



April 22, 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.



The Hard Work of Access Between Public Officials and the ECA

Speaking with one voice that represents the general engineering industry in the North Bay Area, is one of the benefits of belonging to the ECA. Since 1976, we have tried to be the one voice expressing concerns regarding fair business practices, fostering access and good relationships between contractors, suppliers and public officials, and influencing policies that benefit the public and the ECA membership. We should be proud of what we have accomplished over the years, and this is one soapbox that is written to reflect that pride. Thanks for taking the time to read it-----

On March 25, 2024, the City of Santa Rosa met with some representatives from the ECA to discuss ways to improve the bidding and construction process on public projects. The meeting was respectful, collaborative, and direct. I have to hand it to the city staff as their intent was “how can we make it better?” as their attitude coming in and during the meeting. Our ECA representatives did a nice job of providing some ways to make the projects get out to bid quicker and get built better so we can get paid quicker.

I think it is important for the ECA members to understand the benefit of “access” when working with the City of Santa Rosa and other municipalities. Being able to have opportunities to share ideas in a constructive way is one of the biggest reasons to belong to this great association. In an effort to help other ECA members understand what that process is like, and how it can positively impact our industry locally, I have shared some of the questions and comments that came out of our meeting with all of you.

I hope this list of comments and questions reflect some of your own thoughts on how we might make bidding and constructing projects better! When we get the responses back from the city, I will share their comments with all of you and ECA members will certainly have an “access” edge that is a result of being a member with the ECA. I appreciate all of the participation from those that helped form and express the questions and comments and am certain the city staff did as well.

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- A. *One idea the ECA firms had was the City of SR try and transition to bidding projects in September, October, November, and December for the next year's construction calendar. Our guys like this idea a lot and even if the project is bid in October and not able to get NTP until May or June the next year, there is great value to our ECA firms.*
- B. *Shortening the timeline from project bid opening to NTP is a concern to ECA firms. We heard from the 3-25-24 meeting that GC's have led to the long timeline because they submitted bonds and insurance incorrectly. Perhaps those forms, with the proper language, can be (I am surprised if they are not already) included in the bidding docs? When I was contracting, it was our practice to send the pertinent docs for insurance to our insurance broker so during the prebid time, we knew what we and our subs/suppliers had to comply with, and we could accommodate that in our bidding cost to you. Other than including the docs, I am not sure what else could be considered to shorten the timeline from Bid to NTP, but we would like to see if the city could shorten that timeline if possible.*
- C. *Another idea to item "B" above, could the City issue the requirements for those forms to their website for prospective bidders? Also, could a "timeline" be standardized on the city website so there is a checklist for most items needed from the Contractor and the timeline needed for review and acceptance by the city? We are thinking by just doing the timeline/checklist, some ideas may occur to the city how we might shorten that time from Bid to NTP. Further dialog between us may be necessary and we are available for that. This suggestion is not to "pin down the city" so we have a bid protest or a change order request. It is simply a tool to help our ECA firms figure out their bid costs more accurately.*
- D. *Will the City of SR entertain an "exit survey" meeting with the owner, GC, CM all present to discuss what went well and what did not go well with the completed project? I really liked this suggestion, and it seems like it is an inexpensive way to get good and nearly immediate feedback that would be useful. Our ECA folks do not think it would add anything to the cost of the project, but rather, would save dollars on future projects.*
- E. *There was general discussion that the City hires 3rd party CM's that demonstrate their "worth" by being "nitpicky" regarding inspections, quantity of measured work in place, and acknowledgement of changed conditions warranting a change order be issued. Those are not my words, but what I heard. If this exists, we feel it sometimes could lead to longer periods of closeout of the contract, longer times to approve progress payments, and longer times to issue and approve change order work. Will the City of SR take steps to ensure 3rd party CMs are incentivized to get the project completed with the specified quality of work installed and closed out in the fastest manner possible? Could a "mini partnering" attitude/process possibly improve this perceived issue?*

There were some other questions around the subject of the new Project Labor Agreement enacted by the City of Santa Rosa, and I will share those questions and comments in a future newsletter if the interest is there. Please let me know if you think we are "on the right track" with these efforts to make our projects go better, get more of them to the street to bid faster, and get us paid quicker and completely!

That's All Folks
John

COMMITTEE NEWS

ECA Event Calendar—Click [HERE!](#)

ECA Father's Day Show and Shine Car Show, Sunday, June 16

ECA Annual Golf Tournament, Friday, July 12

ECA Days of Wine and Dozers Auction, Saturday, September 28

ECA Committee News:

Government Affairs Committee-Chaired by Art Deicke, the GAC will meet on Monday, April 22 via Zoom to discuss expansion of the issues and candidates the GAC will vet in order to provide a more comprehensive "Voter Recommendation List" that will reflect everything a local voter will see on their ballot in November. The perspective of the GAC will always be "what is good for the local general engineering contracting industry" as our guidelines for vetting issues and candidates. More to come as our GAC works hard to help all of our ECA membership try and understand the complex interaction of voting and how seemingly unrelated to our business issues, are actually able to impact our community and therefore our businesses.

Community Relations Committee-Chaired by Lacey Torkalson Smith, has met and will present a possible new Community Relations Project for the Board to consider on Tuesday, April 23, 2024, between 12-1:30 at our regular Board of Directors Meeting. Lacey will be framing the project for the Children's Museum which is next to the Redwood Empire Ice Arena. The Children's Museum is a charity that offers learning interactive experiences for children and has impacted and helped thousands of kids in our area. Lacey will have the Children's Museum Collette Michaud with her to frame the project for the Board to consider as the next ECA CR project. More to follow!

Father's Day Show and Shine Car Show Committee-chaired by Walt Turner, went into Sonoma Media two weeks ago and recorded a promo for the 2024 Father's Day Car Show on June 16, 2024, at Julliard Park in Santa Rosa. Walt did a great job recording his radio ad and it will be broadcast on nine radio stations beginning around June 1, 2024. If you want to bring your car for a great day of fun and sun and music and hot classics and hot rods, please consider joining us for the biggest community event the ECA does each year. Sponsorships and raffle donations are welcome, and if you are willing to put up a flyer at your business so your workers can see it, all the better!

Days of Wine and Dozers Auction Committee-is looking for a chairperson. Mary handles the chair position in the absence of a chairperson, but it is a much healthier situation if we have an ECA member or friend that is not staff, chair this committee. The next Auction committee meeting will be held on 4/24/24 from 12-1pm at NCBE. Please consider attending so you can help make the event more fun, and better for all of us!

ECA Specifications Committee-chaired by Dale Smith and Casey Wood, will again meet soon to discuss contract issues important to all participants on both public and private projects. News of the next meeting will be announced soon----

ECA Golf Committee-chaired by John has no meeting scheduled but the Tournament info can be found right here, right now!! To Register Click [HERE!](#) To Sponsor Click [HERE!](#)



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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SAFETY CORNER

Safety Classes-Please be sure to use ECA for your safety classes to keep up to date with all the requirements.

Contact Mary to set up any classes you may need. mary@nceca.org.

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](#)

Upcoming Active Violence Emergency Response Training

Go Beyond Active Shooter Response Training. While other programs focus solely on active shooter or stop the bleed, AVERT goes beyond by combining both of these important topics in one training program.

When active violence occurs, seconds count, and you can't always wait for EMS to arrive. AVERT enables you and your team to become immediate responders.

No later than July 1, 2024, covered California employers must implement extensive workplace violence prevention plans. Click [HERE](#) to read more.

Wednesday, May 29th—[Flyer](#)

1 pm—2:30 pm

Friday, June 28—[Flyer](#)

9 am—11:30 am

Competent Person Trenching & Excavation

Monday, April 29 - 9 am - 11 am

The course will cover soil analysis, sloping, shoring and shielding, hazardous situations, excavation standards and more...

Click [HERE](#) for flyer.

Confined Space

Friday, May 10—9 am—11:30 am

This course covers proper procedures for making entry into Permit Required Confined Spaces. Participants are prepared to operate in the capacity of Entrant, Attendant or Entry Supervisor during confined space operations.

Click [HERE](#) for flyer.

From the Desk of Jim Persons

Lifting and Rigging Safety

Anytime you work in an environment that has physical hazards that apply, you should be educated on the safety protocols for the job. It is the best thing to do for the employees and the safety of all involved.

Work that involves mechanical lifting and rigging falls into the category of having high hazards.

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 or phone: 707-889-0881



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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.

Covered employers must deliver the training to all employees no later than July 1, 2024, and annually thereafter.

Click [HERE](#) to read more.



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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Art Deicke, Environmental Pollution Solutions

Art owns a small environmental consulting firm with a couple of employees currently based in Rohnert Park. The company started in 2013 in the North Bay providing industrial and construction stormwater pollution prevention services, wastewater services and other environmental related services. His clients include wineries, trucking facilities, rock quarries, landfills, MRFs, metal manufacturing facilities and construction/developers.



Art has been a member of the ECA and board member, with a one-year break since 2015 and chairs the ECA Government Affairs Committee. Art is very active in the community, blending business, civic, environment, non-profit and other volunteer work with his professional work. Art served over 21 years in the US Navy as a meteorology and oceanography specialist retiring as a Master Chief.

We want to highlight a member each week in our MEMBER SPOTLIGHT. 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!

NEWS YOU CAN USE

1. AI has much to offer construction workers

Builders haven't been slow in adopting artificial intelligence for a wide variety of roles, leveraging in particular its ability to assist construction personnel. James McGehee and Bradford Kelley of Littler Mendelson PC take a look at what AI has to offer construction workers in the form of improved safety and accessibility for workers with disabilities. Full Story: [For Construction Pros](#)

2. Low bid isn't the only way to win

Failing to place the low bid for a project may not necessarily mean a contractor will fail to win the work. The key to winning in this situation lies in offering something of greater value by really listening to the client, building solid relationships and raising internal standards for an operational advantage.

3. Analysis: PLAs, Davis-Bacon overhaul will be costly

Mandated project labor agreements for projects topping \$35 million and significant changes last year to the Davis-Bacon Act are expected to exert upward pressure on already rising construction labor costs this year and beyond.

4. Preliminary work continues for Calif.-Nev. rail project

Land surveying, geotechnical boring and utility preparation are continuing for Brightline West's planned high-speed rail line linking Southern California and Las Vegas. Brightline has laid out details of the work, which began in January and extends along the Interstate 15 right of way.

5. [Highway 37 widening project gets \\$20M more - The North Bay Business Journal](#)

6. [Builders may challenge California's development 'impact fees,' Supreme Court rules - The North Bay Business Journal](#)

7. [SCTA Board Allocates Over \\$80 Million to Transit and Local Transportation Projects](#)

Annual Coordinated Claim and Funding Program provides State and Local dollars for transportation Please view the [linked file 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](#)

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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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

Northern California Engineering Contractors Association

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 ~ We would love to have you!



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