



January 19, 2026

"CONSTRUCTING A WAY FOR A BETTER FUTURE"

ECA Newsletter

John's Soapbox



Remember my disclaimer -this Soapbox is my own opinion and does not necessarily reflect any official ECA position, nor any opinion of any ECA member firm. This is my stuff only and is intended to be thought-provoking as well as educational.

48th Annual Installation & Awards Dinner

*Santa Rosa Golf & Country Club
333 Country Club Dr, Santa Rosa
Saturday, January 31, 2026*

*President's Champagne Reception 5:30 pm
Plated Dinner 6:30 pm
Awards 7 pm
Coffee, Dessert, Port & Cigars 8:30 pm
Hosted Bar till 8:30 pm*



We Need You!

1. We exist solely to benefit our members. The ECA has been in continuous existence since 1976-making this our 50th YEAR! As we enter this year, we have a 66.7% turnover on our staff (Mary and Cheryl have retired, McKenzie and Susan are our new and very capable staff). Although we have hired the correct people in Susan Maners and McKenzie Wexler, there is a learning curve. I am asking all of you loyal ECA members to be patient and help us out as much as possible by paying invoices and getting your reservations and sponsorships in for the first ECA event of 2026 today.

THIS WEDNESDAY THE 21ST IS THE LAST DAY TO RSVP FOR INSTALLATION & AWARDS DINNER! JUST 2 MORE DAYS!

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2. Our Installation Dinner and Awards Night is not sold out yet. We are only 11 days away and I am amazed that Louie Gobbi, Frank Palagi, Toby Giacomini/Toby's Trucking, and Josh McGarva/Western Water being honored have not helped sell out this event. Please get your sponsorships and table and seat reservations as soon as possible. Why is this important? Because for the first time in 19 years, we have a new person trying hard to fill Mary's shoes as the event coordinator and an event like this one coming on January 31, 2026, has a lot of moving parts that she needs to deal with. Last second signups and food choices make it harder to handle. Please get all of the menu choices in and your tables and seats reserved today! That way McKenzie and I can make sure the evening goes smoothly and our honorees get a memorable evening and everyone in attendance enjoys a smooth and inspiring evening! For tickets and sponsorships, please click here on this link:

To register click [HERE](#)

To sponsor click [HERE](#)

3. If you are unsure whether you have signed up to attend or sponsor, here is the list of attendees so far and a list of the generous sponsors we so appreciate!

Attendees include:

Roblar Quarry
Toby's Trucking
Western Water
Ritchie Bros
Baker Tilly
Soiland Co.
Ghilotti Bros Inc.
Ghilotti Construction
CRH Americas Materials
PACE Supply
RCX Inc.
The ECA, Ed Clark, Jim & Linda Persons

Sponsorships that we have so far:

[Roblar Quarry](#) - Premier Sponsor
[Toby's Trucking](#) - Premier Sponsor
[Western Water](#) - Video Co-Sponsor
[Ritchie Bros](#) - President's Reception
[Baker Tilly](#) - Dessert & Coffee Sponsor
[Soiland Co.](#)—Hermsmeyer Award Sponsor
[Stevenson Supply](#)—Hermsmeyer Award Sponsor
[Engelke Construction](#)—Bar Sponsor
[Ghilotti Bros Inc.](#) - Champagne Sponsor
[Ghilotti Construction](#) - Hermsmeyer Hall of Fame Sponsor
[CRH Americas Materials](#) - Centerpiece Sponsor

The Award Winners to be honored are:

Contractor of the Year - Western Water Constructors (Josh McGarva)

Affiliate of the Year - Toby's Trucking (Toby Giacomini)

Hermsmeyer Hall of Fame Inductee - Louie Gobbi of G & G Heavy Equipment Rentals

Hermsmeyer Hall of Fame Inductee (Posthumous) is Frank Palagi of Ghilotti Brothers, Inc.

Volunteer of the Year - Kristi Pruett

Thank you all for your continued support of the ECA!!

Please Join us,

John

ECA COMMITTEE NEWS

- ECA Executive Committee Meetings are recurring every month and are held every Last Tuesday from 11:00 am -12:00pm, in the NCBE small conference room. Committee Officers are Kimber Lenning Carpenter -President, Matt Storm – Vice President, Casey Wood - Treasurer, Antonio Mencarini - Secretary, Dan Giordani- Past President
- ECA Board of Directors meetings are recurring every month and are held every last Tuesday from 12:00-1:30pm, in the main conference board room at NCBE.
- ECA Government Affairs Committee (GAC) meetings are recurring every month and are held every last Tuesday from 2:00pm-3:30pm in the main conference boardroom at NCBE. The GAC committee is John Bly, Members Ross Liscum, Keith Woods, Joanne Webster, Dale Mahoney, Mark Soiland, Mike Wolff, John Reid, and Aimi Dutra.
- ECA Specifications Committee are recurring every month and are held every last Wednesday from 3:00-4:30pm in the main conference board room at NCBE. The Spec Committee is Dale Smith/Casey Wood, Antonio Mencarini, John Reid, Geoff Coleman, Tim Dillenburg and Jason Nutt.
- ECA Nominating Committee will meet on Tuesday, Feb 24, 2026, from 11:00 am to 11:30 am in the NCBE small conference room. Chair Dan Giordani, Kimber Lenning, Matt Storm, Casey Wood, Antonio Mencarini, Mark Soiland and are the committee members. We will be considering Bridge Award candidates as well as the Golden Hardhat candidates for the Public Officials Night.

ECA EVENTS

- January 31, 2026 - 48th Annual ECA Installation and Awards Dinner will be held at Santa Rosa Golf and Country Club at 333 Country Club Dr. in Santa Rosa from 5:30-9:30pm. Tickets and sponsorship information can be found [here](#):

To register click [HERE](#)

To sponsor click [HERE](#)

- April 30, 2026 - ECA Public Officials Night will be held at The Backdrop, 1455 Corporate Center Parkway in Santa Rosa, CA from 5:30pm – 9:00pm.
- June 21, 2026 - Father's Day ECA "Show and Shine" Car Show will be held at Julliard Park at 227 Santa Rosa, Ave. in Santa Rosa from 9:00am-4pm
- July 10, 2026 - The ECA Golf Tournament will be held at the Windsor Golf Course at 1340 19th Hole Drive in Windsor, CA from 11:00am-7:00pm



- 24-Hour Emergency Response
- Mud, Waste and Debris Removal
- Earthwork, Excavation, and Grading
- Retaining Wall Installation and Slide Repairs
- Pavement and Structural Repairs
- Drainage, Pipeline and Utility Repairs
- Asphalt and Aggregate Materials

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Gary Huddle | Construction Superintendent (Lake/Mendocino) | Cell: (707) 272-0136 | Gary.Huddle@gcinc.com

NEWS YOU CAN USE

1. Granite lands a big project-[Granite wins \\$66M Caltrans roadway widening contract](#)
2. Gordon Ball has low bid on the bridge over Hwy 101 (SRJC to Coddington)-Congrats on a tight bid \$38,000,000 leaving only \$18,000 on the table to a very (I presume) disappointed 2nd bidder.
3. "Know Your Rights" Notification deadline coming up: [Know-Your-Rights-Notice-English.pdf](#)
4. US construction lags in robotics, AI adoption
The US construction industry, characterized by fragmentation and thin margins, has been slow to adopt robotics and AI compared to other sectors. However, advances in AI and robotics are starting to change this trend. AI is being used for project management, design optimization and routine tasks, while robotics are beginning to automate jobs such as brick-laying and welding. Globally, countries such as Japan and China are leaders in construction automation, demonstrating its potential on large-scale projects. Full Story: [Forbes \(tiered subscription model\)](#)
5. Problem Bridge on Hwy 37 gets funding-
[Highway 37 bridge project in Novato gets \\$25 million influx](#)
6. As we discussed and learned at our ECA Annual General Membership Meeting in November, a lot of projects are coming our way from Santa Rosa-read about them here
[\\$100 million surge in public works projects underway in Santa Rosa. Here's what's planned in 2026](#)
7. New Laws for 2026-[California contractors: 7 key law changes for 2026](#)

From the Desk of Jim Persons

Safety Related Paperwork

Safety is often associated with paperwork in many workplaces. While many employees dislike the fact that there is so much paperwork involved in workplace safety, it is often necessary to have it.

To continue reading

[Click HERE](#)



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 news, an update on your company or new equipment! What ever you want to share about your company with our members.

ECA & NCBE SAFETY & EDUCATION TRAINING

ECA MEMBERS PAY THE NCBE PRICE

January:

Thursday 1/22

Confined Space "Competent Person" - English & Spanish - Ukiah 7 am - 10 am

Prevailing Wage Seminar 9 am - 4 pm

Heat Illness Prevention Training - English & Spanish - Ukiah 10 am - 11 am

CPR + First Aid - English & Spanish - Ukiah 1 pm - 3 pm

Monday 1/26

Fall Protection "Competent Person" English & Spanish 9 am - 11 am

Thursday 1/29

SB 440: New claim/change order dispute requirements on commercial and some residential projects 9 am - 11 am

February:

Thursday 2/5

Exclusive Enphase Installer Training 10 am - 1 pm

Thursday 5/12

Trenching/Excavation "Competent Person" - English 9 am - 11 am

Workers' Comp Office Hours 1 pm - 4 pm

Northern California Engineering Contractors Association

The ECA, and its Board of Directors, has been the voice of the engineering construction industry for almost 50 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.

USEFUL LINKS TO SUPPORT YOUR BUSINESS

- A. Resilient 37 Policy Committee Meetings (open to the public) – Next meeting March 6, 9:30-11:30 am-link [State Route 37 Policy Committee - Sonoma County Transportation Authority](#)
- B. Metropolitan Transportation Commission website-link [Meetings & Events | Metropolitan Transportation Commission](#)
- C. Sonoma County Transportation Authority-link [Sonoma County Transportation Authority | SCTA](#)
- D. Transportation Authority of Marin Website-link [Transportation Authority of Marin](#)
- E. Marin Builders Exchange website-link [Home - Marin Builders Association, CA](#)
- F. North Coast Builders Exchange website-link [North Coast Builders Exchange – NCBE Online](#)



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EMERGENCY RESPONSE MANUAL ~ 2025—2026

In the event of an emergency, we have put together the Emergency Response Manual to help our community receive quick service from our members. The manual is sent to city and county agencies in case of an emergency so they will know who to call for services, equipment and materials.

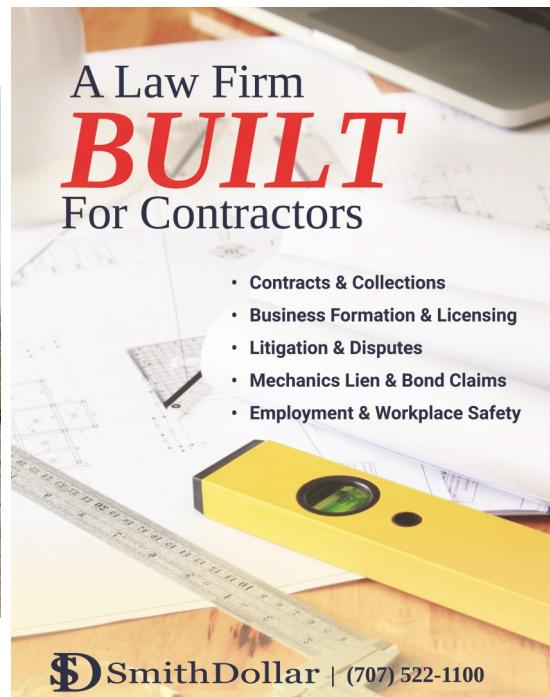
Click [HERE](#) for the 2025-2026 manual.



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