

From the President's Desk



Donald Leslie Jr.

Where has the "spring" season gone? Aside from the questionable weather we've had, here we are, almost at the end of May, and it seems like 2005 just started. At least, when you look at 2005 from the "contractors" point of view, the construction season hasn't started at all.

Okay, so the federal government allocated "plenty" of money to New York State for infrastructure repairs and upgrades, but so far, the roadway projects are A.W.O.L., and if we don't start seeing the bids soon, the 2005 construction season for road work, will be pushed into 2006. Yes, we have had a "few" bid opportunities, but not nearly what we should be bidding between January and May, and certainly not the bid activity needed to put the trades back to work after a long winter hiatus.

While there seems to be "plans" being made on the county level; we've still only seen the usual bid schedules from both Nassau and Suffolk. There were hopes that the

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Long Island Chapter In Support Of Wicks Law

New York's Wicks Law is constantly challenged by the lobbies of the General Contractors who seek its repeal. As Long Island moves forward in planning of new municipal projects, GCs are whispering in the ears of government leaders, urging them to sidestep the Wicks Law which has successfully protected the public since 1924.

It is important that we remind our representatives that Wicks works. Multiple contracts save money and make government look good. The Long Island Chapter of NECA vigorously supports the Wicks Law because it is far less expensive to the public and it prevents special interests from corrupting the bidding process.

The law calls for separate bidding by the mechanical trades on municipal construction projects of over \$50,000. This means that the general contractor's bid is separate from and does not include those of electrical, HVAC and plumbing. Each bid is considered and awarded as a prime contract on its own merits.

The Wicks Law is obvious in its savings for the public. It eliminates the General Contractor markup on change orders. When these orders come through under single contracts, the GC marks up the cost as much as ten percent—an unnecessary add-on driving up the total job cost. The law eliminates duplication of Bond premiums. Under single contracts, responsible GCs require primary subcontractors to post performance and payment bonds. The costs of these bond premiums are in addition to the bond premium of the entire project, essentially causing the job to be insured twice.

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Visit our newly designed website
www.lineca.org

Strong Management and Broad Vision Permits Diversification at Eldor

Long Island Chapter Vice President Nicolaus Feldmann has a long history in our industry. He began as an apprentice electrician when he was 18 and has come far

since then. As President of Eldor Contracting Corp., a electrical construction and maintenance company, Nick is responsible,



Nick Feldmann displays NECA decal on Eldor Trucks

along with his partner Alan Lang, for the livelihoods of some 125 office and field workers. (30 percent of them have been with Eldor for 15 years or more.) Eldor operates 45 trucks, and fills 8,500 square feet of warehouse space in addition to administrative offices at its headquarters facility in Holbrook. There are also satellites in Nassau and New York City.

“To succeed, you have to look to reinvent yourself and find the niches,” says Nick. Aware of changing needs in the marketplace, he transformed Eldor in 1985 from a mechanical contracting firm to an electrical contracting company and has continued to look for special niches to fill. Eldor is not only licensed on Long Island, but in New York City, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Jersey as well. Jobs are diversified with work on the new concourse in Penn Station, at

Rikers Island where they renovated the largest kitchen in a penal institution in the United States, Brooklyn’s Atlantic Yards, and 911 centers in three of New York City’s boroughs. They recently completed a fast track job (18 months) on the Sachem High School, the largest high school on Long Island.

The work covers a broad range of areas with divisions for data, maintenance and construction. Eldor’s large management capability permits this diversity.

The company’s headquarters is impressive. Occupying a large stone building which was completely renovated when they moved in six years ago, visitors are impressed by the inviting pergola that caps the entrance. Inside, a comfortable conference room trimmed with dark wood is dominated by a large TV screen for presentations. Moving through the heavily peopled offices one gets a feeling of high energy. A large poster which can’t be missed expresses a company philosophy: “Every person is the architect of their own character.”

Eldor became a NECA contractor in 1994, allowing it to have a say in the direction of the electrical industry. New York’s Wicks Law is of particular concern right now. The Suffolk County administration is petitioning the state to override the law’s mandate for separate bids by the mechanical trades on the new Suffolk County Jail. As Vice President of NECA’s Long Island Chapter, Nick is very much opposed to abrogation of this important law. If the state were to allow single bidding, costs for the project will be higher and the public interest will not be served.

On the personal side, Nick and Patricia, his wife of 36 years have four children. Kurt, the youngest son, joined Eldor two years ago.

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President’s Message

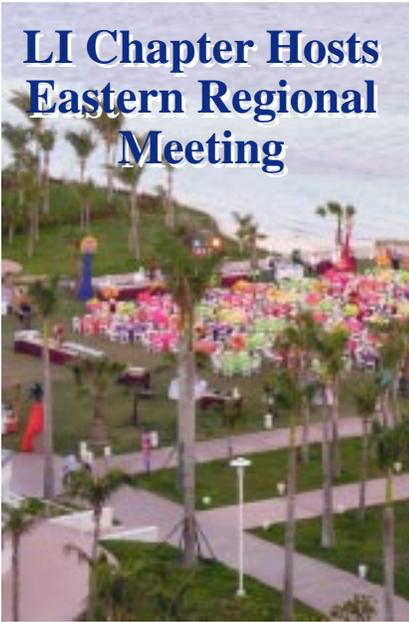
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new jail in Suffolk County would be starting by now, but as the newspapers reported, our elected officials were “shocked” at the pricing levels for the first round of bids. My guess is, they were not paying attention to the fact that steel had quadrupled in price in the last two years, concrete had gone up drastically. The cost of fuel has driven up the cost of almost all materials, not to mention the contractors increased costs.

To make matters worse Suffolk County Executive Levy has applied to the State to obtain an exemption from the Wicks Law on the Riverhead jail, stating he’ll save fifty million dollars, which, we here at the NECA organization believe is totally misleading. (See Long Island Chapter in support of Wicks Law.) We as electrical contractors know from experience, that this exemption, when approved, will only promote job delays, cost over runs, manipulation of subcontractors by the general contractors, and end up

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LI Chapter Hosts Eastern Regional Meeting



The Long Island Chapter hosted the Eastern Regional Meeting on March 13-16th, 2005. The meeting was held at Our Lucaya Beach and Golf Resort in Grand Bahama Island.

The members all sported special shirts recognizing us as the host chapter and we presented some of these to the NECA personnel in attendance. Forty members and guests attended the chapter dinner at Luciano' which was a big success. The chapter received many compliments on the food and drinks that were provided at check in upon arrival.

At the opening business session Chapter Manager Roy Richey opened with a prayer, Vice President Nick Feldmann led us in the flag salute. President Don Leslie, Jr. then gave a welcoming speech on behalf of the Chapter.

The programs were all interesting, however the video of Ed Hill's speech to his members last year, drew the most attention. Ed Hill being the International President of the IBEW. The chapter will obtain a copy of this to be used at one of our membership meetings.

The hospitality suite was very busy and all enjoyed exchanging ideas on our industry. One of the events that many of us participated in was the golf tournament and Robert Mauchan was the star for the chapter winning the low net award for men.



**Join us for NECA SHOW 2005
September 17-20
in
New Orleans!**

Industry Awareness To Help Keep Market Share

On March 28, 2005, representatives from the Long Island Chapter, NECA and Local Union No. 25, IBEW met at the Union headquarters for a program presented by International Representatives Wyatt Earp and Jerry Comer, and NECA Field Representative William "Biff" Jones.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the Electrical Industry and where it is heading in the near future. There were approximately fifty people in attendance. Ideas were exchanged, some new and some old, but both Labor and Management were able to analyze what we have to do to keep our market share on Long Island growing.

One of the stimulants for this meeting was IBEW International President Edwin Hill's recent speech to his Business Managers in Illinois last year. •



President's Message

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costing the taxpayers more in the long run. The only benefit to the county, will be that they will have someone else to blame for the problems - the general contractor "in charge" of the project. In the meantime, the project is delayed, the construction season is slipping away, while two-thirds of the people awaiting trial in Suffolk County continue to cost the taxpayers money, housed in upstate jails as we don't have sufficient facilities here in Suffolk County and are forced to transport these "prisoners" back and forth as necessary, until they can get to trial. At a recent meeting, a member suggested that "maybe" we'd be better off building another courthouse, and hiring more judges, so that all these people awaiting trial could be moved through the court system quickly and effectively, and possibly eliminate the need for Suffolk County to house them.

In the meantime, we here at NECA will continue to get the message out to our elected officials, that despite what the GCs and school districts would have you believe, while it may not be "perfect"...**WICKS WORKS!!!**

In the coming months, we'll continue working on the many issues that effect the electrical industry and keep you advised on issues we are working on such as;

- A county wide Nassau County electrical license, supported by many elected officials, NECA, Nassau Electric

League, Suffolk County Electrical Contractors Association Inc. and the IBEW.

- Results of the negotiation process and the C.I.R. (Council on Industrial Relations) decision on both the maintenance and telecommunication agreements, along with the many positive changes negotiated locally to both agreements.

- Current status of the Health & Benefit Fund, and any further changes being proposed by the Trustees.

- Updates on the pension benefits, and possible changes being made.

- Updates on J.A.T.C. - apprenticeship issues and the "New Apprenticeship Class."

- Changes by the IBEW and President Hill to the referral system (which effects how we hire our electricians).

- Updates on the "Long Island Aquarium" and where the "donations" went when the project was never built.

- Update on the IBEW's proposed new "Construction Wireman Program." And the many, many issues that come before us on a daily basis.

Please remember to check the meeting calendar, call the chapter office if you have any questions or issues we can help with, and get involved with the chapter, and your industry - we welcome your input and advice, and want you to be involved in your industry and this association. Together - we can make this a better industry for everyone!!! — **Don Leslie, Jr.**

Calendar

Meeting Dates

General Membership

June 16, 2005 (3rd Thursday)

September 15, 2005 (3rd Thursday)

October 20, 2005 (3rd Thursday)

J.A.T.C. Graduation

June 3, 2005 (Friday)

Check the Chapter Website for Industry Meetings and keep in mind...

2005 NECA National Convention and Show will be held September 17-20, 2005 in New Orleans

Eastern Region Annual Meeting will be held March 18-22, 2006 in Aruba

Wicks Law from page one

Comprehensive studies comparing single vs. separate bids in a number of states indicate that projects awarded under separate contracts have effected substantial net savings to local and state government agencies. Because of these proven savings on construction projects, many private developers use the principle of the Wicks Law. Firms like Eastman Kodak, Hyatt, Xerox, and many more all have gained through the separate contracts principle of the Wicks Law on their New York State building projects.

Without Wicks, GCs would be free to hire inexperienced mechanical tradesmen by claiming that they would properly supervise them. No one can supervise an inept plumber or a poorly trained electrician into first class work. And coordinating the activities of these inexperienced people invariably adds time and costs to the job.

As NECA contractors, tell your County Legislators and New York State Senators and Assemblymen—Wicks works. Let's keep spending under control. •