



MONDAY MORNING NEWS

Puget Sound Chapter • National Electrical Contractors Association



**MAY 11, 2020
MEETINGS**

5/21/20 – TECHNOLOGY WEBINAR

LIVE ONLINE BIM SOFTWARE TRAINING NOW AVAILABLE

NECA is excited to announce live, instructor-led online training on Revit and Navisworks software solutions! Throughout the month of May, NECA will be offering online classes on the most popular BIM solutions, developed for our members at a substantial discount. Normally hundreds of dollars each, our partner Sanveo, is offering these courses for just \$39.00 each!

Class Schedule:

- **Revit for Project Managers**
 - May 11th & 12th, 2020 from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM
- **Navisworks Freedom**
 - May 13th, 2020 from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM
- **Revit Electrical Basics**
 - May 18th-19th, 2020 from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM
- **Navisworks Manage**
 - May 20th-21st, 2020 from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM
- **Revit Electrical Circuiting**
 - May 27th, 2020 from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM
- **Revit Electrical Raceways**
 - May 28th, 2020 from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

Each session will be presented by an expert facilitator and participants will be able to ask questions and interact with software. To register for any one of the courses above, click on the course title and you will be redirected to a registration page.

For questions please contact education@necanet.org

NECA ENDORSES MCAA CHANGE ORDER PUBLICATION

NECA has given its full endorsement to the 2020 edition of the Mechanical Contractors Association of America's (MCAA) publication *Change Orders, Productivity, Overtime—A Primer for the Construction Industry*.

NECA endorsed the contents of this publication as being as applicable to the electrical construction industry as the mechanical piping and plumbing trades, furthering its use to benefit the memberships of NECA and MCAA and the industry as a whole. This publication has become a standard in the construction industry and is widely relied upon by mechanical and other specialty contractors, attorneys in construction practices and consultants. Its chapters were peer-reviewed by a panel of MCAA contractors.

"This is an incredibly valuable publication for our members," NECA CEO David Long said. "Our trades have a lot in common, and I look forward to working with MCAA again in the future."

The *2020 Edition of Change Orders, Productivity, Overtime* contains a new chapter that discusses the essential concept of sharing the CPM schedule in its native form between all of the major trades on a construction project. It is the MCAA's goal to make the construction management and scheduling process more transparent and effective on today's complex and challenging construction projects, to the benefit of all of the parties to a construction contract.

"MCAA appreciates NECA's continued endorsement of this publication," MCAA Chief Executive Officer Timothy J. Brink said. "The members of both organizations benefit from the partnership and spirit of cooperation that exists between MCAA and NECA."

NECA members can get the discounted price of the book using the [order form here](#). For questions, email education@necanet.org.

SOCIAL DISTANCING AND SITE MONITORING TECH RAPIDLY ROLLING OUT TO U.S. CONSTRUCTION SITES

The coronavirus pandemic has shocked U.S. construction into needing to adopt new technologies to maintain social distancing and monitor jobsites remotely. Those adaptations, some construction leaders say, should have been adopted in the first place, before the pandemic forced contractors to implement them. As construction was deemed essential and allowed to continue in nearly all 50 states, contractors were required to follow CDC guidelines to protect workers from the spread of COVID-19. In response, tech firms and safety app developers introduced or expanded a variety of applications that some construction leaders say will become the norm.

Some applications use image data or wearables to track workers, ensure they maintain social distancing, or at the very least, reduce social density on jobsites. Other apps provide questionnaires for workers prior to allowing them onsite to ensure they were as low risk as possible for having and spreading COVID-19. Plus, others allow for virtual walkthroughs so stakeholders in their homes can have up-to-date imagery of work in progress.

"While I believe contractors will continue to use scheduling technology in the future, the landscape will be different," said Matt Abeles, vice president of construction technology and innovation for Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC). "Using site monitoring technology will become more prevalent, so stakeholders not physically on the jobsite can have a transparent view on progress." Having stakeholders working remotely will aid in speeding up projects, Abeles said.

During a webinar from the Society for Construction Solutions New York Chapter, Anita Woolley Nelson, chief strategy officer of Skanska USA Building, said several executives at the company are taking base training for tech practices to prepare for the future. “People always say you can’t take a jobsite home with you, [but] maybe you can,” she said.

AMERICA NEEDS HOPE AS WELL AS SAFETY

While we do our best to deliver information for this newsletter in a concise, digestible way, sometimes we come across articles that need to be read in full. The article below fits into this category. To take us home this week we turn to our favorite guest columnist, Peggy Noonan.

New jobless claims came out this week, putting American unemployment at an estimated 33.4 million. ADP, the payroll-processing company, reports the private sector lost more than 20 million jobs in April alone. Earnings reports are dreadful, and whole sectors—air travel, hospitality—are being wiped out. Nothing will turn around soon. It is a catastrophe. But you know all that.

What’s needed now? A certain shift in stance and attitude that allows a broader appreciation of our predicament.

Our economy is experiencing a great contraction, a seizing up; it’s becoming smaller, tighter, more airless. As a nation we have rightly focused on the illness that caused all this and the fight to beat it back. That fight can’t let up. When the disease goes down in one place it shows up in another, and a second or third wave is likely; viruses like this don’t knock on the door just once.

But the economic contraction will have repercussions as destructive as the virus itself. People will die and sicken because of lost jobs, lost income and a feeling of no opportunity, no *possibility*. Alcoholism, drug abuse, anxiety, suicide, strife within families—all these things will follow. And there’s a feeling of terrible generational injustice. My generation is on pause, but the young are on stall, and it’s no good for them. People need to operate in the world to become themselves.

A doctor in New York, who was right from the start and ahead of the curve in his warnings in February, told the patients in his practice this week that social distancing worked. The hospitals reached full capacity but weren’t overwhelmed; against the odds they stood their ground. But he was honest. The victory came with “grave consequences” for employees and businesses and “an increase in domestic violence and child abuse.” People with life-threatening symptoms like chest pain avoided the emergency room, and parents delayed vaccinating their children for measles and meningitis. Patients with mental illness experienced severe increases in their symptoms. “The full extent of these costs will take years to fully understand.”

We have to see the unfolding economic calamity in a new, more present and urgent way, and think about its impact on our culture, our ability to fund things, our standing in the world, our *morale*.

We can’t grapple only with the illness, we have to grapple with the crash. The bias now should be toward opening, doing everything we can to allow the economy to become itself again, to the degree that’s possible.

Toward that end, two thoughts from two wise men. The first is that we must unleash the creativity of businessmen and -women, an uncalled-on brigade in this battle. Not only doctors and scientists will get us out of this, business must be on the lines, too.

Second, we have to cooperate by doing the things that contain the illness so that businesses can stay open and functioning. A mask isn’t a sign of submission as some idiots claim. It’s a sign of respect, responsibility and economic encouragement. It says, “I’ll do my small part.”

The first wise man is George Shultz, a participant in and observer of history to whom I spoke by phone. “It is a catastrophe,” the former secretary of state and of labor said of the virus and the economy. “The government shuts things down, the government has all the money and is dealing it out, so there’s an expectation the government can get us out of this.” But no government has that power.

Where is the hope? “We have a potentially vibrant private sector. There’s an immense amount of energy and ingenuity and fresh thinking there. They think about how to get themselves in a profitable position, and to do that they have to take into account a lot—supply chains, the health of their employees, the safety of customers. We have to open things up and say to the private sector, ‘Do your job.’ They have creativity, they want to get things up and going again.”

The second wise man: Ken Langone, a founder of [Home Depot](#). If you hear his name a lot lately it’s because he endowed a hospital at the center of New York’s struggle with coronavirus, NYU Langone Medical Center. He said if we do everything we can to make people safe, we’ll be doing everything to get business going.

“There is a bigger risk in business not being open than in staying closed,” he said by phone. “Why? Look, you’re looking at depression, financial problems, taxes will have to go up to pay for all this.” Taxes pay for public services—including the operation of hospitals.

“It isn’t safety *or* business, it’s safety right now which *allows* business.” Every American can contribute by observing the protocols we now know by heart—washing hands, maintaining social distance, wearing masks, using hand sanitizer. “If the American people want to be cavalier about this they should be ashamed.”

Last Sunday afternoon he drove to the Home Depot store in Jericho, N.Y. Home Depots have stayed open as essential businesses. “I go up and down the aisle. There wasn’t an empty space in the parking lot. They were buying flowers, garden tools, seedlings—people were all over. People aren’t gonna sit and vegetate at home. The wife says, ‘Don’t sit around on your ass, go buy some paint, paint the house.’ American energy, this is our advantage.”

But the store is careful. “We have distancing. All wore masks. People will have to stand 6 feet away and yell a little. OK with me, I like to yell!”

“We’re not gonna be the same,” he said. “We’re gonna be challenged like never before, but we will pass the test with flying colors. . . . Capitalism brought America to the party. It’s what gonna get us out of this mess.”

But a “big readjustment” in business thinking will be needed to get through the crisis. If a restaurant reopens with half as many customers due to distancing protocols, the owner will have to hike prices, but that will hurt business. The answer is that the landlord needs to lower the restaurant’s rent, and the landlord’s lenders need to adapt in turn. “The financial chain’s gotta be readjusted, concessions up and down the line.”

Fine. We can all be patient with each other as we try to come back, together.

I want to get back to the national morale. All these dreadful economic numbers—you can’t let people sink into defeatism. You can’t let them think there is no hope, or that things in the future are just going to be bad. They are Americans, they know how to suffer—even the ones who’ve never suffered a day in their lives, it’s still in their genes. But they’re like the pioneers, they have to be able to believe while they’re on the long trek that there’s some fertile area around the next bend, or the one after that. They have to know there’s a safe place where they can finally settle.

People need hope. Americans live on it. We must return to life. That is where the bias must be.

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY 1934— A massive storm sends millions of tons of topsoil flying from across the parched Great Plains region of the United States as far east as New York, Boston and Atlanta.

At the time the Great Plains were settled in the mid-1800s, the land was covered by prairie grass, which held moisture in the earth and kept most of the soil from blowing away even during dry spells. By the early 20th century, however, farmers had plowed under much of the grass to create fields. The U.S. entry into World War I in 1917 caused a great need for wheat, and farms began to push their fields to the limit, plowing under more and more grassland with the newly invented tractor. The plowing continued after the war, when the introduction of

even more powerful gasoline tractors sped up the process. During the 1920s, wheat production increased by 300 percent, causing a glut in the market by 1931.

That year, a severe drought spread across the region. As crops died, wind began to carry dust from the over-plowed and over-grazed lands. The number of dust storms reported jumped from 14 in 1932 to 28 in 1933. The following year, the storms decreased in frequency but increased in intensity, culminating in the most severe storm yet in May 1934. Over a period of two days, high-level winds caught and carried some 350 million tons of silt all the way from the northern Great Plains to the eastern seaboard. According to *The New York Times*, dust “lodged itself in the eyes and throats of weeping and coughing New Yorkers,” and even ships some 300 miles offshore saw dust collect on their decks.



“The question isn’t who is going to let me, it’s who is going to stop me.”

—Ayn Rand

As of Friday, May 8th, there are 229 JW on Book 1 and 103 JW on Book 2. There are currently 45 Commercial Apprentices, 1 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.