



# PENNSYLVANIA LAND IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTORS' ASSOCIATION

## FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER

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PHONE: 724-866-1082 Website: [Pennsylvanialica.com](http://Pennsylvanialica.com)  
Email: [PENNSYLVANIALICA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:PENNSYLVANIALICA@GMAIL.COM)



Our first DOT event in Southwest PA was held on October 4<sup>th</sup> at TOPCON Solutions Store in Warrendale, PA. We had a nice turnout, and the information was very well received and appreciated by those in attendance.



**A huge thanks to Cory Mason and all the folks at the TOPCON Store for their hospitality, the great breakfast they supplied, and for hosting this event for the very first time.**

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER TOPCON SOLUTION STORE IS OFFERING A DISCOUNT PROGRAM, (see below) EXCLUSIVELY FOR PALICA MEMBERS, THAT WILL RUN UNTIL 3/31/2024.**

Please call Cory Mason, Sales Manager, at 724-352-5400 at the Warrendale location (820 Commonwealth Drive) with any questions, or stop in and be sure to mention you are a PALICA member to get the discount.

- Laser Products will have a 15% discount.
- MC Mobile Product Line will have a 10% discount.
- Showroom Accessories or Supplies will have a 10% discount.

Their website is: [www.topconsolutions.com](http://www.topconsolutions.com)



**\*\*Special thanks to Trooper Justin Prejsnar and Trooper Jon Pomaybo who ran the class.**



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – BARRY MUTZABAUGH JR.

Hello All,

Fall is in the air & I hope all is well with everyone. This has been a very busy year so far. We didn't blow away at Ag Progress Days in State College even though the wind tried its best (HA-HA). Justin Hoover & I attended a DOT event at LCTI and had a great turnout. Thanks to National LICA members for attending! Dan & Joanie attended the DOT that was held at TOPCON as well. TOPCON is offering PALICA members a special discount (**see the cover of this newsletter for details**) so go check it out. I would personally like to thank them for all that they did!

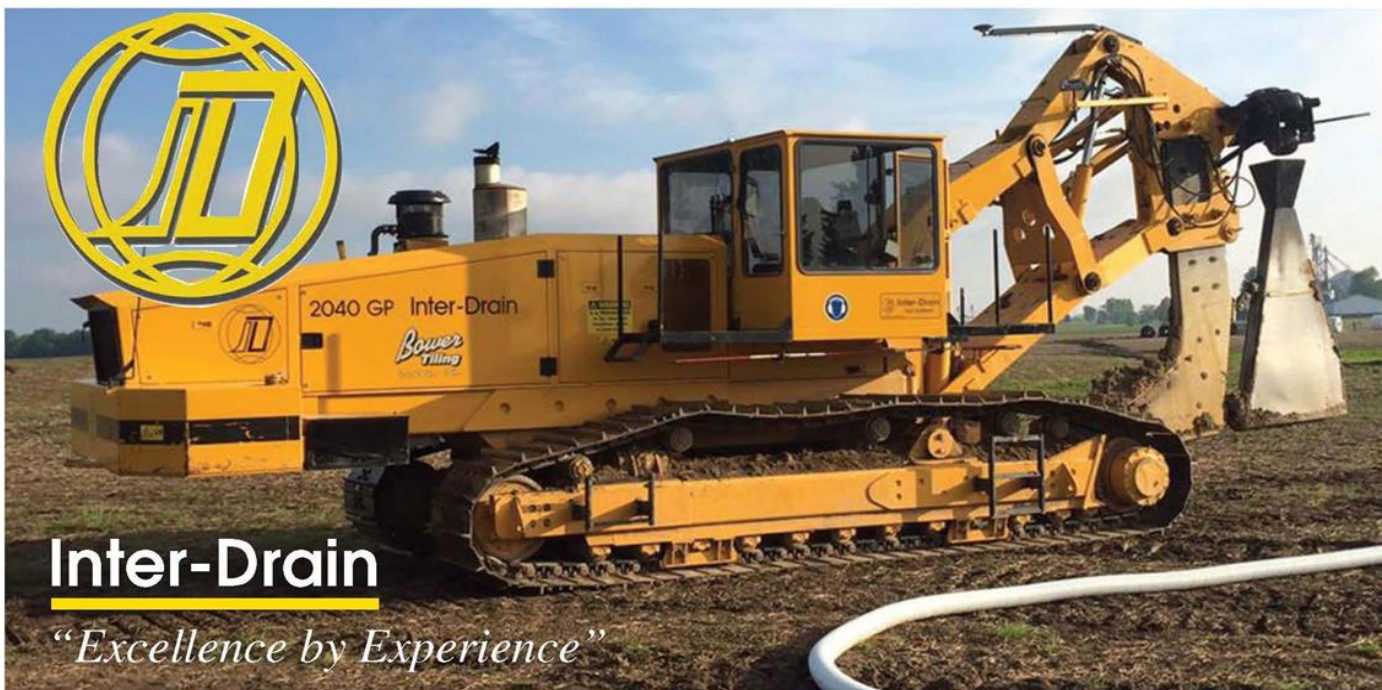
**We will be having our year-end board meeting on November 11th at Hoss's Restaurant in State College. The meeting starts at 11 am and will be followed by a presentation from Brenda Reigle of DIG Prevention Consulting called:**

## **"DIGGING DEEPER: Navigating PA One Call Law – Excavator's Duties Unveiled"**

*Unearth the essential responsibilities entrusted to excavators under the PA One Call law in this open conversation presentation. From preventing utility disruptions to ensuring public safety, we'll delve into the core obligations that excavators must embrace. Join us to gain a comprehensive understanding of how adherence to these responsibilities can entrust project efficiency, protect vital infrastructure, and foster a safer excavation environment.*

Lunch will follow the presentation for all those in attendance. **Please RSVP to Joanie at 724-866-1082 by 11/9/23.** Hope to see you there if you're able to make it. This will be the last meeting before the winter convention in Grantville. Keep an eye out on Fridays for an email being sent out called **"The Legislative Lighthouse"** to see what the state of PA is doing. Keep in touch with your representatives, we must make our voices heard!

Well, that's all for now; be safe and keep digging..... Barry



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Steve Latimer, PALICA Board Member and Sales Rep for Groff Equipment (GTE), invited some PALICA members to a Customer Appreciation Event on September 28<sup>th</sup> which included a BBQ dinner. Over 100 customers (owners and their employees) attended. The event took place at Hunting Hills in Dilliner PA. This was one of three separate events they held in PA. PALICA Board Member Dan Micsky, pictured below, thoroughly enjoyed the day, and feels events like this go a long way towards customer relationship building as well as a great opportunity to network with other contractors. THANKS STEVE!



1 of 1

## CUSTOMER APPRECIATION CLAY SHOOT

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\*Registration (12:30 P.M. – 1:30 P.M.), Safety Briefing (1:30 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.), Clay Shoot (2:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.), Dinner & Drinks (5:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.)

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- 2nd Place Team \$100 ea. Visa Gift Card
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## WELCOME OUR NEWEST MEMBERS TO PALICA!

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Dupont, PA 18641  
Luzerne County

**Lewis Environmental**  
Charles Bisking  
155 Railroad Plaza  
Royersford, PA 19468  
Montgomery County  
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**Mark DePermentier Trucking**  
Mark DePermentier  
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Lansdale, PA 19446  
Montgomery County

**Wunder Construction Co. LLC**  
Frank Wunder  
300 Merkall Road  
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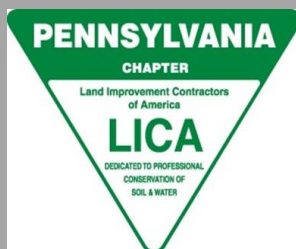
## ASSOCIATE REPRESENTATIVES:

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BRENDA REIGLE - Dig Prevention  
Consulting

WEBSITE: [www.pennsylvanialica.com](http://www.pennsylvanialica.com)



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Joanie Micsky  
775 Mercer Road  
Greenville, PA 16125  
724-866-1082

EMAIL: [Pennsylvanialica@gmail.com](mailto:Pennsylvanialica@gmail.com)

**SAVE THE DATES – 2024 PALICA STATE  
CONVENTION** will be held March 7<sup>th</sup>- March 9<sup>th</sup> at  
the Holiday Inn Harrisburg-Hershey, 604 Station  
Rd., Grantville PA – 717-469-0661

**ROOM RATES WILL BE \$109/NIGHT PLUS TAX**

FOR THOSE THAT WANT TO GET A HEAD START ON BOOKING  
YOUR ROOMS, YOU CAN GO TO [WWW.STAYHOLIDAY.COM](http://WWW.STAYHOLIDAY.COM)  
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The cutoff date to book your room is 2/26/24 but it's better to  
get your room early – you can always cancel. Once rooms in our  
block are gone, you'll be charged the regular rate of \$159/night.  
You can also call the hotel directly to book your room.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE CLASSES WE HAVE LINED UP  
FOR YOU – A MORE DETAILED AND FINALIZED AGENDA  
WILL BE IN THE WINTER NEWSLETTER AND ON OUR  
WEBSITE IN THE WEEKS TO COME.

**We'll have a Meet & Greet Pizza and Drinks Dinner on  
Thursday night for anyone coming in then.**

- DEP will once again answer questions (a continuation from last year's session) **SO START THINKING NOW OF QUESTIONS YOU'D LIKE TO SUBMIT AHEAD OF TIME.**
- Main traffic control signs and when to replace them.
- Personal Protection Equipment – when to use it and when to replace items.
- DOT Requirements and File Maintenance.
- Housekeeping In Shops and on the Job Site.
- Documenting a Utility Incident for a good defense
- Presentation on subsurface utility engineering as required by PA One Call law.
- Mock damage prevention hearing with Dig Prevention Consulting members deciding fate of excavator – (case of excavator hitting a mis-marked utility and the facility owner is disputing their violation and fine).
- Presentation from NORWECO out of Norwalk OH, on the latest in septic systems.
- We'll hold our board meeting and annual membership meetings on Saturday morning, and everyone is invited to attend them.
- The ladies will have an offsite class activity on Friday.
- We'll wrap up the convention on Saturday (late afternoon) with a trip to the casino in Grantville for those who would like to go.

## 5 COST-SAVING STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING FUEL CONSUMPTION IN CONSTRUCTION SITE EQUIPMENT AND TRUCKS



*Con Expo Newsletter, summer edition*

In the world of construction, heavy equipment and trucks are the backbone of projects, delivering the power and muscle needed to get the job done. Yet, the substantial fuel consumption of these machines can lead to steep and unpredictable operational costs. To maintain profitability, construction companies are increasingly focusing on methods to reduce fuel usage. Let's look at some pragmatic approaches to reduce fuel consumption and, as a bonus, lower emissions on your projects.

### 1. Regular Maintenance Pays Off

Routine maintenance is a cornerstone for cost-effective fuel consumption. Neglecting maintenance can lead to inefficient engine performance and increased fuel usage. Regularly changing air, fuel, and oil filters ensure engines operate at peak efficiency. Tires are overlooked but contribute greatly to reducing fuel consumption. Be sure to check tire pressure, tread depth, weight, and alignment to maximize fuel usage. Proper maintenance not only saves fuel but also prevents costly breakdowns, minimizing downtime.

### 2. Equipment Optimization

Matching equipment size to the task at hand is a simple way to save on fuel costs. Oversized equipment not only consumes more fuel but also increases maintenance expenses. By employing the right-sized machinery, construction companies strike a balance between power and efficiency, effectively cutting fuel consumption and operational expenses. Explore rental options that allow you to always have the right sized machine for each job – and often newer, more efficient machines than those you own. A fleet that has a mix of owner-owned and rental equipment can allow you to reduce fuel costs and try out the latest electric and alternative fuel equipment as it hits the market.

### 3. Smart Driving Practices

Operators play a pivotal role in fuel efficiency. Training operators to adopt fuel-saving driving habits, such as gentle accelerations and smooth decelerations, driving at lower speeds, and reducing load weight, can substantially reduce fuel consumption. Emphasize the importance of reducing idle time and shutting down engines during breaks to maximize cost savings. Consider implementing an idle policy that may include:

- Five minutes or less for the engine to warm up.
- Two minutes or less for engines to shut down.
- Do not turn on equipment during breaks, or when workers are waiting more than five minutes to load or unload.

(Con't on next page) Pg 4

#### 4. Telematics Technology

Leveraging technology to monitor fuel consumption and machine performance enables real-time adjustments to achieve optimal efficiency. Telematics systems provide valuable insights into fuel consumption patterns, facilitating data-driven decisions. Machine telematics should be adopted across as many pieces of construction equipment as possible to increase efficiency and save fuel. In fact, according to a new AEM study “Benefits of Construction Equipment Technologies and their Impact on Society,” telematics and reduced idling time can save millions of gallons of diesel each year. The fuel saved from reducing nonproductive idling across all machines in North America due to the effective use of telematics is equivalent to flying around the world 800 times!

#### 5. Modern Equipment Integration

Investing in modern equipment can yield substantial long-term savings. Cutting-edge machinery often comes equipped with advanced fuel-saving technologies and eco-friendly features. While the upfront costs may be higher, the return-on-investment manifests through reduced fuel consumption and enhanced efficiency. Today’s modern engines and drivetrains are quieter, use less fuel, and emit fewer emissions. Today’s diesel engine emits 96.3% less NOx and approximately 11-15% less CO2 per hour of use than their counterparts in 1996. And they use less fuel! The total fuel saved from the increased efficiency of today’s engines and drivetrains is roughly equivalent to removing 1,350,000 cars off the road permanently, which is roughly the number of registered cars in all of New Hampshire. A fleet management system is another way to reduce fuel and emissions, all in real time so you can pivot quickly to make needed adjustments.

**Conclusion** In the competitive construction industry, trimming operational costs is constant. By implementing prudent strategies to reduce fuel consumption in heavy equipment and trucks, construction companies can directly impact their bottom line. These strategies not only bolster profitability but also underscore the industry's commitment to sustainability.





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# HELP FOR MY CUSTOMERS!



## HOMEOWNER SEPTIC SYSTEM FINANCING

Septic system replacement/repair and sewer connection costs often surprise homeowners. They typically don't even think about these vital systems in their homes—until they fail. And suddenly a basic system is causing them a major headache. As a contractor, being able to connect homeowners with a simple, straightforward way to pay for septic system failures and first-time connections from existing homes feels great, and helps you keep that job you estimated.

Please check out PHFA's website, [www.phfa.org/programs/repairs.aspx](http://www.phfa.org/programs/repairs.aspx), to learn more about how the program can help your customers turn a large bill into manageable monthly payments. Loans available up to \$25,000, up to 20 years in most cases, no prepayment penalties, and no income limits.<sup>1</sup>

### SAMPLE PAYMENTS

- Payment for a \$15,000 loan is \$75 monthly.
- Payment for a \$25,000 loan is \$124 monthly.

<sup>1</sup> Subject to credit approval and eligibility restrictions including loan use, property requirements, and owner occupancy. Interest rate quoted as of 1/1/2023. The APR is fixed for the term of the loan. Borrower pays origination and closing charges. Sample payments based on \$15,000 and \$25,000 loan examples have 20 year term and 240 payments. Total finance charge for a \$15,000 loan is \$3,869 and for a \$25,000 loan is \$5,727.



## NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR -- PLEASE READ

A letter was sent with your dues invoice last month and the bottom half of that letter gave you a form to update any of your company info (contacts, emails, phone numbers, work categories you currently perform), etc. If you forgot to return it with your check, you can fill this page out and email it to me to save a stamp at [PENNSYLVANIALICA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:PENNSYLVANIALICA@GMAIL.COM). The information we have (which may not be correct) is what gets listed in our PALICA member directory as well as the National LICA directory and on our website. Email blasts go out a few times a month with important updates on benefits or upcoming events etc. so please be sure we have your correct email address.

Speaking of stamps, postage has had a price increase 3 times this year – soon to be a 4<sup>th</sup> time. **The newsletter is published 4 times a year and mailed out to over 150 members at an average cost of \$4 per member/per mailing (printing and postage combined). We're looking at trying to email as much as possible (but at the very least, the Newsletters) to our members, if you'd be willing to receive it electronically.** Please indicate your preference below and I'll start with the Winter/Convention Edition that will go out in January of 2024. Downsizing our postage budget will enable us to pursue other opportunities to bring you more educational events. The newsletter will also be sent out in an email blast and posted on our website. **(PLEASE CHECK ONE OPTION BELOW)**

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**\*\*PLEASE MAIL OR EMAIL THIS ENTIRE FORM WITH YOUR PREFERENCES EVEN IF THERE ARE NO CHANGES TO YOUR COMPANY INFO (PALICA @ 775 MERCER RD., GREENVILLE PA 16125)**

 **PLEASE COMPLETE THE BOTTOM SECTION AS WELL** 

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**Contact Person for Company:** \_\_\_\_\_

(This is who you want all correspondence AND billing sent to)

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**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Company Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Website Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **CONTRACTORS – CHECK ALL CATAGORIES THAT APPLY**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> DI Drainage/Irrigation        | <input type="checkbox"/> LL Land Leveling            | <input type="checkbox"/> SEP Septic Systems          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EC Erosion Control            | <input type="checkbox"/> LS Landscaping              | <input type="checkbox"/> SP Site Preparation/Dev     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EMC Earthmoving/Land Cleaning | <input type="checkbox"/> ODW Open Ditch Work         | <input type="checkbox"/> SWU Sewer/Water/Undrnd Util |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXG Excavating/Grading        | <input type="checkbox"/> OSW On Site Waste Treatment | <input type="checkbox"/> TH Trucking or Hauling      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GR Gravel/Rock Production     | <input type="checkbox"/> PA Paving                   | <input type="checkbox"/> TW Terraces or Waterways    |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> PD Ponds or Dams            | <input type="checkbox"/> WM Water Management         |

☐ **SA Dealer, Service Co., Government Agency, Consultant**





## THE LIFECYCLE OF A ROUTINE TICKET

There are several types of tickets that can be placed by Pennsylvania 811 users. The most common ticket would be the routine ticket. Let's take a walk through who, what, when, where and why of a routine ticket.

### What is Routine?

Three business days in advance of digging is required for routine.

Three business days allows underground facility operators ample time to manage their underground line locator's workload and properly respond. Keeping the outer limit to 10 business days ensures the markings remain visible and accurate throughout the excavation.

Routine tickets are for planned and predictable excavation or demolition work, or for one-time small homeowner projects. Routine tickets are limited to 1000 feet or working between two intersections on the same road. The predictable timeframe enables all involved to smoothly do their part to protect underground lines from damage.

### Starting Out

Diane's landscaping company is hired to grade, level, and till a yard to place a garden. Diane logs in to [www.pa1call.org](http://www.pa1call.org) three business days before the work is to start and enters her **Routine**

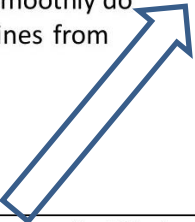
worksite information into **Web Ticket Entry**. Diane has dialed **8-1-1** in the past, yet prefers using the tools within Web Ticket Entry to draw the precise worksite in the satellite map. After Diane submits her Web Ticket, she receives an email with her ticket serial number confirmation. She reviews the underground facility owners (utilities) notified and files as documentation to keep her project on track.

Nick at Main Street Water Company receives the ticket from Diane's landscaping company and checks the address against his company records.

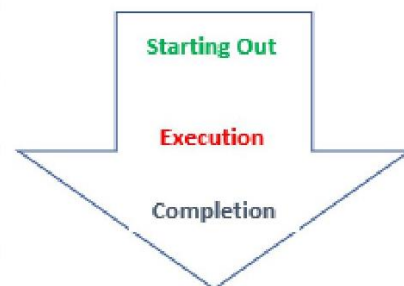
Finding a conflict, Nick dispatches a locator to mark the water lines on the property.

### Execution

Diane had **marked the exact site in white** prior to placing her ticket; when the locator arrives at the property, the worksite is easy to identify and mark correctly within the white area. This ensures Nick's blue markings for Main Street's water line are complete and only painted where needed on the client's property.



I have a project that requires excavation.
I placed a dig ticket by calling 8-1-1 or by using Web Ticket Entry.
I marked my area of excavation in white by using paint, flags or stakes.
I waited until my lawful start date, viewed my responses and confirmed markings at the site are visible.
I am ready to begin excavation!



### Completion

Diane receives the **KARL Automated Response** email with all utility responses early in the day of their planned excavation. She confirms all utilities have responded "Field Marked" or "Clear – No Facilities of Facilities Not Involved

Based on Ticket Information" and lets her crew know there is a green light to perform the excavation.

When the excavation work is complete, the crew is reminded to **remove the utility markings**, as they are no longer needed.

THIS WILL BE ONE OF THE CLASSES WE HAVE AT THE STATE CONVENTION IN MARCH – OUR ASSOCIATE COLLEEN GEMMILL WILL DIRECT THE CLASS WITH HER SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE OF PPE REQUIREMENTS.



\*Graphic taken from Minnesota Local Technical Assistance Program



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➤ WE'RE ALL IN.



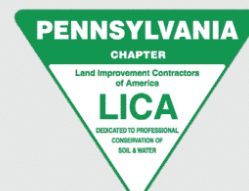
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# GOOD & BAD NEWS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Labor Day week brought good and bad news for the construction industry as two new reports show both growth of the industry and a lack of skilled workers needed to fill positions and complete projects.

As the U.S. added 177,000 new jobs in August, the construction industry added 22,000 jobs, according to a U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) August Employment Situation report released Sept. 1. This follows an average monthly gain over the prior 12 months of 17,000 jobs. Employment continued to increase in August with specialty trade contractors adding 11,000 jobs and heavy and civil engineering construction adding 7,000 jobs.

Inflation and interest rates, two factors that directly impact the construction industry, remain high. However, government money from the Infrastructure Act is helping the construction industry grow and keep the demand for skilled workers high. Meanwhile, a severe workforce shortage is impacting construction projects across the country.

There were some declines in the transportation and warehousing industries, which lost 34,000 jobs in August. Employment in truck transportation also fell sharply with a loss of 37,000 jobs, although this is likely due to closures. Employment in transportation and warehousing has shown little net change over the prior 12 months.

"Continued gains in construction and manufacturing...reflect broad economic growth across different sectors..." Acting U.S. Secretary of Labor Julie A. Suaid said about the report. Another BLS report Job Openings and Labor Turnover, released Aug. 29, shows that construction companies are paying a premium for skilled workers

and still falling short of where the industry needs to be.



Average hourly earnings employees in construction jumped by 5.7% over the year to \$34.40 per hour in August, according to an

Associated Builders & Contractors (AGC) analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data, noted construction firms paid a wage "premium" of 18.6 percent compared to the average hourly earnings for all private-sector production employees.

Many contractors are still unable to find qualified workers amid an unemployment rate of only 3.9 percent in August for jobseekers with construction experience, the AGC analysis stated.

"Today's reports show there is no letup in demand for construction workers or private-sector projects," said Ken Simonson, AGC's chief economist. "The industry is raising pay faster than other sectors amid persistently low unemployment."

The construction unemployment rate remained unchanged at 3.9 percent for August, while the national unemployment rate jumped from 3.5 percent in July to 3.8 percent in August.

Leading the construction growth is non-residential projects, specifically megaprojects that often exceed \$1 billion in areas like Ohio, Texas and Arizona. Many skilled workers are looking at where the highest pay is being offered and relocating to take advantage of the significant differences. This could cause a construction recession in some areas of the country, while other areas experience a boom.

For the construction industry, the data shows that conditions are not likely to level out anytime soon. Companies will be focused on solutions like finding skilled workers and retaining their current workforce to keep businesses profitable and projects moving forward.



# GETTING KIDS INVOLVED AND INTERESTED IN THE FAMILY BUSINESS

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM CON EXPO NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2023



“My grandfather started the business in 1968, and it’s been a family business ever since.” Taylor White, Director of Ken White Construction of Carp, Ontario, Canada, says his grandfather valued family and made sure the business bearing his name reflected those values. Taylor is the third generation in the business and, since 2018, has been moving into taking over operations. His wife, two cousins, and his dad also work for the company. As of the date of our interview,

Taylor, age 28, and his wife have a 3-year-old daughter and a 3-week-old son. “I want to build something permanent for them.” That’s a goal shared by many family business owners, but how does one accomplish that?

## ***A different childhood***

“My dad and I didn’t do the usual father-and-son stuff,” says Taylor. “No hunting or fishing or camping. No throwing the football around. I spent my youth watching him from the passenger seat of the truck.” His father’s tutelage of Taylor did not involve formal instruction; no sit-downs to go over business management strategies. His father simply led by example. It worked well. Under Taylor’s guidance, field staff have increased from 3 to 23 in the past four years. And whereas his dad did everything, Taylor worked with his dad to bring in an estimator and then a project manager; soon the company was buying more equipment to meet the increased demand for their services.

Taylor’s early involvement with Ken White Construction was mostly grunt work, and he intends the same path for his kids. “As soon as they’re old enough to hold a broom, they’ll be sweeping.” This accomplishes two things. First, it thwarts any resentment of the boss’s kid getting preferential treatment. Second, it gives the child appreciation for and familiarity with every aspect of the business as they move into other tasks and greater responsibility.

“Some parents send their kids to college and give them an office job when they graduate,” he says. “I don’t think that’s the right way to groom kids for the business. There’s nothing wrong with formal education but it cannot take the place of on-the-job training.”

## ***Attitudes are contagious***

That phrase is an old one, but well worth keeping in mind. “Always make sure you bring home the joy of the job,” says Taylor. “Have love and enthusiasm for what you do and share that with your kids.” Don’t mope around on Monday mornings saying, “Well, I guess I gotta go to work again. I can’t wait ‘til this week’s over.”

(Con’t on next page)

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### ***Time away from the family business***

Before settling down into the Ken White Construction family business, Taylor spent seven months on his own in Alberta. He was suddenly responsible for everything: paying bills, buying groceries, preparing meals, doing dishes and laundry. At the end of this time, things were going on with Ken White Construction that made Taylor feel compelled to go home and contribute to the business. "I went home ready to buckle down. The partying days and party friends of high school were put behind me. The time out West catapulted me into adulthood."

Is a similar experience necessary for every child aspiring to a leadership role in the family business? Was it truly necessary in Taylor's case? The answer to both is no, but it certainly accelerated his maturation, and will likely do the same for other youths.

### ***Top 3 Tips***


Here are Taylor's top three tips for running a successful family business.

**1. Have open, honest, regular communication.** At one point Taylor thought he was underpaid and asked his dad for more money (the wage had been meager, partly to negate any "boss's kid" talk). His dad refused and they came to an impasse. Taylor told his dad, "I have to look out for myself and my family when that time comes. Either pay me more or I'll go buy equipment and start my own business. We will become competitors." It wasn't a threat. There was no animosity. It was an open discussion of facts and objectives built on a history of honest communication. They reconciled their differences.

**2. Respect and credibility are earned.** If you don't have them it's probably because you haven't earned them. Is there a risk of over-compensating, of being too agreeable to not seem privileged? "No. For me, the line was always quite clear. Generally, I conducted myself as I would if I were just another employee and not a family member." That said, after more than a decade in the business, Taylor will take vacations and he does have nice things. "But I still work hard. First on-site. Last to leave." He enjoys the benefits afforded by a good work ethic and encourages his employees to do the same.

**3. Always be learning and networking.** "It can be viewed as a trite phrase, but I still like it: 'Keep your finger on the pulse of the industry.'" They do construction-specific events but also regular community events. Community involvement was another of Taylor's grandfather's core values. The Carp Agricultural Society is the clearinghouse for the local 4H, an annual fair, tractor pulls, etc. and Ken White Construction is very active there. They awarded a \$10,000 scholarship to the winner of their "Student Pursuing the Trades" program to a student seeking to become an electrician. It's been a challenge for Taylor to be perceived as the owner and manager of a business by people who had always known his father to be in that role, "and social exposure helps overcome that."

### ***Final thoughts***

Taylor shares two final thoughts. The first is that "the most valuable thing you can offer is your time," whether with your family, the business, or the community. The second is that "blue collar is the groundwork of the economy. Make sure your kids take pride in doing work that is fundamental to society." 



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# 8 STEPS TO TAKE TO KEEP FROM GETTING EQUIPMENT STOLEN & HOW TO GET IT BACK IF IT DOES



Until your company is a victim of equipment theft, it's probably not on the list of things most contractors worry about. Yet according to study from National Equipment Register, hundreds of millions of dollars of equipment is stolen each year.

Insurance provides some protection, but the costs of a theft are considerable: the deductible, the cost of rental equipment to replace the machine in the short term and potential project delays. Down the road there may be higher insurance premiums.

It's good to know a few simple steps can

protect your company and improve your chances of recovering the stolen asset.

## ***1. Keep good records***

Keeping good records is essential to helping law enforcement recover your equipment. "When you buy a piece of equipment, digitize the paperwork around the purchase and keep a paper file as well. Take photos of the equipment as well as the VIN (Vehicle Identification Number), PIN (Product Identification Number) and or Serial Number (SN) plate," said Gabe Marquez, special agent with the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB). This ensures when you report the equipment stolen it will be entered into the Law Enforcement theft databases correctly.

## ***2. Stamp and label equipment in multiple locations.***

Kenneth Peters, a deputy sheriff in Hunt County, Texas, believes the best way to mark your equipment is to use etching tools, die stamping, or a steel punch to duplicate a unit's Product Identification Number (PIN) or other serial numbers in at least two places on the equipment, one obvious and one hidden. Record the location of these numbers. Marquez advises using labels and unique markings to help identify your equipment. "Thieves will have to make an effort to peel labels off or paint over these markings," said Marquez. "If you make it easy to identify your equipment, you make it easier for law enforcement to do their jobs."

## ***3. Be aware of what equipment is likely to be stolen***

"There are certain assets that thieves are always looking for," said Ryan Shepherd, general manager for Verisk, who oversees the National Equipment Register, a national database of equipment ownership records and thefts. **"Skid-steers and backhoes—any equipment that is smaller in size; that doesn't require a trailer to move—is a target."** These assets can be loaded on a truck in minutes and attract a wide audience of buyers in construction, farming, and homeowners. Stolen assets are easily sold online or through social media. If located, stolen equipment will be taken away from buyers who knowingly or unknowingly purchased them. To prevent theft NER suggests stating smaller equipment so it is surrounded by larger machines. Anchor equipment with either a chain or cable. Institute a policy to remove keys from equipment when not in use or in storage, and securely store them.

“Trailers are another big problem,” said Peters. NER recommends hitch protection or removing the tongue from the trailer. Never leave any equipment on a trailer for an extended time period.

#### ***4. Know when thieves are likely to strike***

NER data shows an uptick in thefts around long holiday weekends. “Thieves know the crews are leaving on a Thursday night and not coming back until Tuesday,” said Shepherd. Designate someone to check on the site at random times during the holiday. Test to be sure that alarms, cameras and lighting are working. Consider moving smaller machines to a more secure area, or lifting items such as compressors with jobsite cranes.

#### ***5. Be accessible***

“I stress that companies should reach out to local law enforcement to provide contact information and phone numbers in the event of an after-hours emergency,” said Peters. Assign the task of reporting crimes to a staff member and give neighboring businesses a number to call if they see suspicious activity.

#### ***6. Register your equipment***

NER allows equipment owners to register their construction equipment on its database. With more than 24 million records, the database helps law enforcement identify stolen equipment, sometimes even before the owner knows it is stolen. The HelpTech service includes registration for up to 50 machines for \$250 annually. Volume and association discounts may be available. According to Shepherd, insurance companies offer incentives to use NER because they know it works. Most will waive their theft deductible up to \$10,000 if the machines are registered.


“The recovery rate for stolen equipment when they launched the program was four percent,” said Shepard. “Today our recovery rate is 22-24 percent.”

#### ***7. Consider local equipment theft prevention groups***

According to Marquez, local theft prevention groups such as **Crime Prevention Program** of Southern California can also be effective. They work with law enforcement, provide education and training, and offer rewards for information about stolen equipment. California has one of the highest incidents of construction equipment theft, but Marquez says the 2019 recovery rate of 36 percent is higher than the industry average. Membership costs \$795 per year.

#### ***8. Apply multiple layers of theft prevention with technology***

Newer machines with telematics systems can alert an owner when a machine is moved off the job site or if the engine is started up outside of designated hours. LoJack can help recover machines through a hidden receiver that broadcasts a signal when activated. Radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology can help you manage assets and reduce theft at construction sites. “Each technology has its pluses and minuses,” said Marquez. He does believe technology has made a difference in keeping up with construction equipment theft in California. In 2019 thefts were up 30 percent but the recovery rate improved slightly from 34 percent to 36 percent.

From serial numbers to physical barriers and technology, each additional layer of **theft protection** provides thieves with a reason to move on to an easier target. Shepherd advises contractors to let their insurance company know all the steps they are taking to prevent theft. “They may be able to reward you with lower premiums.” 





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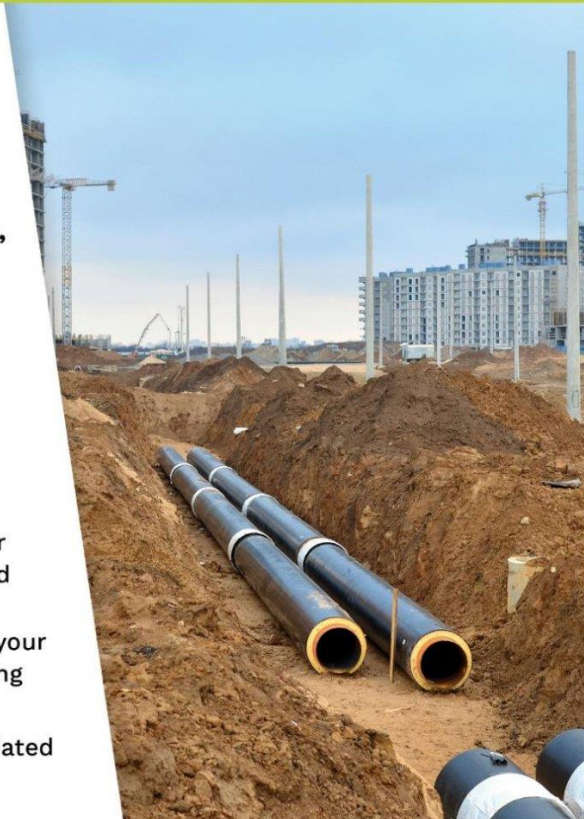


## COORDINATE PA IS THE NEXT GENERATION OF UTILITY COORDINATION

**Coordinate PA is a web application developed by Pennsylvania One Call System to support public works, utility project planning and utility coordination within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Users utilize a spatial, map-based system to view underground utility and public works projects, identifying opportunities for coordination and collaboration when projects overlap in space and time.**

### **Coordinate PA Benefits:**

- Define projects using a web application (No special software required!) Store project data and records in a secure repository
- Gather and disseminate information to a broader range of stakeholders beyond project planners and public works officials
- Coordinate and collaborate on projects outside your scope of responsibility, saving money and improving service for all parties
- Request meetings and upload documents associated with a complex project








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