



“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.**



### We Probably Can--

I have suffered from anxiety and panic attacks since my early 20’s. Mostly, I hid it from my family and my co-workers, and I coped with my panic attacks by avoiding certain situations whenever I could. When I could not, I coped as best I could, but I got so amped up I think I am going to have a heart attack.

These are not pleasant experiences to talk about. It is even hard for me to admit that I have suffered from panic and anxiety attacks. It somehow makes me feel diminished or ashamed.

So why bring it up now, you might ask?

Mainly, the “why now?” question is because I am guessing others have had similar issues in their lives or know somebody who has trouble coping in certain situations. I just want to make sure we do not make people feel weird or ashamed that they are not perfect. This is the construction industry, and we all feel we have to be perfect to a certain extent. If we are not, it is like our resume is not as good as it could be. I do not want others to internalize these touchy issues, but rather, deal with them before they become too big to deal with.

I had my best friend take his life due to anxiety episodes that developed into severe depression. And I never saw the signs that he had reached that state of finality. Had I known what he was doing to cope with his mental and physical pain, I might have been able to make a difference. My best friend was self-medicating from physical pain and using the same self-medication to calm his mental demons into submission. Eventually, that self-med route led to a toxic reaction that he could not deal with and that is the end of that tune.

I bring up this topic because the construction industry does not talk about this kind of mental anguish and those that have experienced it feel ashamed to discuss it. I am guessing, I am not the only one that has had those feelings of panic and/or anxiety. I am also guessing my best friend is not the only one that coped with self-medicating to get through his pain whether it be from physical or mental issues.

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MARY KENNEDY CABRERA

Continued from page 1

Here are some sobering statistics:

- \* The suicide rate for construction is the second highest of all industries: 53 in every 100,000 workers. This is attributable to a number of factors that often compound: financial distress, long working hours, separation from family and substance abuse.
- Historically, construction is also a very male-dominated industry, and men have been discouraged from talking about their feelings or asking for help. As a result, many issues are internalized and may eventually reach a breaking point if they can't find an outlet for support. Much of this despair, however, is preventable with the right protocols and support.
- The substance abuse rate within construction is nearly twice the national average. Around 15% of all construction workers in the United States have a substance abuse disorder, compared to 8.6% of the general adult population. Construction workers represent around one in four of fatal opioid overdoses amongst all workers. This is a physical industry, and opioid addiction often begins with a prescription to aid a work-related injury, then eventually leads to substance dependence.

In construction, safety can't just be about your body: Your mental well-being is as important as your physical health. Not often does a company's safety program encompass efficient and anonymous means to discuss mental health issues.

Somehow, firms might want to dedicate a day to mental health and encourage people to share their stories. The goal of these events is to start conversations that normalize mental health issues. It's not about checking a box, but living our safety mantra: Think safe, work safe, home safe.

It's also about taking action. Whether it's a jobsite safety issue or something more personal: If you see something, say something. We want to be sure everyone is receiving the type of support they need in a timely way, and to do that, we all must chip in.

But in construction, caring about people has to be part of the culture. As human beings, we are complex, and everyone has different needs and challenges. Let's not prejudge those needs and challenges. Let's care about each other and make sure we are able to talk about things and continue to heal those parts of ourselves that are not so obvious to others.

If you think you can do better as a firm, as a manager of crews, as a father, as a mother, or as a friend, then

*you probably can-----*

That's All Folks  
John

## ECA MEMBER UPDATE



### Soiland Company

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A background image for the law firm advertisement showing a yellow hard hat, a yellow level, a ruler, and architectural blueprints.

The logo for SmithDollar, featuring a stylized 'S' and 'D' inside a circle.

SmithDollar | (707) 522-1100





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

Sunday, June 16, 2024  
Juilliard Park, Santa Rosa

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

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## ECA's Annual Golf Tournament

Friday, July 12, 2024  
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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](mailto: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

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.**

Friday, June 28—[Flyer](#)

9 am—11:30 am



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## From the Desk of Jim Persons

### HDPE Pipe Welding Safety

High-density polyethylene (HDPE) welding is a relatively simple process, but workers should be aware of the many safety hazards involved.

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 or sign up for an upcoming class!



## 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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## NEWS YOU CAN USE

1. James Gore has a fundraiser coming up at the high-end skeet and trap shooting location and he wants ECA members to come and support his campaign for State Senate-please review the flyer and sign up for some real fun and political advocacy!! Click [HERE](#) for flyer.
2. Payroll employment increases by 272,000 in May; unemployment rate changes little at 4.0% Total non-farm payroll employment increased by 272,000 in May, and the unemployment rate changed little at 4.0 percent. Employment continued to trend up in several industries, led by health care; government; leisure and hospitality; and professional, scientific, and technical services.
3. 38% of infrastructure funds announced at halfway mark. Halfway through the bipartisan infrastructure law's five years, 38% of its \$1.2 billion has been made available, boosted by a rise this year in the pace of funding. In all, more than 56,000 projects and awards are underway or have been announced. Full Story: [Construction Dive](#)
4. Which fuels will power construction fleets? New types of fuel for construction fleets are generating attention as builders look for sustainable solutions. Merina Shriver examines options explored at a recent Gladstein Neandross & Associates seminar, including renewable diesel, hydrogen and batteries, as well as the issue of driver acceptance. Full Story: [For Construction Pros](#)
5. FHWA researcher warns builders to prepare for climate. Resilience against the challenges posed by a changing climate is an increasingly vital issue for road builders, according to Amir Gotalipour, a highway research engineer in the Federal Highway Administration. Speaking at the recent National Institute of Building Sciences' Building Innovation Conference in Washington, D.C., Gotalipour examined the threats posed to roadways by increased flooding and more numerous wildfires and the upfront cost advantages of building resiliently. Full Story: [Construction Dive](#)
6. Trucking Q & A for non-publicly funded projects: [AB 1851 HAULING UNDER LABOR CODE SECTION 1720.3 \(nceca.org\)](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions - Hauling under Labor Code section 1720.3 \(nceca.org\)](#)

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PAID FOR BY JAMES GORE FOR STATE SENATE 2026 FPCC#1464998

## 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](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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## COMMITTEE NEWS

1. **Government Affairs Committee**-Our Government Affairs Committee, led by Art Deicke, has begun to gather information on the November ballots facing our ECA membership. We will re-search local ballot measures for Cities, Counties that cover Northern California. We will gather information on State candidates and ballot measures that will affect ECA members. We will gather information on city council candidates and county candidates for Sonoma County and Napa County. We will gather information on Marin County Ballot measures and candidates for County and city offices.  
As you can see, our GAC will be very busy over the next 75 days or so. Please consider giving a "thank you" to our GAC committee members when you have a moment: Art Deicke-Chair, Keith Woods, Ross Liscum, Brian Ling, Dale Mahoney, Mark Soiland, John Bly.
2. **Community Relations Committee**-Lacey has been in contact with The Children's Museum and should have some progress update soon. They are going through the permitting process.
3. **Father's Day Show and Shine Car Show Committee**-chaired by Walt Turner is happening next Sunday, Father's Day. Come out and enjoy the day with us!!
4. **Days of Wine and Dozers Auction Committee**-September 28, 2024, is the date, and Graton Event Center is the Place! Get your table mates together to have a great evening!
5. **ECA Specifications Committee**-chaired by Dale Smith and Casey Wood are following up on new water runoff rules.
6. **ECA Golf Committee**-Players are filled up and we are still looking for sponsors to make this the best golf tourney in the area!! Thanks to all that have participated!!

**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](mailto:mary@nceca.org) with your spotlight information and send in photos if you have them!

### 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!



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Mary Kennedy Cabrera, Member Services Director  
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