



January 26, 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.

ECA Members Respond In a Big Way!

Last week I wrote about needing folks to let McKenzie know about the Installation Dinner tickets and sponsorships. In the last 13 days, we went from 65 reservations and \$6500 in Sponsorships to **216 reservations and \$21,500 in Sponsorships**! Bam.

Way to step up ECA Family!! Please note that the event starts at 5:30 pm and plated dinner is served at 6:30!

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 until **8:30 pm**

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 Materials](#) —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

[Aaction Rents](#) - Champagne Sponsor

[Argonaut Constructors](#) - Bar Sponsor

[Exchange Bank](#) - Dessert & Coffee Sponsor

Attendees:

Roblar Quarry

Toby's Trucking

Western Water

Ritchie Bros

Baker Tilly

Soiland Materials

Ghilotti Bros Inc.

Ghilotti Construction

CRH Americas Materials

PACE Supply

RCX Inc.

The ECA Group

Jim & Linda Persons (Safety Pride)

Kadon Trucking

Exchange Bank

Argonaut Constructors

Aaction Rents

Wolff Contracting

Peterson Cat

Northbay Petroleum/ A RelaDyne Co.

Granite Construction

Gordon N. Ball Co.

Saturday night, at the Santa Rosa Golf and Country Club, it is going to be a very special night for attendees and honorees. We also welcome and introduce our new Directors and Officers for 2026, and we will get to hear a very rare public speak by outgoing President Dan Giordani of Argonaut Constructors. 2025 was a very good year for the ECA even though it was a relatively “spotty” year for some members due to slow private side projects going to construction, and very competitive bidding in the public works area. Dan is going to give a brief view of the past year, and Kimber (Kadon Trucking) will also give us a brief look forward to her year as ECA President. Only the 3rd female president we have had, and I know she is looking forward to a great 2026!

Again, thank you to all of our table purchasers, our sponsors and our other attendees. You are coming out to honor our award winners will help make a very special evening for those being recognized and being present in the big numbers we have coming will mean a lot to our honorees.

Thank you!

John

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)

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

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

Volunteer of the Year - Kristi Pruett



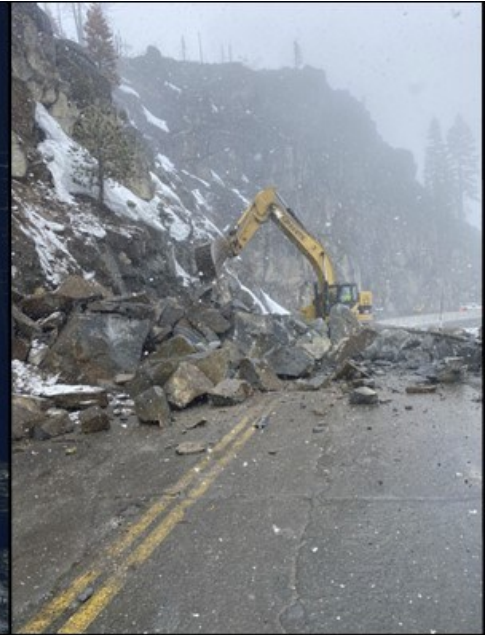
ECA COMMITTEE NEWS

1. **ECA Executive Committee (Officers) Meetings** are recurring every month and are held every Last Tuesday from 11:00-12:00pm, in the small NCBE conference room.
2. **ECA Board of Directors meetings** are recurring every month and are held every last Tuesday from 12:00-1:30pm, in the main conference boardroom at NCBE.
3. **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. This month (Tuesday, 1-27-26 from 2-3:30pm) we are interviewing Eli Beckman and Eric Lucan (candidates for Damon Connolly's vacated Assembly Seat)
4. **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. This month (Wednesday, 1-28-26 from 3:00pm to 4:30pm) we are hearing from Scott Orr (new Executive Director for Sonoma County Permit Sonoma, Nathan Quarles (Deputy Director for Permit Sonoma) and Josh Ricci who is in charge of inspections for Permit Sonoma. This should be a very informative Spec Meeting. Even if you are not on the Spec Committee, you can attend-just show up at the main Board room for NCBE at 1030 Apollo Way, Santa Rosa, CA around 3:00pm on Wednesday this week.

ECA EVENTS

1. **January 31, 2026 -ECA Installation and Awards Dinner** will be held at Santa Rosa Golf and Country Club at 333 Country Club Dr. in Santa Rosa from 5:30-10pm. The event is sold out, but we are still accepting sponsorships. If you are interested in sponsoring, click [HERE](#)
2. **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.
3. **June 21, 2026 -ECA Show and Shine Car Show** will be held at Julliard Park at 227 Santa Rosa, Ave. in Santa Rosa from 9:00am-3:30pm
4. **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

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NEWS YOU CAN USE

1. **Construction Materials Prices Rise Sharply Due to Aluminum and Steel Increases:** Input prices for new nonresidential construction rose 0.4% in November, not seasonally adjusted, and 3.6% year-over-year (y/y), according to producer price index (PPI) data the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) [posted](#) on Wednesday. The y/y change was the largest since January 2023. In contrast, the PPI for new nonresidential building construction, a measure of what contractors say they would charge to construct a new building, was unchanged for the month and rose only 2.7% y/y. AGC posted tables and a chart of PPI changes relevant to construction. There were notable y/y increases in the PPIs for aluminum mill shapes (28%) and fabricated structural metal bar joists and rebar (17%), a major building material. Although PPIs exclude foreign producers' prices, some domestic producers were quick to raise prices once tariffs took effect. Tariffs on aluminum and steel from most countries increased from 25% to 50% on June 4. Readers are invited to consult AGC's Tariff Resource Center for the latest details and to send information about project timing, materials price changes, and supply chains to ken.simonson@agc.org.
2. **Nationally:** Contractors are anticipating 2025 construction support staff wage increases to average 4.0% by year end, down from the 2024 actual increase of 4.4%," construction pay consultant PAS [reported](#) on January 2, based on a survey of 239 companies in September and October. "Unless construction conditions change, we think 2026 support staff increases will mimic 2025 activity.
3. **Faster Approvals, More Risk:** NEPA rollback could speed projects but raises legal risks. The Trump administration has rolled back part of the National Environmental Policy Act to expedite federal approval for infrastructure projects involving water and wastewater. The changes impose stricter timelines and page limits for environmental reviews, potentially speeding up permitting. However, legal experts warn that the rollback could increase litigation risks and lead to environmental damage.

Full Story: [Water Online](#)

4. **Data standardization needed for AI to thrive in construction:** Data standardization is a significant barrier to the effective use of artificial intelligence in construction, writes Amir Berman of Buildots. Construction data is often siloed and inconsistent, making it difficult to integrate and analyze across projects. Berman calls for "active governance," where leaders treat data as a strategic asset, standardize data collection and reject unstructured data.

Full Story: [Construction Dive](#)

5. **Draft of the SCTA 2050 Transportation Plan for Sonoma County can be Found Right Here:**

[SCTA-CTP21 v8.pdf](#)

ECA & NCBE SAFETY & EDUCATION TRAINING

ECA MEMBERS PAY THE NCBE PRICE

January:

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 2/12

[Trenching/Excavation "Competent Person" - English](#) 9 am - 11 am

[Workers' Comp Office Hours](#) 1 pm - 4 pm

Tuesday 2/17

[CPR + First Aid February - English and Spanish](#) 9 am - 11 am

Wednesday 2/18

[Scaffolding Training "Qualified Person" - English](#) 1 pm - 3 pm

Tuesday 2/24

[Fall Protection "Competent Person" - English & Spanish](#) 9 am - 11 am

From the Desk of Jim Persons

Surveying (Construction) Safety Talk

Surveying is a relatively repetitive and low-hazard task on its own. However, surveyors on construction sites face many different hazards while completing their work. It is important to evaluate the work environment and eliminate as many hazards as possible prior to beginning surveying activities onsite.

To continue reading [Click HERE](#)



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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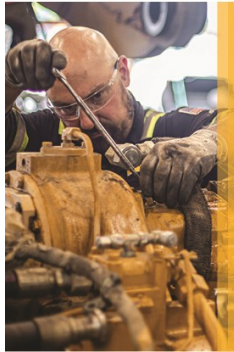
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