



April 1, 2024

“CONSTRUCTING A WAY FOR A BETTER FUTURE”

# ECA NEWSLETTER

## JOHNS SOAPBOX



Remember-this is an op-ed piece and I do not speak for the ECA or any of its members in this “Soapbox”. These are just my ramblings that hopefully you find thought provoking. Remember-these are my opinions, not those of the ECA or any of its member firms.



### Cocktail Party Chatter

As we see one of the inevitable fuel price spikes, it comes to mind that maybe it is time to revisit what we are supposed to be paying for, vs what we are actually getting.

It is well known that California gas and diesel prices are higher than most other states. The link that demonstrates that is found here [AAA Gas Prices](#)

The National Average gas price is \$3.536/gallon vs California average gas price of \$5.105/gallon as of 4/1/24. Sonoma County average gas price is \$5.226/gallon, while Napa is \$5.193/gallon, Marin is \$5.247/gallon, Lake is \$5.087/gallon, and Mendocino is \$5.096/gallon.

*The highest recorded average California gas price is \$6.438/gallon in June of 2022.*

For every gallon of gas in California, we pay:

- 54 cents in state excise tax: among the highest in the nation
- 18.4 cents in federal excise tax
- 23 cents for California's cap-and-trade program to lower greenhouse gas emissions
- 18 cents for the state's low-carbon fuel programs
- 2 cents for underground gas storage fees
- An average of 3.7% in state and local sales taxes

The vast majority of the differential in gas prices between California and other states can be attributed to differing policies:

- Severin Borenstein, a UC Berkeley economist regarded as the state’s leading expert on the issue, [parsed the differential in a 2023 paper](#), pointing out that California’s direct and indirect taxes on fuel amount to nearly \$1 per gallon – 70 cents higher than the national average in such taxes – and the state’s unique fuel blend to battle smog adds another dime.

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- That left what he calls the “mystery gasoline surcharge,” or MGS, of about 43 cents a gallon that cannot be directly attributed to oil prices or California’s taxes and other official factors. It may be a mystery, but at least some of it can be logically attributed to the relatively high costs of doing any kind of business in California – rents, electricity and other utilities, wages and regulatory overhead, for example.
- Even if the MGS could be eliminated from the equation, California’s gas prices would still be at least \$1 higher than those in other states.

So, let’s see how our roads are getting fixed vs the national average shall we? California ranks 45<sup>th</sup> out of the 50 states in road performance-[California Ranks 45th in the Nation in Highway Performance and Cost-Effectiveness - Reason Foundation](#)

Put simply, the state does many things poorly and nothing well. California’s per mile spending (\$206,924) is three times that of Texas (\$75,153). And what is California receiving for that high spending? It’s not smooth roads. On rural Interstates, 3.05% of pavement is in poor condition while in Texas the percentage is 0.75. On urban Interstates 8.08% of pavement is in poor condition while in Texas the percentage is 3.43.

In safety and performance categories, California ranks 25<sup>th</sup> in overall fatality rate, 25<sup>th</sup> in structurally deficient bridges, 43<sup>rd</sup> in traffic congestion, 44<sup>th</sup> in urban Interstate pavement condition, and 40<sup>th</sup> in rural Interstate pavement condition.

On spending, California spends \$206,924 per state-controlled mile of highway. It ranks 44<sup>th</sup> in total spending per mile and 41<sup>st</sup> in capital and bridge costs per mile.

California’s best rankings are in structurally deficient bridges (25<sup>th</sup>) and overall fatality rate (25<sup>th</sup>).

California’s worst rankings are in urban arterial pavement condition (49<sup>th</sup>) and maintenance disbursements per mile (47<sup>th</sup>).

**Maybe it is unfair to compare CA to Texas, but it is kind of fun for cocktail party chatter, right?**

That’s All Folks,

John

## COMMITTEE NEWS

**ECA Executive Committee Meeting-** was held on Tuesday March 26, at 11:00 am. The Exec Committee meets every 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month in 2024 at 11:00-12:00 in the small NCBE conference room. Next Exec meeting will be 11:00 am on April 23, 2024

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**ECA Board of Director Meeting**-was held on Tuesday, Feb 27, 2024, from 12-1:30 pm with the Affiliate presentation done by Matheson Gas. I did not know the extensive safety and PPE products offered by Matheson Gas. I was also impressed with the new vending machines they can install in your shop or jobsite to facilitate many different consumables your firm might use.

The Board of Directors meets in the NCBE main board room. Next BOD meeting will be 12 noon on April 23, 2024. The Affiliate presentation will be by United Rentals

**ECA Community Relations Committee**-Chaired by Lacey Torkelson Smith, meets when there is a specific project to consider. Our current plan is to present the Children's Museum project to be considered on April 23, 2024, by our full Board of Directors.

**ECA Specification Committee**-chaired by Casey Wood of GBI and Dale Smith of RCX. We will next meet on Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> from 4-5:30 pm in the conference room at NCBE.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

### [Baltimore bridge rebuild might take up to 15 years](#)

The Biden administration has committed full federal funding to rebuild Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge, but the project could take anywhere from two to 15 years to complete, according to experts. Rebuilding will require many steps, experts say, but the first order of business will be the massive task of clearing away wreckage and debris. **Full Story:** [The Washington Post](#) [The Baltimore Sun \(tiered subscription model\)](#)

### [Construction workers missing after Baltimore bridge falls](#)

Multiple contractors were performing concrete deck repairs on Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge before a cargo ship collision caused it to collapse. It's unclear how many people were on the bridge at the time, but as of 10:30 AM ET, six construction workers were missing. **Full Story:** [USA Today](#) [Engineering News-Record \(tiered subscription model\)](#)

### [What Gen Z is looking for from construction work](#)

Switching from one job to the next is now more frequent among Gen Z workers, one of the new factors the construction industry should take into account hiring and trying to retain the young. Lucy Barnard examines this and other factors, including Gen Z's more aspirational outlook, expectations of training and their tech-friendly habits as digital natives. **Full Story:** [Construction Briefing](#)

### **Truckers and Electric Mandates Costing Consumers**

"Trucking companies say electric models are more than twice the cost of a diesel truck, take hours to charge, can't travel the range that many companies need to transport cargo and lack a sufficient statewide network of charging stations."

- Nadia Lopez, [California phases out diesel trucks: What happens next?](#), *CalMatters*, April 28, 2023.

"Vehicle reliability and affordability are top priorities for OOIDA members. We have yet to see proof that electric CMVs are a realistic option for most trucking businesses considering the price tag and lack of charging infrastructure. The bottom line is that the technology they're trying to mandate does not yet exist."

- Todd Spencer, President of Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA), March 31, 2023, referring to CARB's mandate.

**Charles M. Schulz** – Sonoma County Airport to replace storm culvert, refurbish sections of pavement at regional airfield. [Charles M. Schulz - Sonoma County Airport to replace storm culvert, refurbish sections of pavement at regional airfield \(ca.gov\)](#)

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## Father's Day "Show & Shine" Car Show

Sunday, June 16, 2024  
Juilliard Park, Santa Rosa

Registration Flyer click [HERE!](#) To register online click [HERE!](#)  
Sponsor opportunities click [HERE!](#)



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## ECA's Annual Golf Tournament

Friday, July 12, 2024  
Windsor Golf Club



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To Sponsor Click [HERE!](#)

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# Public Officials Night!

Wednesday, April 10

5:30pm - 9:00pm

No Host Cocktails 5:30 p.m. - Dinner 7 p.m.

Place

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## 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 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](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](#)

## Labor Law Posters 2024

Click [HERE!](#)

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## From the Desk of Jim Persons

### Laceration Hazard and Injury Prevention

Construction sites are some of the most hazardous places to work in the world. Unfortunately, cuts to the hands and fingers account for the majority of laceration injuries on job sites today.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that cuts on hands and fingers result in over 110,000 lost time cases each year. The National Safety Council reports an average direct cost for laceration of the hand injuries account for \$10,000 in company expenses and severed tendons can exceed \$70,000.



Click [HERE](#) to read more.

### Workplace Violence Program

Implementation "Target Date" – July 1, 2024

Senate Bill 553 requires employers to create, implement and maintain a Workplace Violence Program by July 1, 2024. Employers must also train their entire workforce.

The Workplace Violence Program must include a reporting mechanism (how is the employee going to report incidents), detailing who will be responsible for receiving complaints, and who will be responsible for identifying and mitigating workplace hazards.

Jim Persons has developed a Workplace Violence Program and Active Shooter Guidelines that meet the requirements of this new regulation. He can also provide training resources for your employees.

Contact Jim if you are interested in getting his help on a Workplace Violence Program, COVID-19 related issues or other health and safety programs.

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



### Fire Debris Cleanup Management Services

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# SAFETY TRAINING

## Upcoming CPR/First Aid Classes

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

9 am—11 am

May 21—[Flyer](#)

June 18—[Flyer](#)

1 pm—3 pm

April 16 - [Flyer](#)

Contact [mary@nceca.org](mailto:mary@nceca.org) for more information.



## California's New Workplace Violence Prevention Requirements

No later than July 1, 2024, covered California employers must implement extensive workplace violence prevention plans (WVPP) and deliver specified training to employees under new legislation signed by Governor Gavin Newsom on September 30, 2023. In order to comply on time – including preparing plans that are “specific to the hazards and corrective measures for each work area” as required – employers will need to prepare early.

Senate Bill 533 adds section 6401.9 to the California Labor Code. The legislation is intended to help employers prevent and respond effectively to workplace violence. The legislature passed, and the Governor signed, the bill despite a full court press by the California Chamber of Commerce in opposition.

**We will be setting up classes for the new requirements next week. Be sure to be on the lookout for the dates!**







## CORPORATE MEMBER SPONSORS



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## BUSINESS MEMBER SPONSORS



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**EWC—Empowering Women in Construction**—Wednesday, April 3, 5:30—7 pm

—Here is the link to view and sign up online.

[The EWC - Empowering Women in Construction Inaugural Meeting \(ncbeonline.com\)](http://ncbeonline.com)

**North Bay Construction Corps** is looking for volunteers to participate in its program kick off on **Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup> from 8am-3pm** at the North Coast Builders Exchange office. Lunch will be provided for all volunteers.

The day will include first aid training, CPR certification and stations on measurement, material identification, power tools and hand tools.

To volunteer email Mackenzie Keith at [mackenzie@ncbeonline.com](mailto:mackenzie@ncbeonline.com)

**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](mailto: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





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