



MONDAY MORNING NEWS

Puget Sound Chapter • National Electrical Contractors Association



APRIL 20, 2020
MEETINGS

No Meetings Scheduled

PUGET SOUND CHAPTER, NECA & CORONAVIRUS UPDATES

As we enjoy an absolutely gorgeous Monday Morning in the beautiful Pacific Northwest, we now tend to start the week with “What will the next 5 days bring?” One thing is for sure: Our personal lives and work have never been so intertwined into the answer to that question each week.

As late as yesterday, it appears additional funds for the Fed’s Payment Protection Program may be approved in the next few days. The original \$350B ran out on Thursday, with another \$300B penciled in for Round 2. Included in the new stimulus package (above the \$300B) is expected to be \$50B for the SBA Disaster Relief Fund, \$75B for hospitals, and \$25B for testing. If your firm has not looked into this program, or you did not complete the paperwork with your bank because the first round of money was running out, please take another look at the PPP. It just might keep you in business beyond 2020.

The entire construction industry in Washington State continues to push efforts to get construction back on track, including private work. As most of you are aware, a coalition of construction industry professionals continue to work with the Governor’s office, to provide a “safe and sane” framework for all workers to operate in – without fear of contracting or spreading COVID-19 or any other viruses/illnesses. NECA is encouraged by the progress being made on this front, and we hope to see some reopening of construction activities in the next 1 – 2 weeks.

The NECA Chapter Office continues to be “Open for Business”. We are here to help in any way we can, and evidenced by the 100’s of phone calls, emails, texts, Zoom Meetings, etc., there are a myriad of unique situations that our contractors are facing on a daily basis. As construction resumes in the near future, we expect that contract issues will begin to take center stage – contracts with GC’s and owners, not necessarily CBA issues. Feel free to run issues by NECA, but it is always best to have your firm’s attorney provide you with legal guidance on issues that you are certain to face in the coming weeks and months.

Most important, **Stay Safe and “Let’s be careful out there!”**

NECA MEMBERSHIP MEETING POSTPONED

The NECA Membership Meeting, originally scheduled for May 21st, has been postponed. The Chapter has been in contact with NECA’s Executive Director of Industry and Innovation, Josh Bone, and with Nationally Syndicated Radio Host Michael Medved, to work on rescheduling the meeting for later this year. We are also looking to potentially set up a virtual meeting with both guests, however this has yet to be finalized. The Chapter will keep you informed with any updates relating to this meeting in a future newsletter.

MILWAUKEE HEALTH AND SAFETY WEBINAR – COVID 19 PROTOCOLS

NECA Premier Partner, Milwaukee Tool is hosting a Webinar this Wednesday, April 22nd at 11:00 AM. The webinar will address the current COVID-19 tool cleaning and disinfecting protocols and will showcase common jobsite injuries in the construction industry. In addition, it will outline innovations in health and safety with “Milwaukee Solutions” and will demonstrate how those solutions fit into the NIOSH Hierarchy of Controls. You can register for the webinar by clicking [here](#). For questions email justin@necaseattle.org.

BUILDERS OFFER INSLEE RECOMMENDATIONS TO SAFELY RESTART CONSTRUCTION

Washington is one of a handful of states where most construction has been halted to stop the spread of COVID-19, but work would restart under recommendations the industry sent to Gov. Jay Inslee on Tuesday.

“We did our level best to be deliberate and thoughtful in developing recommendations for your consideration that we believe are consistent with the mission of combating the COVID-19 virus while allowing construction work to be safely phased back into operation,” members of the Construction Roundtable wrote in a letter to the governor, who appointed the group.

“We’re hopeful the governor will adopt that and restart work soon,” Building Industry Association of Washington (BIAW) Executive Vice President Greg Lane said Thursday. The shutdown of construction has been harsh. During the three weeks ending April 11th, people in construction filed 69,700 initial claims for unemployment benefits, according to the state Employment Security Department.

“These are challenging times and I think the governor is doing his best to make some very tough decisions, but the longer this drags on, the more catastrophic it is for the economy overall and for home builders in particular,” said Kat Sims, executive director of the Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties. The mood among the 900 homebuilders in the 2,700-member association is “increasingly dire,” she said.

It was unclear exactly how many homes and apartments aren't getting built, but the association estimates it's about 6,300 single-family houses and 16,850 multifamily units in King and Snohomish counties. Some portion of these are affordable units, which are still allowed to continue construction. The association has been lobbying Inslee to reconsider the ban, saying builders can work safely.

“Our builders are prepared to adopt very rigorous guidelines. They'd be willing to take employees' temperatures and make sure that people are well when they come on site and provide additional hand washing stations and make sure the tools that are shared are wiped down,” Sims said.

The Construction Roundtable proposes reopening construction in phases, starting with only work that can be done meeting social distancing requirements. Protocols would be posted at job sites.

Roundtable members said some projects like residences that were well underway when the stay-home order was made could achieve the safety conditions. They added the state Department of Transportation and some other public agencies are systematically prioritizing projects by risk level. “These deliberations would work in concert for identifying projects that appropriately fit into Phase 1,” roundtable members wrote, adding they are working on a Phase 2 document.

“We believe that a Phase 3 document will also be necessary but, in the spirit of getting you these recommendations expeditiously, we limited our current recommendations to the lower risk construction activities,” the group wrote.

Inslee said Wednesday the economy will likely reopen in phases, and on Thursday he outlined what has to happen first: much more testing and commencement of a contact tracing program. He offered little detail but suggested the most needed sectors of the economy and society would be reopened first, with others to follow.

Other organizations represented in the roundtable are the state Building and Construction Trades Council, Operating Engineers Local 302, the regional Council of Carpenters, the Associated General Contractors and the Association of Washington Business.

INSLEE OUTLINES CRITERIA FOR RESTARTING WASHINGTON'S ECONOMY

Gov. [Jay Inslee](#) hinted Thursday that it may be well beyond May 4th before the economy reopens. During a news conference he said that three things need to happen before lifting the lockdown that has kept Washingtonians at home and the economy at a standstill since early March. First, the curve in new COVID-19 cases needs to drop to near zero, according to epidemiologists, to avoid another spike in infections. That curve is currently plateaued, Inslee said, which is progress but not enough. Second, there needs to be enough coronavirus testing kits available for widespread testing, so people can quickly learn if they have the virus and enter isolation if they do. About 4,500 Washingtonians are being tested each day, Inslee said. He wants that up to around 15,000 tests each day, yet test-kit supplies — swabs, vials and virus transmittal medium fluid — are still in short supply. And, third, the state and medical professionals need a system to track down anyone who has come in contact with an infected person, so those people can be isolated, too. That measure is not yet in place.

Inslee said Wednesday the economy will likely reopen in phases. He offered little detail, but suggested the most needed sectors of the economy and society would be reopened first, with others to follow. Inslee said a number of factors could come together to reopen the economy faster, but he made no guarantees. “We have bent the curve down. We are making progress,” Inslee said Thursday. “We still have not got on the downward part of this curve to where we have to get. ... Unfortunately, we are still at a plateau.”

Inslee also commended President Donald Trump for backing down from a claim that the president’s rule superseded that of states' when it comes to reopening economies. “It was confirmed by the president that he will not be interfering with our 'Stay Home, Stay Healthy' initiative,” Inslee said. “He has decided to follow the Constitution.” Inslee called on Trump to mobilize the U.S. manufacturing base and the Department of Defense’s supply chain to make COVID-19 testing kits more widely available. He called the DOD “the most powerful supply chain in human history” and called on defense officials to “stop making cup holders for armored personnel carriers” and start making testing kits. Inslee said Trump is starting to take small steps to harness the DOD’s supply chain but more needs to be done. “We could use more presidential oomph in that regard,” Inslee said.

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY 2008— 26-year-old Danica Patrick wins the Indy Japan 300 at Twin Ring Montegi in Montegi, Japan, making her the first female winner in IndyCar racing history.



“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go...”

– Dr. Seuss, Oh, the Places You'll Go!

As of Friday, April 17th, there are 216 JW on Book 1 and 123 JW on Book 2. There are currently 39 Commercial Apprentices, 0 S&C Apprentice, and 0 Residential Apprentices available for dispatch. There are 0 unfilled Commercial, 0 unfilled S&C and 0 unfilled Residential Apprentice requests.