



WATTS UP

May 01, 2009

Alaska Chapter NECA Newsletter

www.alaskaneca.org

Chapter Calendar

May 5

May 5

May 10

May 12

May 13

May 14

May 25

July 12

September 12-15

Cinco de Mayo

Anchorage JATC

Mother's Day

Safety Committee

Board of Directors/Membership Meeting

AKCISAP (Substance Abuse) Meeting

Memorial Day

NECA Open Moose Run Hill

NECA Convention/Seattle, WA

Tool Box Talks

May 04, 2009

May 11, 2009

May 18, 2009

May 25, 2009

Fire Prevention

First Response, Medical/Moving an Injured Person

Flame Resistant Apparel

Grounding and Shock/Hazards of Electricity

CEA Election

Jim Nordlund and Pay Kennedy were elected to the Chugach Board last night (4/30/09)

The officers remained the same as last year with Rebecca Logan as Chair, Jim as Vice Chair, Alex as Secretary and P.J. as Treasurer. Pat was high vote getter with about 5,150 followed by Jim at 5,015, Steve Pratt at around 4,860 and Uwe at 4,750.

NECA Takes a Stand at OSHA Public Hearing for Cranes and Derricks

Electrical contractors specializing in high-voltage line work recently spoke out on OSHA's proposed rule for cranes and derricks. Representatives from NECA's District 10 testified at the four-day public hearing on how the proposed OSHA rule can keep job sites and workers safe without compromising efficiency and productivity.

Ward Andrews and Tracy Harness testify on behalf of NECA at the OSHA hearing. Tracy Harness, chapter manager of Northwest Line Constructors Chapter, NECA, and Ward Andrews, safety director, Wilson Construction, provided testimony on behalf of NECA. They focused on the exclusion for digger derricks, certification portability, and the recognition of NECA's training program, the National Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (NJATC), as an accredited training institution for the certification.

Full text of Harness's testimony is below.





Photo of a digger derrick.

Andrews and Harness stressed that simply exempting the digger derrick and/or line service truck from this regulation for a certain type of high-voltage work would not present any real problems. Harness offered an alternate version of the proposed exemption in her testimony.

NECA supports enhancing the language of the proposed ruling and ensuring the true intentions of the Crane and Derricks Negotiated Rulemaking Committee (C-DAC) were reflected on the new standard. OSHA formed the C-DAC committee in 2003 with the intent of having representatives from each industry most affected by this standard. William "Doc" Weaver, Honorary Board Member of NECA's Western Line Constructors Chapter, served as NECA's representative for the C-DAC committee. Other power line industry representatives testifying at the hearing echoed NECA's position on the exclusion of digger derricks.

NECA also reaffirmed its commitment to work with OSHA to protect the construction workforce. During questions, Andrews focused on the impracticality of some of the proposed training options. He shared statistics from the OSHA Transmission and Distribution Partnership showing that of the 27 percent of fatalities occurring from power line contacts, none were within outside contractors. Andrews also discussed the rule's portability requirements and how they could adversely affect power line contractors' mobility. Line contractors are among the first responders to emergencies and natural disasters, and restricting their mobility could compromise their emergency response and service.

The issue of training and certification prompted a strong reaction from representatives of the International Union of Operating Engineers and Operating Engineers Certification Program at the hearing. NECA believes that for more than 70 years, NJATC has proven to be a leader in safety training for construction workers and would be more than capable of administering the training and certification program for electrical workers proposed in the cranes and derricks rule.

Sanctioning a single organization as the sole training and certification source in the ruling would cause unnecessary confusion and delay in connecting electric power on some sites. NECA will continue to fight for the right to train its workforce to the highest standards of workplace safety rather than delegating this responsibility to other organizations.

NECA Government Affairs Update

ECPAC

District 10 a fundraising success! – Earlier this week, Lake participated in the District 10 convention in Scottsdale, Arizona and presented a government affairs update, including the latest on the follow-up to the economic stimulus legislation. NECA secured approximately \$65,000 in contributions. **Heidi McBride** joined her husband, **Tim McBride**, as a PLC member. PLC District 10 Chairman **Tom Wolden** spearheaded the fundraising effort and secured the American Line Builders as the newest PLC chapter member and secured several NECA members renewing their PLC membership during or just before the convention, including **Jody Shea, Bill Green, John Colson, Fred Davie, Don Wilson, Leslie Simmons,** and **Walter Parkes**. Thanks to all for your support of ECPAC.

Eastern Region fundraising during its convention in Rome, Italy, was also a success. PLC renewals prior to or during convention included **Rex Ferry, Don Leslie, Jr., David MacKay, Kevin McKosky, Dennis Quebe, and Bob Bruce**. District 1 collected \$32,075; District 2, \$39,190. Gentlemen, thank you for your commitment to ECPAC!

Legislative Action

Stimulus Subsidized COBRA - Economic Stimulus Update – While we continue to monitor the various sources of information regarding stimulus opportunities, I learned of a COBRA provision impacting employers who have employees who are involuntarily terminated, generally, those terminated or laid off. COBRA gives employees who lose their jobs the right to purchase group health care from the employer. The stimulus bill will require the employer to pick up 65% of the COBRA premium; with 35% of the premium the responsibility of the individual. The subsidy applies for months of COBRA coverage beginning March 1, 2009 and is limited to 9 months in duration.

Boehner introduces pension legislation – **House Minority Leader John Boehner (R-OH)** introduced the Savings Recovery Act (H.R. 2121) earlier this week that would increase the contribution and catch-up limits for individuals and families saving for retirement; extend the existing college savings credit; double the Social Security earnings limit; and allow companies to amortize any pension funding shortfalls in the 2009 and 2010 plan years. The legislation does not address multiemployer pension programs. NECA is strategizing with the National Coordinating Committee on Multiemployer Pension Programs regarding several legislative solutions for pension relief during this congress.

NECA 2009 Seattle Registration Opens May 15

It's a new economy . . . and a new National Electrical Code is coming.

Over **5,000 changes** were submitted for the 2011 National Electrical Code. And more than **\$150 billion** was allocated for infrastructure spending and energy projects in the economic stimulus. The best way to learn how all these changes will impact your business is at NECA 2009 Seattle.

So far, more than half the NECA Show floor is sold, and new exhibitors are signing up daily. Just last week, McGraw-Hill committed to bringing its latest construction products to the 2009 NECA Show *and* putting on a technical workshop for attendees. We're in business and looking forward to a great event!

Registration opens May 15, so check out www.necaconvention.org for registration info and blog.necaconvention.org for the latest news.

Be ready for all that's new in your industry. Be at NECA 2009 Seattle.

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