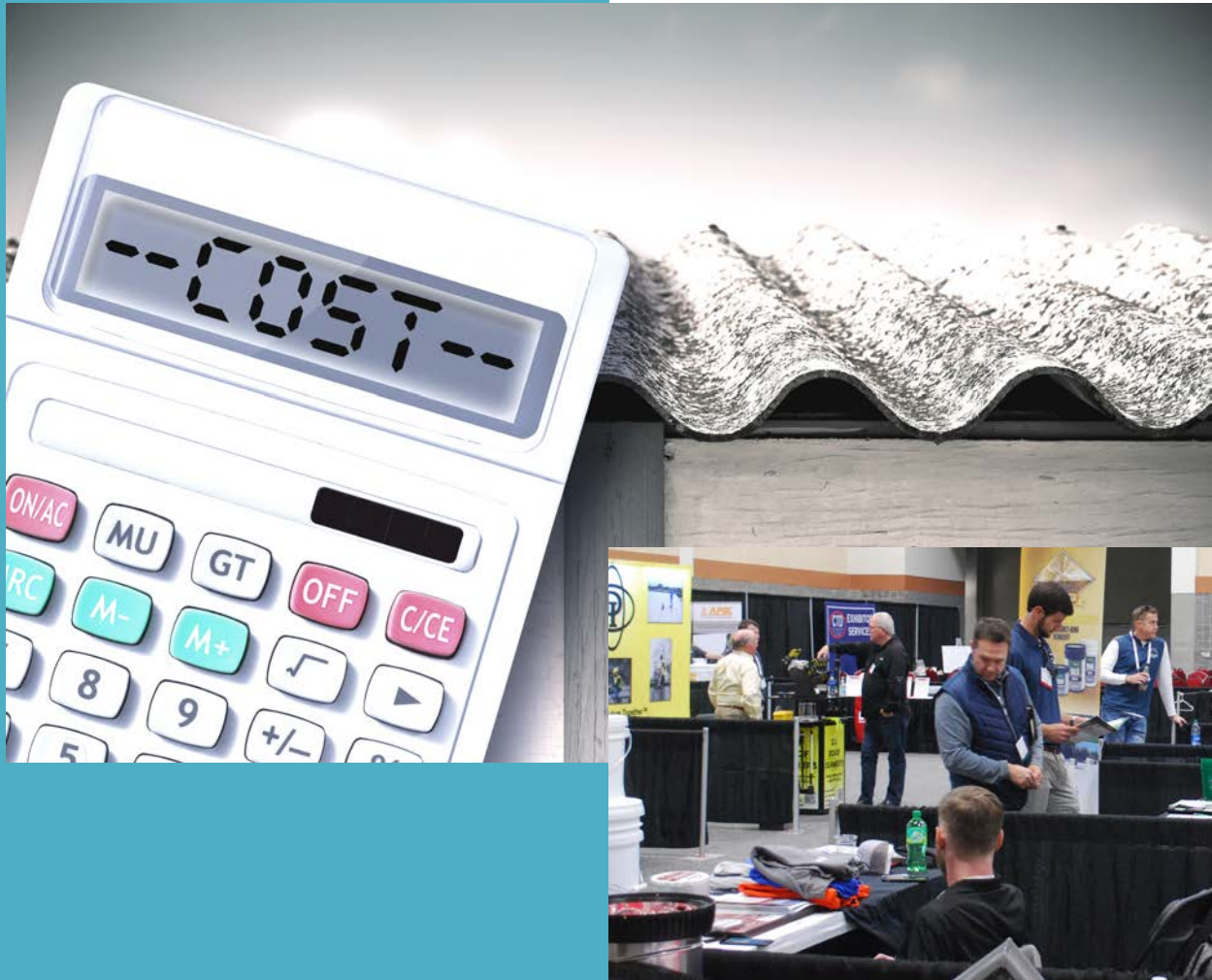


CAROLINAS CONTACTS

CRSMCA - Covering the Carolinas for over 75 years



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GOLD



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JUNE 23-26, 2022
MARRIOTT HILTON HEAD
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CAROLINAS ROOFING & SHEET METAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Assistant, Karin Barahona

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Josh Dernosek, CL Burks Construction
Brandon Jackson, Petersen Aluminum Corporation
Rainy Ugenmach, NBHandy Company
Carla Sims, CRSMCA

Carolinas Contacts address issues and concerns of the roofing industry. Technology, test, and building codes are constantly changing, and such changes may not be reflected herein. All information is presented for the benefit of our readers and does not necessarily reflect the views of CRSMCA. Press releases and product information presented do not reflect all available materials. Before purchasing, installing, using, or recommending any product, system, or method, readers should make independent evaluations.

THE CRSMCA MISSION STATEMENT

To promote and safeguard the common business interest of its members and to improve conditions by educating all persons concerning the roofing and sheet metal business and industry. To work for the development and progress of the roofing and sheet metal business industry and to work with individuals' organizations and governmental agencies toward the achievement of a stronger profession of the roofing and sheet metal industry.

AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL ROOFING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION, INC.





**Message from Executive Director,
Carla B. Sims**

CRSMCA is moving forward... will you join us?
CRSMCA hosted the 2022 Carolinas Mid-Winter Roofing Expo in January in Columbia, South Carolina. I am happy to say that it was a successful event. Although attendance numbers were lower than past years, hosting the event on its set date and being able to provide educational content, networking within the roofing industry, and seeing familiar faces once again... was a success to be proud of! Thank you to everyone that was able to attend... and know that those who could not... you were truly missed! On behalf of the CRSMCA Board members and Staff, we hope to see you

at the next event.

CRSMCA is bring back the Spring District Meetings beginning in March! The District meetings are hosted throughout the Carolinas on Thursday's providing either a social networking opportunity or a short-session education presentation to take back to the office or jobsite!

Be sure to mark your calendars for the **79th Annual Meeting/Summer Convention** that hosts a family-friendly event for all members to join! This event will be held at the Marriott Hilton Head Resort & Spa in South Carolina on June 23-26. On the agenda will be educational presentations that include a round-table discussion between panel members and attendees, a motivational speaker [your significant will not want to miss this either!], a beach social for the entire family, networking receptions, introduction of the 2022-2023 Board members and special recognition for our elite members! *A weekend of fun for everyone!*

CALLING ALL CRSMCA MEMBERS! The CRSMCA Executive Committee wants to know what you have to say about YOUR organization! In the coming weeks, I will be contacting the members to have a short phone conversation asking a few questions specific to your membership with CRSMCA. The purpose of the phone call is to see how the leadership can make changes to the organizations current structure of events to bring additional value to the members and roofing industry peers. The information shared will only be provided to the CRSMCA Executive Committee. I look forward to speaking with you soon and know that this will be a great opportunity for CRSMCA!

-Carla B. Sims, CRSMCA Executive Director

find us on social media



CRSMCA EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

- President, Matthew Williams, CityScape Roofing, Inc.
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- 2nd Vice President, Jason Tetterton, Curtis Construction Co., Inc.
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- Past President, Eric Campbell, Campbell Professional Roofing, Inc.

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- 03 Robert Hodges, RK Hydro-Vac, Inc. [Charlotte, NC]
- 04 David Panella, Hamlin Roofing Co., Inc. [Garner, NC]
- 05
- 06
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- 08
- 09
- 10

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- 03 Brad Damewood, Beacon Roofing Supply [Charlotte, NC]
- 03 Andy Butler, Roofers Supply of Greenville [Charlotte, NC]
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- 05 Chad Bolt, ABC Supply Company, Inc. [Greenville, NC]
- 05 Todd Casey, Beacon Roofing Supply [Goldsboro, NC]
- 06 Anna Read Maltos, Superior Distribution [Wilmington, NC]
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- 09 Nathan Rollins, HB Fuller Construction Adhesives [Greer, SC]
- 10 David King, NBHandy Company [Charleston, SC]



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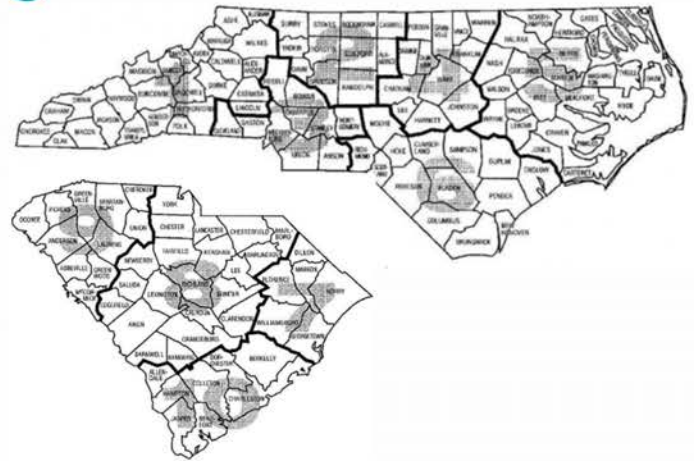
UPCOMING

EVENTS

Check Out Our
Upcoming Events
this Year!

Spring District Meetings

- March 17 District 1
- April 31 District 2
- April 7 District 3
- April 14 District 4
- April 28 District 5 & 6
- May 5 District 7
- May 12 District 8
- May 19 District 9
- May 26 District 10



June
23-26

79th Annual Meeting/Summer Convention
Marriott Resort & Spa Hilton Head [Hilton Head, SC]

October
13

5th Annual Golf Tournament
Rocky River Golf Course [Concord, NC]
**participate as a sponsor and/or host a team*

January
17-19

2023 Carolinas Mid-Winter Roofing Expo
Benton Convention Center [Winston-Salem, NC]

For more information:
704.556.1228 or www.crsma.org

NEWS FROM THE CAROLINAS

MEMORIAL NOTICE

PHILIP N. GRAY,
Charleston, SC

Philip Neal Gray, 71, of Charleston, SC, husband of Judy Lawson Gray, entered into eternal rest Monday, January 10, 2022. Arrangements by J. Henry Stuhr, Inc., West Ashley Chapel.

Philip was born May 16, 1950, in Savannah, GA, a son of the late William Edmund Gray and the late Mildred Walther Gray. He worked in sales for various roofing distributors over his career. Phil was an avid golfer all his life. In his retirement, he enjoyed bird watching and rediscovered his love for photography. Phil loved spending time at Folly Beach. He will be remembered as a loving husband, father and grandfather.

Along with his wife, of 40 years, he is survived by his son, Philip "Neal" Gray Jr. (Mary Paige), of Charlotte, NC; his daughter, Lauren Gray Cooper (George), of Columbia, SC; his grandchildren, Molly Cooper, Kellan Gray, and Van Gray; his brother, William "Ed" Edmund Gray, Jr. (Suzanne), of Madison, MS; many nieces and nephews. Memorials may be made to Respite Care Charleston,

www.respitecarecharleston.org or an Animal Rescue of your choice.

A memorial message may be sent to the family by visiting our website at www.jhenrystuhr.com.



LEARN ABOUT THE CRSMC SELF-INSURERS FUND PROGRAM

Carolinas Roofing and Sheet Metal Contractors – Self-Insurers Fund is the oldest worker's Compensation group funded in the Carolinas and could be saving your company money! Members within the CRSMC-SIF program are not just purchasing their workers compensation but investing into a program that brings additional value to their company through a commitment to ensure the safety of their employees. As a member/customer within the program, you participate in building a fund that is beneficial for all members/customers within the program, you could receive competitive rates within the insurance industry, and you could receive a return of interest determined by the CRSMC-SIF Trustees and other approved returns during the year. In the year 2018, the CRSMC-SIF returned more than **\$1 MILLION DOLLARS** to the CRSMC-SIF members! Additionally, the CRSMC-SIF is large component of support for the CRSMCA through sponsoring the CRSMCA Annual Meeting/Summer Convention and attendance of Trustees at the event.

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED CRSMC-SIF FOR YOUR WORKERS COMPENSATION NEEDS?

NEW YEAR. NEW EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES!

Space is limited and class sell out, register today!

www.nrca.net/news-events/calendar/

WHAT IS THE CRSMCA MASTER INSTALLERS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM?



The CRSMCA Roofing Academy Master Installer Certification Program is designed to promote safety issues and concerns in the application of the roof systems to prepare the employee for best practices in their job performance. It is intended for the use by anyone with an interest in these roof systems, from roofing workers to foremen to supervisors. It is a culmination of efforts by contractors, manufacturers, suppliers and others who are dedicated to promoting safety.

Enrolled students will learn and train the basics of roofing, increasing their knowledge and skills to make them more valuable to their respective companies, as well as build future leaders in the roofing industry.

HOW DO YOU GET INVOLVED?

The CRSMCA Roofing Academy Committee is always searching for instructors of the classroom material and the hands-on demonstration. View the class and hands-on courses on the CRSMCA website at www.crsmdca.org/master_installers. Should you wish to be an instructor, donate materials, and/or be a hands-on instructor; please contact Carla Sims at the CRSMCA office at 704.556.1228 or csims@crsmca.org or the Committee Chairman, David Griffin, at dgriffin@coastalcommercialroofing.com.

www.labor.nc.gov

The NCDOL is pleased to offer **pre-recorded webinars** ready for you and your employees to view at your convenience. To access a webinar visit

www.labor.communications.its.state.nc.us/OSHPublic/ETTA/class_regist/calendar.cfm, double-click on the applicable safety and health topic below and it will automatically start the training session.

Note: Some of the webinars are hosted on a training platform and will require you to log in with your name and email in order to access the training session.

The Department of Labor does not provide certificates for employees viewing our pre-recorded webinars. These webinars were live recordings and contain chat conversations. For this reason, you will not be able to interact with the instructor during the recording. If you prefer to receive a certificate and have interaction with an instructor, please refer to our training schedule above for current live webinar offerings.

Training information, registration and course details can be found at www.labor.nc.gov/safety-and-health/training

Upcoming Training Events:

March 7 30-Hour Construction Industry Awareness Course [Asheboro, NC]

March 7 10-Hour Construction Industry Awareness Course [Asheboro, NC]

March 18 Electrical Safety-Construction Industry [webinar]

March 25 Personal Protective Equipment-General Industry [webinar]

May 2 Fall Protection [webinar]

May 2 Stairways & Ladders [webinar]

May 3 Scaffolds [webinar]

Training information, registration and course details can be found at www.scosha.llronline.com/outreach/training.aspx

Is Your Safety Manual OSHA Compliant? Exploring the Topics Required

Written by Julia Kunlo, CSP, Evolution Safety Resources

A written safety manual is often seen as the backbone of a workplace safety program. These documented processes are powerful tools, helping to outline expectations, train employees, bid work, and even avoid legal trouble. What many people don't know, however, is that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has strict guidelines pertaining to what topics must be included in a written safety program. Are you sure that your company's safety manual is OSHA compliant? Authoring a safety manual that meets OSHA standards requires knowledge and research. Lucky for you, we've done the digging through multiple references so you can quickly understand what your business needs.

Based upon your business category (construction, general industry, or both), read more to learn what topics are required and their corresponding OSHA standard.

Global Requirements (Regardless of Industry)

If your business is categorized as "construction" or "general industry" the following topics must be addressed in your manual:

- OSHA recordkeeping (OSHA 29 CFR 1904)
- Hazard communication (OSHA 29 CFR 1926.59 & 1200)
- Emergency action planning (OSHA 29 CFR 1926.35 & 38)
- Fire prevention plan (OSHA 29 CFR 1926.150 & 39)
- First aid (OSHA 29 CFR 1910.151 & 50)
- Lockout/tagout (OSHA 29 CFR 1910.147, 333 & 417)
- Personal protective equipment (OSHA 29 CFR 1910.132 & 1926 Subpart E)
- Hearing conservation (OSHA 29 CFR 1910.95 & 101)
- Crane/hoisting inspection program (OSHA 29 CFR 1910.179, 184 & 251, 552)
- Respiratory protection program (OSHA 29 CFR 1910.134 & 103)
- Powered industrial truck operator training (OSHA 29 CFR 1910.178 & 602(d))

Construction Industry Requirements

If your business is categorized as construction, then OSHA 29 CFR 1926 applies. The following topics must be address in your manual:

- General safety and health provisions (OSHA 29 CFR 1926.20)
- Trenching and excavations (OSHA 29 CFR 1926.651 & 652)
- Fall protection (OSHA 29 CFR 1926 Subpart M)
- Safety training and education (OSHA 29 CFR 1926.21)

When building a written safety manual, it is important that companies understand the minimum requirements as outlined by OSHA. This understanding will help to create a program that is well-equipped to protect businesses from legal or regulatory trouble. In addition, it is equally as important to build a manual that can be used as a practical and helpful tool for your business, training your team on how you expect them to perform safely in the field. Consider adding additional "best in class" procedures to your manual (such as defensive driving, heat/cold stress, job hazard analysis, etc.) to build a written program that is truly top-level. If you need assistance with auditing your current manual or making improvements, the experts at ESR are ready and available to help. We offer free consultations and will develop complimentary improvement plans.

OSHA FORM 300A SUBMITTAL DUE BY MARCH 2

If employers have

1. 250 or more employees and are currently required to keep OSHA injury and illness records
2. 20-249 employees classified in specific industries with historically high rates of occupational injuries and illnesses.

Visit OSHA's Injury Tracking Application webpage

(www.osha.gov/injuryreporting/) for more information and to submit data online.

When electronically submitting OSHA Form 300A, you must provide your Employee Identification Number.

NRCA Announces CEO Reid Ribble's Retirement

NRCA has announced its current CEO, Reid Ribble, will be retiring May 31. Ribble has led the association for five years.

A second-generation roofing contractor, former U.S. congressman and the first roofing contractor to lead NRCA as CEO, Ribble has brought a unique perspective and leadership approach to the job from day one. His first priority was to determine where the roofing industry believed the organization should focus its efforts. After discussions with NRCA's Executive Committee, board of directors, members and other industry stakeholders, a new vision statement was created—one that emphasizes the recognition of members as professionals and seeks to unite the industry to that purpose.

Since then, Ribble has worked diligently with NRCA's board of directors and volunteers regarding the implementation of NRCA's overall vision. Whether NRCA's One Voice initiative, NRCA ProCertification® or Training for Roof Application Careers, Ribble has been highly engaged in instituting the strategy and direction of NRCA's Executive Committee, chairman of the board and board of directors on behalf of NRCA members and the roofing industry. In addition, Ribble has lent his political expertise to the development and implementation of Roofing Day in D.C.



www.nrca.net

and launched a podcast series that celebrates roofing professionals' meaningful experiences and stories of inspiration and generosity in the industry. He continues to lead the association and the industry through the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing supply chain crisis, hosting several telephone town halls to connect with members and ensuring NRCA's website is current with the latest relevant information.

"Reid has led NRCA with unwavering commitment, passion and dedication during his time as CEO," says Rod Petrick, president of Ridgeworth Roofing Co. Inc., Frankfort, Ill., and NRCA's chairman of the board. "The roofing industry has benefited from his efforts to enhance the industry's professionalism, tackle ongoing challenges and unite all segments of the industry, and I have enjoyed working alongside him."

"It's been a joy to work with my friends and colleagues at NRCA for these past five years," Ribble says. "I have been impressed by the commitment to the industry by our members and industry partners. On May 31, I will retire as interim CEO of NRCA. I am looking forward to spending more time with my wife of 47 years, my children and especially my six grandsons."

NRCA COO McKay Daniels will succeed Ribble as CEO June 1. Daniels has served NRCA for three years, managing the association's daily operations and staff and overseeing member-driven initiatives. He has more than 20 years of experience in nonprofits, government and the private sector.

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REGISTER FOR ROOFING DAY IN D.C. 2022

Online registration is open for Roofing Day in D.C. 2022, which will be held in person April 5-6; the purpose of the event is to bring the roofing industry together to meet with members of Congress and their staffs and deliver the industry's message with one voice. Professionals from all segments of the roofing industry will come to Washington, D.C., to advocate for the roofing industry; information about 2022 advocacy issues will be available soon.

Although not all Congress members will be available to meet in person because of the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person meetings will be scheduled for many participants. Please note one or more of the meetings may be virtual.

Event highlights include:

- Opening cocktail reception
- Advocacy training and issues briefing
- Presentations from members of Congress
- Administration speakers who will address supply chain issues or Occupational Safety and Health Administration policies
- Best practices for Capitol Hill meetings presented by a Congressional Chief of Staff panel
- Capitol Hill meetings with congressional representatives (in-person and virtual)
- Wrap-up Reception at the Top of The Hill Banquet Center

Roofing contractors are encouraged to bring one or more standout crew members to help share the industry's story.

Registration for Roofing Day in D.C. 2022 is \$95 for company representatives and \$35 for field workers, students and spouses.

REGISTER ONLINE AT www.nrca.net/advocacy/roofingday



Allen Lancaster is awarded roofing industry's highest honor

NRCA named Allen Lancaster, vice president of Metalcrafts, A Tecta America Co., Savannah, Ga., recipient of its 75th annual J.A. Piper Award. The J.A. Piper Award is the roofing industry's most prestigious honor and recognizes roofing professionals who have devoted constant outstanding service to the association and roofing industry.

Read the full story at

[www.nrca.net/RoofingNews/allen-lancaster-is-awarded-roofing-industrys-highest-honor.2-3-2022.10245/Details/Story?](http://www.nrca.net/RoofingNews/allen-lancaster-is-awarded-roofing-industrys-highest-honor.2-3-2022.10245/Details/Story?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=E-News%202322&utm_content=E-News%202322+CID_cdbc7a0fd0dd875e9400de086327cedc&utm_source=campaign_monitor&utm_term=Allen%20Lancaster%20is%20awarde)

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Looking for Training Space in the Charlotte Area?

The CRSMCA headquarters features a conference room and a warehouse demonstration area...perfect for your next training event!

The conference room holds up to 40 people classroom style or set less for an employee or board meeting. The conference room hosts a screen for your projection needs and Wi-Fi.

The warehouse demonstration area is perfect for your set up of products and/or mock-up for the training event. The area is ventilated and can provide shelter in rain or cold weather.

Available for you is your CRSMCA support staff; available to accept shipments and assist with promotional exposure.

To reserve your space, contact the CRSMCA office at 704.556.1228 or cbsims@crsmca.org.



Advertise with the *Carolinas Contacts Magazine*

The CRSMCA Carolinas Contacts Magazine is published every other month, six-times a year, and is placed in over 800 roofing industry professional email inboxes throughout the Carolinas, Georgia, Virginia and more located in the southeast region. The CRSMCA Carolinas Contacts Magazine is also displayed on the CRSMCA website page with archived issues.

The magazine provides valuable information from products to services and regulations that are important to the roofing industry businesses as well as news and events within the roofing industry.

2022 EDITORIAL SCHEDULE COMING SOON!

Submit full-color, high-resolution pdf artwork to

OR

for additional information on placing your advertisement, contact Carla Sims at cbsims@crsmca.org

MEMBER PRICING

Ad Size	6xs	3xs
Full Page	\$588	\$615
1/2 Page	\$345	\$360
1/3 Page	\$255	\$268
1/6 Page	\$199	\$210
Contactor Ad	\$165	-----

NON-MEMBER PRICING

Ad Size	6xs	3xs
Full Page	\$588	\$615
1/2 Page	\$345	\$360
1/3 Page	\$255	\$268
1/6 Page	\$199	\$210

AD SPECIFICATIONS

Size	Horizontal (width x height)	Vertical (width x height)
Full Page	7.5" x 10" (no bleed)	--
1/2 Page	7.5" x 4.625"	3.625" x 10"
1/3 Page	5" x 4.625"	2.375" x 10"
1/6 Page	3.625" x 4.625"	--
Contactor Ad	3.5" x 2"	--

The construction industry struggles with understaffed job sites

The highly infectious Omicron variant of COVID-19 has hit the U.S. hard. The Washington Post analysis of Census Household Pulse Survey data for late December 2021 to mid-January show about 8.8 million workers reported missing work because they were sick with COVID-19 or caring for someone else who was ill, according to www.constructiondive.com.

That number is triple the figure from early December 2021 and significantly exceeds the January 2021 peak of 6.6 million. Construction companies have been affected by the surge, and many contractors report their pool of workers is declining as the virus hits their communities.

Tim Spiegelglass, co-owner of Spiegelglass Construction Company, St. Louis, said one of his company's electrical subcontracting firms at one point had 75% of its office test positive. The rest of the workers in the office had to quarantine, so there were no electrical workers on the job site for a week.

David Brown, a project executive at New York City-based CNY Group, said Omicron was affecting his company's operations the most in the quick-build retail projects, which typically can take 14 to 16 weeks and require a large volume of workers at once. Across current projects, Brown generally is seeing a 10% to 15% loss of workers on any given day.

Contractors are using various tactics to keep job sites running, such as quickly bringing in subs or recruiting managers and executives to help. But smaller contractors do not have extra people who can be pulled in to help and often just proceed unless something prevents them from doing so. Spiegelglass said his company has adapted, with supervisors bouncing to different job sites and project managers staying in the field longer than they typically would.

Other ways contractors are trying to combat the issue are by hosting short training sessions to quickly bring new recruits onto job sites or using technology, such as drones.

Brown said it currently is important to plan work shortages into schedules and deliverables.

"I feel like people are really starting to understand that a little bit better now and are more receptive to adding a little bit of time at the front end of a project to address it and to manage it," Brown said.



Results from the latest market index survey for reroofing

A coalition of industry trade associations representing contractors, consultants and manufacturers in the U.S. and Canada completed its latest Quarterly Market Index Survey for Reroofing. The survey takes the pulse of the reroofing industry on a quarterly basis and serves as a regular barometer of the industry's business conditions.

Seventy-three percent of survey responses came from contractors, and 27% came from roof consultants.

Some topline excerpts of the survey are:

- Forty-nine percent of all respondents indicated their customer inquiries increased during the fourth quarter of 2021 compared with the same quarter in 2020. Twenty-one percent of respondents reported a decrease in customer inquiries during the same period, and 31% indicated no change in activity.
- Project contracts increased for 44% of respondents and decreased for 22% of respondents; 33% reported no change.
- Sixteen percent of roofing contractors reported no project backlogs, 39% reported project backlogs of one to two months and 23% reported project backlogs of three to four months. Twenty-two percent of roofing contractors reported project backlogs of five months or more.

Additionally, two new indices offer insight regarding customer inquiries and project contracts across market segments. The indices are based on a 0 to 100 scale. A score of 50 or higher suggests expansion or optimism; a score below 50 indicates contraction or pessimism.

The customer inquiries index score is 58.9 for the steep-slope reroofing market; 66.8 for the low-slope reroofing market; and 61.6 for the blended low- and steep-slope reroofing market. The project contracts index score is 58 for the steep-slope reroofing market; 61.6 for the low-slope reroofing market; and 61.5 for the blended low- and steep-slope reroofing market.

The complete results of the Quarterly Market Index Survey for Reroofing are available to those who participate in the survey via an online dashboard that enables users to filter results by region and other metrics. Contractors and consultants who want to participate in next quarter's brief survey can sign up for a notification.

The survey is an industry-wide effort spearheaded by a coalition of trade associations, including the Asphalt Roofing Manufacturers Association, Canadian Roofing Contractors Association, Chemical Fabrics & Film Association Inc., EPDM Roofing Association, International Institute of Building Enclosure Consultants, Metal Construction Association, NRCA, National Women in Roofing, Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association, Roof Coatings Manufacturers Association and Single Ply Roofing Industry.



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Economic outlook: The issues that will boost, challenge construction in 2022

Obstacles including inflation, pricing woes, omicron and more will continue into the new year, as developers face a now-or-never moment to build.

Written by Joe Bousquin, ConstructionDive, Published Jan. 10, 2022

In late December, Deron Brown was having trouble finding a hotel room in Phoenix for a January conference. And from his perspective, that was a good thing.

As president and chief operating officer of U.S. operations for Edmonton, Canada-based PCL Construction, Brown constantly tries to read the tea leaves of where construction markets are headed.

As 2021 turned into 2022, many of those signs indicated it was at least in the right direction.

Beyond the lack of hotel rooms in Phoenix — a signpost for Brown that "people are getting back out there and doing things" — he's noticed a distinct change in the tenor of PCL's clients across its buildings, industrial and civil divisions. Namely, they're no longer lollygagging when it comes to committing to projects.

"The key is whether people are actually pulling the trigger and signing contracts," said Brown. "Over just the last couple months, we see people doing that." For example, while hospitality construction has been one of the hardest hit sectors of the pandemic, PCL had at least six hotels in various stages of development and construction at the beginning of 2022.

Indeed, across the four regions where PCL operates — Canada, Australia, the Caribbean and the U.S. — the firm had a record backlog at the end of 2021. For Brown, it all adds up to a robust outlook for the year ahead.

"We do see a strong construction market for 2022," said Brown. "Some areas are still hurting, but a lot of other areas are very strong."

Brown and PCL aren't alone in that tentative, but rebounding, new year's forecast.

Nervous optimism on pricing

Construction pros and economists are taking a cautious but more hopeful view on the year ahead, even in the face of the highest rate of inflation since 1982, material price surges, continuing supply chain snarls and the exploding COVID-19 omicron variant. While these market observers still see plenty of challenges ahead in the sector — the endemic labor shortage being top among their concerns — their perspective at the beginning of the year marks a return, if not to normal, at least a resemblance to the pre-pandemic world.

"Looking at 2022, I would say I'm nervously optimistic," said Ken Simonson, chief economist for the Associated General Contractors of America. "Nonresidential construction, by and large, seems to have passed the low point and is on an upswing." For Simonson, that nervous optimism is based, at least in part, on some commodity prices coming back down at the end of 2021. Lead times for deliveries of materials were also shrinking, he said, a factor that should put further downward pressure on prices. While he doesn't expect them to return to pre-pandemic levels, he anticipates more up and down volatility, which is better than the exclusively upward cost trajectory many material prices took through to the summer of 2021.

His bigger concern is continued threats from COVID-19, including omicron, the ever-changing vaccine mandate landscape and

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heightened vaccine hesitancy among construction workers, compared to other industries.

Those challenges add to the already endemic labor shortage in construction, where there were 345,000 unfilled jobs at the end of November. That was actually down from October, when openings hit an all-time high of 455,000, but up from 261,000 a year earlier, a 32% jump, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The benefits of inflation

Yet, as some of construction's biggest challenges converged in 2021 — namely rising prices and fewer workers — there's also reason to believe that they might conspire to contractors' benefit in the year ahead.

That's the view of Anirban Basu, chief economist at Associated Builders and Contractors, when he looks at surging inflation in the economy as a whole — it rose 6.8% year-over-year through November 2021 — and the number of workers who are still sitting on the sidelines.

"Inflation is real. It's not particularly transitory," said Basu, countering the Federal Reserve's view for much of last year that rising prices were temporary, before it pivoted to a more hawkish stance in December and signaled it would start increasing interest rates in 2022. "More and more people will have difficulty paying their bills."

The silver lining of those increases is that they may very well force people to go back to their jobs. "That might induce them back into the labor market, which I think would be a positive," Basu said. "It's time to get back to work."

Another looming advantage of rising prices is that it has put pressure on developers to lock in contracts now, before costs can go higher, and get their projects in the pipeline while contractors still have bandwidth. That's a factor that Brown sees incentivizing his clients to move forward as well, especially as the pandemic recedes.

"There's some confidence that we don't have this thing beat yet, but we're moving in the right direction," Brown said in reference to COVID-19. "And to build a project, you don't build it in a day — you build it in a year and a half, or two years. So people are starting to think that if they wait, they may miss the right opportunity to build their project."

Manufacturing's long journey home

For Richard Branch, chief economist at Dodge Data & Analytics, labor also figures into the biggest challenges facing construction in 2022, a trifecta he calls the "3 Ps" of "people, prices and productivity," with the last hurdle referring to trying to do more work with fewer resources.

But he also sees evidence that construction might enjoy some tailwinds due to adjustments firms have made due to the very challenges COVID-19 has thrown at the country.

A case in point is manufacturing, where a movement toward "onshoring" to overcome far-flung supply chain tangles overseas has led producers of goods not only to start ramping up their existing production volumes, but also to build new facilities to pump out more product.

Indeed, it was the manufacturing sector — not warehouses, not healthcare, not other nonresidential buildings — that blew the doors off construction starts in 2021, increasing by 86%, according to Dodge's data.

"The good news is we are starting to see factory output come back to close to where it was prior to the pandemic," Branch said. "That should help the supply side, and if we start to see some improvements with the log jams at ports, perhaps by the back side of 2022, we might see some reprieve from these higher prices."

More hoarding ahead?

Until that comes, however, there's another outlier that concerns construction watchers, and that's an increase in stockpiling of materials in yards and warehouses by contractors, simply to have them, should a job materialize where they can be used.

It's a trend Brown has picked up on as he goes out to compete for the increased amount of contracts he's seeing in the marketplace.

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The Dotted Line: COVID-19 Force Majeure Clauses are Losing Their Punch

Written by Joe Bousquin, ConstructionDive, Published Jan. 25, 2022

This feature is a part of "The Dotted Line" series, which takes an in-depth look at the complex legal landscape of the construction industry. To view the entire series, visit www.constructiondive.com/news/the-dotted-line-everything-you-need-to-know-about-construction-contracts/566539/.



Two years in, we've all got pandemic fatigue. Turns out, the go-to language of "force majeure" due to COVID-19 in construction contracts may be getting a bit tired as well.

Owners are increasingly pushing back against clauses that cite COVID-19 as an excusable delay, construction attorneys say.

Paired with a decision by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) that a bid was properly rejected for including a COVID-19 clause, it means the "force" of using force majeure for COVID-19 claims is on the wane.

"I would not allow a force majeure clause to include COVID anymore," said attorney Deborah Cazan, a partner in the Atlanta office of Alston & Bird, who typically represents project owners. "A force majeure event is something that's not foreseeable. At this point, COVID is out there, and everybody knows it."

Other construction law professionals agree.

"Simply claiming 'COVID' as justification for a delay claim will not pass muster," said William Thomas, an attorney and member of the construction law and litigation committee of the Chicago-based International Association of Defense Counsel, who represents both owners and contractors. "I've seen clients prepare robust force majeure clauses for pandemic-related impacts that were completely redlined out by owners."

Eric Ruzicka, a partner at Minneapolis-based law firm Dorsey & Whitney who also represents both owners and contractors, said the COVID-19 crisis has simply evolved too much to be used as a plausible excuse anymore.

"When we started in dealing with force majeure claims in March 2020, we were without a doubt in 'unforeseeable' territory," Ruzicka said. "But in January of 2022, it's foreseeable, and your job as a business is to try to accurately predict those challenges in the bid."

A nonresponsive bid

Taking more of the power out of COVID-19 force majeure claims is the recent decision by GAO that the Army Corps of Engineers properly deemed a bid from Boulder, Colorado-based American Mine Services (AMS) as nonresponsive because it included a COVID-19 force majeure clause.

Pointing to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), which governs procurement in the executive branch, GAO reasoned that "epidemics" and "quarantine restrictions" were already included in the applicable language.

But AMS wrote that "for purposes of this bid, COVID-19 is considered a force majeure event along with any other similar disease, epidemic or pandemic event. If any of the aforementioned events occur and affect the project, AMS reserves its rights for additional time."

That language, given the inclusion of epidemics in the FAR already, limited the rights of the government too much, GAO concluded.

"The language they sought to be added likely went too far," Thomas said.

Implications for supply chain woes

Going forward, the decision could potentially have far-reaching implications, given the fact that there is a dearth of existing case law covering COVID-19 and force majeure disputes to date.

"The court system is slow, and most construction disputes are resolved in the arbitration setting, so we don't have a lot of published opinions," Ruzicka said. For that reason, this decision by GAO is likely to be used in future claims.

"You will see people cite the GAO logic," Ruzicka said. "It's a stake in the ground that people have been salivating to find, and now they found one. If it favors them, they will certainly be latching on to it."

The real challenge for contractors, Thomas said, is how the decision, which was focused on COVID-19, will apply to other impacts of the pandemic that have now come into play.

"The hard question will be whether bidders feel they have enough cover from language already in that same section of the FAR related to supply chain disruptions, to get by without adding language and risking a nonresponsive bid," Thomas said.

At the very least, contractors should avoid the rejected American Mine tactic, said Shane McCall, a construction attorney and equity partner at Koprince McCall Pottroff in Lawrence, Kansas.

But that doesn't mean contractors shouldn't include force majeure clauses in general in contracts, attorneys said. It just means you need to be more specific than merely pointing to "COVID-19" when you do.

For example, Cazan, the owners' attorney, said her clients are still being realistic about the impacts supply chain issues and material availability are having on projects and contractors.

"The new provision that's being added to contracts now is 'material escalation,' which was never there before," said Cazan, describing language that protects contractors if material prices rise. "Owners are accepting those."

Indeed, to Ruzicka, who represents both owners and contractors, the new environment reflects the give-and-take that goes with setting the scope of a project in the first place, which should always be a primary goal of a good contract or bid.

"We're seeing it as a negotiation point," Ruzicka said. "People are trying to either get in, or keep out, very specific language to narrowly tailor or broaden the interpretation of force majeure."

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Three Tips for Holding Yourself Accountable

Published by NRCA on Feb 10, 2022

When you are lacking motivation, you can stay on task and focused on your goals by building in ways to hold yourself accountable, according to Harvard Business Review.

Following are three strategies that can help.

- 1. Enlist an accountability buddy. Tell them what your specific goal is and ask them to check in with you periodically. Knowing someone is keeping track of your progress will motivate you to succeed.*
- 2. Find a group of people who share a similar goal and commit to supporting each other. Research shows working with others toward your goals significantly increases your interest, resilience and likelihood of success.*
- 3. Consider changing your environment. This might mean working in a new location or changing your work setup, such as leaving your phone in another room.*

You do not have to depend solely on willpower. Finding ways to hold yourself accountable can improve motivation and lead to success.

SAFETY TALKS

Don't Let Injuries Get on a Roll

Recently, 2 different employees in the Carolinas Roofing and Sheet Metal Contractors Self Insurers Fund each strained a shoulder while they were positioning rolled roofing material. A few weeks later another employee in the fund was lifting rolls of roofing material and injured his lower back. During the same month, another employee within the fund sustained an injury when he smashed a finger between the roll he was handling and a cart.



The one thing that each of these injuries has in common is that they each involved an employee manually handling rolled roofing materials. Rolls of material are not uncommon in the roofing industry. After all, there's ordinary rubber rolled roofing, EPDM rolled roofing, TPO rolled roofing, bitumen rolled roofing, and more. However, it is probably not too often that employees see those rolls of roofing material and perceive the hazards. The goal of this Safety Talk is to change that.

The next time you look at a roll of roofing material, realize that the combination of its weight and shape can mean that it can lead to a back or shoulder injury unless care is taken in handling it, to include the following:

- Know your limits – Don't lift or handle more than you can easily manage. There's a difference between what people can lift and what they can safely lift. If you're in doubt get help.
- Move smoothly – Don't move quickly or jerk when handling rolls as this can make it harder to keep control and increases the risk of injury.
- Do not twist – When handling a roll of roofing material avoid twisting or leaning sideways, especially while the back is bent.

Discuss with Your Crew

What rolls of roofing material do we have on this job, or what rolls of roofing material are likely to be used on this job?

Remembering that there is a difference between what you can lift and what you can safely lift, what rolled roofing material should probably be handled with 2 people instead of just one?

Handling rolls of roofing material while it is still on the roll is one thing, but re-positioning it on the roof once it is rolled out also presents a material handling hazard. What strategies have you used to prevent shoulder or back injuries while performing that task?

SAFETY TALK ATTENDEES:

CHARLAS DE SEGURIDAD

No deje que las lesiones se pongan en marcha

Recientemente, 2 empleados diferentes en el Fondo de Autoaseguradoras de Contratistas de Techos y Chapa Metálica de Carolinas se esforzaron cada uno mientras colocaban material laminado para techos. Unas semanas más tarde, otro empleado del fondo estaba levantando



rollos de material para techos y se lesionó la parte baja de la espalda. Durante el mismo mes, otro empleado dentro del fondo sufrió una lesión cuando rompió un dedo entre el rollo que estaba manejando y un carro. Lo único que cada una de estas lesiones tiene en común es que cada una involucró a un empleado que maneja manualmente materiales laminados para techos. Los rollos de material no son infrecuentes en la industria de techos. Después de todo, hay techos laminados de caucho ordinarios, techos laminados de EPDM, techos laminados de TPO, techos laminados con betún y más. Sin embargo, probablemente no sea demasiado frecuente que los empleados vean esos rollos de material para techos y perciban los peligros. El objetivo de esta charla de seguridad es cambiar eso.

La próxima vez que mire un rollo de material para techos, tenga en cuenta que la combinación de su peso y forma puede significar que puede provocar una lesión en la espalda o el hombro a menos que se tenga cuidado al manipularlo, para incluir lo siguiente:

- Conozca sus límites: no levante ni manipule más de lo que puede manejar fácilmente. Hay una diferencia entre lo que las personas pueden levantar y lo que pueden levantar de manera segura. Si tienes dudas, busca ayuda.
- Muévase suavemente: no se mueva rápidamente ni se sacuda al manipular rollos, ya que esto puede dificultar el control y aumenta el riesgo de lesiones.
- No gire : cuando manipule un rollo de material para techos, evite torcerse o inclinarse hacia los lados, especialmente mientras la parte posterior está doblada.

Discuta con su equipo

¿Qué rollos de material para techos tenemos en este trabajo, o qué rollos de material para techos es probable que se usen en este trabajo?

Recordando que hay una diferencia entre lo que puede levantar y lo que puede levantar de manera segura, ¿qué material de techo laminado probablemente debería manejarse con 2 personas en lugar de solo una?

El manejo de rollos de material para techos mientras todavía está en el rollo es una cosa, pero volver a colocarlo en el techo una vez que se despliega también presenta un peligro de manejo de materiales. ¿Qué estrategias ha utilizado para prevenir lesiones en el hombro o la espalda mientras realiza esa tarea?

ASISTENTES DE LA CHARLA DE SEGURIDAD:
