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VOLUME 55 NO. 12 DECEMBER 2021



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MICA MESSENGER

Volume 55 Issue 12

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

TO: THE MICA MEMBERSHIP

Merry Christmas MICA Members!

From our family to yours -I hope you are enjoying a wonderful holiday season this year and are able to catch up on quality time with family and friends.

The Christmas Season and all of its characteristics make it easy for us to "naturally give" during the end of the year. Giving to a local charity, supporting the food pantry, donating gifts to those in need, and watching those we love receive a thoughtful gift on Christmas morning. It is also a good time to better CONNECT to the people around us with the gift of personal connection.

Creating a deeper connection with those around us can be a very powerful gift. Yes, it may mean stepping out of your comfort zone by reaching out to that co-worker you aren't very close with or talking to that cousin at the family Christmas who you haven't known that well over the years. Simply asking someone how they are doing, and how they are holding up this year through all the stresses that 2021 have caused us, can leave a lasting impression. It doesn't take much to find some common ground with those around us and forming even the slightest connection can really impact others.

Last month, I talked about being grateful for all the people/things around us – including the things we overlook or take-for-granted. During this Christmas season, it is important to think about those everyday things in our lives we may overlook and reflect on how important some of those things are to so many people in our families and communities. Having heat in our house during the cold months, being able to fill up the car with groceries for the kids and relatives coming over to celebrate, buying gifts for our loved ones, fueling up the vehicle on the way to our holiday celebrations, etc. These everyday actions for most of us can be things that others around us struggle with on a daily basis.

I challenge you all to go beyond the pocket change to the salvation army bell ringer at the store; go beyond the extra pair of socks given to the homeless shelter; go beyond the can of soup to the food drive; volunteer at the food pantry rather than just donating food items. This year - sacrifice more than you have to make a bigger impact in your community as people around us continue to struggle during today's unpredictable economy. Stepping out of the normal/comfortable giving we do every year not only helps more of those in need, but gives you a better sense of fulfillment.

A quick reminder; The winter committee meetings that are scheduled for January 20 — 23, 2022, are open to all MI-CA members. The room block at the Hyatt Scottsdale Resort at McCormick Ranch is open until December 29th. Reserve your room today.

Travel safe, have a joyous Christmas, and a prosperous New Year!

Sincerely,

Rudy Nigl MICA President



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BOARD SETS DUES AND ADVERTISING RATES FOR 2022

At its October meeting, the Board of Directors of MICA approved MICA's operating budget for 2022. In its deliberations, the Board voted a modest \$25.00 increase in the annual membership dues for contractor and associate member firms. The Board is very cognizant of the current state of the economy and wants to keep MICA affordable to all current and prospective members. The Board felt that it was prudent to approve a modest increase in the dues structure as it begins to implement a strategic transition in the association's normal operations. Contractor member annual dues for 2022 are set at \$775.00. The annual dues for associate member firms is \$575.00. The 2022 membership renewal notices have been mailed to all current member firms. We are anticipating 100% renewals and look forward to your continued participation in MICA in 2022.

Advertising in the MICA Messenger continues to be an excellent forum to reach the membership on a monthly basis. As such, advertising rates for 2022 remain the same as in 2021. The advertising renewal contracts and applications for advertising for those who are currently not advertising in the newsletter were mailed to the associate member firms. Contact the MICA office if you need an electronic copy of your dues or advertising invoices.

If you have not placed an ad in the newsletter or if you have advertised in the past, 2022 would be a great year to start advertising in the newsletter. Just call the MICA office, and we will get you started.

US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR EXTENDS COMMENT PERIOD FOR RULEMAKING TO PROTECT INDOOR AND OUTDOOR WORKERS FROM HEAT HAZARDS

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration is extending the period for submitting comments on the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for Heat Injury and Illness Prevention in Outdoor and Indoor Work Settings. Comments on the ANPRM must now be submitted by Jan. 26, 2022.

The 30-day extension provides stakeholders more time to review the ANPRM and collect information and data necessary for comment.

Currently, OSHA does not have a heat-specific standard to protect millions of workers in indoor and outdoor work settings from exposure to hazardous heat conditions. In recent months, OSHA has initiated several efforts to protect workers from <u>heat-related illnesses</u> and deaths while working in hazardously hot indoor and outdoor environments. In addition to pursuing a heat-specific workplace rule, OSHA instituted a heat-related enforcement initiative and plans to issue a National Emphasis Program for heat-related safety efforts in 2022.

The agency began the process of considering a heatspecific workplace rule to address heat-related illnesses when it published the ANPRM on Oct. 27, 2021.





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(Continued from page 6)

Submit comments, identified by Docket No. OSHA-2021 -0009, electronically at www.regulations.gov, which is the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. The Federal e-Rulemaking Portal is the only way to submit comments on this ANPRM.

LITIGATION UPDATE FROM OSHA

OSHA is gratified the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit dissolved the Fifth Circuit's stay of the Vaccination and Testing Emergency Temporary Standard. OSHA can now once again implement this vital workplace health standard, which will protect the health of workers by mitigating the spread of the unprecedented virus in the workplace.

To account for any uncertainty created by the stay, OSHA is exercising enforcement discretion with respect to the compliance dates of the ETS. To provide employers with sufficient time to come into compliance, OSHA will not issue citations for noncompliance with any requirements of the ETS before January 10 and will not issue citations for noncompliance with the standard's testing requirements before February 9, so long as an employer is exercising reasonable, good faith efforts to come into compliance with the standard. OSHA will work closely with the regulated community to provide compliance assistance

Comment Period

The ETS on Vaccination and Testing was published in the Federal Register on November 5, 2021. The ETS also acts as a proposal for a permanent standard and OSHA has decided to extend the comment period for that rule by 45 days. Written comments on any aspect of the ETS must now be submitted by January 19, 2022 to *www.regulations.gov* in Docket number OSHA-2021-0007, which is the only way that OSHA is receiving comments on the ETS. Written comments on the information collection request as described in Section V.K. of the ETS preamble [2021-23643] must still be submitted by January 4, 2022 in Docket number OSHA-2021-0008.

Find information on the COVID-19 Healthcare ETS or on Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19).



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FUTURE MICA MEETING DATES

2022 Winter Meetings — January 20 — 23, 2022, Hyatt Regency The Scottsdale Resort at McCormick Ranch, Scottsdale, AZ.

65th Annual Spring Convention — June 19 — 22, 2022, Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort, Bonita Springs, FL.

Fall 2022 Annual Fall Business Meeting — October 13 & 14, 2022, Omaha Marriott Downtown, Omaha, NE.

2023 Winter Meetings — TBD

66th Annual Spring Convention — June 19 — 22, 2023, Cheyenne Mountain Resort, Colorado Springs, CO.

68th Annual Spring Convention — June 16 — 19, **2025**, Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort, Bonita Springs, FL.

MICA MEMBER ADDRESS/INFO. UPDATES

Be sure to inform the MICA office of any changes or corrections to your listing for either the MICA Directory, e-mail correspondence or mailing address. Even if you update your company listing on the MICA website, please inform the MICA office of the changes. We try to be as current as possible with your help.



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<u>CONSTRUCTION JOBS EXCEED</u> <u>PRE-PANDEMIC LEVEL ONLY 18 STATES AND</u> <u>D.C. AS FIRMS STRUGGLE TO FIND QUALIFIED</u> <u>WORKERS TO KEEP UP WITH DEMAND</u>

Only 18 states and the District of Columbia have added construction jobs since just before the start of the pandemic in February 2020 despite a pickup in most states from October to November, according to a new <u>analysis</u> of federal employment data released today by the Associated General Contractors of America. Association officials said one reason employment is below pre-pandemic levels in many parts of the country is the lack of available workers to hire.

"Construction activity has picked up in recent months but still has not reached the employment levels of early last year in most of the country during what has become a very tight labor market," said Ken Simonson, the association's chief economist. "If contractors had found enough qualified workers, more states would have recovered fully by now from the pandemic-induced job losses," he added, noting that job openings at the end of October exceeded the number of workers hired into the industry that month.

From February 2020—the month before the pandemic caused projects to be halted or canceled—to last month, construction employment decreased in 32 states and increased in only 18 states and D.C. Texas shed the most construction jobs over the period (-42,600 jobs or -5.5 percent), followed by New York (-39,700 jobs, -9.7 percent), California (-23,100 jobs, -2.5 percent), and Louisiana (19,800 jobs, -14.5 percent). The largest

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percentage losses were in Louisiana, Wyoming (-13.1 percent, - 3,000 jobs), and New York.

Florida added the most construction jobs since February 2020 (8,700 jobs, 1.5 percent), followed by Utah (8,200 jobs, 7.2 percent), and Washington (6,200 jobs, 2.8 percent). The largest percentage gains were in South Dakota (10.5 percent, 2,500 jobs), followed by Idaho (8.7 percent, 4,800 jobs), and Utah.

From October to November construction employment decreased in 13 states, increased in 36 states and D.C., and was unchanged in Kansas. Louisiana lost the most jobs (-2,200 jobs, -1.8 percent), followed by North Carolina (-1,900 jobs, -0.8 percent) and New Jersey (-1,800 jobs, -1.2 percent). Louisiana also had largest percentage decline, followed by Oklahoma (-1.5 percent, -1,200 jobs), New Jersey, and North Carolina.

Florida added the most construction jobs between October and November (8,200 jobs, 1.4 percent), followed by Illinois (3,800 jobs, 1.7%) and Texas (3,600 jobs, 0.5 percent). Montana had the largest percentage gain (2.7 percent, 800 jobs), followed by Missouri (2.6 percent, 3,200 jobs) and Vermont (2.1 percent, 300 jobs).

Association officials said labor shortages are undermining the construction industry's ability to fully recover. They urged public officials to boost investments in career and technical education and other programs that expose more people to construction career opportunities. They added that the association was working with its chapters and member firms to recruit more, and more diverse, people into the industry.



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(Continued from page 14)

"It is time to stop giving students the incorrect impression that every good career requires a college degree and takes place in an office of one kind or another," said Stephen E. Sandherr, the association's chief executive officer.

IRS ISSUES STANDARD MILEAGE RATES FOR 2022

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service issued the 2022 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.

Beginning on Jan. 1, 2022, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be:

58.5 cents per mile driven for business use, up 2.5 cents from the rate for 2021,

18 cents per mile driven for medical, or moving purposes for qualified active-duty members of the Armed Forces, up 2 cents from the rate for 2021 and

14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations; the rate is set by statute and remains unchanged from 2021.

The standard mileage rate for business use is based on an annual study of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile. The rate for medical and moving purposes is based on the variable costs.

It is important to note that under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, taxpayers cannot claim a miscellaneous itemized deduction for unreimbursed employee travel expenses. Taxpayers also cannot claim a deduction for moving expenses, unless they are members of the Armed Forces on active duty moving under orders to a permanent change of station. For more details see Moving Expenses for Members of the Armed Forces.

Taxpayers always have the option of calculating the actual costs of using their vehicle rather than using the standard mileage rates.

Taxpayers can use the standard mileage rate but must opt to use it in the first year the car is available for business use. Then, in later years, they can choose either the standard mileage rate or actual expenses. Leased vehicles must use the standard mileage rate method for the entire lease period (including renewals) if the standard mileage rate is chosen.

Notice 22-03, contains the optional 2022 standard mileage rates, as well as the maximum automobile cost used to calculate *(Continued on page 20)*

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(Continued from page 17)

the allowance under a fixed and variable rate (FAVR) plan. In addition, the notice provides the maximum fair market value of employer-provided automobiles first made available to employees for personal use in calendar year 2022 for which employers may use the fleet-average valuation rule in or the vehicle centsper-mile valuation rule.

<u>DODGE MOMENTUM INDEX DECLINES IN</u> <u>NOVEMBER</u>

HAMILTON, New Jersey – December 7, 2021 – The Dodge Momentum Index fell 4% in November to 171.7 (2000=100) down from the revised October reading of 178.1. The Momentum Index, issued by Dodge Construction Network, is a monthly measure of the initial report for nonresidential building projects in planning, which have been shown to lead construction spending for nonresidential buildings by a full year. In November, commercial planning fell 8% while institutional planning moved 5% higher.

The value of nonresidential building projects continues to move in a sawtooth pattern, alternating between a month of gains followed by a loss. Since the pandemic began, nonresidential building projects entering planning have been more volatile than in past cycles, likely driven by increased challenges from higher prices and lack of labor.

Despite these issues and a lack of underlying demand for some building types such as offices and hotels, the Momentum Index remains near a 14-year high. Compared to November 2020, the Momentum Index was 44% higher in November 2021. The commercial planning component was 45% higher, and institutional was 41% higher.

A total of 10 projects with a value of \$100 million or more entered planning in November. The leading commercial projects were a \$240 million Seefried Industrial Properties warehouse in Mesa, AZ, and a \$158 million Prologis warehouse in Lebanon, TN. The leading institutional projects were the \$450 million Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem, NC, and the \$241 million Hoboken High School in Hoboken, NJ.

Planning data continues to suggest a healthy level of construction to come in 2022. However, due to higher prices and shortages of labor, actual growth is expected to be modest. The new Omicron variant for COVID-19, and its potential impact on economic growth, highlights the tremendous uncertainly the construction sector will face over the coming year.

DODGE MOMENTUM INDEX

(2000=100, Seasonally Adjusted)

	Nov-21	Oct-21	% Change	
Dodge Momentum Index	171.7	178.1	-3.6%	
Commercial Building	205.6	222.6	-7.6%	
Institutional Building	129.6	123.1	5.3%	

Source: Dodge Construction Network

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ABC: CONSTRUCTION BACKLOG AND CONTRACTOR CONFIDENCE REBOUND IN NOVEMBER

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14—Associated Builders and Contractors reports today that its Construction Backlog Indicator rose to 8.4 months in November, according to an ABC member survey conducted Nov. 19 to Dec. 3. The reading is up 0.3 months from October 2021 and 1.2 months from November 2020.

ABC's Construction Confidence Index readings for sales, profit margins and staffing levels increased in November. All three indices stand above the threshold of 50, indicating expectations of growth over the next six months.

"It's getting better out there," said ABC Chief Economist Anirban Basu. "While the outlook for construction remains imperfect, extraordinarily low interest rates have created enough appetite for deal-making to push backlog higher and persuade the average contractor that sales, employment and profit margins will climb over the next six months.

"Optimistic expectations are a testament to how strong deal flow remains in stimulus-driven America," said Basu. "The infrastructure package passed in November is another reason for optimism, particularly for contractors who work in segments like roads and bridges, water and sewer and mass transit. It is likely that industry circumstances will improve further in 2022, especially if supply chain disruptions and input shortages become less severe, which many economists anticipate by the second half of next year."

Construction Backlog Indicator

	Nov. 2021	Oct. 2021	Nov. 2020	1-Month Net Change	12-Month Net Change
Total	8.4	8.1	7.2	0.3	1.2
		Industry	,		
Commercial & Institutional	8.7	8.3	7.2	0.4	1.5
Heavy Industrial	9.9	7.6	4.5	2.3	5.4
Infrastructure	8.6	7.8	8.7	0.8	-0.1
		Region			
Middle States	8.1	6.8	6.0	1.3	2.1
Northeast	7.7	8.7	7.1	-1.0	0.6
South	10.2	8.7	8.4	1.5	1.8
West	8.0	8.1	7.8	-0.1	0.2
	C	ompany S	Size		
<\$30 Million	7.7	7.4	6.8	0.3	0.9
\$30-\$50 Million	8.9	10.2	7.5	-1.3	1.4
\$50-\$100 Million	10.2	8.9	8.2	1.3	2.0
>\$100 Million	15.0	13.2	10.4	1.8	4.6

Construction Confidence Index

Response	November 2021	October 2021	November 2020
	CCI Reading		
Sales	65.2	59.7	49.4
Profit Margins	50.9	48.9	43.4
Staffing	62.5	59.2	53.8
		Sales Expectations	
Up Big	12.8%	9.0%	5.4%
Up Small	52.1%	44.7%	36.5%
No Change	19.7%	27.0%	22.1%
Down Small	13.8%	14.8%	22.5%
Down Big	1.6%	4.5%	13.5%
	Prot	fit Margins Expectat	ions
Up Big	2.7%	3.7%	2.7%
Up Small	31.9%	30.3%	22.1%
No Change	39.4%	32.0%	32.0%
Down Small	18.6%	25.8%	32.4%
Down Big	7.4%	8.2%	10.8%
	Stat	ffing Level Expectat	ions
Up Big	4.8%	4.9%	2.7%
Up Small	50.0%	44.7%	35.1%
No Change	37.2%	34.8%	43.7%
Down Small	6.4%	13.5%	11.7%
Down Big	1.6%	2.0%	6.8%



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<u>WIDESPREAD STEEP INCREASES IN</u> MATERIALS COSTS IN NOVEMBER OUTRUN <u>PRICES FOR CONTRUCTION PROJECTS,</u> ADDING TO SQUEEZE ON CONTRACTORS' <u>MARGINS</u>

Prices of numerous construction materials soared again in November, outpacing the rate at which contractors raised their bid prices, according to an <u>analysis</u> by the Associated General Contractors of America of government data released today. Association officials said the current steps being taken to address supply chain problems and rising prices have been insufficient and urged public officials to redouble their efforts.

"Prices for nearly every type of construction material are rising at runaway rates," said Ken Simonson, the association's chief economist. "These costs are compounding the difficulties contractors are experiencing from long lead times for production, gridlocked supply chains, and record numbers of job openings."

The producer price index for inputs to new nonresidential construction—the prices charged by goods producers and service providers such as distributors and transportation firms--jumped 0.9 percent in November and 22.1 percent over 12 months. Those increases dwarfed the rise in the index for new nonresidential construction—a measure of what contractors say they would charge to erect five types of nonresidential buildings, Simonson noted. That index climbed by 0.3 percent for the month and 12.4 percent from a year earlier.

A wide range of products used in construction, as well as trucking services, posted double-digit price increases over the past 12 months, Simonson observed. The price index for steel mill products more than doubled, soaring 141.6 percent since November 2020. The index for aluminum mill shapes jumped 41.1 percent over 12 months, while the index for copper and brass mill shapes rose 37.8 percent. The index for plastic construction products climbed by 32.5 percent. The index for gyp-sum products such as wallboard rose 20.9 percent and insulation costs increased 17.4 percent.

Trucking costs climbed 16.3 percent, as did the index for asphalt felts and coatings. The index for architectural coatings increased 12.4 percent and the index for lumber and plywood rose 12.2 percent. The index for diesel fuel, which contractors buy directly for their own vehicles and off-road equipment and also indirectly through surcharges on deliveries of materials and equipment, soared 81 percent over 12 months despite a 2.9 percent decline from October.

Association officials said the steep rise in materials prices shows that more needs to be done to tackle supply chain issues and price inflation that are making it difficult for contractors to be successful. They urged public officials to look at ways to temporarily increase capacity at backed up ports like Los Angeles/Long Beach, abandon plans to double tariffs on Canadian wood, and address rising levels of inflation.

"Rising materials prices are squeezing already slim profit margins for many contractors," said Stephen E. Sandherr, the association's chief executive officer. "Having strong demand for construction is important, being able to make a small amount of money on that work is vital."



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