



North America's **Building Trades** Unions

*#BuildingTradesWhateverItTakes*

*Weekly Newsletter*

*5.1.2020*

## FIELD SERVICES

- NCA
- Bechtel South Field Combine Cycle - Things are progressing well. We are currently at 270 craft this week and have plans to add another 80 next week. The dayshift peak will be capped around 420 (space limitations) as long as social distancing requirements remain in place.
- Great Arrow Builders Penn Chem – Project has increased to 500 including Craft and Non-Manuals. Planning to increase 300 more next week.
- GPPMA
- No changes since last report
- TVA
- Continues to stay ahead of the curve with mandatory testing to enter all nuclear sites. Fossil outages continue as planned although at a reduced scope where possible.
- Hydro and Gas site outages continue as planned. However due to smaller plant and scope size craft numbers are substantially lower.
- Disney
- No Changes since last report
- Southern Company
- Most outages have been scaled back where applicable or postponed until the fall.
- Vogtle - Is still trending up.... With 618 total tested, 167 total positive cases, and 408 confirmed negative. There have been 68 confirmed "recovered" workers that are eligible to return to site.
- DOE
- No Changes since last report.

### COVID-19 Major Council Cities Report as of April 30, 2020

#### Seattle

- Last Friday, April 24, Washington Governor Jay Inslee announced [a plan to allow current construction projects previously underway to be completed](#). Mark Riker, Executive Secretary of the Washington State Building Trades, participated in the media event and did an excellent job. The State Building Trades worked with other representatives from the Construction Roundtable and the Governor's office to create a "sensible plan for limited return to construction with safety measures in place." The Construction Roundtable's formal agreement between construction industry employers, developers and state agencies facilitated by the Governor's office focused on an agreed upon new set of standards and phasing proposal to safely re-start construction.

- The Governor [clarified the initial guidance memo](#) and issued a guide to [frequently asked questions about construction activities](#). No jobsite may operate until the contractor can meet and maintain all requirements, including providing materials, schedules and equipment required to comply. Currently operating projects must be in compliance by no later than this Friday, May 1. We anticipate another announcement on May 1 about an extension of other aspects of the Governor's "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" order, which is scheduled to end May 4.

#### Orange County/L.A.

- Not much change on the job front, most all jobs still open, the City of Los Angeles is approving Corona Virus testing to Asymptomatic Construction Workers.

#### Milwaukee

- In Milwaukee we are holding our own. Most Locals have about 100- 200 members off. Some due to project delays some by choice. Our safer at Home order has been extended to May 26th by the Governor. The state legislation is suing to change the order. They says the Governor over reached in use of his power. The State Supreme court will hear and rule on it tomorrow. Some non-essential businesses have been allowed to open for curbside pickup etc. Things are slowly loosening up as COVID numbers flatten or drop. We have yet to have any major work site have a large spread of COVID incidents. Many projects are being delayed. The Democratic National Convention has been moved to August 13th. This is also not a guarantee to happen either. We have a PLA in place but the scope of work that will be needed remains fluid as they figure out what this event will look like this year.

#### Pennsylvania

- As the construction industry prepares to resume work, the Wolf Administration today issued [guidance](#) for all construction businesses and employees to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
- All businesses in the construction industry in the commonwealth are permitted to resume in-person operations starting Friday, May 1 – one week earlier than previously announced.
- Previously, Governor Tom Wolf and Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine ordered most construction projects to cease unless they were supporting life-sustaining businesses or activities or were granted an exemption to perform or support life-sustaining activities.
- All business and employees in the construction industry must adhere to the Secretary of Health's [order](#) providing for business safety measures, which requires that every person present at a work site wear masks/face coverings unless they are unable for medical or safety reasons and requires that businesses establish protocols upon discovery that the business has been exposed to a person who is a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19. All construction projects must maintain proper social distancing and provide hand washing and sanitizing stations for workers, as well as cleaning and sanitizing protocols for high risk transmission areas. Businesses must identify a "pandemic safety officer" for each project or work site, or, for large scale construction projects, for each contractor at the site.

#### St. Louis

- Nothing much has changed in St. Louis...projects continue to proceed with caution. I really think our joint workers hotline & weekly calls we have with the AGC has been the key! We started it in the very beginning and the calls are at a minimum now, with ALL calls being addressed & satisfied

#### Texas

- Work continues and remains the same as in previous reports. No new Members have tested positive to my knowledge. The only thing new to report on is the Governor will start a 3 phrase program (GA-18) to Reopen Texas starting May 1, 2020.

#### San Francisco

- Today, the Mayor and Health Department's new directive which extends "shelter at home" through the end of May has removed all previous bans on construction.

### Greater Kanas City

- Both Missouri and Kansas "shelter in place" will be lifted at Midnight on Monday, May 4th with guidelines and keeping social distancing.
- All projects are back to work. We have one small project where 10 workers have contracted COVID 19. The Non-Union General Contractor is not following our COVID 19 industry guidelines and several of the union sub-contractors are refusing to go to work until the project is shut down and cleaned. We are working with the owner to get the project temporarily closed and follow industry standards.
- We hold weekly calls with the trades to provide updates and for support. Most trades have 90% of their members working and beginning to recruit for spring. The "Care for Construction Heroes" hotline has been going well. We have had one call this week. To date we have 12 calls reporting job site issues. All have been addressed.
- We have had approximately 50 of our members infected with over 150 being quarantined. We have lost one member and 3 members families however all due to health issue and none from contact on a job site.

### Oregon.

- Regarding our COVID-19 Joint Construction Safety Task Force, we continue to meet three times per week, including 2-4 job site visits. On Thursday we added NECA to our group of participants. Last we issued our first press release to over 200 outlets.

### Michigan

- The Governor is opening construction May 7th .Our Refuel Outage at Fermi Power Plant was going pretty smooth until yesterday with a number of confirmed COVID-19 cases reported. We continue to work with FCA, FORD and GM regarding a restart of their Projects.

### Minnesota

- In Minnesota, construction continues as a critical industry. While the Stay at Home Order is currently scheduled to expire on May 4, the Governor is using a "dial-up/dial-down" method to opening the Minnesota economy, so we anticipate modifications to the Order rather than it being lifted completely. We are beginning to hear concerns from the design community that significantly fewer projects are in the pre-planning phases which could dramatically impact our construction workforce in approximately six months. Currently, Minnesota construction unemployment is relatively low, and members are working safely throughout the State.

### Kentucky

- In Kentucky, construction unemployment remains about 20% statewide. Customers and contractors seem to be following the necessary CDC guidelines in order to keep our members on the job and safe.

### North Dakota

- We are holding steady in commercial sectors with some trades having difficulty filling calls. The industrial sector is continuing to slide with energy commodity prices falling. Unemployment applications have been decreasing but expecting an uptick in the coming weeks due to industrial sector constraints. We are working with signatory contractors to follow National Department recommendations for exposure control plans for construction sites. Governor's shut down order will expire Thursday April 30 for high-contact businesses such as restaurants, bars, hair salons, fitness centers, etc.

## CPWR

CPWR assisted NABTU in releasing the standard on Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup>. A copy is attached separately.

CPWR continues to offer live distance learning courses on COVID-19 and ICRA/COVID-19 awareness to affiliates. We also can train trainers and supply curriculum for integration into affiliates' own learning management systems. We are continuing to explore online asynchronous delivery to reach many more members. We are modifying grants and subgrants to address affiliates H&S training needs.

## TRAINING

The NABTU Education and Research Department has, at the direction of the Apprenticeship and Training Committee, submitted a proposal this week in response to the DOL's Registered Apprenticeship Industry Intermediary Contract Request for Proposals (RFP). The NABTU proposal requests funding for the expansion of apprenticeship utilization and apprenticeship readiness programs. These DOL Contracts, which are slated to run for five years, are very similar to the existing Contract that NABTU was awarded by the DOL. Over the past four years, NABTU has been awarded contracts totaling \$5.8 million to promote Registered Apprenticeship and expand Apprenticeship Readiness programs nationwide.

Next week, the NABTU Education and Research Department will submit a similar proposal, also at the direction of the Apprenticeship and Training Committee, in response to the DOL's Youth Apprenticeship Grant Request for Proposals (RFP). This proposal will request funding for five years to expand apprenticeship readiness programs and Registered Apprenticeship outreach in the nation's CTE school.

## COMMUNICATIONS

This week, NABTU Communications continued rapid response news and social media engagement, council, staff, and industry outreach and updating our [COVID-19 resource webpage](#) with the latest resourceful information for our members and industry. We hosted a teleconference with international affiliate communications directors, met with industry partners' communications teams, and conducted daily individual calls with department staff, officers and council leaders to provide support and guidance through statements, press outreach, interview preparation, content editing, talking points, outreach assistance, and social media promotion.

In press media interviews and on social media, we promoted the urgency for OSHA to provide a national infectious disease standard and for Congress to address COBRA subsidies and pension security in the next stimulus package. We released [a press announcement with CPWR about our new national infectious disease standard for construction sites](#) and [a statement in remembrance of Workers' Memorial Day](#). We continue to strategically leverage opportunities and platforms to educate and promote our messaging to the public, media, government officials and key stakeholders on critical issues impacting our industry during this pandemic. Also, through our [#buildingtradeswhateverittakes](#) social media campaign, we continue to amplify our commitment to community, health and safety, and publicize the helpful efforts and extraordinary contributions of our members.

## LEGISLATIVE

### PENSION

- President McGarvey spoke with Speaker Pelosi this week and received new assurances that House and Senate Democrats will push hard for pension relief in the CARES 2 bill. NABTU and NCCMP are also reviewing new draft pension relief language. At the time of this writing, review is still ongoing. However, this language is expected to be largely the same as the language that all 14 affiliates supported and submitted to the Hill.

### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

- There is increased acknowledgement that this crisis will not be over by the end of July. Therefore, extending and expanding the unemployment insurance benefits included in the CARES Act are most likely to be included in the House Democrats CARES 2 draft. House Democrats have not coalesced around one specific proposal yet. Regardless, there is concern that additional federal money, beyond the \$600 per week included in the CARES Act, will be needed because many states' unemployment insurance funds will be running low due to high demand.

### STATE AND LOCAL FUNDING

- Pelosi announced this week that she would include \$1 trillion in funding for state and local governments in her CARES 2 bill. Some of these funds may be used to shore up state unemployment insurance funds. Senate Republican Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has acknowledged he will negotiate to bring this number down and put limits on its use. However, he will meet resistance from governors, House and Senate Democrats and even members of his own caucus.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

- The House Democrats announced this week a new plan to expand access to broadband. It is anticipated this plan will be a part of the CARES 2 bill as well. House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy, whose district is notably rural, has opened the door to being supportive of including this in the bill. NABTU and the LTF will be lobbying hard to ensure prevailing wage coverage is included as it currently is on a handful of federal government broadband programs.

### WORKFORCE

- House Education and Labor Chair Bobby Scott is working to finalize an approach to providing hazard pay for essential workers. A bill may be unveiled as soon as next week with the intent to include it in CARES 2.
- House Education and Labor Chair Bobby Scott is also working on a bill to provide state and local workforce and career and technical education systems with support to respond to the COVID-19 national emergency. No money would go to IRAPs, but \$500 million would be appropriated for Registered Apprenticeships. At minimum, parts of this legislation would be a part of House Democrats CARES 2 bill.

### THE TIMING OF CARES 2

- Many of the key pieces of the House Democrats CARES 2 bill are close to being final. It is expected these will be compiled (and released) into the comprehensive draft CARES 2 bill which may happen as soon as next week. Furthermore, the House may return in some form the week of May 11 to consider CARES 2.

## CANADA

The Finance Minister announced pension relief last week for federally regulated pensions; working with the Canadian Labour Congress, a letter has been sent to provincial councils to lobby their provincial finance ministers for solvency relief for multi-employer plans. Affiliates are also working with the Federal Minister of Finance for additional pension relief in the form of interest-free loans to create cashflow for pension plans to meet payout obligations.

The Canadian Executive Board of the CBTU held a conference call with the Minister of Natural Resources, Seamus O'Regan, this week to discuss the need for additional funding for the oil and gas sector, the opportunity to utilize community benefits, infrastructure spending as part of the stimulus coming out of COVID-19.

Lobbying continues for the creation of a construction taskforce to advise on stimulus spending; Provincial Councils and Affiliates submitted a list of "shovel-ready" projects to be included in the TaskForce framework document being prepared for the Minister of Infrastructure. The TaskForce is expected to be announced by the government by end of week.

The Federal Wage Subsidy program's online portal opened Monday, April 27. Employers, including Local Unions, Training Centres and Councils should qualify for the wage subsidy program.

On the CERB, clarification was received that local unions are able to utilize health and welfare plans to top up the CERB benefit up to \$1000 per month for members, without affecting their eligibility to receive the CERB.

### Newfoundland and Labrador

- 85% unemployed
- No known cases of COVID-19 amongst Building Trade members.

### Nova Scotia

- 65-70% employment, developed and released a report on safety guidelines and working with government on infrastructure taskforce.
- No known cases of COVID-19 amongst Building Trade members

### New Brunswick

- About 50% employed.
- No known cases of COVID-19 amongst Building Trade members
- Government, owner/clients are in the planning stages of bringing people back to work.

### Quebec

- Construction is set to reopen on May 11.
- No known cases of COVID-19 amongst Building Trade members

### Ontario

- 65-70% employed.
- Seven - 12 known cases of COVID-19 amongst Building Trade members, but no new cases since last week. One member has died of COVID-19, but few details are available at this time

### Manitoba

- 50% employed
- No known cases of COVID-19 amongst Building Trade members
- Government is easing restrictions by early May.

### Saskatchewan

- 50% employed

- Province is looking to reopen, and some projects that were pushed back because of COVID-19 are looking to restart mid-May.
- No known cases of COVID-19 amongst Building Trade members

#### **Alberta**

- Roughly 50% employed.
- Dealing with severe flooding in Northern Alberta, Fort McMurray area.
- Pressure from owners in the oil sector for concessions on maintenance costs. CLAC has made a five per cent concession and the Council is working with the GPMC to address this issue.

#### **British Columbia**

- 70-80% employed
- Planning is underway to reopen the economy and include Community Benefit Agreements are used on site, Premier is expected to announce plan for reopening next week.

#### **LEGAL**

Separately attached is a revised summary focused on protections and benefits for workers.