



“CONSTRUCTING A WAY FOR A BETTER FUTURE”

# ECA Newsletter

## John's 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.

“Work hard and be kind and amazing things will happen.”

- Conan O’Brien, comedian

### I Want a Cupcake Without a Pow Pow!

The title of this Soapbox will make no sense until and unless you watch the embedded video of the 3-year-old trying to communicate with his mom “Linda” over wanting a cupcake. I sense the lack of “listening” between the 3-year-old and his mom is similar in some ways to an owner who wants more bidders and is being told why they are not seeing more bidders. [My 3-year-old must argue and debate everything!](#)

It is no secret that contractors choose other options than bidding to municipalities/ owners who have had poor returns on past projects or who they feel have policies that create uncertainties in where their costs might end up.

I know when I owned Kirkwood Bly we had several agencies we simply refused to bid to because they did not seem receptive to prebid concerns that we and other bidders had, pointed out to them, and were told “bid it like you see it”. Here we are 25 years (plus) later.

In Santa Rosa, two public works projects just came out to bid and had a grand total of zero bidders and 1 bidder (congratulations Argonaut on being the one!): South Davis neighborhood park and Roseland pavement maintenance, respectively. Why were there not more bidders?

Uncertainties.

Having very few bidders on public works projects in a season that is showing fewer bid opportunities than in prior years, screams there is a problem. To their credit, the city has asked and met with us (the ECA) to ask how they can be more attractive as an owner to get bids. I am quite certain the public works staff is hearing us, but I am less certain the City Council is hearing us.

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City of Santa Rosa

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

JOHN BLY

**MEMBER SERVICES DIRECTOR**

MARY KENNEDY CABRERA

Santa Rosa just passed a budget with \$76million earmarked for ECA type work. Here is a city that is facing budget woes, and they are laying off staff, firefighters and police officers because of low income and high expenses, and they are considering more draconian cuts in 2026 and 2027 in their budget. Santa Rosa is trying hard. They are making hard cuts to their costs. They are considering a sales tax measure to help on the income side. I really do want to see them get lots of bidders on their projects. But to do that, they need to 'change their stripes". By that, I mean they need to implement changes based on what they see from their bid openings and what they hear from contractors who pull plans and choose not to bid to the city.

The City of Santa Rosa Project Labor Agreement instituted in 2023 has added unnecessary confusion to the bid process because their policy requires ALL SUB-CONTRACTORS to be signatory regardless of whether there are local signatory firms that do certain work. The ECA is not opposed to PLAs. We are opposed to rigid rules that add uncertainty to the bid process. Reducing or eliminating sub quotes for our general contractors is not the way to get more competitive bidding and put more local workers to work.

How is a contractor supposed to bid work when certain subcontracted work has no qualified subcontractors bidding to them? Maybe they add dollars in hopes of getting someone from Sacramento or further away to do that work, or maybe they choose to self-perform the work with their own signatory work force. Or maybe they choose not to bid on the project. In all three of those examples, the city and local workers lose out.

I do not want to suggest that I am anti-PLA. This is an op-ed piece that represents MY OPINION, not the collective opinion of the ECA. The adoption of a PLA is not THE problem. It is the rigidity of the PLA that does not consider specialty trades and work types that have no signatory options for contractors to rely on. That is the problem.

The system Santa Rosa has put in place for public works projects, is not working for anybody.

I suggest they allow bidders to ask a prebid question when there are no signatory subcontractors on a certain phase of work and then they can decide, before the bid, whether they want that phase of work to be excluded from the project PLA policy. That might allow specialty subs to bid, it would allow local trucking to bid, and it would result in it being more attractive for contractors to bid to. I am going to suggest to the ECA Board and Officers that they allow me to reach out and discuss this possible solution with labor leaders like Michael Allen, Mike Yates, Mike Pickens, and Jack Buckhorn. If we listen to each other we might all get our cupcakes without getting a "pow pow" spanking.

Just a thought. Remember-this is just my thought. Not the ECA's thought. Don't shoot the messenger please!

That's All Folks!

John

## COMMITTEE NEWS

- A. **ECA Executive Committee** Recurring Meeting (Dan Giordani President, Kimber Lenning Carpenter Vice-President, Matt Storm Treasurer, Casey Wood Secretary, Mike Gulley Past President)-Every 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month from 11:00am-12:00pm from January through October, Place NCBE small conference room 1030 Apollo Way, Santa Rosa, CA - next meeting Tuesday June 24, 2025 from 11:00am to 12:00pm
- B. **ECA Board of Directors** Recurring Meeting – Every 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month from 12:00pm -1:30pm from January through October, Place – NCBE Main Board Room 1030 Apollo Way, Santa Rosa, CA – next meeting Tuesday June 24, 2025, from 12:00pm to 1:30pm, with special guests Suzanne Smith, Joanne Webster, and Mike Pickens to talk about SMART sales tax extension.
- C. **ECA Government Affairs Committee** Recurring Meeting-Every 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month from 1:30pm – 3:00pm from January through October, Place -NCBE small conference room 1030 Apollo Way, Santa Rosa, CA – next Meeting Tuesday June 24, 2025 from **1:30pm to 3:00pm**- (Chair John Bly, Members Ross Liscum, Keith Woods, Joanne Webster, Dale Mahoney, Mark Soiland, Mike Wolff, John Reid, and Aimi Dutra!!)-invited guests who will be meeting separately with us are Petaluma Mayor Kevin McConnell and Petaluma Council Member Brian Barnacle.
- D. **ECA Specification Meeting** ECA Specification Meeting Recurring Meeting Every 4th Wednesday of the month from February through October from 3:00pm to 4:30pm, – **next meeting has been scheduled for 3-5pm on Wednesday, June 25, 2025 at 400 Aviation Blvd** (the American Ag Building on road to airport). **This meeting will have all the Public Works Directors in Sonoma County present. This is a rare opportunity to streamline and make more efficient the public projects that we depend on.**
- E. **Golf Committee meeting** at Thursday, June 26 at noon, Charlies Restaurant

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

1. Concrete is getting smarter, greener, and more high-tech. Advancements in “self-healing” concrete, 3D -printed concrete, smart concrete with sustainable mixes and robotics. Lots of good stuff happening. Click [here](#).
2. Universities Pausing Construction due to Funding Uncertainty. The Trump Administration proposal to cap federal research funding reimbursement rates at 15% has led universities to pause some big projects. Go to [Budget Cuts, Loss of Trust Threaten Higher Ed’s Workforce](#)
3. Trump to Keep PLA Mandates but allow exemptions. [PLA mandate to stay, with exemptions: OMB | Construction Dive](#)
4. BrightLine West begins field work on the rail from Los Angeles to Las Vegas. [Brightline West continues I-15 field investigation work in High Desert](#)
5. SMART chugging on up North-[SMART in line for \\$81 million in state funds to extend service to Healdsburg - The North Bay Business Journal](#)
6. City of Santa Rosa \$76 million budget for public works! [Here’s what Santa Rosa’s \\$76 million capital budget will pay for - The Press Democrat](#)

# ARE YOU AWARE

THAT YOUR ACCESS TO WATER IS ABOUT TO CHANGE?



# YOUR WATER YOUR FUTURE

ALL OUTCOMES WILL AFFECT YOUR WATER SUPPLY

JOIN US TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF YOUR WATER

**TUESDAY**  
**JULY 1ST**  
**5:30 PM**  
**FINLEY COMMUNITY CENTER**  
**SANTA ROSA, CA**

**PVP**

## THE POTTER VALLEY WATER PROJECT (PVP)

A hydroelectric and water diversion project on the Eel River that transfers water to the Russian River and serves as a critical water provider to Mendocino, Sonoma, and Marin County Communities

**PG&E**

## PG&E, THE OWNER OF THE PVP, IS LOOKING TO DECOMMISSION THE PVP

PG&E's position is that PVP no longer generates energy in a cost-effective manner so they are seeking to release their liability. In doing so, part of the potential agreement is to remove the dams (Scott Dam and Cape Horn Dam) that serve the PVP and eliminate the diversion of water to the Russian River

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# ECA 32nd Annual Golf Tournament



**Friday, July 11, 2025**  
**Windsor Golf Club**  
1340 19th Hole, Windsor

**SOLD OUT!!!!**

We do have more Sponsor opportunities:

[Click HERE for Flyer](#)



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## ECA SAFETY & EDUCATION TRAINING



### **CPR / First Aid**

**July 16 @ 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm**

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.

[Click HERE for Flyer](#)

### **Confined Space**

**July 17 @ 9:00 am - 12:00 pm**

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. Participants are familiarized with CFR 1910.146 and how to properly employ the permit program. This course is a combination of classroom instruction and practical application in actual permit spaces utilizing the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment, meters and ventilation. This course is required by OSHA before an employee can enter a Permit Required Confined Space. Certification of completion is provided.

[Click HERE for Flyer](#)

### **CPR / First Aid**

**August 7 @ 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm**

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.

[Click HERE for Flyer](#)

### **Competent Person / Trenching & Excavation**

**August 28 @ 9:00 am - 12:00 pm**

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

[Click HERE for Flyer](#)

## From the Desk of Jim Persons

### Silicosis Safety

Since the introduction of the new silica dust standard by OSHA, there has been a renewed focus on the effects of silica dust by employers; however, the adverse health effects of silica have been known for decades. It is important to understand what crystalline silica is, how workers are exposed to it, and the adverse health effects it can cause.

To read more.

[Click HERE](#)



### Workplace Violence Program

Implemented – 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!



### Fire Debris Cleanup Management Services

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## 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—\$45 per person ~ 2 hrs for Supervisors \$60 per person

Active Violence Emergency Response Training— \$100 per person



### 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.

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

## 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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## 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

## 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.

**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!

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## NORTH BAY CONSTRUCTION CORPS

Training The Next Generation of Construction Workers

The North Bay Construction Corps (NBCC) is an after-school, 3-month basic construction training program for seniors in their last semester of high school. Classes are taught by local contractors and construction managers. Participants are introduced to a variety of trades and earn certifications in Personal Protective Equipment and CPR/First Aid.

Each meeting is led by a contractor or tradesperson who presents information about his/her particular trade and then leads students through a hands-on skill-building activity. There is a strong focus on safety awareness at each meeting.

2025 NBCC Schedule: Click [HERE](#)

**For additional information, contact:** NBCC Sonoma: Mackenzie Smith  
[\(707\) 542-9502](tel:7075429502) / [mackenzie@ncbeonline.com](mailto:mackenzie@ncbeonline.com)

## Save the Dates for 2025!

ECA Golf Tournament - Friday, July 11 at Windsor Golf Club  
ECA Luncheon at Glenn Smith's Home - Friday, August 29  
Wine & Dozers Auction - Saturday, November 1 at Graton Resort & Casino  
ECA Annual General Membership Meeting - Date/Time/Place TBD



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### 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.

### **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA ENGINEERING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION**

**John Bly, Executive Director**  
email: [john@nceca.org](mailto:john@nceca.org)

**Mary Kennedy Cabrera, Member Services Director**  
email: [mary@nceca.org](mailto:mary@nceca.org)

**Cheryl Long, Bookkeeper**  
email: [cheryl@nceca.org](mailto:cheryl@nceca.org)

**Postal Address: P.O. Box 8249 Santa Rosa, CA 95407 ~Phone: 707.546.5500**