# CONSTRUCTION RESOURCE

Volume 29, Issue 1

# **Education is your best defense**

### **INSIDE:**

### **HEALTH & SAFETY:**

Determining What Projects Can Proceed in Massachusetts in the COVID-19 Era

### **HUMAN RESOURCES:**

In Uncertain Times, Pay Close Attention to the Employee Handbook

### **ECONOMY:**

Searching for Consistency and Stability

### **MARKETING:**

How to Market Your Construction Company During a Crisis

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### From the President & CEO

# ABC Members Donate \$44,000 to Food Banks of New Hampshire & Vermont

am pleased to see that our industry has stepped up in a big way to help fight back against impact COVID19 has had on our community. Members have donated thousands of N95 masks to frontline healthcare workers and aided causes to ease the burden being felt by all.

During this coronavirus crisis, many families in our communities are faced with tough decisions but choosing to eat should not be one of them. That's why the chapter coordinated a fundraising drive that raised over \$34,000 in relief to help the food banks of New Hampshire and Vermont fight hunger in our communities. And surprisingly enough, one member made an additional \$10,000 direct donation to the NH Food Bank, bringing the total raised by our members to over \$44,000! We initially set a goal of \$15,000 and were humbled by the overwhelming



support displayed by the men and women who helped us *double* our goal.

We have such an amazing and compassionate construction community and they stepped up in a big way to help the food banks in their fight against hunger. It is this show of good will which gives me the confidence to believe we will all make it through this pandemic stronger. I could not be prouder of the people who work for the companies that belong to this association.

On behalf of the board of directors and the chapter staff, I truly thank you for your generosity and kindness which makes this the best construction association in New England.

Very Truly Yours, Josh Reap President & CEO

### **Contents**

- 5 From the Chair: ABC NH/VT Benefits & New Group 401(k) Plan
- 7 Health & Safety: Determining What Projects
  Can Proceed in Massachusetts in the COVID-19 Era
- 9 Human Resources: In Uncertain Times, Pay Close Attention to the Employee Handbook
- 11 Economy: Searching for Consistency and Stability
- **15** Member News
- 21 New Members
- **26** Professional Resources
- Marketing: How to Market Your Construction Company During a Crisis
- **37** Celebrate Our Members
- **46** Advertiser Index

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### From the Chair

# ABC NH/VT Benefits & New Group 401(k) Plan

People join different groups, clubs, sports leagues or associations for different reasons.

Some enjoy the new friendships they may develop as a member. Others enjoy the spiritual and emotional lift that they may gain for themselves. Some feel reinvigorated by participating in something that may bring back memories from younger days. No matter what you may receive from your affiliation with these different interests...One could look upon these as real by USACE and NAVFAC, First Aid, Workplace safety training, construction document education, contract lan-



guage, etc. The education options are continually rotated and enhanced based upon the Chapter Members needs. One of my favorite education programs that I was able to attend was the Future Leaders in Construction

Our New Hampshire members have an opportunity to join the Chapter's self-insured group (SIG)....
We receive deep discounts from a large array of participating Companies. Some are local, others are major corporations. These discounts may include Purchasing Cards, Apparel and Uniforms, Commercial Vehicles, Fleet Management, Auto Parts and Accessories, Fuel, Cell Phones, Materials, Tools, Office Supplies and Delivery Services.

personnel benefits.

In one form or another you or your company receive similar benefits as a member of the ABC NH/VT Chapter.

I would like to take a few minutes of your time and remind you of a few specific benefits that some may not take advantage of or may not realize that they exist. Also, I would also like to introduce a new and exciting benefit for our Chapter in 2020.

As a member you have access to highly beneficial education opportunities. These involve Superintendent Certifications, OSHA 10- & 30-hour outreach courses, Construction Quality Management classes required

(FLIC) class. This class helped me to expand my understanding of my work environment, the perspectives of others and myself. I highly recommend this personal game changer!

Our New Hampshire members have an opportunity to join the Chapter's self-insured group (SIG). Our participating members have safety on their minds every day. They are helped by the exceptional focus to safety training and awareness from the group trust plan facilitator and the Board of Directors.

We receive deep discounts from a large array of participating Companies. Some are local, others are major corporations. These discounts may include Purchasing Cards, Apparel and Uniforms, Commercial Vehicles, Fleet Management, Auto Parts and Accessories, Fuel, Cell Phones, Materials, Tools, Office Supplies and Delivery Services.

The new exciting benefit that the ABC NH/VT Chapter can now offer to its members is a group 401(k) plan!

This group plan is available to all interested members in both New Hampshire and Vermont. This group plan will allow all member companies, no matter their size, the ability to join and offer their employees an opportunity to invest in their futures. The Chapter has partnered with Granite Solutions. This low-cost group 401 (k) plan offers members a wide selection of investment opportunities managed by a nationally recognized company.

This is just a highlight of some of the benefits. All Chapter members should take a moment and refamiliarized themselves with what benefits their membership afford them. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the ABC NH/VT Chapter staff members for assistance with whatever you may need. Please take advantage of your chapters many resources.

Thank You!

Wilfred E.

2020 Chairman



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### **Determining What Projects Can Proceed** in Massachusetts in the COVID-19 Era

BY KENNETH E. RUBINSTEIN AND NATHAN R. FENNESSY

COVID-19 has impacted nearly all aspects of society, and has had a particularly profound impact on the construction industry. Different states have adopted different approaches, balancing the need for worker safety and the need for economic survival. While New Hampshire has generally allowed all construction to proceed, Massachusetts has adopted a much more restrictive approach, allowing some projects to progress, while others are shut down.

Massachusetts has effectively shut down all on-premises work other than work that is defined as Essential Services.

On March 23, 2020, Mas-

sachusetts Governor Charles Baker issued an executive order requiring that, "All business and other organizations that do not provide COVID-19 Essential Services shall close their physical workplaces and facilities ("brick- Fennessy and-mortar premises") to



Rubinstein



workers, customers, and the public..." Governor Baker then extended that order on March 31, 2020 to continue through May 4, 2020, and recently extended this Order again to continue in force

through May 18, 2020.

Massachusetts initially included all construction work among the designated Essential Services, but then rewrote its list to exclude most projects.

Governor Baker's March 23rd order broadly included construction among its "Essential Services," including "Construction Workers who support the construction, operation, inspection. and maintenance of construction sites and construction projects (including housing construction)" among the designated Essential Services.

Governor Baker, however. then issued a March 31st order sharply limiting the construction projects that qualify as Essential Services. The updated list of Essential Services limits construction to projects in certain specified sectors, including but not limited to defense, healthcare, housing, energy, and infrastructure (including computing and telecommunication) sectors, as well as support for COVID-19 relief efforts. Work may also proceed if it is needed for the operation of an existing building, is expressly permitted within the exemption for a specific essential industry, or involves the production of new housing units."

### Construction in support of an Essential Service is not necessarily an Essential Service itself.

Even if a project would support an essential industry, the Orders do not include an express exemption that all construction in support of an Essential Services is itself deemed essential, and that can not just be assumed. For example, while restaurants and food service is considered an Essential Service, it is unlikely that the Governor

intended that the construction of a Chili's restaurant is the type of essential work that must continue during this period. This type of "bootstrapping" argument is permitted, however. where the construction at issue is related to essential products, services and supply chain in COVID-19 relief efforts.

### When in doubt, request an Essential Services designation.

While prohibiting most construction, Massachusetts established a procedure that allows contractors who believe that their work or project should be deemed essential to apply for an Essential Business Designation, by submitting a form through its website. To date, however, very few, if any, contractors who have applied have received a response. If a contractor is unsure about whether it is considered "non-essential" it should carefully review the Order, the essential services list, and the posted FAQ to confirm that the issue is not addressed in some way. If "non-essential" status is still unclear, the contractor should make a good faith determination about whether it is "non-essential" based on the Order's purpose, which is to "minimize all unnecessary activities outside of the home during the state of emergency," and based on how similar businesses, organizations, and facilities are treated under the Order

If the contractor is unclear how to proceed and decides to remain open, the contractor must seek more detailed legal advice and should strictly adhere to all applicable guidance from the Center for Disease Control and Massachusetts Department

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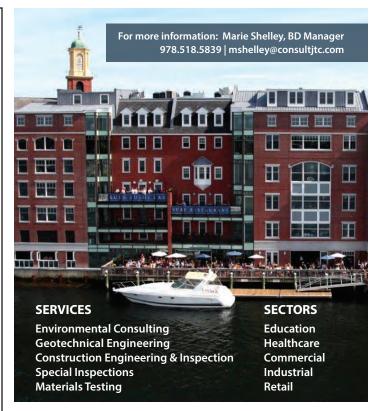
PROJECTS, CONT. ON PAGE 8

### PROJECTS, CONTINUED FROM PG. 7

of Public Health regarding social distancing and environmental cleaning and disinfection. The contractor would also be well advised to submit an application for an essential services designation to show its efforts to comply with the Commonwealth's requirements.

This difficult situation is also made more challenging by the fact that many owners have refused to accept these restrictions and have pushed contractors to continue working in violation of the Orders' requirements. This is complicated even further by the fact that many municipalities have been lax in enforcing the Order, leaving contractors and owners to self-police. While municipalities always have the right to add additional restrictions to a state requirement, they are not permitted to override the state requirements. Accordingly, the Governor's Orders remain in place, regardless of whether towns and cities choose to enforce them. Contractors working in Massachusetts are urged to comply the requirements, as they face significant risk, include potential shutdowns, OSHA fines and violations, and liabilities for proceeding in violation of the Orders.

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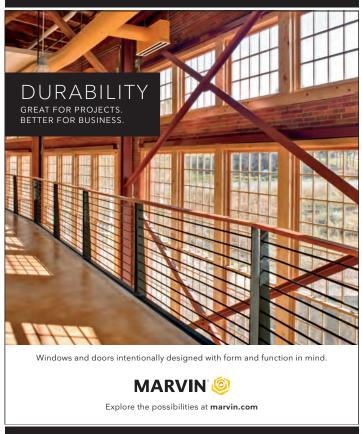






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# In Uncertain Times, Pay Close Attention to the Employee Handbook

BY RICK BLYSTONE

Employers have quite a bit to think about in relation to COVID-19. During these uncertain times, pay special attention to one specific point of control: the employee handbook.

Starting with the premise that an employee handbook is typically not considered a contract, the handbook and the provisions therein can generally be modified by the employer, at any time, as the employer deems appropriate. There are, however, exceptions, as well as certain provisions that employers should include because if they are not included, detrimental and often unintended effects could result.

### **EMPLOYMENT AT-WILL**

Sample language could include: "This Employee Handbook is not a contract. It can be modified at any time by the Company, in the Company's sole discretion. Neither this handbook nor any provisions contained herein shall establish any contract rights, in whole or in part, between the Company and any of its employees. All employees of the Company are employed at-will, and this Employee Handbook does not in any way alter the at-will employment relationship.

"This means that either the Company or the employee, or both, can terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice, and for any reason. The atwill employment relationship between an employee and the Company may only be modified, in writing, signed by both the employee and the President, Chief Executive Officer, or Owner of the Company."

### **FMLA**

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) generally provides eligible employees who work for covered employers with 12 weeks of job-protected leave in a defined 12-month period in relation to a serious health condition or as it pertains to childbirth, adoption or foster care. The employer may use any of the following methods to establish the 12-month period:

- the calendar year: 12-month period that runs from January 1 through December 31;
- any fixed 12 months: 12-month period such as a fiscal year (for example, October 1 through September 30), a year starting on an employee's anniversary date (for example, September 22 through September 21) or a 12-month period required by state law;
- the 12-month period measured forward: 12-month period measured forward from the first date an employee takes FMLA leave; or
- a "rolling" 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave.

Under the "rolling" 12-month period, each time an employee takes FMLA leave, the remaining leave entitlement would be the balance of the 12 weeks that has not been used during the immediately preceding 12 months. The problem here is that if the employer does not define how it counts the 12-month period, the employee gets to choose.

This means that if, for example, an employee takes leave during the final 12 weeks of 2020, and if the employer has not defined how it counts the

12-month period, the employee could then choose the "calendar year" method, and take 12 more weeks of FMLA leave

beginning on Jan. 1, 2021. Under those circumstances, the employee could conceivably take 24 straight weeks of protected leave. This might be a logistical nightmare for employers, which could be even more pronounced

given the other challenges employers are currently facing. Most employers prefer the "rolling" 12-month method because it avoids this dilemma.

Whichever method is chosen, it should be identified in the handbook, or the employee is left in control.

The employer should also state in the handbook whether any accrued paid leave runs concurrently with FMLA. If FMLA leave is not defined as running concurrently with other paid leave, then an employee could take 12 weeks of FMLA leave. and assert entitlement to his or her additional accrued leave following exhaustion of FMLA, just as they could in the situation described above. In a concurrent leave scenario, the employee would be on FMLA leave, and at the same time, exhaust his or her accrued leave. Once it runs out. the remainder of leave would be

Note that this does not apply to recently enacted paid sick leave requirements under The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), which requires certain paid leave relating to COVID-19. Under FFCRA, the employer may not require an employee to use other paid

leave provided by the employer before the employee uses the paid sick leave. With this in mind, employers might specify



in their employee handbooks that accrued paid leave shall run concurrently with leave taken under the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (as it existed prior to any FFCRA amendment), but that employees are not required to use accrued paid leave before taking paid sick leave pursuant the FFCRA.

Unless a particular state has an applicable law in place, or a collective bargaining or other enforceable contract applies, whether an employee of a private company is entitled to a payout of his or her accrued sick or vacation leave upon separation of employment is usually governed by an employer's policies.

An employer that is facing reductions in force, layoffs, terminations, etc. in the wake of COVID-19 may not wish to make a payout of unused sick or vacation leave at the point of an employee's separation (or have the funding to do it). If this is the case, the employer should state that "except or unless required by applicable law, all accrued vacation leave, accrued sick leave and accrued PTO, shall be forfeit upon an employee's separation of employment, and the

HR, CONT. ON PAGE 10

#### HR CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

employee shall not be entitled to any payout whatsoever for such accrued, unused leave."

The employer might also choose to include a policy that states that "except or unless approved in writing by management, an employee may not take vacation, or utilize accrued vacation leave, during the final two weeks of employment." This should help the employer avoid a scenario where an employee gives his or her two weeks' notice, or where the employer notifies the employee that he or she will be separated in two weeks, and the employee subsequently attempts to take vacation during those two weeks.

Approval of sick leave following a two-week notice should be treated differently, particularly given the circumstances surrounding COVID-19.

### AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Employers often have a discrimination and harassment policy in place that refers to the Americans With Disabilities Act. If an employee is a qualified individual with a disability, and the employer has 15 or more employees, the employee is protected under the ADA, and may be entitled to a reasonable accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of the job. The right to protection and/or an accommodation may be even more clear under state law (for instance, certain states and/or municipalities do not have the 15-employee mandate).

When an accommodation is requested, the employer is required to engage with the employee in an interactive process—that is, talk to the employee about their request(s), decide collectively about the accommodation needed and choose what accommodation can be offered that would not be unduly burdensome to the

employer. A direct threat analysis may also be appropriate.

These issues could well arise in relation to COVID-19, and so it makes sense to include an ADA/ reasonable accommodations policy in the employee handbook. At the very least, this will serve as a reminder to employees and employers as to the process to be followed.

### FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

Salary-exempt personnel are employees who, because they fall into an applicable exemption under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), need not be paid overtime by their employer. Employers can destroy the exempt status of their exempt employees if they make improper deductions from those employees' paychecks.

Damages under the FLSA include lost wages, an amount equal to lost wages, known as liquidated damages, as well as attorney's fees and costs. Collective actions also can be brought. Thus, destroying the exemption by wrongly, and perhaps inadvertently, deducting from an exempt employee's pay can have dire consequences. As employers tighten their budgets during COVID-19, employers may be looking more carefully at the prospect of taking deductions from exempt employees pay. This could lead to errors.

There may be a way, however, to preserve the exempt status of an employee, even where impermissible deductions occur. The FLSA provides a "safe harbor," which states that exempt status may be preserved if the employer:

- has a written policy prohibiting improper deductions and has "clearly communicated" that policy to its employees;
- has established a complaint mechanism for employees

- who believe their wages have been improperly deducted;
- reimburses employees for any improper deductions; and
- makes a good faith commitment to comply in the future.

Accordingly, employers should include a safe harbor policy in their handbooks. It should include a complaint mechanism and detail exactly what an employee should do when they believe improper deductions are taken, who, specifically, they should go to in order to raise a concern and what will happen when a concern is raised or a complaint made.

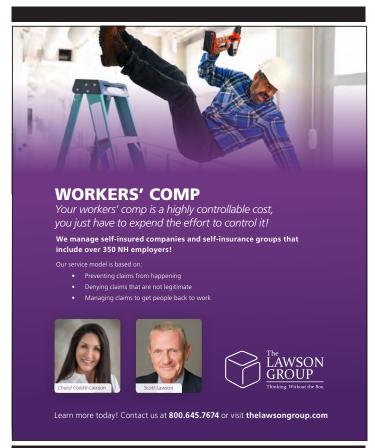
### EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Make sure to include an employee acknowledgment with the handbook, and again any time the handbook is amended. The acknowledgment should

at the very least state that the employee has fully reviewed and understands the handbook, or amended handbook, and every provision contained therein.

Employers often also take the opportunity in the acknowledgment to include a statement reiterating the at-will employment relationship. The acknowledgment should be signed and dated by the employee. A copy of any such signed acknowledgment(s) should be kept in the employee's file.

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in Construction Executive Magazine
April 2020.



### **Searching for Consistency and Stability**

At the beginning of March, the typical ABC construction member's day was such that the work was non-stop, the bidding was plentiful, new business opportunities were actually being turned away for staffing reasons. Here we are, two weeks later, scrambling to salvage jobsites while implementing workfrom-home practices, staring at backlogs and seeing a wall in front of us featuring "Corona Correction, Travelling at the Speed of Light". Fortunately, this is construction and ESSENTIAL but as you read this article today, this could already have changed.

When considering your operational needs, healthcare, wellness, safety, insurance, 401K program, the emails and resources can be overwhelming as all of these areas will be effected with not-yet-defined limitations and

exclusions

Two things that will remain unchanged regardless of the economic environment are the efforts and services of the Associated Builders and Contractors and the ABC Workers Compensation Self-Insurance Group (ABCSIG). These two entities have consistently delivered service and stability for the construction industry through crisis like the 2008 Great Recession, the September 11th Attack and hurricanes.

### Why do Members join and remain in the SIG?

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Stability: We retain 99% of our members year over year. "Being in the SIG for over 25 years, I have never wanted to shop my workers comp again" – Jerry Kingwill, Cobb Hill Construction

"The ABC SIG brought our company to a whole new level with regard to safety. We have almost tripled in size over the years and the SIG has grown right along with us, raising the bar that led to higher quality employees and jobsites."
—Mike Dion, owner MetroWalls/Exterior Designs

"The make-up of the SIG is a strong combination of FutureComp/ USI and CRM where industry experts in every discipline of insurance, claims management, and on-site observations share resources to bring continuous awareness and learning opportunities to fellow members. It is where monthly meetings with peers, raise high the importance of accountability to each member and metrics focusing on benchmarks and results make a recipe for best practices and

ABC SIG, CONT. ON PAGE 17





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22 Hampshire Drive, Hudson, New Hampshire 03051 www.northpointcm.com | T: 603-546-2000 | F: 603-546-2002 ■ Matthew Wheaton was recently promoted to Vice President of Preconstruction at **DEW CONSTRUCTION**. Matt joined DEW in 2012 as a preconstruction manager and in 2015

transitioned to VP of DEW Properties. Over the past four years he was a VP of business development. Wheaton was



recently promoted to vice president of preconstruction and is responsible for the management, coordination, and successful delivery of preconstruction services to our clients – from marketing and negotiating of the preconstruction agreement, through successful GMP and project turn-over to the construction team. His background in design, estimating, and project management provide him with the skills to be a valuable resource for our clients as well as the entire team

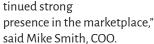
at DEW.

Wheaton holds a Master of Architecture degree from Norwich University. He is a board member with Associated Builders & Contractors of NH/VT.

DEW Construction announced that Taylor Woodward has been promoted to Executive Vice President. In his new role, Woodward will lead our efforts to integrate services and streamline processes.

"This is an exciting opportunity for both DEW and Taylor. Taylor brings a wealth of experience, passion commitment

and respectfulness to DEW leadership. His influence will have positive impact on DEW's continued strong



In his position as project manager, Woodward was

responsible for and excelled at controlling the cost and quality of projects and meeting clients' expectations.

MEMBER NEWS

Woodward brings with him over 14 years' experience in construction management, where he has held various positions in the field and internally. He holds a B.S. degree in Construction Management from Vermont Technical College.

■ In December, 2019, **PRO-CON**'s Architecture Team was recognized as a winner of the 2019 Argentum Senior Living by Design Award for Brightview Senior Living in Shelton, CT. The 168,000 SF design was featured in the December 2019 issue of Senior Living Executive Magazine. The Shelton community was selected from among national submissions for its



Brightview Senior Living

NEWS, CONT. ON PAGE 17



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#### **NEWS, CONT. FROM PAGE 15**

embodiment of Argentum's 2019 theme "A Certain Sense of Place." Brightview Shelton is lodged in the Connecticut countryside adjacent to Wells Hollow Farm between New Haven and Bridgeport. The Manchester-based PROCON constructed the 4-story community as part of their award-winning design-build process.

In January 2020, The AC
Hotel by Marriott located at 299
Vaughan Street in Portsmouth,
opened its doors to guests.
The upscale 152,000 SF hotel is
adjacent to the 3S Artspace in
the City's North End. PROCON
designed and constructed the
project in partnership with

XSS Hotels of Manchester, NH, and Cathartes of Boston, MA.
Colwen Hotel Management of Portsmouth is providing comprehensive management services.
The new hotel is a stone's throw from Portwalk Place and the city's thriving downtown area featuring smart eateries, shopping, and entertainment.

And, coming in February 2020, Rooftop at the Envio - a European inspired lounge and rooftop restaurant with an outdoor deck and panoramic views of the city's working waterfront. Guests will enjoy signature hand-crafted cocktails, local craft beers, and local seasonal eclectic cuisine. Two dedicated elevators will take guests straight from the ground floor to the restaurant.

Moreover, the Envio will be the only publicly-available rooftop space in the city.

Representatives from PROCON, the Amer(GPES) in Manchester performed by the AHA's Hip Hoppin' Hawks Demonstration team of Londonderry, NH. PROCON sponsored the event as part of an ongoing partnership with the AHA's "Growing Healthy Hearts" program that is running this school year at the GPES and the Manchester Boys & Girls Club.

The American Heart Association's "Growing Healthy Hearts" program teaches students how to live healthier lifestyles. Focused monthly messages are distributed to the students and their families about valuable health topics, such as the importance of eating right, drinking water, the dangers of cigarettes and vaping, and the benefits of physical activity. January's jump rope demonstration sets up the program's February focus, which is about the benefits of exercise.

PROCON Owner Sally Stebbins attended the event along with family members. She remarked, "We hope to encourage children to live a healthy lifestyle, and with the help of their families, create a good foundation in their homes. I am happy to see kids learn and develop healthy habits that will "Demonstrating fun and creative ways to stay active and eat well is essential in developing healthy habits at a young age," said Mayor Craig. "I want to thank the American Heart Association and PROCON for bringing the "Growing Healthy Hearts" program to our students and for setting our students up for a healthier future."

■ University Systems of New Hampshire (USNH) has awarded a 3-year term contract to RPF ENVIRONMENTAL, INC. for industrial hygiene assessments, environmental testing and consulting, hazardous materials, air quality testing, and laboratory analysis services for its campuses throughout the State. This includes Keene State College, Plymouth State College, Granite State College, and University of New Hampshire.

■ TFMORAN Senior Project Manager, Nicholas Golon, PE was recognized by the New Hampshire Union Leader as one

of the state's standout young professionals on January 27th in a 2020 Class of 40 Under Forty special edition. Mr. Golon was



featured as one of the 40 best and brightest young leaders in New Hampshire for his work as a civil engineer and for his community involvement. Mr. Golon joined TFMoran in 2006 and is a licensed Professional Engineer in the states of New Hampshire and Maine. His engineering background includes a diverse cross-section of projects ranging from the residential and the commercial market to industrial and energy applications. His history of successfully managing fast-paced multi-discipline projects provides a strategic benefit to any project team.



ABC SIG, CONT. FROM PAGE 11

continuous progress for safe working conditions while promoting good decision-making throughout our companies."—Larry Huot, President LaValley/Middleton Building Supply.

As many companies are seeking out better options, turn to the ABCSIG. Please look out for more information blasts regarding the SIG and visit the www. ABCNHVT.org website for more information and contacts. Jennifer Monkiewicz, SIG Administrator, FutureComp/USI, ABC Board Member



American Heart Association's Hip Hoppin' Hawks Demonstration team of Londonderry, NH

ican Heart Association (AHA), and Manchester Mayor Joyce Craig, attended an interactive jump rope demonstration at the Gossler Park Elementary School last them a lifetime." The Gossler Park Elementary School also has special meaning to the Stebbins family because Blanchard Stebbins built it in 1956.



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### NEWS, CONT. FROM PAGE 17

Mr. Golon also serves on the American Society of Civil Engineers-New Hampshire Section Board of Directors and has participated in the ASCE Legislative Fly-In program in Washington, DC. He recently helped ASCE-NH raise \$15,000 for the Scholarship Fund for current and prospective New Hampshire engineering students. Mr. Golon gives back to his community in many ways including volunteering on numerous non-profit organizations and mentoring New Hampshire students interested in science, engineering and construction.

Ezequiel Galvan has joined TFMoran as a Structural Engineer

in the Bedford office. Mr.
Galvan recently graduated from the University of New Hampshire at Durham with a Bach-



elor of Science degree in Civil Engineering. He has two years of experience as a Structural Design Intern, focusing on the design of concrete planks, crane layouts, and hoist plans, as well as concrete quality control testing.

TFMoran's Senior Project Engineer Jeremy Belanger, PE has been selected by a jury of his

peers from New Hampshire's Joint Engineering Societies as the 2020 New Hampshire Young Engineer of the



Year. This distinguished award was presented to Mr. Belanger on February 19th at the 69th Annual Engineers' Week Awards Banquet & Exhibition at the Grappone Conference Center in Concord, NH. The American Society of Civil Engineers – New Hampshire Section (ASCE-NH) submitted his nomination not only for his involvement in ASCE-NH, but for his outstanding work

ethic, his integrity as a young professional, his enthusiasm for the civil engineering profession, and his volunteerism in giving back to the community.

Thomas Burns, PE has recently been promoted to Senior Project Manager. He joined

the TFMoran civil engineering team in 2014 and has over 19 years of relevant experience. Mr. Burns has a Bachelor of



Science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of New Hampshire in 2000. He is a licensed professional engineer in the states of New Hampshire and Maine, and a licensed New Hampshire Subsurface Disposal System Designer. He is responsible for overall project management of private and municipal land development projects. Mr. Burns has extensive experience in site/civil design, design of commercial septic systems, and environmental permits of commercial, institutional, industrial, residential and municipal projects.

TFMoran announces the promotion of Jennifer Porter, PE to Senior Project Engineer/Traffic Engineer. Ms. Porter joined TFMoran's Civil Engineering department in 1998. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from Bucknell University. Ms.

Porter's engineering experience includes traffic analysis, civil/site design, and environmen-



tal permitting of private and public sector projects, including municipal, commercial, industrial, residential and institutional projects. She has played a key role in many of TFMoran's largest projects over the past 20+ years and is a licensed professional engineer in the state of New

Hampshire.

Jeremy Belanger, a Senior Project Engineer for TFMoran, recently passed the Professional Engineer exam and is now a licensed civil engineer in the state of New Hampshire. Mr. Belanger joined TFMoran's civil engineering department in 2015. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering and a Master of Science degree in Civil Engineering (Water Resources) from the University of New Hampshire. Mr. Belanger's work experience includes civil/site design and infrastructure design, as well as regulatory permitting and approvals for residential, commercial, industrial, municipal and energy projects.

TFMoran announces that Natalia Kulchitsky recently passed the Professional Engineer exam and is now a licensed structural

engineer in the state of New Hampshire. Ms. Kulchitsky joined TFMoran's structural engineering team in



2016. She has a Master's degree in Civil/Structural Engineering from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and a Master's degree in Applied Mathematics and Mechanics from Lomonosov State University in Moscow. Ms. Kulchitsky's structural design experience includes steel and timber commercial and industrial buildings, and concrete foundations.

■ Tony Giunta, Director of Project Development at **NOBIS GROUP** based in Concord, NH, was recently named Clean Energy Champion of the Year at the Clean Energy New Hampshire (CENH) Annual Awards.

CENH is a non-profit organization focused on promoting clean energy and technologies through education and advocacy for a stronger economic future. The organization's Champion of the Year Award recognizes individuals who demonstrate leadership roles in the transition to a clean energy future. Giunta, who is currently serving his fourth term as Mayor of the City of Franklin, NH, was honored to accept the award.

Throughout his career,
Giunta's major area of interest
has been the renewable energy
market. "As a young professional," Giunta recalls, "renewable
energy was only a dream. Today,
technology and science have
merged to change civilization
as we know it. I wake up every
day excited to work on projects
that only a short while ago were
considered science fiction."

"We are proud to have Tony as part of the Nobis team and congratulate him on receiving this noteworthy award," Ken Koornneef, President and CEO of Nobis Group, stated. "Tony's dynamic and steadfast commitment to promoting clean energy is very much in line with our efforts at Nobis Group to remain a leading renewable energy firm in the region. We are thrilled Tony has received this well-deserved recognition for his work."

Amanda Savage, Business
Development Manager at
NORTH BRANCH CONSTRUCTION in Concord, NH, has been
named to serve as Vice President
on the Plan NH
Board of Direc-

tors.
"I am very
excited about
this opportunity
to be an integral
member of such



an important organization making a difference throughout New Hampshire," said Ms. Savage. "Working with so many talented professionals creating programs to support the planning, design, and development of healthy and vibrant New Hampshire

NEWS, CONT. ON PAGE 23

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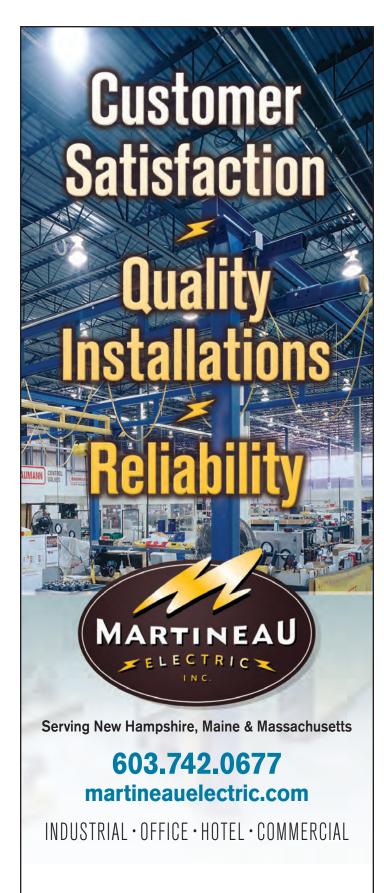
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### NEWS, CONT. FROM PAGE 19

communities is energizing. Addressing the needs of the people living in the many towns, cities, and villages that make up our great state, while maintaining and celebrating each community's unique sense of place and protecting and securing the environment is critical to building a healthy future for the people of New Hampshire."

Plan New Hampshire, The Foundation for Shaping the Built Environment (Plan NH), formed in 1989, with a mission to foster excellence in planning and design and development of New Hampshire's built environment to support a vision of healthy and vibrant communities in the Granite State. Membership in Plan NH includes architects, landscape architects, engineers, planners, building and real



White Birch Armory ceremonial groundbreaking

estate professionals, lawyers, financial and insurance firms and others with an interest in promoting and supporting environmentally, economically and socially healthy communities. The diversity of membership brings a unique variety of views and perspectives to Plan NH's collective approach to shaping New Hampshire's built environment.

White Birch Armory held a ceremonial groundbreaking celebration on Friday, December 20th at the site of the new White Birch Armory Shooting Range and Retail Showroom to be completed by North Branch Construction of Concord. The new construction project located at 74 Industrial Park Road in Dover, New Hampshire includes 13,600 square feet dedicated to a shooting range with 16 firing lanes and warehouse space of insulated concrete form and structural steel, with a 8,144 square foot retail showroom of light gauge

metal frame construction. Scheduled to open in the summer of 2020, the facility will also include classrooms, a member lounge & administrative offices.

### ■ COBB HILL CONSTRUC-

**TION** is proud to announce that Bart Cangialose and Jake Owre have been added to their Project Management team. Both Bart and Jake have extensive construction experience and previously held Superintendent positions at Cobb Hill. Bart resides in Meredith with his wife and two children while Jake, his wife and family reside in Londonderry.

Bart most recently completed the historic Majestic Theatre renovations in Conway and Jake was one of the key Superintendents with CHC's Dental Construction

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NEWS, CONT. ON PAGE 41



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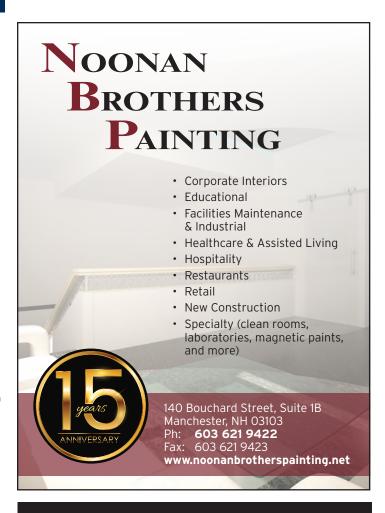
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# How to Market Your Construction Company During a Crisis

BY LORRAINE CLINE

In my 32-year career as a construction marketing specialist, I have never come across a more challenging time to market than right now. As the entire world is preoccupied with fear, social distancing, and sheltering-in-place, we still need to do everything we can to save our businesses, protect our employees' jobs, and preserve the work we have already secured.

I suppose the real challenge is that we've never had to deal with a catastrophe of this magnitude and complexity before. Add to that a situation that changes on a daily basis, and you can see how difficult it is to create a marketing strategy that won't be perceived as overly sales-oriented, self-serving, or downright insensitive.

So how do we market our businesses during such a fluid crisis? In the words of Rand Fishkin.



SEO and digital marketing guru, "Read the room." Rand explains, "Imagine you've walked into a religious space. This room is sacred to the people inside it. When you speak, whatever you say will be viewed through the context of where you are. That's exactly what COVID-19's done to our planet."

So how do you appropriately "read the room?" You will need to know three things before you can successfully accomplish this:

1) Know your audience (you will likely have more than one;

most businesses have 5-to-6, based upon the number of industries served)

- 2) Know your audience's pain points (not just the usual concerns: budget; schedule; experience; quality; and minimizing disruption), but today's pain points (how to keep my business alive; how to retain my employees; how to preserve my cashflow; how to ramp up production for a needed medical device; how to take advantage of the CARES Act and SBA loan programs)
- Know how and where to distribute your message that addresses your audience's pain points

If you want to remain top-ofmind to your clients, prospects, and the community-at-large, I recommend you do the following:

### **DO NOT STOP MARKETING.**

If you disappear from your audience's radar, they may assume your company is no longer in business.
According to the Harvard Business Review, "On average, increases in marketing spending during a recession have boosted financial performance throughout the year following the recession." Stay out front and you will have an easier time recovering when the situation begins to turn around.

MARKET, CONT. ON PAGE 33





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MARKET, FROM PAGE 31

### COMMUNICATE WHAT IS NEEDED MOST NOW.

One of our clients is putting together a virtual panel discussion with bankers and economic development experts to help local businesses learn about what programs are being offered through the recently-passed CARES Act. We will use social media, phone calls, emails, and paid media (Facebook ads) to alert local businesses about this webinar. Another client has put together a comprehensive list of stimulus programs and aid available through the federal government and state agencies. We published a blog and have sent an email out to his contact list of nearly 4,000 businesses with a link back to his website with that timely information. Another client is posting photos of his team's home workspaces on his company's social media channels. It's a lighter, yet appropriate, way of saying, "We are working from home and we care about our employees." These are the types of messages that will resonate with your audience right now.

- PROMOTE WAYS YOU ARE HELPING. Have you donated masks to the local hospital? Put out a social media post with a message such as, "Our company's safety policy has always been to ensure our workers go home safely to their families. We're doing the same for our healthcare heroes. We are grateful to donate our N95 masks to [NAME OF HOSPITAL OR FACILITY] to help save lives."
- PROMOTING IT. Do you have a restaurant client? Help that client out by ordering a sandwich platter to be sent to the local hospital, fire

department, or police station. Know a teacher? Volunteer to be a guest in a virtual classroom to talk about how a project is planned, designed, and constructed, or donate some construction-related classroom materials. That's

media channels—even your branding. Give everything a refresh so you will be ready when this crisis comes to an end. Remember to focus on your audience and their pain points. Your content will resonate with them if

According to the Harvard Business Review, "On average, increases in marketing spending during a recession have boosted financial performance throughout the year following the recession."

all you need to do. Quite often, these groups post thank you messages on social media and will tag your company in the post. This is the best form of recognition, plus you helped out your client as well as those who are putting their lives on the line for all of us.

### TRY NOT TO PROMOTE FREE CONSULTATIONS, or

projects you are currently working on, unless you are doing truly essential work for manufacturers of healthcare facilities, medical devices, PPE or laboratories involved in finding a vaccine or other treatment for the coronavirus. Now is simply not the time to be perceived to be drumming up business. By all means, do reply to any leads that come in. Some businesses are in the unique situation of being able to plan expansions and new construction while they are not as busy.

TAKE THIS TIME TO DUST
OFF YOUR MARKETING
MATERIALS. Now is an
excellent time to improve
your existing marketing
materials—statements of
qualification, proposal covers,
newsletters, core principles
and mission statements,
business cards, website
copy and design, and social

it addresses their specific needs.

- **UPDATE YOUR CRM.** If you don't already use customer relationship management software (CRM), you should. At the very least, you should have an Excel spreadsheet with all your contact information. Ideally, this should include employees, existing clients, prospects, subcontractors, vendors, suppliers, CPAs, attorneys, economic development executives, real estate developers, Chamber members—anyone who is considered an influencer. Ask your project managers, superintendents, estimators, and other key employees to go through their contacts and add them to the list. Include first name, last name, title, company name, address, phone, and email. The easiest way to do this is to create a Google Sheet and share it with these individuals. Then everyone can see who has already been added to the list.
  - TAKE ADVANTAGE
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to see how they handle jobsite safety protocols, retaining employees, COVID-19 policies, SBA loan applications, legal issues and marketing/ business development strategies. ABC National has been hosting a series of webinars on coronavirus since the beginning of the outbreak. The information is timely and gives you an opportunity to hear from experts and ask the questions you need answered. Your local chapter's website offers education and safety training as well as current news and information about the effects the pandemic is having on your business and the construction industry, in general. Don't be shy about reaching out to your chapter's staff or other members to see how they are dealing with this. No need to recreate the wheel.

■ KEEP IN REGULAR **CONTACT WITH YOUR EMPLOYEES.** To those that are working from home, be sensitive to the fact that they are likely trying to take care of kids, cook, clean, homeschool, and work all at the same time. Provide them with resources to deal with boredom, creating an efficient workspace at home, and how to stay healthy. To those still on the job, understand that they are highly stressed individuals who need to go home healthy. Do everything you can to ensure their safety on the site. Implement and reinforce safe distancing, nosharing of tools, proper hand washing, routine sanitizing, and reporting of any signs of illness onsite. The best way to retain your employees is to keep them healthy—both mentally and physically.

MARKET, CONT. ON PAGE 35





MARKET, FROM PAGE 33

AND LASTLY, BE MINDFUL TO "READ THE **ROOM" FREQUENTLY.** 

As we move through the stages of this pandemic and economic crisis, it is important to understand that perceptions and attitudes will change. Stay in touch with your best clients and ask them how they feel about their businesses, their economic outlook and their plans for future projects.

Please share with me the things you are doing to help

keep your company top-ofmind. And, as always, if you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact me at lorraine@clinedesign.com. Remember, a rising tide lifts all ships.

Lorraine Cline is President and Founder of Cline Design, LLC, a 32-year-old construction marketing and creative firm. Cline Design works exclusively with commercial and industrial contractors throughout the US and Canada to create effective marketing strategies, newsletters, website creation, industry-related content, proposals, statements of qualifications, social media and other marketing and graphic design services.







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## Spotlight your project!

NH Business Review is giving contractors the opportunity to spotlight a recently completed project in a special two-page center spread called "From the Ground Up." This special feature gives visibility to the construction industry while showcasing some of the most interesting projects here in New Hampshire.

Each feature includes photos and article about the project, and advertising from the architects, engineers, and subcontractors who have been directly involved with the project.

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#### **CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23**

able to take on this integral advancement in our company. Both bring the tenacity, skills and knowledge that is critical to the CHC team." - Jerry Kingwill, President of Cobb Hill Construction

**■ EXTERIOR DESIGNS** of Londonderry, NH was happy to make a donation of \$10,000 to the New Hampshire Food Bank this holiday season.

"Each year, the NH Food Bank provides hundreds of meals to our local community. We proudly support this organization and would like to thank them for all they do during the holidays and all year long", said Nick Paquet, Executive VP of Exterior Designs.

These funds will help buy groceries for those in need and help educate the public on hunger in our state.

■ METRO WALLS was happy to donate \$10,000 to the NH Food



Bank this holiday season.

This annual donation is one that the company looks forward to making every year. Over the years Metro Walls has donated over \$100,000 to this local chari-

"We really enjoy helping the NH Food Bank every holiday season. The impact that this organization has on our community is tremendous and it feels

really good to be a part of it" says Mike Dion, President of Metro Walls.

With this money, approximately 20,000 meals will be served to those who need them. For more information on how you can make an impact for those in need, please visit www.nhfoodbank.org.



Jeff Stupalski

makes him a good fit for this role. As an estimator, Jeff is responsible for qualifying bids, pricing materials, and working with contractors. He prides himself on getting proposals out in a timely manner and on following up with his potential customers.

He feels that these two practices

Metro Walls is excited to

announce that Jeff Stupalski has

for their new South Shore office.

Jeff will be working with General

size job from the South Shore to

Jeff started his career in the field

and comes to Metro with over

ten years of industry expertise.

made for an easy transition to

and that's key to understanding

the business," said Jeff on what

"I think my field experience

the office. I know both sides

taken on the role of estimator

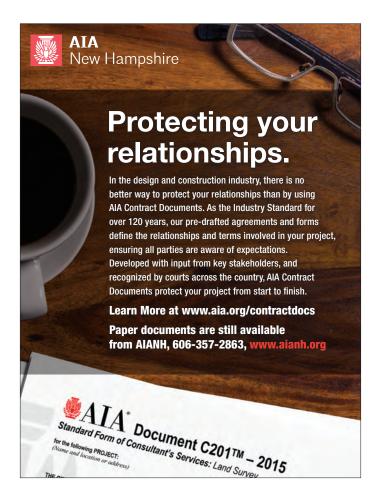
Manager Jay Rocha and their

team is ready to take on any

Rhode Island.

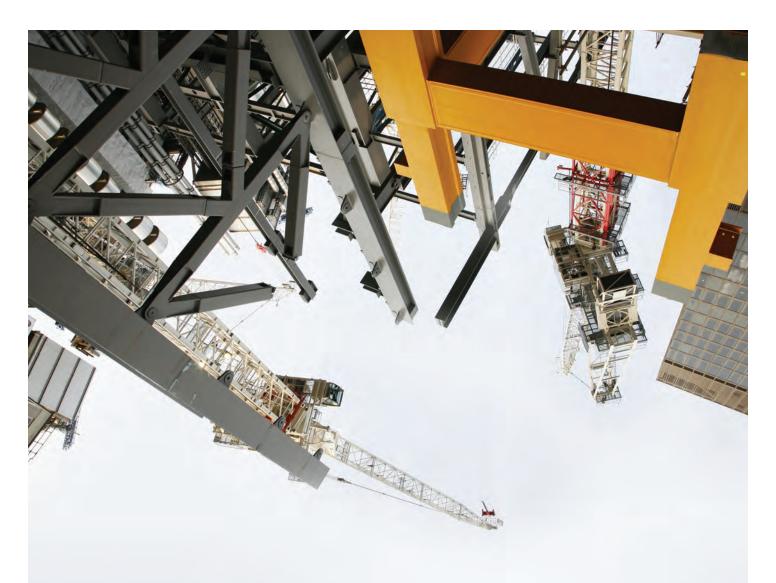
are what makes an exceptional estima-

Jeff's goal for 2020 is to help Metro Walls become the "go to" drywall company of the South Shore. You can find him at Metro Walls' new office located at 95 State Road in Westport, MA.









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\*ABC 2018 Safety Performance Report, abc.org/spr







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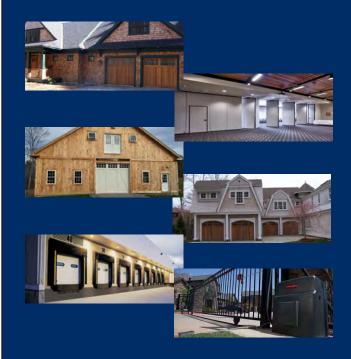
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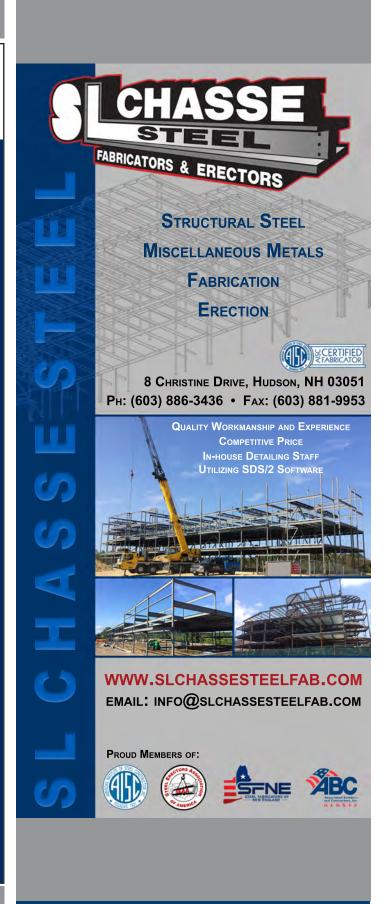
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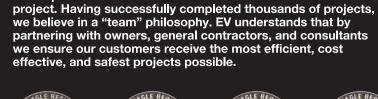
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cleanup with attention to the overall considerations of the









