](#) will allow it to include, at least to some extent, estimates of future risk from wildfires in their rates which would probably lead to premium increases.

Newsom stopped short of declaring an emergency in Thursday's executive order, which would have given Lara the authority to issue new rate-setting rules without going through the usual procedural hoops.

Earlier in the day, Consumer Watchdog, the organization that sponsored a 1988 overhaul of insurance regulation, [Proposition 103](#), and has been a critic of Lara from virtually his first day on the job, issued a warning to Newsom and Lara about proceeding on an emergency basis.

Later, the organization said, Lara's move "would allow insurance companies to use secret algorithms to set rates for homeowners' coverage for wildfire and to add reinsurance costs to premiums will lead to higher insurance premiums."

So there it is, a complex mélange of economic, political and societal factors and a huge tradeoff between the availability of coverage, which is mandatory for anyone having a mortgage, and the costs.

Dan Walters, Opinion Columnist **OPINION COLUMNIST**

Click [HERE](#) for story.

That's All Folks

[John](#)

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## JOBS OPENING

THE CITY OF SANTA ROSA IS NOW HIRING CIVIL ENGINEERING TECHNICIANS TO JOIN OUR TEAM IN PROVIDING CRITICAL SERVICES TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY! JOIN A KNOWLEDGEABLE AND MOTIVATED TEAM WHO TAKE PRIDE IN DOING QUALITY WORK

This recruitment is being conducted to fill vacancies in Transportation and Public Works - Capital Projects Engineering (CPE) Division, as well as any future regular or limited-term vacancies Citywide during the life of the eligible candidate list. If you are interested in this position or a possible future Civil Engineering Technician position at the City, should one become available, including transfer opportunities, you are strongly encouraged to apply now. The City of Santa Rosa is committed to building a workforce reflective of our community and establishing a lasting culture of equity and belonging within our organization. Our collective talents and expertise contribute to high-quality public services that support a vibrant, resilient, and inclusive City for our community and visitors. We celebrate a diverse workforce and welcome all qualified candidates to apply.

[Civil Engineering Technician I, II, III | Job Details tab | Career Pages \(governmentjobs.com\)](#)

### **Construction Technician I/II**

Brelje & Race Consulting Engineers has an immediate opening for a Construction Technician. Experience should include underground utility, asphalt paving and/or water/wastewater treatment plant projects. The individual will be responsible for field engineering and construction monitoring at sites in Sonoma, Lake and Mendocino Counties. This on-call position is seasonal, with nearly full-time hours when active.

Responsibilities include contract compliance monitoring; observation and reporting of construction activities; coordination of quality control testing; tracking and coordinating project schedule; and maintaining client goals and expectations. Office duties may include assisting with contract administration services such as reviewing submittals, responding to requests for information, and maintaining construction contract logs and files.

Compensation: \$55 to \$75 per hour depending on experience, education, and licensure/certifications

See full job details at [www.brce.com/careers](http://www.brce.com/careers)

Apply by emailing your resume to [careers@brce.com](mailto:careers@brce.com)

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# ECA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



Northern California Engineering Contractors Association

## Where is our Dam Water

### General Membership Meeting

"Where is our Dam Water?" as we wrestle with environmentalists who want to remove dams and even stop diverting water from the eel river to lake Mendocino, Sonoma county businesses, farmers, and residents are at a crossroads. Do we put the interests of fish ahead of people? Find out at the annual GMM!

4:30—6:30 pm

Thursday, November 16  
Charlies at  
Windsor Golf Club  
Windsor, CA

#### Speakers:

Supervisor James Gore via video,  
Grant Davis, General Manager Sonoma Water  
Janet Pauli, Redwood Valley Water and Ag expert  
Pamela Jeane, Assistant GM Sonoma Water,



Supervisor James Gore



Grant Davis,  
GM Sonoma Water



Janet Pauli, Chair,  
Mendocino County  
Inland Water and Power  
Commission



Pamela Jeane, Assistant  
GM Sonoma Water

4:30—6:30 pm

Charlies, Windsor Golf Club

Click [HERE](#) for Flyer.

Thursday, November 16, Charlies at Windsor Golf Club  
\$35 for ECA members~ \$60 non-members  
RSVP: [mary@nceca.org](mailto:mary@nceca.org) or call 707-546-5500

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ECA | 1030 Apollo Way | Santa Rosa, CA 95404 | 707.546.5500 ph | [www.nceca.org](http://www.nceca.org) | [mary@nceca.org](mailto:mary@nceca.org)

## EVENT NEWS & INFORMATION:

The ECA Annual General Membership Meeting will take place on Thursday, November 16, 2023, from 4:30-6pm at Charlies in Windsor. This is a great chance to wrap up the year with what President Antonio Mencarini has accomplished and look forward to 2024 and incoming President Mike Gulley. Also, we have some great speakers telling us what is what with removing dams in Mendo County and maybe draining Lake Pillsbury. Big things are happening with our water supply. This should be a good event folks, so we hope to see you there!

## 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.



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 Kincadee 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](mailto:mary@nceda.org). There is no charge for this. You can access the list by clicking [HERE](#)

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE MANUAL

The updated 2023-2024 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.

**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](#)

The banner features a blue background with white wavy lines on the sides. At the top center is a white box with a floral border containing the text "North Bay Job Fair" and the website "northbayjobfair.com". Below this is a yellow horizontal bar with the text "ONE Job Fair left in 2023!". Underneath the yellow bar, the event details are listed: "Wed, October 4", "3:00-6:00", "Elsie Allen High School", and "Roseland". A yellow oval button contains the text "Register below". At the bottom, in small white text, it says "email Bpell@mysonomamedia.com with questions".

[North Bay Job Fair | Amaturro Sonoma Media Group](#)

### Building a Safety Culture

Safety culture is the way in which safety is managed in the workplace, and reflects the attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and values that employers and employees share in relation to safety.

Every organization has a safety culture. The question is whether the safety culture is what we want it to be. If the culture is not what we want it to be, what can we do to change it.

Click [HERE](#) for more.



### 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](mailto:jimpersons@safetypride.com) or phone: 707-889-0881



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## SAFETY TRAINING

### CPR / First Aid

Thursday, October 26, 2023

9 am - 12 pm

Training includes bleeding control, strokes, seizures, broken bones and other life-threatening emergencies. Adult/child/infant CPR & airway obstruction management covered. This course is designed as both a course for first-timers and as a refresher.

click [HERE](#) for flyer

## FUNDRAISERS

### Santa Rosa Fire Foundation Event

The When is Friday, October 13, 2023

The Time: 6:00-8:00pm

The Requirement: Your Presence at the Santa Rosa Fire Foundation Dinner and Live Auction

Location at The Kunde Family Winery.

The [Santa Rosa Fire Foundation](#) is excited to share our second annual fundraising event to support the Santa Rosa Fire Department and commemorate the 2023 fire season coming to an end. The Foundation was formed in the wake of the devastating wildfires in Sonoma County as a way to inspire the generosity of the community to strengthen and expand the services of the Santa Rosa Fire Department by providing resources not otherwise available. Funds raised at this event will be used to help the Santa Rosa Fire Department institute innovative enhancements in the areas of wildfire resiliency, health and wellness of our first responders and building the next generation of firefighters in our community.

Come and enjoy a fantastic evening of great food and craft wine at one of Sonoma County's Premier wine country destinations. We would love for you to join us along with Congressman Mike Thompson, State Senator Mike McGuire and former San Francisco Giant Rich Aurilia in supporting the important work of the Santa Rosa Fire Foundation and celebrate the end of the 2023 fire season.

[Seating is limited so purchase tickets now.](#)



Join **Los Lobos on October 1, 2023** for a special 50th Anniversary benefit concert at the Raven Theater in Healdsburg, California. [Earl Thomas](#) will be the opening performer. This an ALL AGES show.

Doors open at 6 p.m. and show starts at 7 p.m.

Sponsorship opportunities are available. For more information, please contact Carlos at [board@corazonhealdsburg.org](mailto:board@corazonhealdsburg.org). Tickets are non-refundable and proceeds support local nonprofit [Corazón Healdsburg](#).

Click [HERE](#) for tickets.





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## COMMITTEE NEWS

- 1. ECA Government Affairs Committee**—the GAC, led by Art Deicke, met with Mark Stapp (City of Santa Rosa Councilman) on September 19, 2023, at 1:30-2:30. Councilman Stapp got an earful about the City of Santa Rosa PLA policy and how it is going to hurt local workforce. Councilman Stapp also responded to some tough questions about cleaning up and cutting down weeds/graffiti/homeless encampments around Santa Rosa. Although it was a respectful meeting, Councilman Stapp learned who the ECA is, what we have done to benefit the community, and why we are so upset with some of the votes taken by SR Councilmembers. We respectfully asked to be used as a resource when the council is deciding on issues that will affect our economy in SR.
- 2. ECA Specification Committee**—the ECA Spec Committee, led by Dale Smith and Casey Wood, will next be meeting on Wednesday, November 15, from 4-5:30 pm in the NCBE main conference room.
- 3. ECA Executive Committee Meeting**—next meeting is on Tuesday, 10-17-23 at 11:00 am. Topics discussed at the 9/19/23 meeting included a Membership drive and both short term and long-term succession planning for the ECA. The ECA is taking proactive steps to ensure we remain relevant to our membership for the foreseeable future. Succession planning should be completed by March of 2024 and will include an “Emergency Plan” that will cover the ECA operating policy for 2-4 months should an unexpected illness or disability occur, and a planned Succession Strategy for operating with the successor to John, Cheryl, and Mary. Although there is no immediate plan for personnel changes, it is incumbent upon the leadership to have a “roadmap” and timeline to make certain the ECA is in good hands and not left scrambling when inevitable retirements do take place. These are exciting times and if you want to share your thoughts, please do so by calling me!
- 4. ECA Board of Director Meeting**—next meeting will be held 10-17-23 from 12-1:30pm. The Nominating Committee made their slate of recommendations to the full Board on 9-19-23, and the final approval of 2024 Officers, Directors, and Award Winners, will take place on 10-17-23. Also, the budget will be reviewed and approved at the 10-17-23 meeting as will date events, and committee meeting schedules. We will be making those dates available on Outlook this year!!  
We will hear a presentation at the 10-17-23 Board meeting from InterWest Insurance Services on their services available to contractors, engineers and suppliers in our industry.



## NEWS YOU CAN USE

1. Sonoma County Project Labor Agreement policy will NOT INCLUDE trucking or local material suppliers when it is finalized in December 2023. This has been confirmed despite some confusion on 9-12-23 at the Supervisor Meeting. Three Supervisors and staff have confirmed that trucking and suppliers will not have to be covered by the new PLA policy for Sonoma County.
2. The first projects under the City of Santa Rosa PLA should be coming to bid in October. We will be monitoring the first projects closely to see how trucking will be handled by the City of SR staff in awarding the projects under the PLA.
3. Longtime City of Santa Rosa Planning department head Claire Hartman has had her tenure ended with the City of Santa Rosa. [Former Santa Rosa planning chief breaks silence but sidesteps sudden City Hall shakeup \(pressdemocrat.com\)](#)
4. State Senate Pro Tem Mike McGuire will be in Santa Rosa Wednesday, and one careful question will be “why did you vote for SB799-the bill that provides unemployment benefits for striking workers?”. Although we know the answer (political favors), it will be interesting to see if he realizes how damaging this bill might be to businesses in California!
5. Windsor News-All sitework prepped and no houses getting built-[New plan for stalled Windsor housing project calls for houses instead of apartments \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](#)
6. More Windsor News-Love it or Hate it, Here is a Chance to Learn About it-[Public hearing announced for Koi Nation’s proposed casino project near Windsor \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](#)
7. The Only Way to Get Housing to Pencil Out?- [\\$20 million secured for affordable housing near future SMART station \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](#)

### Northern California Engineering Contractors Association

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The ECA, and its Board of Directors, has been the voice of the engineering construction industry for over 40 years.

The foundation of the ECA has been to address local needs and issues.

The purpose and goal of ECA and its staff are to provide services to the members that help them run their businesses safely, efficiently, and in compliance with the many rules and regulations and mandates of government.

The working committees are the heart and soul of the ECA. The committees are comprised of ECA members.

The committees promote events that enable the ECA to fund community projects that include: Fathers Day “Show & Shine” Car Show, Public Officials Night, the Golf Tournament, and, the “Days of Wine & Dozers” Auction Dinner.

If you would like to join a committee, please email [mary@nceca.org](mailto:mary@nceca.org) ~ We would love to have you!

### Northern California Engineering Contractors Association

---

John Bly, Executive Vice President  
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Mary Kennedy Cabrera, Member Services Director  
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