



MONDAY MORNING NEWS

Puget Sound Chapter • National Electrical Contractors Association



**NOVEMBER 9, 2020
MEETINGS**

No Meetings Scheduled

OPEN ENROLLMENT – 401(K) SAVINGS PLAN

The annual open enrollment for employees to elect to defer a portion of their wages on a voluntary pre-tax basis to the Puget Sound Electrical Workers 401(k) Savings Plan is being held from November 1, 2020 through November 30, 2020. Elections made during this open enrollment period will be effective for payroll deductions commencing with hours worked on or after January 1, 2021. These voluntary wage deferral contributions are in addition to the employer contributions already made based upon the current Collective Bargaining Agreements.

The application forms are being mailed to all eligible participants and available from IBEW Local 46 or at the WPAS Office. Plan participants can also request an application form by emailing a request to enrollment@wpas-inc.com. Any employee already participating will automatically continue to participate at the same level if a new enrollment form is not completed.

Employees are not required to defer any portion of their wages to the 401(k) Plan. The employee must make an election to defer wages to the 401(k) Plan. Those agreeing to defer a portion of their wages, agree to reduce their hourly base wage that they would otherwise be paid under the various Collective Bargaining Agreements by the amount of the election. These additional wage deferral contributions must be reported separately on the Trust Fund's monthly remittance report.

The hourly deferral election amounts are \$1, \$2, \$3, \$4, \$5, and \$6. The \$6 deferral alternative is new for 2021. If the eligible employee will be age 50 or older before January 1, 2022, they can alternatively elect a \$7 or \$8 per hour salary deferral rate under the Plan's "Catch Up" contribution feature.

All completed forms must be returned to IBEW Local 46 by November 30, 2020. After Local 46 reviews the application, a copy is sent to the employer. Employers must then begin the required withholding effective with the first pay period on or after January 1, 2021. Questions concerning completion of the forms should be referred to Chase Knight of the Administration Office (WPAS) at (866) 314-4239 or (206) 441-4667, extension 3345.

SME INC. OF SEATTLE – NEW NECA ACCREDITED REPRESENTATIVE

The Puget Sound Chapter, NECA would like to welcome Troy Wallin as the new NECA Accredited Representative for SME Inc. of Seattle. Troy is the Vice President – Preconstruction for SME and replaces Adam Pinsky as the NECA Accredited Representative. NECA wishes Adam well and we look forward to working with Troy and SME going forward. SME's phone number is 206-329-2040.

PRICES SOARED AS SEATTLE METRO HOME SALES SET RECORD IN OCTOBER

Home buyers bid up prices in the Seattle metro area and beyond during October. Median sale prices increased by double digits in all but one of the 23-county Northwest Multiple Listing Service area.

A non-metro county, Kittitas, saw the biggest year-over-year price jump, 39% to \$498,950, while the four urban counties saw single-family home prices increase about 13% in King and Kitsap, 17% in Snohomish County and nearly 18% Pierce. Douglas County in Central Washington experienced a 3.6% increase to \$375,000. Compare that to King's new \$745,000 median price, Snohomish County's nearly \$579,975, Pierce's \$430,000 and Kitsap's \$437,000.

While median prices were up by double digits across most of King County, Seattle saw only a 3.2% increase to \$800,000. Prices rose 16.7% to \$1.05 million on the Eastside. Were it not for record low interest rates, this would be a terrible time to try to buy a house.

"Finding and buying a home today is more difficult than at any time in the past 40 years of my career," [Dick Beeson](#), managing broker at Re/Max Northwest in Tacoma-Gig Harbor, said in a news release the Northwest Multiple Listing Service issued Thursday along with October market statistics.

Inventory is way down and demand is sky high. The four metro counties broke the October record for the number of homes going under contract, according to [J. Lennox Scott](#), chairman and CEO of John L. Scott Real Estate. The MLS reported 7,934 pending sales. The previous high over the last 18 years was 7,740 three years ago. This is in a market where there were only about 4,075 single-family homes on the market in October, 45% fewer than the prior October.

New listings are on the rise, but "they are being stripped from the market at a stunning pace," said broker/owner [Frank Leach](#) at Re/Max Platinum Services in Silverdale. "Buyers are bidding up properties as demand stays steady and inventory continues to dwindle."

UPCOMING "VIRTUAL" NECA SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING – NOVEMBER 13TH

Mark your calendars for our upcoming "virtual" safety committee meeting on Friday, November 13th starting at 10:00AM. We are excited to announce that we will have two guest speakers joining us for our meeting. First, Jim Phillips, with Brain Filler has graciously agreed to give our team an update on the significant changes to the NFPA 70E 2021 Edition. Jim is a recognized expert in power system design, analysis, and arc flash safety. Jim is very active in standards development and sits on the technical

committee for the NFPA 70E. This will be a great opportunity to learn from one of the best! You can view his website by clicking [here](#). We will also have Rob Armstrong with AlertMedia. Rob will be giving us a demonstration on his firm's emergency notification program. This is an exciting software program that makes it easier to communicate to employees during an emergency. You can visit their website by clicking [here](#). This meeting is open to anyone in your firm that would like to attend. For those that wish to attend, **please RSVP to PSC NECA Director of Safety, Justin Thayer at justin@necaseattle.org.**

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY 1989 – EAST GERMANY OPEN THE BERLIN WALL

East German officials today opened the [Berlin Wall](#), allowing travel from East to West Berlin. The following day, celebrating Germans began to tear the wall down.

One of the ugliest and most infamous symbols of the [Cold War](#) was soon reduced to rubble that was quickly snatched up by souvenir hunters. The East German action followed a decision by Hungarian officials a few weeks earlier to open the border between Hungary and Austria. This effectively ended the purpose of the Berlin Wall, since East German citizens could now circumvent it by going through Hungary, into Austria, and thence into West Germany.

The decision to open the wall was also a reflection of the immense political changes taking place in East Germany, where the old communist leadership was rapidly losing power and the populace was demanding free elections and movement toward a free market system. The action also had an impact on President [George Bush](#) and his advisors. After watching television coverage of the delirious German crowds demolishing the wall, many in the Bush administration became more convinced than ever that Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's statements about desiring a new relationship with the West must be taken more seriously. Unlike 1956 and 1968, when Soviet forces ruthlessly crushed protests in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, respectively, Gorbachev actually encouraged the East German action. As such, the destruction of the Berlin Wall was one of the most significant actions leading to the end of the Cold War.

"My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style." – Maya Angelou

As of Friday, November 6th, there are 325 JW on Book 1 and 185 JW on Book 2. There are currently 28 Commercial Apprentices, 0 S&C Apprentices, and 0 Residential Apprentices available for dispatch. There are no unfilled calls. There are 11 First Period Commercial Bootcamp graduates available for dispatch. An additional Inside Wire Bootcamp is scheduled to graduate in late November. There are 13 Limited Energy Bootcamp graduates available for dispatch. There are also 4 Residential Bootcamp graduates available.