



WATTS UP

August 01, 2009

Alaska Chapter NECA Newsletter

www.alaskaneca.org

Chapter Calendar

August 4

August 11

August 12

August 19

September 7

September 12-15

Anchorage JATC

Safety Committee

District Six in Victoria, BC

Board of Directors/Membership Meeting/Guest & Veterans

Labor Day

NECA Convention/Seattle, WA

Tool Box Talks

August 03, 2008

August 10, 2008

August 17, 2008

August 24, 2008

August 31, 2009

Low Voltage, Indoors/Low Voltage, Outdoors

MSDS

OSHA Violations to Avoid, Part I and II

Portable Cords

Power Lines

NECA Government Affairs Update: Tuesday, August 04, 2009

"Getting the right people elected to the House and Senate is important for contractors in every part of the country. ECPAC helps level the playing field because it gives me, here in Alaska, the ability to support candidates from New England to the Southwest. I depend on NECA to know who will be our best champions in Congress and then I put my dollars into the mix to help get them elected. That's ECPAC and it works for all of us." – **Scott Bringmann**, Alcan Electrical & Engineering, Anchorage, Alaska

As Congressional Recess commences, NECA would like to advise its members receiving the Government Affairs Update that issues over the next three weeks may be shorter than usual. This is not to say we aren't continuing to work on your behalf on the Hill; however, there won't be quite as much to report. We will continue to report on any health care developments and stimulus opportunities, as we know these things are important to our members. We all need a bit of a recess every once in a while!

Health Care heats up during August recess – President Obama's signature issue is facing serious opposition from Republicans, but perhaps his biggest opposition comes from members of his own party. Fiscally-conservative Blue Dog Democrats expressed opposition to the legislation due to tax increases and penalties for those employers opting out of the system, a proposed government-run 'public' option, and support for exempting small businesses from the health care mandate. Last week, through negotiations between the fiscally-conservative Blue Dog Democrats and Democratic leadership in the House, the small business exemption was increased from \$250,000 to \$500,000. The legislation proposes a graduated tax increase for those small employers electing not to provide health insurance. Under the new 'deal,' firms with a 2008 payroll of greater than \$750,000 can elect not to provide health insurance and incur an 8 percent (of payroll) tax penalty.

Speaker Pelosi's biggest challenge will be to keep all of the factions within the Democratic Party unified in support of comprehensive health care reform. While the Blue Dogs secured relief that would exempt more small businesses from the health care mandate, another major section of the Democratic Caucus

spoke out against the Blue Dog's "deal." The more progressive faction of the Party has expressed concern with a perceived weakening in the requirement for a public option. Meanwhile, the Senate is still at work through the end of this week and it is unlikely that the Senate Finance Committee will provide any specifics regarding how to pay for health care. NECA wrote to Senators and Representatives expressing concern with two major provisions in the health care legislation. For the full language of the letter, please see the attached document. NECA is opposed to an exemption from a requirement to provide health care for small business employers as well as opposition to taxation of employer-provided health care benefits. Please feel free to express your views regarding the health care reform package and these will be considered in terms of NECA's health care position. So far, NECA's members have expressed overwhelming opposition to the legislation.

Cap and Trade Survey – Along with offering your thoughts on health care reform, NECA's Government Affairs welcomes your thoughts on the House-passed cap and trade legislation. Recently, NECA placed in article in its weekly newsletter and in other online materials asking for members to participate in an online survey regarding the cap and trade legislation.

As compared to member's responses which are overwhelmingly in opposition to health care legislation, some members have expressed support for the cap and trade legislation citing the legislation's emphasis and opportunities created for renewable energy. To make sure that your views are considered on the cap and trade legislation, please participate in our online survey at

<http://www.necanet.org/news/?fa=whatsNew&articleID=3863>.

Labor Relations

Reserve Your Place at NECA's Labor Relations Conference by August 10

Registration for our 2009 Labor Relations Conference at the Hilton Palacio del Rio in San Antonio, October 12-14, has picked up considerably since we recently mailed a brochure on this event to all members. Chapter executives and staff, management trustees, and any other NECA contractor who wants to learn about issues related to trust funds from the management perspective should register by August 10 to avoid a shut-out - and to save \$50 on registration! [Register for the 2009 Labor Relations Conference by August 10 and save!](#)

New Fellows Selected by Academy of Electrical Contracting

Academy Meeting Includes LEED Discussion, White Paper Presentation

Six electrical contractors will be joining the industry's most esteemed organization as Fellows of the Academy of Electrical Contracting in September at the annual convention of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA). In addition to selecting the 2009 class of Fellows at its recently annual meeting, the Academy held a working group focused on the role of electrical contractors on LEED construction projects.

Since its founding meeting in 1968, the Academy has served as the "voice of experience" for NECA and ELECTRICAL International – The Foundation for Electrical Construction, Inc. Fellows of the Academy are invited to join the organization based on their exceptional service to the electrical contracting industry. Each Academy Fellow authors a white page on their area of industry expertise, and they participate in issue analysis to determine trends within the industry and make recommendations.

The incoming Fellows for 2009 are:

Scott Bringmann

Alcan Electrical & Engineering, Inc.
Anchorage, Alaska

Kenneth Hart

Dynalectric Company ~ Washington, DC
Dulles, Virginia

Stephen J. Kohnen

Kay-Bee Electric Company
Florissant, Missouri

Craig Martin

Frost Electric Company, Inc.
Aurora, Illinois

William A. Powell, Jr.

Chewning & Wilmer, Inc.
Richmond, Virginia

Daniel G. Schaeffer

Schaeffer Electric Company
St. Louis, Missouri

Fellows Thomas Curran and Richard Manrod presented papers at the meeting. Curran’s paper, “Patience+Presence+Partnerships = Payback,” focused on California’s successful Labor-Management Cooperation Committee. Manrod presented “The Transition from Electrician to Electrical Contractor,” a step-by-step guide for prospective electrical contractors. Copies of their papers can be downloaded as PDFs below. [A complete archive of Academy white papers is available online.](#)

Global economics forecaster Jeffrey Rosenweig delivered the meeting’s well-received keynote speech. He focused on importance of electrical contractors maintaining positive goals during the current economic downturn and offered his insights on the financial trends that will shape the recovery in the U.S. and globally.

Electrical Contractors and LEED

The new Fellows will join the Academy at a critical time for the electrical construction industry. The economic downturn and rising demand for green energy solutions are affecting nearly every aspect of electrical contractors’ work, and the Academy draws on decades of shared industry experience to ascertain future requirements of the industry. The working group program at the recent Academy meeting yielded some compelling results.

Matt Syal, associate professor and research director at the Construction Management School of Michigan State University, facilitated the program. Syal is a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Accredited Professional and leads a research initiative on the role electrical contractors have in constructing LEED-certified buildings and the ongoing development of LEED standards.

The U.S. Green Building Council believes that 1 million buildings will be LEED-certified by 2020, and Syal pointed out that electrical contractors contribute to nearly half of the certification credits for LEED projects. The Fellows determined that electrical contractors also have the responsibility of working with general contractors and owners to demonstrate the value and overall savings LEED offers. “We need to properly commission our systems towards LEED,” one participant remarked.

The group agreed that workforce training in LEED remains the top priority for the industry, followed by increasing their own knowledge of LEED and becoming LEED certified. Syal’s full report on the role of electrical contractors in LEED will be available from NECA/ELECTRI International later this year. To learn more about NECA’s green energy work, visit energysolutions.necanet.org.

Proposals To Be Considered At Governors Meeting Ready Online For Review

At their meeting on September 12, NECA chapter governors will consider adopting a standing policy promoting zero-energy work environments as the normal and best practice. They’ll also vote on amending existing standing policies to account for new technologies and contracting methods, and they’ll weigh in on a proposed NECA Bylaw amendment to clarify the duties of NECA district vice presidents. Read them and let your governor know what you think. [Review the proposals and other items about the NECA Board of Governors Meeting](#)

FUTURE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS.....

October 2-5	NECA Convention/Boston, MA
October 22-25	NECA Convention/San Diego, CA
September 30-October 3	NECA Convention/Las Vegas, NV
October 12-15	NECA Convention/Washington, DC