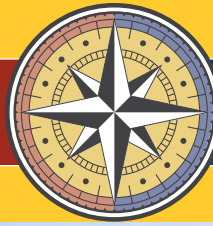


THE CONTRACTOR'S COMPASS



Evolving Site Safety & Health Compliance for Subcontractors



Gallagher's Construction Practice

Local presence supported by global depth and knowledge

Gallagher's Construction practice is focused solely on the construction industry, working closely with our clients to help them enhance their growth and development, and protect their assets and reputation. We dive deep to understand your unique organization and its people, the specific risks you face, and your tolerance for those risks. Once we fully understand the risks your business encounters and the opportunities ahead of you, we will design a program that manages those risks and opportunities. Gallagher's Construction practice is a market leader and innovator in construction risk management.

We do more than help protect your business.

We help build it.

For more information, contact:

Gary Semmer - gary_semmer@ajg.com
EVP US Construction - Gallagher ASA Contact

Brian Cooper - brian_cooper@ajg.com
Sr. Managing Director - US Construction

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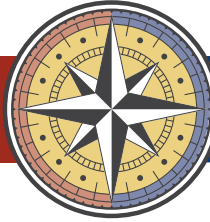
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THE CONTRACTOR'S COMPASS



EDITORIAL PURPOSE

The Contractor's Compass is the monthly educational journal of the Foundation of the American Subcontractors Association, Inc. (FASA) and part of FASA's Contractors' Knowledge Network. FASA was established in 1987 as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt entity to support research, education and public awareness. Through its Contractors' Knowledge Network, FASA is committed to forging and exploring the critical issues shaping subcontractors and specialty trade contractors in the construction industry. The journal is designed to equip construction subcontractors with the ideas, tools and tactics they need to thrive. The views expressed by contributors to The Contractor's Compass do not necessarily represent the opinions of FASA or the American Subcontractors Association, Inc. (ASA).

MISSION

To educate and equip subcontractors and suppliers with the education and resources they need to thrive in the construction industry. Additionally, FASA raises awareness about issues critical to and about construction in the United States.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Contractor's Compass is a free monthly publication for ASA members and nonmembers. For questions about subscribing, please contact communications@asa-hq.com.

ADVERTISING

Interested in advertising? Contact Richard Bright at (703) 684-3450 or rbright@asa-hq.com or advertising@asa-hq.com.

EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS

Contributing authors are encouraged to submit a brief abstract of their article idea before providing a full-length feature article. Feature articles should be no longer than 1,500 words and comply with The Associated Press style guidelines. Article submissions become the property of ASA and FASA. The editor reserves the right to edit all accepted editorial submissions for length, style, clarity, spelling and punctuation. Send abstracts and submissions for *The Contractor's Compass* to communications@asa-hq.com.

ABOUT ASA

ASA is a nonprofit trade association of union and non-union subcontractors and suppliers. Through a nationwide network of local and state ASA associations, members receive information and education on relevant business issues and work together to protect their rights as an integral part of the construction team. For more information about becoming an ASA member, contact ASA at 1004 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314-3588, (703) 684-3450, membership@asa-hq.com, or visit the ASA Web site, www.asaonline.com.

CONTENT TASK FORCE

Richard Bright, William Burke, Sheri Kitchen, Joselin Martin, Michael Metz-Topodas, Adrienne Smoot-Edwards, and Cheri Woodsmall

EDITOR

Mary Klett

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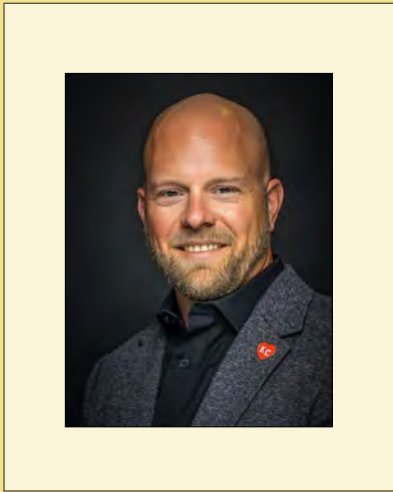
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PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear Members,

As the school year comes to a close and summer begins, many of us are looking ahead to a busy season for our businesses and our families. This time of year always seems to bring a natural moment of transition, and for me, that is especially true as I write my final letter as president.

It has been an honor to serve in this role during ASA's 60th anniversary, and to work alongside so many dedicated subcontractors, suppliers, industry partners, chapter leaders, and volunteers. Our association is strong

because of the people who show up, speak up, share their expertise, and support one another. I am grateful for the trust you have placed in me and proud of what we have accomplished together.

June also marks National Safety Month, an important reminder that safety is not a once-a-year campaign, but a daily commitment. In construction, safety depends on planning, communication, training, and a culture where every worker understands that getting the job done right means getting everyone home safely. As projects ramp up this summer, I encourage every member to take time to reinforce safe practices, revisit procedures, and recognize the crews and leaders who make safety a priority every day.

I also want to remind everyone that registration is open for **SUBExcel**, taking place September 29–October 1. This annual convention is one of the best opportunities to connect with fellow subcontractors, learn from industry experts, strengthen business relationships, and bring new ideas back to your company and chapter. I hope you will make plans to attend and take full advantage of this valuable event.

As my term comes to an end, I want to thank our members, board, staff, sponsors, and volunteers for your commitment to this association and to the construction industry. It has been a privilege to serve, and I look forward to continuing to support ASA's work in the years ahead. I am pleased to welcome our incoming president, Tony Vermaas. I know he will bring strong leadership, fresh energy, and a continued commitment to advancing the mission of ASA. Please join me in supporting Tony and the incoming leadership team as they begin this next chapter.

Thank you for the opportunity to be part of this chapter's leadership and for all you do to move our industry forward.

Sincerely,

Andrew V. Christ
ASA President, 2025-26
asapresident@asa-hq.com

Registration Now Open!
Register by June 5 for early-bird discount.

SUB Excel
SEPTEMBER 29 - OCTOBER 1 *Bonita Springs, Florida*

Subs in the Sun



CONTRACTOR COMMUNITY

NGA Safe Schools Act Reintroduced with NGA Proposed Language

[In advocacy news, proposed language from the National Glass Association was included in the SAFE Schools Act, H.R. 8506, which has now been introduced into the House of Representatives.](#) H.R. 8506 establishes a grant program to improve school security, including securing glass in the building's exterior through the installation of forced entry or bullet resistant glass. This achievement is the result of glass industry support and advocacy, and offers another opportunity to continue advocating for glass solutions in school security.



ASA Members Gain Preferred Access to PlanHub

ASA Members now have exclusive access to PlanHub through the ASA Advantage program, helping

subcontractors simplify preconstruction and win more work.

Built specifically for construction professionals, PlanHub connects subcontractors with active project opportunities and a nationwide network of general contractors looking for qualified trades. Through this collaboration, ASA members receive preferred pricing and exclusive access to PlanHub's modern preconstruction platform.

PlanHub helps subcontractors discover and manage bid opportunities more efficiently while improving communication and collaboration throughout the bidding process. Members can save time, stay organized, reduce missed opportunities, and strengthen relationships with general contractors and suppliers, all within one easy-to-use platform. Key benefits for ASA members include:

- Access to thousands of active construction projects
- Direct connections with general contractors

Streamlined bid management and communication tools

- Improved visibility for subcontractor businesses
- Exclusive ASA member pricing on PlanHub plans

Whether you're looking to grow your pipeline, expand into new markets, or improve efficiency, PlanHub provides the tools needed to compete and succeed in today's construction industry.

This collaboration reflects ASA's commitment to delivering valuable resources and business solutions that support subcontractor success.

[Learn more.](#)

knowify and AI Link Up

Subcontractors live and die by job-level numbers, and most of them spend too much time hunting those numbers down. Knowify, a long-running partner of the ASA community, just launched the first commercial construction AI connector for Claude and ChatGPT, solving a big chunk of that problem. Ask about a job, get an answer from your actual project data.

Welcome New Board Members First Term (2026 - 2029)

Lee Aitken, Holes, Inc. — Houston, TX

Ted Dunnam, Dunnam Safety Management — San Antonio, TX

Matt Molleur, F.L. Crane & Sons — Austin, TX.

Melissa Rossi, Division 9, Inc. — Bothell, WA

Claire Wilson, Sitaline — San Francisco, CA



UNLOCK YOUR PRO XTRA REBATE

1. Link all payment methods to your account if you haven't already.
2. Reach your minimum spend by June 30, 2026.
3. Contact your National Account Manager if you have any questions.



Get Started

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IT'S ALWAYS SOMETHING **AWESOME**

ASA Members Give Back...Again

by Melanie McCoy, Supply SA

In April, Supply SA team had the opportunity to participate in the ribbon-cutting event for the Southside Lions Park project, where a new skatepark was delivered through the partnership of the City of San Antonio and local small business Lone Star Civil.

During the event, **Councilwoman Phyllis Viagran** emphasized that prioritizing quality, delivering value, and intentionally engaging small and local vendors leads to outcomes that are both responsive to the community needs and sustainable over time. Her remarks reinforced the importance of engaging local businesses to deliver solutions that reflect the needs and character of the communities they serve.

Congratulations to the City of San Antonio, Parks and Recreation, and Lone Star Civil for their partnership in delivering a project that demonstrates the impact of collaboration! What an amazing space to enjoy.

I am proud to share this moment, as it reflects the broader impact of strengthening partnerships and supporting small and local businesses across our region.





CELEBRATING
60 YEARS OF ASA
& AMERICA'S 250TH!

**AMERICAN
SUBCONTRACTORS
ASSOCIATION**

WHAT DOES BUILDING AMERICA MEAN TO YOU?

Share your essay with ASA!

Contest runs from April 1, 2026 to June 30, 2026

In celebration of ASA's 60th Anniversary and America's 250th Anniversary, we want to know:
What does building America mean to you?

Essays will be shared via social media, the ASA website, in Contractors Compass, and at SUBExcel.

One winning essay will be chosen!

WINNER WILL RECEIVE:

- Recognition at SUBExcel
- Complimentary event registration

Submission Details:

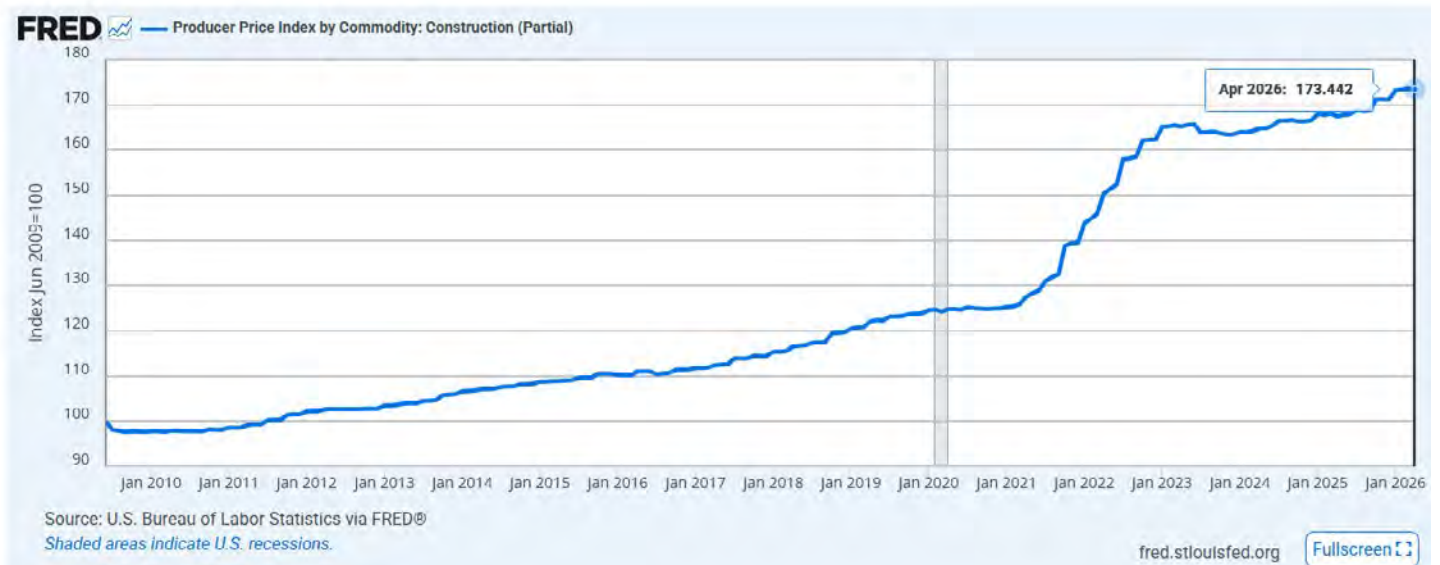
- Must be an ASA member to win.

All essays must be less than 500 words and submitted by 5pm Eastern on June 30th to mlevine@asa-hq.com and include ASA 60 / USA 250 in the subject line.



Construction Data & Figures

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Producer Price Index by Commodity: Construction (Partial): New Nonresidential Building Construction



[View online](#)

Midterm Wake-Up Call for Trump

Study Shows Nonunion Construction Workers Built the GOP Coalition

Associated Builders and Contractors released the [results](#) of a new [survey](#) conducted by The Harris Poll in six battleground states—Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin—which found that nonunion skilled trades workers—who make up nearly **90%** of the construction workforce—are an influential voting bloc in elections and were the driving force behind Republicans' success in 2024, including the election of President Donald Trump.

"While the working-class identity has too often been conflated with union affiliation, the data shows that nonunion construction workers voted for President Trump at a significantly higher rate in 2024," said Michael Bellaman, ABC president and CEO. "In fact, through measures of party alignment, candidate support and policy preferences, nonunion workers in the trades consistently align more closely with the GOP than their union counterparts.

"The survey also makes it clear that working-class support should not be confused with union leadership support," said Bellaman. "Nonunion construction workers not only supported President Trump at a significantly higher rate than union workers in 2024, but they also vastly outnumber union workers in the battleground states that will determine control of Congress next year.

"Despite this political reality, the Trump administration continues to support the controversial project labor agreement mandate that President Joe Biden established via executive order," said Bellaman. "The PLA mandate tells nonunion construction workers they are unworthy of participating in federally funded projects, which risks alienating a workforce that forms a critical part of the GOP's electoral base, particularly in swing states where nonunion workers play an outsized role.

"Ahead of the midterms, President Trump and his administration have a choice," said Bellaman. "They can reverse course and allow all workers, including the nonunion workers who powered their 2024 victory, to participate on federal projects or they

can continue appeasing union leadership through policies that restrict competition, raise costs and alienate the overwhelming majority of the construction workforce.

"In the 2026 midterms and beyond, Republicans who embrace fair and open competition will see continued support from the majority of skilled trades workers in their states and districts," said Bellaman. "Those who support government-mandated project labor agreements in the

hope that appeasing union bosses will win over rank-and-file workers are chasing a bargain the data shows does not exist."

Highlights from the study include:

- Nonunion construction workers outnumber union workers in presidential swing states, comprising 76%-98% of the construction workforce electorate.

Construction Employment Statistics April 2026



	April 2026	March 2026	April 2025	1-Month Net Change	12-Month Net Change	12-Month % Change
Construction	8,321,000	8,312,000	8,271,000	9,000	50,000	0.6%
Nonresidential	5,041,100	5,022,100	4,942,500	19,000	98,600	2.0%
Nonresidential building	943,800	938,200	925,200	5,600	18,600	2.0%
Nonresidential specialty trade contractors	2,896,000	2,883,400	2,838,300	12,600	57,700	2.0%
Heavy & civil engineering	1,201,300	1,200,500	1,179,000	800	22,300	1.9%
Residential	3,279,500	3,289,900	3,328,700	-10,400	-49,200	-1.5%
Residential building	926,500	928,000	933,600	-1,500	-7,100	-0.8%
Residential specialty trade contractors	2,353,000	2,361,900	2,395,100	-8,900	-42,100	-1.8%
Average Hourly Earnings						
All private industries	\$37.41	\$37.35	\$36.12	\$0.06	\$1.29	3.6%
Construction	\$40.97	\$40.93	\$39.33	\$0.04	\$1.64	4.2%
Average Weekly Hours						
All private industries	34.3	34.2	34.3	0.1	0.0	0.0%
Construction	39.3	39.3	39.0	0.0	0.3	0.8%
Unemployment Rate						
All private industries (SA)	4.3%	4.3%	4.2%	0.0pp	0.1pp	
Construction (NSA)	3.8%	6.7%	5.6%	-2.9pp	-1.8pp	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Associated Builders and Contractors. Note: SA: Seasonally adjusted. NSA: Not seasonally adjusted

Construction Employment Growth April 2025 v. April 2026



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Associated Builders and Contractors

**Includes Residential Building and Residential Building, Nonresidential STC, and Heavy and Civil Engineering

Visit abc.org/economics for the Construction Backlog Indicator and Construction Confidence Index, plus analysis of spending, employment, job openings and the Producer Price Index.

Construction Data & Figures

- Merit shop support for President Trump exceeded union support across all six swing states:
- In Arizona, Georgia and North Carolina, nonunion workers supported President Trump at a rate 19 points higher than union workers.
- In Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, nonunion workers supported President Trump at a rate 7 points higher than union workers.
- Skilled trades workers oppose union preferences in federal contracting by a 2-to-1 margin.
- When asked whether the federal government should have the flexibility to select contractors based on best value for taxpayers, rather than union affiliation, 83% of nonunion construction workers agreed or strongly agreed and 73% of union construction workers agreed or strongly agreed.

Nonresidential Construction Adds Healthy 19,000 Jobs in April

The construction industry added 9,000 jobs on net in April, according to an Associated Builders and Contractors analysis of data released today by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. On a year-over-year basis, industry employment has expanded by 50,000 jobs, an increase of 0.6%.

Nonresidential construction employment increased by 19,000 positions, with gains in all three subcategories. Nonresidential specialty traded added the most jobs, increasing by 12,600 positions. Nonresidential building and heavy and civil engineering added 5,600 and 800 jobs, respectively, in April.

The construction unemployment rate was 3.8% in April. Unemployment across all industries remained unchanged at 4.3% and is 0.1 percentage point higher than it was a year ago.

“Construction employment expanded modestly in April, but that’s largely due to weakness on the residential side of the industry,” said ABC Chief Economist Anirban Basu. “Nonresidential construction employment rose at a healthy pace for the month and is up a respectable 2.0% over the past year. This strength can be traced to surging data center construction spending, which is up [34% over the past year](#). It also helps explain why ABC

member expectations for hiring remain elevated, according to [ABC’s Construction Confidence Index](#), despite tepid industrywide job growth.”

Contractor Backlog and Confidence Rise Again in April, Buoyed by Data

Associated Builders and Contractors reported in May that its Construction Backlog Indicator rose to 8.8 months in April, according to an ABC member survey conducted from April 20 to May 4. The reading is up 0.2 months from March and up 0.1 months from April 2025.

View ABC’s [Construction Backlog Indicator](#) and [Construction Confidence Index](#) for April. View the full Construction Backlog Indicator and Construction Confidence Index [data series](#).

Backlog surged for contractors with greater than \$100 million in annual revenues and is now 2.2 months higher than during April 2025. All other contractor size categories have smaller backlog than they did one year ago.

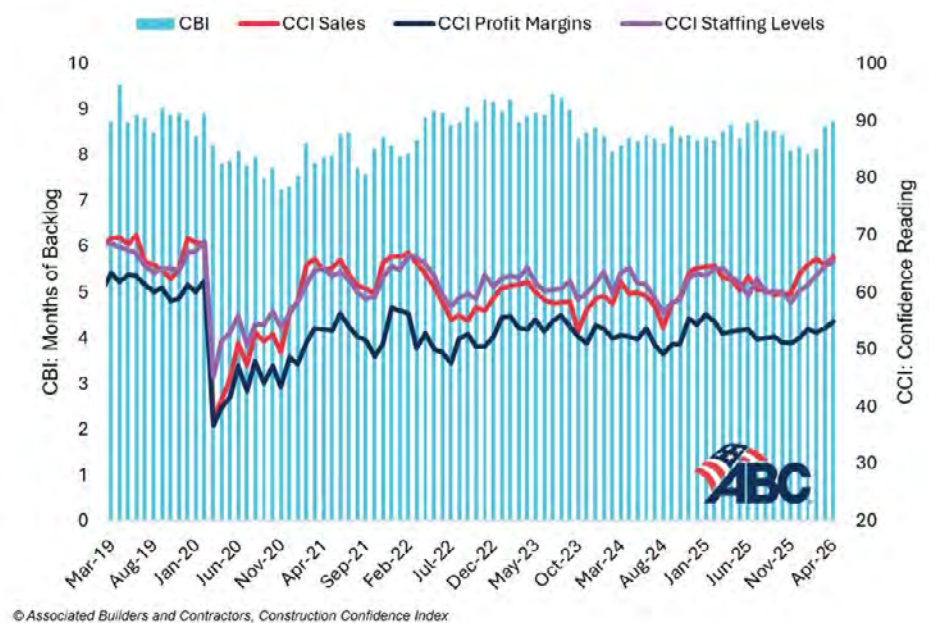
ABC’s Construction Confidence Index readings for sales, profit margins and staffing levels also increased in April. The readings for all three components are higher than they were one year ago and remain above the threshold of 50,

indicating expectations for growth over the next six months.

“While backlog surged to a 10-month high in April, the industry’s recent momentum is highly concentrated among a subset of contractors,” said ABC Chief Economist Anirban Basu. “Booming data center construction has almost exclusively benefited the largest ABC members; 42% of contractors with more than \$100 million in annual revenues are under contract to work on data center projects. The same is true for just 7% of contractors with less than \$100 million in annual revenues. Critically, contractors under contract to work on data centers have significantly longer backlog (12.2 months) than those that are not (8.3 months).

“Despite diverging levels of backlog, ABC contractor members of all sizes remain confident about the outlook,” said Basu. “Just 1 in 5 expect their profit margins to shrink over the next six months, the fewest since January 2025, and contractors are similarly upbeat about their sales and staffing levels. The upshot is that [weak construction spending data](#), the recent rise in oil prices and [emerging materials price escalation](#) have not diminished ABC member confidence.”

ABC Construction Backlog Indicator and Construction Confidence Index 2019-April 2026





Dodge Momentum Index Accelerates 6% in April

The Dodge Momentum Index (DMI), issued by Dodge Construction Network, increased 6.2% in April to 264.2 (2000=100) from the downwardly revised March reading of 248.8. Over the month, commercial planning grew 8.1% and institutional planning momentum improved 1.5%.

"After three months of slowing momentum, nonresidential planning began to find its footing in April," said Sarah Martin, Director of Economic Research

at Dodge Construction Network. "Data centers remain the largest driver behind growth in the Dodge Momentum Index, but several other sectors appeared to stabilize over the month. Macroeconomic risks remain weighted to the downside, with labor shortages, higher material costs and supply chain disruptions weighing on owner confidence in the near-term."

Planning activity for traditional office buildings, data centers, warehouses, hotels and parking garages grew in April, while retail store planning slowed pace. On the institutional side, education and healthcare planning re-accelerated, while recreational, public and religious planning slowed down over the month. Year-over-year, the DMI was up 14.1% when compared to April 2025. The commercial segment was up 37.2% (+5.8% when data centers are removed) and the institutional segment was up 28.8% over the same period.

A total of 44 projects valued at \$100 million or more entered planning throughout March. The largest of those projects included the \$500 million Google Data Center (Building One) in Buffalo, West Virginia, the \$470 million Stargate Data Center (Freebird Phase 2) in Burlington, Texas and the \$450 million Jay Data Center in Jay, Maine. The largest institutional projects were the \$256 million Navy Seal Museum in San Diego, California, the \$178 million Lurie Children's Hospital in Downer's Grove, Illinois, and the \$175 million Unaccompanied Housing improvement project at Naval Base Coronado in California.

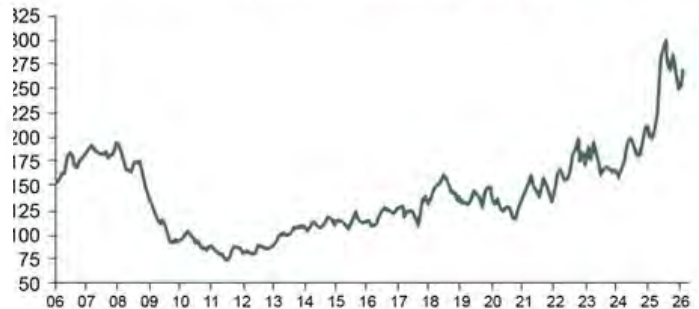
The DMI is a monthly measure based on the three-month moving value of nonresidential building projects going into planning, shown to lead construction spending for nonresidential buildings by a full year to 18 months.

DODGE MOMENTUM INDEX (2000=100, Seasonally Adjusted)

	Apr-26	Mar-26	% Change
Dodge Momentum Index	264.2	248.8	6.2%
Commercial Building	344.6	318.7	8.1%
Institutional Building	164.7	162.2	1.5%

Source: Dodge Construction Network

DODGE MOMENTUM INDEX (2000=100, Seasonally Adjusted)



Construction Starts Power On, Up 9% in April

Total construction starts rose 9.0% in April to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$1.33 trillion, according to [Dodge Construction Network](#). Nonresidential building starts grew by 18.6%, nonbuilding starts increased 7.0%, and residential starts fell 0.7% over the month. On a year-to-date basis, total construction starts were up 5.4% through April. Nonresidential starts were up 9.1%, nonbuilding starts improved by 12.3%, and residential starts were down 4.5% over the same period. For the 12 months ending April 2026, total construction starts were up 8.1% from the 12 months ending April 2025. Residential

starts were down 4.4%, nonresidential starts were up 10.0% and nonbuilding was up 19.5%.

"April's construction starts were robust with only three categories posting month over month losses," stated Eric Gaus, Chief Economist of Dodge Construction Network. "Large data centers and energy generation supported the growth, but 9 of the 15 categories saw double or triple digit growth."

Nonresidential

Nonresidential building starts improved 18.6% in April to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$550 billion. Commercial starts were up 41.4%, mostly driven by the 46.1% m/m increase in offices and data centers, however all sectors experienced growth; parking garages

(120.4% m/m), warehouses (+25.0% m/m), hotels (+12.8% m/m), and stores (+5.0% m/m). Institutional starts gained 12.3% over the month, with all sub-categories experiencing growth; other institutional categories (+15.1% m/m), education (+13.2% m/m), and healthcare (+4.6%). Manufacturing construction gave up 29.3% m/m after an astounding 251.4% growth in March. On a year-to-date basis through April, nonresidential starts are up 9.1%. Commercial and industrial construction gained 30.4%, while institutional starts are down 12.1% over the same period.

For the 12 months ending April 2026, total nonresidential starts were up 10.0% compared to the 12 months ending April 2025. Commercial starts were up 25.1%, institutional starts decreased 3.8%, and manufacturing starts were up 20.9% over the same period.

Construction Data & Figures

MONTHLY CONSTRUCTION STARTS

(Billions of Dollars, Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate)

	Apr-26	Mar-26	% Change
Nonresidential Building	\$550	\$463	18.6
Residential Building	\$383	\$386	-0.7
Nonbuilding Construction	\$394	\$368	7.0
Total Construction	\$1,326	\$1,217	9.0

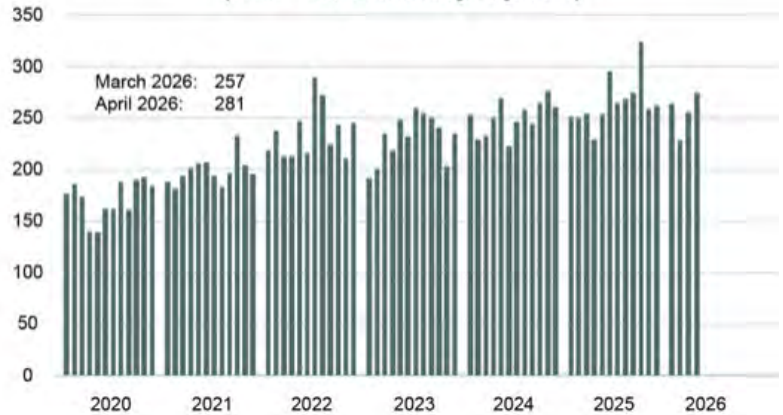
RECENT 12 MO CONSTRUCTION STARTS

(Unadjusted Moving Totals, in Billions of Dollars)

	Apr 2026	Apr 2025	% Change
Nonresidential Building	\$497	\$451	10.0
Residential Building	\$372	\$389	-4.4
Nonbuilding Construction	\$419	\$350	19.5
Total Construction	\$1,288	\$1,190	8.1

THE DODGE INDEX

(2000=100, Seasonally Adjusted)



The largest nonresidential building projects to break ground in April were the \$5.0 billion Provident/PowerHouse Prairie Ridge Data Center Phase 1 in Midlothian, TX, the \$1.9 billion SK Hynix HBM Advanced Packaging & R&D Hub project in West Lafayette, IN, and the \$1.3 million Stargate Data Center Campus project in Saline Township, MI.

Nonbuilding

Nonbuilding construction starts increased 7.0% in April to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$394 billion. Strong double digit gains in miscellaneous nonbuilding (+18.1% m/m), highways and bridges (+17.0% m/m) and environmental public works (+16.3% m/m) reversed losses from the previous month. Electric power/utilities segment fell 9.7% but levels remain bolstered by large natural gas facilities and large renewable projects. On a year-to-date basis through April, nonbuilding construction was up 12.3% alongside the 79.3% year-to-date growth in electric power/utilities. The remaining public works sectors, however, are seeing deeper year-to-date declines.

For the 12 months ending April 2026, total nonbuilding starts were up 19.5%. Environmental public works fell by 2.2%

compared to the 12 months ending April 2025. Highway and bridge starts were down 0.9%, miscellaneous nonbuilding starts were up 35.6% and utility/gas starts increased 62.0% over the same period.

The largest nonbuilding projects to break ground in April included the \$3.8 billion Bison Generation Station Natural Gas Power Plant in ND, the \$3.3 billion Cayuga Station Natural Gas Energy Replacement in Cayuga, IN, and the \$1.0 billion Tradepoint Atlantic Container Terminal in Edgemere, MD.

Residential

Residential building starts fell by 0.7% in April to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$383 billion. Single family starts increased 4.2% m/m, and multifamily starts fell 7.2% m/m. On a year-to-date basis, residential starts are down 4.5%, with single family starts down 10.9% and multifamily starts up 7.9%.

For the 12 months ending April 2026, total residential starts fell 4.4%. Single family starts fell 15.0% compared to the 12 months ending April 2025, and multifamily starts increased 17.4% over the same period.

The largest multifamily structures to break ground in April were the \$850 million Gowanus Wharf 175 3rd Street

Mixed Use Development in Gowanus, NY, the \$354 million Deerfield Episcopal Retirement Community III (Expansion) project Asheville, NC and \$303 million Archer Towers Mixed Use Development-Garage (Phase 2) project in Jamaica, NY.

Regionally, total construction starts in April rose in the Midwest (+66.9% m/m), the Northeast (+19.9% m/m), and the South Atlantic (+9.3% m/m). Meanwhile, the South Central (-14.5% m/m), and the West (-8.6% m/m) saw declines.

About Dodge Construction Network

Dodge Construction Network harnesses data, analytics, and industry connections to be the leading source of insights and opportunities in the commercial construction industry. With five trusted solutions-Dodge Construction Central, The Blue Book, Sweets, IMS, and Principia-Dodge connects construction professionals across all stages of the building process. Designed for both small teams and large enterprises, these tools simplify complexity, empowering you to build thriving businesses and communities. With over a century of experience, Dodge Construction Network is the catalyst for modern construction. To learn more, visit [construction.com](https://www.construction.com).

welcome

NEW ASA MEMBERS!

Welcome to ASA —we're glad to have you join our community of dedicated subcontractors and industry partners. Together, we share resources, advocate for a stronger business environment, and create opportunities to learn, grow, and succeed. We look forward to welcoming you at upcoming events and hearing your voice and your priorities in shaping the future of our industry.

- A3 CM Services
- Air & Hydronic Specialties
- Allied Glazing Management, LLC
- Arnold Refrigeration
- AV Calibrations, LLC
- Basis Insurance Group, LLC
- BCS Technology Partners
- BFL Construction
- Bmore Technology
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- JT Costa
- Kefi Catalyst
- LT Leon Associates, Inc.
- Marris Construction
- Memco
- Midwest Drywall
- National Trench Safety
- Openforce
- Paychex
- PCX Construction LLC
- Performance Roofing Associates
- Power Plumbing LLC
- Price Electric
- Rebar
- San Antonio Lath & Plaster
- Schnurr Painting, LLC
- Sound Surveillance
- Steen Enterprises Inc
- Stone Solutions and Research Collective LLC
- T-Brock
- The Home Depot
- Trayd
- W W Rasin Construction



ASK A SAFETY EXPERT

Safety Doesn't Stop: Maintain Momentum After Safety Month

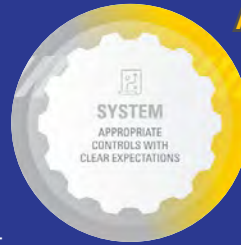
by Stephen Peterson, Caterpillar Safety Services

Hear from a Caterpillar expert about how you can maintain your momentum and continue to grow your site's safety culture.

To achieve greatness in any endeavor, it helps to make a habit of building momentum. It is the catalyst that drives people and organizations from average to good, and good to great. Each year, National Safety Month serves as a reminder about the importance of workplace safety. Organizations flood our inboxes with digital pledges and resources, proudly displaying their commitment to safety. But what happens once

Safety Month is over? Do organizations (consciously or unconsciously) pivot focus to other key performance indicators or priorities?

Safety Month is a great opportunity to spotlight safety risks and practices, but improving safety should remain an unrelenting focus for organizations. Here are some ways to examine the interdependent components that maintain a **resilient safety culture** and build momentum for your organization's safety journey.



Assess Your Safety System

A safety **system** is the foundation of an effective safety culture. This includes having well-defined policies, procedures and protocols that guide employees in maintaining a safe work environment. During Safety Month, organizations may review and update these systems to ensure they are current. However, checking a system once and expecting people to operate perfectly within that system at all times isn't realistic.



Create a framework to regularly address your systems in the field to ensure employees and leaders know and understand the expectations, that it is serving them well, that their perspectives and feedback has a channel, and is considered. That will help maintain your safety system's effectiveness.

[Read more about how to improve the System component.](#)

Consider Your Organization's Mindset



Safety is not just about following rules and procedures, or the quintessential "safety cop" approach. It's about fostering a mindset of care and curiosity rather than blame when challenges arise. This mindset should be demonstrated at every level of the organization, from top management to the front line. Leverage Safety Month as a kickoff by encouraging discussions and asking questions whenever mistakes happen. This fosters a climate of respect by building trust, cultivating openness, and offering concerns and suggestions without the fear of reprisal. By doing this, you will see a shift in mindsets and see how it is more effective to seek perspectives rather than point fingers. With a culture of open communication, employees feel more comfortable with reporting near-misses and identifying hazards early on.

[Read more about how to improve the Mindset component.](#)

Invest In Leadership



Effective leadership is critical in promoting and sustaining a positive and proactive safety culture. Leaders set

the tone, from the top down, for the organization's values and behaviors. During Safety Month, leaders often take a more visible role in safety initiatives. However, this stance should not diminish once the month is over. Encourage your leaders to intentionally monitor pertinent safety indicators and outcomes. Leaders must consistently pursue accountability and connect with their employees to build trust and credibility around safety activities. Just as they do with production and quality expectations within the organization, equip leaders to do the same with safety. Why would we treat safety any differently?

[Read more about how to improve the Leadership component.](#)

Build Ownership at Every Level



A truly resilient safety culture is one where every employee feels a sense of ownership over safety. This means empowering employees to take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of their colleagues. Building ownership of safety gives employees a voice, drives engagement, utilizes their expertise and creates lasting change. Safety Month is the perfect time to introduce initiatives that encourage employee involvement, like safety steering teams or learning teams, to identify system gaps and make recommendations for continuous safety improvement. This momentum can continue beyond Safety Month, as organizations can provide year-round opportunities for employees to share their experiences, contribute ideas, and recognize their efforts through the strategic initiatives that make the workplace safer.

[Read more about how to improve the Ownership component.](#)

Beyond Safety Month: A Continuous Journey

Safety is more than just a compliance requirement. It's a commitment to the well-being of every employee. Safety Month serves as an excellent reminder of this by bringing safety to the top of our minds. However, it's our job to keep safety an integral part of our daily operations long after the month has ended – to keep the momentum.

Caterpillar Safety Services helps organizations transform their safety cultures every day to make them more resilient. To learn more about how our experts can support your journey to a resilient safety culture, [contact](#) us and visit cat.com/safety for more information.

About the Author



Stephen Peterson is an Industry Account Manager with Caterpillar Safety Services. With more than 20 years' experience in private and

non-profit sectors, Stephen's focus on leadership and resource development drives his desire to help customers from a variety of industries equip their leaders and team members with the knowledge, skill sets, and talents for organizational excellence. Stephen holds a bachelor's degree in Biology and a master's degree in Leadership in Human Services Administration from Bradley University. [Follow Stephen on LinkedIn](#). This article is reprinted with permission from Caterpillar Safety Services. It originally appeared in May 2025.

In Memoriam



John Allison Driggs
1936–2026

We would like to pay special tribute to John Driggs, a past President of the Metro Washington Chapter and a founding member of ASA. John's leadership, vision, and dedication helped lay the groundwork for an organization that has spent six decades championing subcontractors and advancing fair construction practices across the industry. His contributions helped shape not only ASA's history, but also the strong community and mission that continue to guide us today. We honor John with gratitude and respect for the lasting legacy he leaves behind.

John Allison Driggs passed away on May 10, 2026, in Potomac, Maryland, at the age of 89.

He was born on July 11, 1936, in Jackson, Ohio, and carried with him throughout his life the values of hard work, steady purpose, and quiet kindness that were rooted

in his upbringing. John lived a life marked by optimism, generosity, and thoughtfulness, and those qualities were evident in the way he approached his family, his career, and every relationship he built over the years. He was the kind of man who left people feeling encouraged and respected, and his presence brought calm and confidence to those around him.

John attended Ohio University, where he began shaping the foundation for a life of accomplishment and responsibility. Following his education, he built a distinguished career as Owner and President of The Driggs Companies, and more recently, ReAgg LLC. Through his leadership and through his involvement in real estate investments, he earned the respect of both colleagues and associates. He understood the importance of perseverance and sound judgment, and he carried those principles into every endeavor. His work

reflected not only business acumen but also a deep commitment to building something lasting.

Those who knew John will remember his optimistic outlook, his generous spirit, and the thoughtful way he treated others. He had a gift for making people feel valued, and he often expressed care through consistent kindness and attention. He was a "grand-gesture kind of guy". He was the type of man who listened carefully, spoke with purpose, and offered support when it was needed most. In both public and private life, he led by example, demonstrating that strength and gentleness can exist together in one person.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial donations to [Maryland Public Television](#) or [WETA](#), both of which he greatly enjoyed, or to organizations dedicated to pulmonary research.



OSHA at the Mid-Year—A Regulatory and Compliance Review

by Michael Metz-Topodas, Saul Ewing LLP

Introduction

With the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (“OSHA”) enforcing an entire section of regulations devoted to the construction industry, changes at the agency significantly impact contractors and their operations. Keeping track of OSHA’s recent activities ensures compliance and promotes safety. With that in mind, contractors should know about developments at OSHA in the first half of 2026, which include new leadership, regulatory structure, heat hazard safety programs, and compliance initiatives.

OSHA’s New Leadership

The tone for OSHA’s 2026 activity took hold late last year with the confirmation on October 2, 2025 of David Keeling as Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health. Keeling brings a strong mix of employer and employee perspective to workplace safety based on his decades of experience. Before this appointment, he worked as Vice President of Global Health and Safety at United Parcel Service, as part of his 36-year tenure at that company. He carried that experience to his role as Director of Global Transportation Safety at Amazon. In these roles, Keeling developed the pragmatic approach he employs in leading OSHA, one that balances a commitment to employee safety with avoiding undue limits on employers’ business goals. As Keeling has stated elsewhere, “We want to be in the abatement [and] . . . solutions business[, not] . . . necessarily . . . the enforcement business.” Keeling’s balanced perspective accords with the current regulatory landscape where OSHA faces multiple obstacles in creating and



enforcing safety standards.

Limitations on Regulatory and Enforcement Activity

Enacting regulatory change at OSHA faces obstacles from multiple executive orders (“EO”s) halting or constraining new regulations. With the EO titled Regulatory Freeze Pending Review, the Trump administration required both agency head review and a sixty-day waiting period for any proposed rule awaiting final approval. Adding to this hold-up of pending regulations, the EO titled Unleashing Prosperity Through Deregulation required federal agencies to eliminate ten existing regulations for each one new regulation it wants to propose. Not only did Keeling walk into a constrained regulatory environment, but he also faces limitations on available resources for OSHA. Although a proposed almost 8% reduction in OSHA’s budget never materialized, its FY2026 funding still has an almost 0.5% decrease from last year. With slightly less funding from the prior year, OSHA will likely maintain a relatively similar number of full-time employees, including Compliance Occupational Safety and Health Officers (“COSH”s), OSHA’s enforcement inspectors. That number falls about 13% short of the inspectors

OSHA had towards the end of the Biden Administration based on information from about a year ago. Without a robust contingent of inspectors, OSHA inspections, and thus citations and penalties, may see little to no increase from last year. During that time, penalties had decreased to the lowest levels in seventeen years according to a February 18, 2026 letter from Senator Elizabeth Warren to the Secretary of Labor.

OSHA has also faced many legal challenges to the scope of its authority. With the recent Supreme Court’s Loper Bright decision, employers can challenge OSHA rules or citations that are based on the agency’s interpretation of ambiguous language in Occupational Safety and Health Act because courts no longer need to defer to such interpretations. Going a step further, recently a New Jersey steel fabricator contested an OSHA citation on constitutional grounds. It argued that the judges of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, the forum for citation challenges, are “unconstitutionally appointed” and “unconstitutionally insulated from removal” and that the proceedings deprive the right to a jury trial and lack the necessary U.S. Attorney General involvement. This challenge echoes

commentary Justice Clarence Thomas made in denying Supreme Court review over an OSHA case that the OSH Act “may be the broadest delegation of power to an administrative agency found in the United States Code” and that “it is hard to imagine” “this far-reaching grant of authority does not impermissibly confer legislative power on an agency . . .” Facing so many formal constraints on what action it can take, OSHA has turned its attention to compliance and education as the way to improve workplace safety.

The Heat Hazard National Emphasis Program

As one of the OSHA initiatives paused by the administration’s regulatory controls, OSHA’s heat hazard rule remains pending following a recent additional notice and comment period. Undeterred, OSHA has employed other available mechanisms to guide employers in implementing controls, measures, and programs aimed at protecting workers from heat hazards. On April 10, 2026, OSHA issued a revised national emphasis program to protect employees from heat-related hazards and resulting injuries and illnesses in outdoor and indoor workplaces (the “Heat Hazard NEP”).

Although the Heat Hazard NEP lacks a regulation’s force of law, like all NEPs, it does direct and guide OSHA personnel on compliance and enforcement activities they can implement to address heat hazards. The Heat Hazard NEP contains a revised list of industries targeted for programmed inspections—i.e., planned and scheduled—based on Bureau of Labor Statistics and reports to OSHA. Organized by NAICS Code, the revised list covers both general construction and many types of contractors, including heavy civil, site work, exterior, residential building, building equipment, and building finishing. The Heat Hazard NEP also directs that any and all OSHA inspections, regardless of their initial reason, can look for heat hazards. In exercising this expanded inspection power, OSHA will determine the extent

to which an employer’s heat hazard program meets criteria outlined in the Heat Hazard NEP. Similar to criteria in the pending rule, under the Heat Hazard NEP, a heat hazard program should include: a heat hazard plan; monitoring for signs of heat illnesses and injury; remedial measures (e.g., available water, scheduled breaks, fans, shade, modified start and stop times to avoid the hottest daytime periods, and other administrative controls); acclimatization for new employees; and heat hazard training. The Heat Hazard NEP also advises COSHOs on how to identify and cite for heat hazard-related general duty clause violations, i.e., failing to comply with the OSH Act’s requirement that employers provide a safe and healthy workplace. As the Heat Hazard NEP expands OSHA’s inspection and citation authority, employers should continue to review and update, as needed, their heat hazard plans.

Nonetheless, if cited for a heat hazard-related general duty clause violation, employers have multiple defenses available. For such violations, OSHA bears a higher burden of proof affording employers the room to argue that even though a heat plan may not meet all aspirations in the Heat Hazard NEP, it still secures for employees a safe and healthy workplace. Moreover, heat hazards constitute a “broad public health concern, not necessarily an ‘occupational’ hazard or strictly about employees’ safety and health.” The U.S. Supreme Court has previously determined that this type of risk falls outside OSHA’s regulatory scope (although in that case the broad public health concern was a virus, COVID-19). Thus, like measures meant to protect employees from a virus, requirements based on heat injury and illness prevention “would significantly expand OSHA’s regulatory authority without clear congressional authorization.” In short, the Heat Hazard NEP does not give OSHA unfettered power to determine how employers should protect their workers from heat injuries and illnesses. Despite such defenses, contractors benefit from directing efforts

towards complying with the Heat Hazard NEP’s guidelines in saving on citation contest costs and securing a safe, healthy, and productive workforce, the lifeblood of any construction company.



Safety Champions Program

As part of OSHA’s increased focus on compliance as opposed to enforcement, it has created a new Safety Champions Program. In this program, employers can demonstrate to OSHA various degrees of commitment to workplace safety and then receive recognition from OSHA attesting to the company’s safety level or “step” as the program describes it. Advancement through the steps depends on how the company’s safety program meets the tenets in OSHA’s Recommended Practices for Safety and Health Programs. Such recognition includes publication on OSHA’s website and a letter identifying that employer’s current Safety Champion level as well as a Safety Champions logo the company may use as a safety “seal of approval” on any and all publications, including its website. The program resembles OSHA’s Voluntary Protection Program, but with fewer requirements for, or benefits of, membership.



OSHA CARES Initiative

Introduced in late-March, the Customer Assistance, Resources & Engagements initiative makes an

agency-wide effort to support and guide all workplaces with the goal of helping to ensure all employees “go home safe.” The initiative aims to encourage businesses to seek OSHA’s guidance and assistance in addressing workplace hazards by showing the benefits of such collaboration. In doing so, the agency presents a more approachable demeanor. Specific CARES Initiative measures include: increasing access to OSHA experts and compliance assistance specialists; improving availability to educational and training materials; and offering consistent workplace assistance during enforcement visits and meetings. With that in mind, OSHA unveiled new versions of required workplace posters that emphasize OSHA’s shift from enforcement tactics that target violations after they occur to compliance support that prevents violations before they happen. Further illustrating this shift, COSHOs’ training will now include education on how they can provide employers real-time assistance to eliminate or control existing workplace hazards detected during an inspection.

Enforcement Activity Continues

Despite OSHA’s multiple policy shifts, enforcement actions continue, as reflected in the top five publicized

citations by penalty pertaining to construction:

- A Massachusetts water and sewer contractor was cited for multiple willful, repeat, and serious violations related to cave-in protection hazards, including excavation exit, shoring, and spoil pile location, with a total penalty of \$4,699,362.
- An Alabama heavy civil contractor received a citation for sixteen serious violations with total penalties of \$257,707 arising out of confined space hazards from sewer gas.
- A Florida roofing contractor was cited for willful and serious violations, with penalties of \$172,324, due to fall hazards, in particular failure to require adequate fall protection for employees working at heights of over 20 feet, resulting in fatalities.
- An Alabama heavy civil contractor received a citation for willful violations and \$170,145 in penalties related to unsafe excavation practices that exposed workers to struck-by and cave-in hazards.
- An Alabama residential home builder was cited for serious violations with penalties of \$115,855 arising out of cave-in hazards while installing sewage drainage pipe.

The Look-Ahead

Based on these developments in the regulatory environment, OSHA will likely increase its current cooperative compliance initiatives. At the same time, OSHA has shown it will not refrain from issuing citations where employers’ failure to address safety properly led to egregious violations or serious safety and health hazards.

About the Author

Michael Metz-Topodas is a partner in the Construction Group at Saul Ewing, LLP. His practice includes construction litigation, day-to-day project and claims counseling, contract review, drafting and negotiations, bid preparation and bid protests, along with OSHA compliance and enforcement defense. In his OSHA practice, he has represented clients before the OSHRC and advised clients on dozens of citation contests, investigation demand responses, and safety standards compliance matters. Mr. Metz-Topodas represents general contractors, subcontractors, owners, designers, and suppliers on private, public, and federal projects and handles all forms of construction disputes. He can be reached at michael.metz-topodas@saul.com.

JUNE IS ALZHEIMER’S AWARENESS MONTH

Worldwide, more than 55 million people are living with Alzheimer’s or another dementia, and two-thirds of Americans have at least one major potential risk factor for dementia. Take action now—for yourself, your loved ones and for the fight to end Alzheimer’s. What actions can you commit to taking this month?

Get Started with Healthy Habits for Your Brain

It’s never too early or too late to take actions that help promote a healthy brain. Get familiar with brain health and learn what steps you can take if you or someone you love has memory concerns.

Science shows that adopting healthy habits — like getting exercise and good quality sleep — may reduce the risk of cognitive decline. Incorporate some or all of these 10 Healthy Habits into your life and share them with someone you know.



10 HEALTHY HABITS FOR YOUR BRAIN

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR BRAIN HEALTH. THESE HEALTHY HABITS CAN LOWER THE RISK OF DEVELOPING COGNITIVE DECLINE AND POSSIBLY DEMENTIA. THIS IS TRUE EVEN FOR PEOPLE WITH A HISTORY OF DEMENTIA IN THEIR FAMILIES.

Follow as many of these tips as possible to achieve the most benefits for your brain and body. It's never too late or too early. Start now!



Protect your head

Help prevent an injury to your head. Wear a helmet for activities like biking, and wear a seatbelt. Protect yourself while playing sports. Do what you can to prevent falls, especially for older adults.



Be smoke-free

Quitting smoking can lower the risk of cognitive decline back to levels similar to those who have not smoked. It's never too late to stop.



Get moving

Engage in regular exercise. This includes activities that raise your heart rate and increase blood flow to the brain and body. Find ways to build more movement into your day — walking, dancing, gardening — whatever works for you!

Challenge your mind



Be curious. Put your brain to work and do something that is new or hard for you. Learn a new skill. Try something artistic. Challenging your mind may have short- and long-term benefits for your brain.



Control your blood pressure

Medications can help lower high blood pressure. And healthy habits like eating right and physical activity can help too. Work with a health care provider to control your blood pressure.



Manage diabetes

Type 2 diabetes can be prevented or controlled by healthier eating, increasing physical activity and medication, if necessary.



Sleep well

Good quality sleep is important for brain health. Stay off screens before bed and make your sleep space as comfortable as possible. Do all you can to minimize disruptions. If you have any sleep-related problems, such as sleep apnea, talk to a health care provider.



Stay in school

Education reduces your risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Encourage youth to stay in school and pursue the highest level of training possible. Continue your own education by taking a class at a local library, college or online.



Eat right

Eating healthier foods can help reduce your risk of cognitive decline. This includes more vegetables and leaner meats/proteins, along with foods that are less processed and lower in fat. Choose healthier meals and snacks that you enjoy and are available to you.



Maintain a healthy weight

Talk to your health care provider about the weight that is healthy for you. Other healthy habits on this list — eating right, physical activity and sleep — can help with maintaining a healthy weight.

Learn more at alz.org/healthyhabits.

UPCOMING WEBINARS

SALT Overview and Risk for Subcontractors

**Tuesday, June 23, 2026
(12:00 PM - 1:00 PM) (EDT)**

This session will provide an overview of state and local tax (SALT) issues that are particularly relevant to subcontractors, including an overview of relevant taxes. The presentation will address practical compliance strategies and highlight common audit issues. After this session, you will be able to:

- Identify key taxes that apply to subcontractors in different states and localities
- Recognize compliance risks and common audit triggers specific to subcontracting activities
- Apply best practices for documentation and exemption certificate management
- Understand recent tax trends relevant to subcontractors

- Implement strategies to minimize exposure and ensure ongoing compliance with evolving SALT requirements

This course is designed for subcontractors, construction and service industry professionals, project managers, controllers, accountants, and anyone responsible for tax compliance or risk management in organizations that perform work across state and local jurisdictions.

About the Presenters:

Thomas Miller, MBA, JD, LL.M., REDW LLC

Tom Miller leads REDW LLC's State & Local Tax (SALT) group, applying over 15 years of specialized experience to help businesses navigate the complex landscape of multistate taxation. From compliance to strategic consulting, he supports clients operating in all 50 states by identifying tax-saving opportunities and minimizing risk. Recognized for his diligence and knowledge of tax law, Tom has taken on leadership roles within the SALT practices of both global accounting firms and private industry. His

broad exposure to indirect tax functions and multistate compliance issues gives him a well-rounded perspective and practical insight into the unique challenges businesses face across jurisdictions.

Thomas Boyle, JD, LL.M, REDW LLC

Tom Boyle brings over six years of experience in State & Local Tax, assisting businesses with complex multistate tax issues. He advises businesses on nexus studies, voluntary disclosure agreements, audit defense, reverse audits, and taxability analyses, helping them reduce risk and uncover savings opportunities. Tom's expertise spans both income and indirect taxes, including sales and use tax. As an attorney, Tom combines legal insight with practical tax strategies to guide businesses through compliance and planning challenges across multiple jurisdictions.

[Register Now](#)

National Family Business Forum

**Tuesday, June 30, 2026
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (EDT)**

The next segment of this continuing series, family businesses are the backbone of the construction industry, but working with relatives can bring both unique strengths and unique challenges. This webinar will explore the dynamics of family-owned construction companies, including leadership transitions, communication, succession planning, conflict management, and preserving company culture across generations. Attendees will gain practical insights into how family businesses can balance personal relationships with professional decision-making while positioning their companies for long-term success. [Register Now](#)



Who Owns Safety on the Modern Jobsite?

by Myra A. Cunningham, Carson Law Group, PLLC

A commercial construction project is approaching a major deadline. Electricians are working overhead while a drywall crew moves material through a shared corridor. Temporary laborers unload equipment nearby as multiple subcontractors attempt to complete punch-list items before an owner walkthrough scheduled for the next morning.

During the middle of the shift, an employee trips over debris and materials that had accumulated in a shared work area used by multiple subcontractors and suffers a serious head injury.

The incident itself may appear relatively straightforward. The questions that follow rarely are.

Who controlled the work area? Had the hazard already been reported? Which contractor maintained responsibility for correcting it? Were site coordination procedures actually being followed in practice?

On modern construction projects, the answers are not always obvious.

Many projects now operate within workforce structures involving numerous subcontractors, specialty trades, staffing agencies, and temporary labor providers working simultaneously under overlapping schedules and reporting systems. As projects become more operationally complex, maintaining consistent communication and coordination across multiple employers may require a more deliberate approach than many contractors historically needed to implement.

Coordination Challenges on Layered Projects

On heavily layered projects, responsibility can sometimes become unclear in ways that are not immediately apparent until after an incident occurs.

Workers may receive direction from multiple supervisors. Reporting

procedures may differ between contractors. Hazards identified by one trade may affect several others working nearby. On fast-moving projects, even relatively minor communication gaps may create uncertainty regarding who was responsible for correcting a hazard or communicating changing site conditions.

A 2024 CPWR study examining injuries along subcontracting chains in the construction industry observed that lower-tier subcontractors and contingent workers experienced higher rates of injury in certain subcontracting arrangements, particularly where work structures involved multiple layers of subcontracting and coordination responsibilities varied across the project.¹ The study reflects a broader reality many contractors already recognize in practice: as projects become more operationally complex, maintaining consistent accountability across multiple employers may require greater planning and oversight.

A separate 2020 study published in the *Journal of Safety Research* found substantial differences in how subcontractors approached safety management across commercial construction projects, particularly with respect to training procedures, hazard communication practices, and project-level coordination efforts.² On projects involving numerous trades and overlapping scopes of work, those inconsistencies may create confusion regarding reporting procedures, supervisory authority, or responsibility for correcting hazards—issues that often become increasingly important following a workplace incident.

Why These Issues Matter Legally

Following a workplace incident, investigators, insurers, and litigants

frequently focus less on the existence of the hazard itself and more on how the project was being managed before the incident occurred.

Who maintained authority over the work area? Was the issue documented? Did contractors follow the site-specific safety plan? Were reporting procedures clearly communicated? Did project personnel respond appropriately once the hazard became known?

On multi-employer worksites, those questions may involve several contractors simultaneously.

At the same time, subcontract agreements themselves have become increasingly detailed with respect to safety obligations. Many now include provisions addressing site-specific safety plans, reporting procedures, coordination meetings, training requirements, and incident response obligations. Broad contractual language assigning responsibility for “all jobsite safety” or “all site conditions” may create obligations extending beyond a subcontractor’s immediate scope of work.

Accordingly, subcontractors should carefully review contractual safety provisions before work begins and ensure that field practices align with written project procedures. Following a serious incident, investigators often examine not only what policies existed on paper, but whether those procedures were consistently implemented and documented in practice.

What This Looks Like in Practice

Consider two drywall subcontractors working on similar commercial projects involving multiple trades operating within the same work areas.

On the first project, safety coordination is handled informally. Foremen discuss issues during walkthroughs, but

concerns are rarely documented unless someone believes the issue presents an immediate danger. Temporary laborers receive only brief verbal instructions before beginning work, and housekeeping responsibilities in shared corridors shift constantly depending on which crews are working in the area that day.

One afternoon, a laborer carrying sheets of drywall through a shared access corridor trips over scrap metal studs, extension cords, and abandoned packaging left near an area where the electrical and framing crews had both been working throughout the morning. After the incident, confusion develops almost immediately. The framing subcontractor insists the electrical crew left the materials behind, while the electrical foreman claims the drywall crew had already raised housekeeping concerns earlier in the week. The general contractor asks whether the condition had previously been reported, but no one can point to any written documentation. Daily reports contain little information regarding housekeeping issues, and project personnel disagree regarding who maintained responsibility for the corridor under the site logistics plan.

On the second project, the underlying incident is nearly identical. The difference is that the subcontractors implemented more structured coordination procedures before work began.

Temporary laborers completed site-specific onboarding that included housekeeping expectations, reporting procedures, and designated supervisory contacts. Foremen conducted documented weekly toolbox talks addressing material staging, shared work areas, and housekeeping obligations between trades. The project logistics plan specifically assigned responsibility for maintaining common access corridors, and hazards identified during walkthroughs were logged through a

centralized reporting system requiring documented follow-up once corrective action was completed.

Midway through the project, the drywall foreman notices scrap material and extension cords beginning to accumulate near a shared staging area being used by the framing and electrical crews. Instead of raising the issue informally during a walkthrough, the drywall foreman photographs the condition, logs it through the project reporting system, and sends it directly to the responsible subcontractor that same afternoon. By the following morning, the area has been cleared and the corrective action has been documented through the project's daily reporting procedures.

Neither project eliminated workplace risk entirely. Construction sites remain active, fast-moving environments. The difference is that one contractor relied largely on assumptions and informal communication, while the other implemented clear procedures designed to reduce confusion before problems developed.

For the average contractor, those practices may matter just as much after an incident occurs as they do before one.

The Industry's Response

Fortunately, many contractors are already responding proactively to these evolving project conditions.

A 2023 CPWR SmartMarket Report examining safety management practices in the construction industry found that companies are increasingly investing in standardized onboarding procedures, pre-task planning, digital reporting systems, and project-wide communication practices designed to improve coordination across multiple employers and trades.³ The report further noted that many contractors view stronger communication and coordination practices as essential

components of both project efficiency and overall safety performance.

Those efforts may provide benefits extending well beyond safety performance alone. Clear reporting procedures, consistent documentation practices, and well-defined coordination structures may also help reduce project delays, strengthen owner relationships, improve workforce retention, and minimize confusion when incidents arise.

In many respects, effective coordination is becoming both a safety tool and a business advantage.

Looking Ahead

Construction projects are unlikely to become less operationally complex in the years ahead. Specialized trades, workforce shortages, and increasingly aggressive project schedules will continue shaping how projects are staffed and managed across the industry.

As projects become more layered, questions regarding supervision, coordination, and responsibility may become increasingly difficult to untangle following a workplace incident. Subcontractors who prioritize communication, documentation, and clearly defined project responsibilities will likely be better positioned not only to reduce legal exposure, but also to operate more efficiently and competitively in an increasingly demanding construction environment.

About the Author

Myra Cunningham is an attorney with Carson Law Group, PLLC, where her practice focuses on construction law and commercial litigation. She regularly works with owners, contractors, and subcontractors on a variety of construction-related disputes. More information about Carson Law Group can be found at <https://www.thecarsonlawgroup.com/>.

¹ CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training, *Measuring Injuries Along the Subcontracting Chain in the U.S. Construction Industry* (2024), available at https://www.cpwr.com/wp-content/uploads/SS2024-measuring_injuries_along_subcontracting.pdf.

² Ann Marie Dale et al., *The Association Between Subcontractor Safety Management Programs and Worker Perceived Safety Climate in Commercial Construction Projects*, 74 *Journal of Safety Research* 33–42 (2020), available at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0022437520300761>.

³ CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training, *Safety Management in the Construction Industry SmartMarket Report* (2023), available at https://www.cpwr.com/wp-content/uploads/RR-Dodge_Safety_Management_SmartMarket_2023.pdf.



Your Crew Is Your Leading Indicator

by Adam Roderick, Datateer; and Nick Williams, R.I.S.E. Inc.

We were sitting together in ASAC's Trade Partner Connection, experienced leaders from across the construction industry trying to tackle some of the challenges we all feel every day.

The topic of the day was employee well-being. Inevitably the familiar old mentality crept in: "This sounds good in theory, but profitability always has to be the priority"

Sound familiar?

In construction, anything perceived as soft is often viewed as competing with schedule, margin, and production. Many leaders have been conditioned to believe that focusing on wellbeing comes at the expense of accountability, urgency, and output. In an industry where the environment is literally trying to break you, that resistance isn't irrational. It's earned.

The tension was palpable and turned into a lively debate. Then Linda from Mountain Man Welding spoke up, and the room went quiet contemplating her comment.

Linda is a veteran in the industry. She's run her firm for decades. She is less interested in fluff; she's interested in what shows up in the steel.

"I can tell when something is up with an employee or even an entire team. The rework metrics start getting worse."

She doesn't discover rework as an explanation for declining profitability on a monthly financial statement. Linda sees rework as a leading indicator. Before anyone approaches her with a problem. Before job costs or schedules start to meaningfully shift. And well before her P&L indicates something went wrong.

Most of us treat rework as a lagging financial failure. It's the tax we pay for a mistake already made. We look at the spreadsheet, find someone to blame, and try to improve management or

training so it doesn't happen on the next job.

Linda's comment was short, but it hit everyone in the room the same way.

When a skilled welder—someone who knows the craft inside and out—starts producing work that doesn't pass muster, it is a check-engine light. It is a physical, measurable manifestation of a breakdown in the human system. Long before the project manager realizes the budget is blown, the rework is screaming that the team is burnt out, distracted, or disconnected.

Rework alone can't tell you everything. It is rarely a craftsmanship issue. Sometimes it is fatigue. Sometimes distraction. It could be a crew operating under chronic stress, poor communication, or burdens in their personal lives.

Instead of waiting until damage becomes visible in budget vs actuals reports, claims, or incident reports, we could act earlier. This is where the human element actually improves profitability and every other financial and efficiency metric. Let that sink in. This is not limited to rework.

The same force also drives turnover, safety incidents, communication breakdowns, near misses, tardiness or no-shows, and disengagement. These are not isolated personnel issues! They are signals in the noise, indicators you can rely on as an early warning that someone's life and well being are degrading.

Human wellbeing is upstream from operational performance, not separate from it.

The conditions of the workforce directly impact communication, quality, safety, trust, retention, schedule reliability, and profitability. If we want to protect the schedules and margins, we have to protect the focus, stability, and

wellbeing of the people doing the work.

The best field leaders already understand this intuitively. They know crews are not machines. Attention, trust, communication, and mental bandwidth directly affect execution. The future of construction leadership depends less on blindly pushing harder and more on learning to recognize the human indicators.

Thankfully, this conversation is no longer isolated. It is converging across the industry. In addition to ASA Colorado's Trade Partner Connection, AGC Colorado's mental health efforts, to Total Worker Health research at the Colorado School of Public Health, to recovery-friendly workplace programs, safety leadership evolution, suicide prevention training, and the ongoing fight to retain a workforce that has more options that ever before. Everyone is coming to similar realizations, from all different directions.

As an industry, construction is excellent at measuring what matters financially. The next evolution is learning to recognize the human indicators that drive those outcomes in the first place. The firms that learn to recognize those signals early will build stronger cultures, safer teams, and more resilient businesses.

About the Authors



Adam Roderick is CEO of Datateer, a data analytics firm transforming how construction companies manage financial complexity.

A veteran technologist, Adam specializes in making massive datasets radically simple to act upon. He

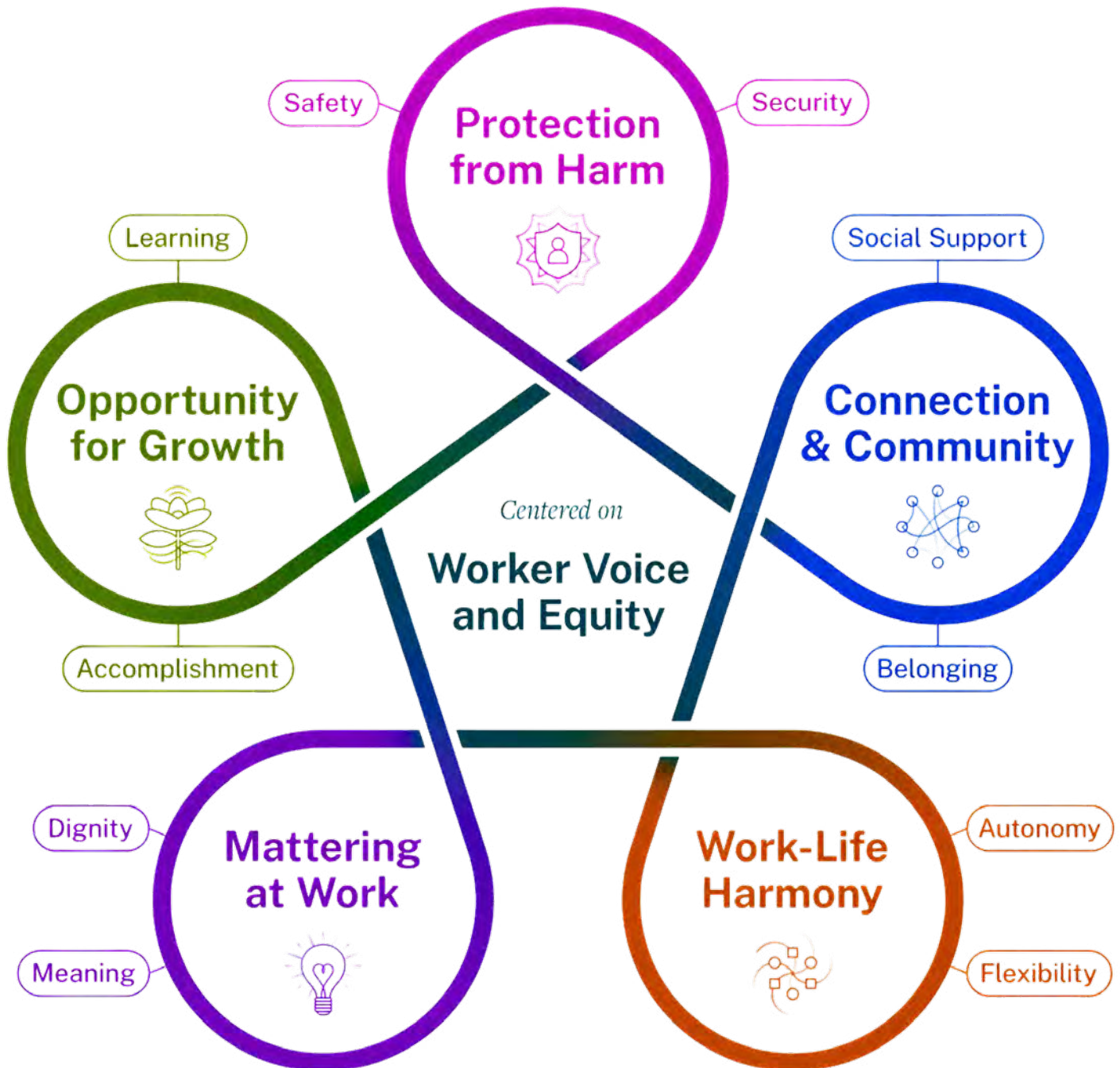
previously worked for PwC and built a premier software firm to 30 employees. An elite full-stack developer, he has architected systems processing hundreds of billions of records daily and led products serving hundreds of thousands of users. His clients include The State Group, Double L Management, Morris-Shea Bridge Company, Northwestern Mutual, Pearson, Vail Resorts, and the US Olympics.



Nick Williams is the CEO of both R.I.S.E LLC and the American Subcontractor's Association of Colorado. He has chaired the AGC

Mental Health Working Group since 2021. He is the Vice Chair of the

non-profit training company Recovery Friendly Leader. He holds a graduate certificate in Total Worker Health from the Colorado School of Public Health. He loves travelling the world with his wife and son, is almost always with his Westies named Pacey and Joey, and is an avid consumer of all things pop culture.





HEALTH COVERAGE INSIGHTS

The Crisis Your Benefits Plan Was Designed to Miss

by Chris Cordon, Affinity Benefits

Last year, more construction workers died by suicide than from falls, electrocutions, struck-by accidents, and caught-in injuries combined. Roughly five thousand suicide deaths against about a thousand from OSHA's entire "Fatal Four." We run safety stand-downs against the smaller number. We say almost nothing about the bigger one.

I'm not going to pretend to be a mental health expert. I sell health

insurance. But the plan you bought is supposed to catch people before that number gets worse — and in construction, it usually doesn't.

A Plan Built for a Different Workforce

The standard group health plan was designed for an office workforce. Salaried, 9-to-5, stable. The network, the EAP, the prior auth structure

— they all assume someone with the time, the privacy, and the cultural permission to call a therapist on a Tuesday afternoon.

Your crew starts at 6 AM. They work ten-hour days in places without cell service. They share trucks. They were raised to consider "going to therapy" a thing other people do.

So the plan misfires.



An EAP Built for the Wrong Workforce

Your plan may include an Employee Assistance Program. Three to six free counseling sessions through a phone tree. Free to add, easy to advertise in the benefits packet, and — across most US employers — used by 5% to 10% of the people who pay for it.

In construction the real number is almost certainly lower. Industry surveys show 78% of construction workers cite shame and stigma as the top reason they won't seek help. Only 17% say they'd talk to a supervisor about a mental health issue, compared to 56% in the general workforce.

The EAP isn't broken because the counselors are bad. It's broken because the design assumes a workforce that doesn't exist on your jobsite.

The Pipeline Before the Problem

Now this part is squarely in my lane. A foreman tears his rotator cuff. The injury runs through workers' comp — separate carrier, separate case manager. He goes home with a 30-day opioid prescription. Then a refill. Then a third. Long-term opioid prescribing after a musculoskeletal injury is the single biggest predictor of opioid use disorder, multiplying those odds nearly tenfold in one large union claims study.

By the time the wheels come off, the patient is on the group health plan, not on workers' comp. Different carrier. Different formulary. No handoff. Two systems that don't talk to each other, sitting on opposite ends of the same person.

Construction had 162.6 overdose deaths per 100,000 workers in 2020 — the highest of any industry. That number isn't a culture problem. It's a benefits-design problem with a culture problem layered on top.

The Network That Isn't There Either

When someone finally does pick up the phone, they meet the other failure point. Senate Finance Committee secret-shopper studies and APA surveys have found that 40% to 80% of behavioral-health providers listed as "in-network" are unreachable, not accepting new patients, or not actually in-network at all. The industry has a name for it: ghost networks.

The 2024 federal mental health parity rule was supposed to force carriers to clean up these directories. As of 2025 it's in non-enforcement. The underlying parity law still applies, but the regulator isn't coming.

What a Plan Built for This Workforce Looks Like

You can bolt point solutions onto an existing plan. You can also ask a different question: was the plan I bought designed for an office workforce or a construction one? Two characteristics separate them.

A behavioral-health front door your crew will actually use. Telehealth-first behavioral health— evening and weekend hours, no phone tree — drives utilization two to three times higher than the legacy EAP, with a 1.9x peer-reviewed return on spend.

Musculoskeletal care upstream of the opioid pipeline. Where 30% of the workforce reports chronic back pain and most opioid prescriptions start with an MSK injury, plans that integrate virtual MSK from day one cut surgery rates, opioid use, and downstream BH claims at \$2,400 to \$3,200 per engaged member annually.

None of this happens by accident. It happens when a plan is built from the ground up for a specific industry — pooled across enough employers to get the buying power, sized for a workforce that gets hurt more than average, and structured around

members who don't have time to chase ghost networks at lunch. That is a different kind of plan than the one most subcontractors are renewing every year.

What You Can Do This Week

Most of this isn't a benefits decision. It's a culture decision wrapped around a benefits decision.

Free, this week: post 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline stickers in every truck and trailer. The Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention has a free toolbox-talk library at preventconstructionsuicide.com. Run one at the next safety meeting and add suicide to the stand-down rotation.

Free, this quarter: send two foremen through CIASP's free supervisor training. Stock Narcan in the same first-aid kits that already carry tourniquets.

At renewal: don't just ask for a quote. Ask whether the plan in front of you was built for your workforce, or whether it's a generic group product with construction-friendly trim. If your broker can't tell you what your current EAP's utilization rate is, that's the answer.

Insurance is supposed to be there when people need it. In construction, when people need it most, it usually isn't. That isn't a culture problem. It's a design problem — and design problems get fixed by changing the design, not by piling fixes onto a plan that wasn't built for you in the first place.

About the Author

Chris Cordon is a Benefits Consultant at Affinity Benefits, the program administrator for the ASAdvantage Health Plan.



FEATURE

Making Parapet Roof Access Safer

by Mary Klett, ASA Communications Team



Above: SAKK® MAT attached to parapet and ladder **Below:** Rolled up for transport/storage

For decades, contractors, maintenance workers, and service professionals have accessed flat parapet-style roofs in much the same way: by climbing an extension ladder, stepping over a metal parapet cap, and hoping the ladder remains stable and the walking surface is safe. Despite major advances in construction safety, this everyday task has remained largely unchanged—and often hazardous, especially in rain, snow, ice, or other inclement weather.

SAKK SAFETY LLC was created to address this long-standing safety gap. Its mission is simple: to make accessing flat parapet-style roofs safer. The company's flagship product, the SAKK® MAT, was developed specifically for workers who must transition from an extension ladder onto a flat roof with a parapet wall.

The need for a better solution is clear. According to a survey conducted by students from the University of Wisconsin Parkside, 82% of construction managers and safety directors said their companies work on numerous projects

each year that require employees or subcontractors to access flat or parapet-style roofs from extension ladders. This means the risk is not rare or occasional—it is a routine challenge across the construction and building maintenance industries. The SAKK® MAT addresses two critical issues at once. First, it helps secure the top of the ladder to reduce movement and prevent the ladder from falling over. Traditionally, workers have relied on makeshift methods such as bungee cords, ropes, tie wire, or even screws installed into the parapet cap. These methods can be unreliable and may damage the building, particularly the metal parapet cap. The SAKK® MAT offers a safer and more practical alternative by using buckle attachments and an adjustable J-hook system to help anchor the ladder without damaging the parapet.

Second, the SAKK® MAT provides a non-slip surface for workers as they step from the ladder onto the roof. This is especially important in wet or freezing conditions, when metal parapet caps can become slippery and dangerous. Instead of chipping ice or snow from the parapet cap with a hammer—another practice

that can cause permanent damage—the worker can remove loose snow or ice with a scraper and place the SAKK® MAT over the access point.

The SAKK® MAT is designed for jobsite practicality. It is made from recycled, UV-resistant material that can remain outdoors for extended periods. It can also be rolled up and secured with wrap-around Velcro for convenient storage. When laid out, it measures 48 inches by 18 inches; when rolled, it measures approximately 6 inches in diameter by 18 inches. The product is proudly made in the USA by Roeming Industries in Mequon, Wisconsin.

Flat parapet-style roof access may seem like a routine task, but routine tasks are often where preventable accidents happen. By combining ladder anchoring with a non-slip transition surface, the SAKK® MAT offers a practical safety improvement for contractors, building maintenance professionals, and property owners alike. Its purpose is straightforward: reduce the risk of slips, falls, ladder movement, and property damage while giving workers a safer way to access the roof.

About the Creator of Sakk Mat: The product was developed by Steve McDonough, who has spent more than 43 years in the construction industry. His experience includes new construction, remodeling, maintenance, and repair work—all areas where roof access is often required. After observing that parapet roof access methods had not meaningfully changed in more than four decades, McDonough created the SAKK® MAT to provide a safer, more dependable way to secure a ladder and protect workers during roof entry and exit. Find out more: <https://saksafety.com/> Or contact Steve McDonough at saksafety2010@gmail.com





How to Extract the True Power of AI Tools

Unlocking the full potential of AI tools like ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini can dramatically improve marketing efficiency, creativity, and outcomes. Most of us are only scratching the surface of what these tools can do, often missing out on valuable features and strategies. Here's how to maximize your results and streamline your workflow using generative AI.

1. Master the Edit Prompt Feature

Most AI tools offer an "edit prompt" button, which is often overlooked but is the most powerful feature for refining outputs. Instead of chatting back and forth to clarify your needs, edit your original prompt to:

1. Increase clarity and specificity: Adjust your instructions to better reflect your intent.
2. Maintain conversation quality: Avoid confusing the AI with a long chat history, which can dilute results.
3. Train yourself as a better prompter: Editing prompts helps you understand how your instructions impact the AI's responses.

Example:

Initial prompt: "Please describe the sky visually."

Refined prompt: "Please describe the sky visually on a clear, sunny day using clear, direct language at a fifth-grade reading level for adults. Do not use metaphors."

2. Leverage AI Vision Capabilities

Modern AI tools can process images, opening up new marketing possibilities:

1. Design feedback: Upload images for suggestions on fonts, colors, or layouts.
2. Ad copywriting: Provide screenshots of search results to generate standout ad copy.

3. Color palette creation: Extract color schemes and hex codes from images.
4. Accessibility and bias checks: Review images for accessibility or potential bias.
5. Content generation: Turn infographics or screenshots into social posts or written content.
6. Analytics insights: Upload dashboard screenshots for instant analysis.

Note: Each tool has different capabilities for image formats and PDF handling. Test your tool's vision features to understand its strengths.

3. Explore Advanced Features

- Code writing and execution: Many AI tools can generate and run code, enabling quick creation of apps or calculators for your website.
- Internet connectivity and deep research: Some tools can browse the web and perform in-depth research, producing comprehensive reports and strategic insights.
- Custom GPTs and projects: Organize your workflows with custom instructions, grouped chats, and scheduled tasks.
- Voice and video interaction: Use voice commands or even video chat for hands-free collaboration and real-time feedback.

4. Optimize Your Communication Style

1. Be clear and specific: Provide all necessary context and instructions.
2. Be polite: Saying "please" and "thank you" can improve the AI's helpfulness.

3. Motivate the AI: Explain why the task is important to encourage thorough, high-quality responses.

4. Use personas: Start prompts with "You are..." followed by a detailed description of the ideal expert for the task.

Sample persona prompt:

You are the best email marketing manager in the world with specialized expertise in automation strategy. Your creativity and customer focus help you create onboarding campaigns that delight and retain customers.

5. Structure Complex Prompts with Delimiters

For advanced tasks, use delimiters (like three slashes ///) to separate different sections of your prompt, such as persona, context, and instructions. This helps the AI understand and organize complex information.

Example:

Persona: /// [detailed persona info] ///
Task: /// [task instructions] ///

You can also use JSON formatting for highly structured data, making it easier for the AI to process complex documents.

6. Action Steps for Marketers

1. Edit prompts instead of chatting to refine outputs.
2. Add persona statements to your most-used prompts and test the difference.
3. Use delimiters to clarify context in complex prompts.
4. Experiment with Vision: Try at least one project using image inputs.

By mastering these strategies, you can unlock the true power of AI tools, streamline their workflows, and achieve better results with less effort.



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The bottom section of the image features a white grid background with two large black gear icons on either side of the text.

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