WHAT'S INSIDE THIS MONTH:

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- President’s Message.
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- MICA Future Meeting Dates.
- IRS Provides Tax Inflation Adjustments for Tax Year 2020.
- October Construction Starts Fall 11 Percent.
- Dodge Momentum Index Moves Higher in October.
- U. S. Department of Labor to Hold Meeting of the National Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health.
- Winter Weather — Plan, Equip, Train.
- Construction Starts to Slip Back in 2020 According to Dodge Data & Analytics.

A THANKSGIVING MESSAGE

Thanksgiving marks the start of another Holiday Season and the end of yet another year. This next month will be filled with family gatherings, holiday shopping, Hanukah, and Christmas and New Year’s Eve parties. This is a time for us to pause and reflect upon our many blessings, and the pressing needs of the less fortunate in our society.

Yet, civility and care for our fellow man seems to have been lost on our politicians in Washington. I can not call them our “leaders” in Washington since there appears to be no leaders to be found. Our representatives are caught up in impeachment hearings and taking positions along political affiliations rather than seeking the truth and enacting legislation that is crucial to our country. Hopefully, this Thanksgiving will help bring some sense of duty and responsibility back to our representatives in Washington.

Unfortunately, the dreaded campaign commercials are about to begin in full force with the presidential election year just a month away. It is time for the politicians in Washington to do what is best for America and not for their political affiliation.

As we approach the Holiday Season, we need to reflect on where we are as a society and ask God for guidance as we navigate our future. There are so many positives of living in a country where we can still have an impact on the direction that we want to see our country move. We pray that our representatives in Washington will have the wisdom to lead and the support of the American people to do so.

As Cindy and I reflect on our year, we as a family have much to be thankful for. God has continued to bless us with good friends and good health. Our daughter, Mary, continues her work with Woodmen Life Insurance Company. Our middle daughter Sarah, is a part-time nurse and full time mother of three children. Our youngest daughter, Anna, the accountant, continues to work for ConAgra Foods in their internal audit department in the Omaha office.

As we reflect upon our many blessings, it is also important to reflect upon those among us who are less fortunate in health and prosperity. We extend our sympathies and prayers to those families that have lost a loved one this past year.

The concern for others and the willingness to help out has been and continues to be an endearing trait among MICA members. You come from such diverse backgrounds, but you all reflect true Christian values in your personal and professional lives. Our association is truly blessed to have such strong members. Cindy, our daughters, and I are most grateful to be a part of MICA and to have MICA a part of us. You have made and continue to make MICA a blessing to our family.

Tom Shimerda, MICA Executive Secretary
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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

TO: THE MICA MEMBERSHIP

Just returned from the NIA Fall Summit in Washington, DC. Saw a few of my MICA peeps there as well as several associate representatives. I enjoyed the speakers and their content that was presented during the meetings. It was all relevant information that can be used immediately in your quest to improve your business. If you’ve never participated in NIA, I highly encourage you to attend, and the Fall Summit is a good place to start!

Here in Missouri, we seem to be notorious for our wild temperature swings and weather fluctuations. We have the uncanny ability to experience all four seasons in the span of a week. Just a few weeks ago, we had an absolutely gorgeous fall weekend with highs in the upper 70’s on Sunday afternoon. I spent all weekend at the lake in a T-shirt! By Sunday night, I was building a fire in the fireplace with sleet/snow on Monday morning and a record low Monday night of 13. Now I know you northern boys see much colder temps than that, and by January/February we do too, but we don’t normally see those temps in the first week of November and those crazy temperature drops are rough! Best two days of fall ever!

The holidays will soon be upon us with Thanksgiv-

ing next week and Christmas/New Year’s just around the corner. As the boys have gotten older and now have their own lives and schedules, it gets harder to get everyone together, but Holly and I sure enjoy having the boys all back in the house, if only for a short time. I am sure many of you can relate and know how special it is when it all comes together.

It’s been crazy busy around here lately so I’m going to keep it short this month. I promise we’ll resume my idiotic psychology ramblings next month!

Our next meeting is the Winter Board and Committee Meetings January 23-26 in Key West, Florida. This is where we plan speakers and topics of discussion for the spring meeting in June 2020. We would love to have your input! At the very least, it’s Florida in January. Can’t go wrong there! Hope to see you there. Any questions, please do not hesitate to call me 417-437-0529.

See ya in Key West!

Sincerely,

Matt Hymer
MICA President

For those of you who are still trying to decide whether to attend our winter committee meetings, below is a picture of the pool area of the DoubleTree Grand Key Resort. My room is on the second floor!
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JOHNS MANVILLE ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION OF ITW INSULATION SYSTEMS

DENVER--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Johns Manville (JM), a Berkshire Hathaway company and leading building products manufacturer, announced today it has signed an agreement to acquire ITW Insulation Systems, a business owned by Illinois Tool Works Inc. that is well known in the industrial industry for its premium, low-temperature polyisocyanurate foam insulations and metal jacketing solutions. The deal is expected to close in early December.

“The acquisition of ITW Insulation Systems represents an important strategic opportunity to offer expanded insulation solutions to the industrial market,” said JM President and CEO Mary Rhinehart. “This will give us greater versatility and allow JM’s Insulation Systems business to continue to offer a robust and well-rounded portfolio of insulation solutions.”

ITW Insulation Systems has 100 employees who work at four manufacturing plants in the U.S. and Canada (Houston, Texas; La Porte, Texas; Edmonton, Alberta; and Mississauga, Ontario).

ITW Insulation Systems’ primary markets include refining, petrochemical, power, LNG, food & beverage, oil sands and other energy applications.

“There is substantial growth occurring in the cold and cryogenic markets,” said Bob Wamboldt, President of JM’s Insulation Systems business. “We wanted to participate more actively in this space and the product portfolio offered by ITW Insulation Systems allows us to do exactly that.”

JM plans to integrate ITW Insulation Systems as a key part of its industrial insulation portfolio without making significant changes to the existing operations at ITW Insulation Systems.

“JM’s Industrial Insulation business is a market leader, producing the broadest product portfolio of any manufacturer in the industrial insulation industry,” said Dave Skelly, General Manager of Performance Materials at JM. “Historically, this has included high-temperature calcium silicate, expanded perlite, mineral wool, microporous blankets and silica aerogel, and now, with the addition of ITW Insulation Systems, our portfolio includes both low-temperature polyisocyanurate foams and metal jacketing. These additions make our industrial insulation portfolio incredibly robust and allow us to be a single source for our customers’ insulation and jacketing needs.”
FUTURE MICA MEETING DATES

2020 Winter Board and Committee Meetings — January 23 — 26, 2020, DoubleTree by Hilton Grand Key Resort, Key West, Florida.

63rd Annual Spring Convention — June 22 — 25, 2020, Lodge of the Four Seasons, Lake Ozark, Missouri.

Fall 2020 Annual Fall Business Meeting — October 15 & 16, 2020, Omaha Marriott Downtown, Omaha, NE.

64th Annual Spring Convention — June 21 — 24, 2021, Out of Region. Site TBD.

Fall 2021 Annual Fall Business Meeting — October 14 & 15, 2021, Omaha Marriott Downtown, Omaha, NE.

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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IRS PROVIDES TAX INFLATION ADJUSTMENTS FOR TAX YEAR 2020

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today announced the tax year 2020 annual inflation adjustments for more than 60 tax provisions, including the tax rate schedules and other tax changes. Revenue Procedure 2019-44 provides details about these annual adjustments.

The tax law change covered in the revenue procedure was added by the Taxpayer First Act of 2019, which increased the failure to file penalty to $330 for returns due after the end of 2019. The new penalty will be adjusted for inflation beginning with tax year 2021.

The tax year 2020 adjustments generally are used on tax returns filed in 2021.

The tax items for tax year 2020 of greatest interest to most taxpayers include the following dollar amounts:

- The standard deduction for married filing jointly rises to $24,800 for tax year 2020, up $400 from the prior year. For single taxpayers and married individuals filing separately, the standard deduction rises to $12,400 in for 2020, up $200, and for heads of households, the standard deduction will be $18,650 for tax year 2020, up $300.

- The personal exemption for tax year 2020 remains at 0, as it was for 2019, this elimination of the personal exemption was a provision in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

- Marginal Rates: For tax year 2020, the top tax rate remains 37% for individual single taxpayers with incomes greater than $518,400 ($622,050 for married couples filing jointly). The other rates are; 35%, for incomes over $207,350 ($414,700 for married couples filing jointly); 32% for incomes over $163,300 ($326,600 for married couples filing jointly); 24% for incomes over $85,525 ($171,050 for married couples filing jointly); 22% for incomes over $40,125 ($80,250 for married couples filing jointly); 12% for incomes over $9,875 ($19,750 for married couples filing jointly). The lowest rate is 10% for incomes of single individuals with incomes of $9,875 or less ($19,750 for married couples filing jointly).

- For 2020, as in 2019 and 2018, there is no limitation on itemized deductions, as that limitation was eliminated by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

- The Alternative Minimum Tax exemption amount for tax year 2020 is $72,900 and begins to phase out at $518,400 ($113,400 for married couples filing jointly for whom the exemption begins to phase out at $1,036,800). The 2019 exemption amount was $71,700 and began to phase out at $510,300 ($111,700, for married couples filing jointly for whom the exemption began to phase out at $1,020,600).

- The tax year 2020 maximum Earned Income Credit amount is $6,660 for qualifying taxpayers who have three or more qualifying children, up from a total of $6,557 for tax year 2019. The revenue procedure contains a table providing maximum credit amounts for other categories, income thresholds and phase-outs.

- For tax year 2020, the monthly limitation for the qualified transportation fringe benefit is $270, as is the monthly limitation for qualified parking, up from $265 for tax year 2019.

- For the taxable years beginning in 2020, the dollar limitation for employee salary reductions for contributions to health flexible spending arrangements is $2,750, up $50 from the limit for 2019.

- For tax year 2020, participants who have self-only coverage in a Medical Savings Account, the plan must have an annual deductible that is not less than $2,350, the same as for tax year 2019; but not more than $3,550, an increase of $50

(Continued on page 12)
from tax year 2019. For self-only coverage, the maximum out-of-pocket expense amount is $4,750, up $100 from 2019. For tax year 2020, participants with family coverage, the floor for the annual deductible is $4,750, up from $4,650 in 2019; however, the deductible cannot be more than $7,100, up $100 from the limit for tax year 2019. For family coverage, the out-of-pocket expense limit is $8,650 for tax year 2020, an increase of $100 from tax year 2019.

- For tax year 2020, the adjusted gross income amount used by joint filers to determine the reduction in the Lifetime Learning Credit is $118,000, up from $116,000 for tax year 2019.

- For tax year 2020, the foreign earned income exclusion is $107,600 up from $105,900 for tax year 2019.

- Estates of decedents who die during 2020 have a basic exclusion amount of $11,580,000, up from a total of $11,400,000 for estates of decedents who died in 2019.

- The annual exclusion for gifts is $15,000 for calendar year 2020, as it was for calendar year 2019.

- The maximum credit allowed for adoptions for tax year 2020 is the amount of qualified adoption expenses up to $14,080, up from $14,300 for 2019.

**MICA MESSENGER**

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(Continued from page 10)

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**OCTOBER CONSTRUCTION STARTS FALL 11 PERCENT**

_Broad based declines pull total construction activity Lower._

NEW YORK – November 18, 2019 – New construction starts declined 11% in October to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of $696.3 billion, according to Dodge Data & Analytics. This is the third consecutive monthly drop in construction starts activity. By major sector, nonresidential building starts fell 20% from September to October and non-building starts dropped 14%, while residential starts moved 2% lower. The October statistics pushed the Dodge Index down to 147 (2000=100) compared to 166 in September.

Through the first ten months of the year, total construction starts were 4% lower than in the same period of 2018. Both residential and nonresidential construction starts were down through ten months, although non-building starts remained on the plus side due to gains in electric utilities/gas plants and environmental public works.

“Concern over the health of the U.S. economy continues to play a key role in the pullback in starts over the past few months,” stated Richard Branch, Chief Economist for Dodge Data & Analytics. “However, solid real estate fundamentals (such as vacancy rates) in addition to stable public funding will continue to support a modest level of construction activity across both public and private projects.”

**Non-building construction** fell 14% in October to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of $159.2 billion. Starts in the electric utility/gas plant category fell 69% in October as activity retreated from a strong September. Environmental public works starts (drinking water, sewers, hazardous waste, and other water resource projects) moved 12% lower over the month. On the plus side, highway and bridge starts increased 4% in October and miscellaneous non-building starts increased 14%.

The largest non-building construction project to get underway in October was the $2.1 billion first phase of the Red/Purple Line Modernization project in Chicago, IL. Also starting in October was the $390 million Nobles 2 County Wind Farm in Wilmont, MN and the $346 million improvement to I-485 intersections in Charlotte, NC.

Through the first ten months of 2019, non-building construction was 2% higher than in the comparable period of 2018. The electric utility/gas plant category

(Continued on page 15)
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was 108% higher than a year earlier and environmental public works was up 2%. Miscellaneous non-building was 21% lower through ten months and highways and bridges declined 10%.

Nonresidential building starts lost 20% over the month in October, falling to $225.8 billion (at a seasonally adjusted annual rate). This steep decline comes after a very strong September that saw two projects valued at nearly $1 billion break ground — a consolidated rental car facility in Los Angeles, CA and a large manufacturing complex in Detroit, MI. In October, commercial starts fell 3% with gains in the office and hotel sectors muting the downturn. Manufacturing starts peeled back 69% and institutional starts moved 20% lower.

The largest nonresidential building project to break ground in October was the $600 million Vision Northland Medical Campus in Duluth, MN. Also starting in October was the $200 million Volpe Transportation Center in Cambridge, MA and a $200 million dry dock in Groton, CT that will serve the new Columbia class nuclear powered ballistic missile submarines.

On a year-to-date basis through October, nonresidential building starts were 7% lower than a year earlier. Commercial starts were up 3% due to gains in office buildings, warehouses and parking structures, while institutional construction was down 6% through October with all major categories posting declines. Manufacturing starts were 43% lower.

DODGE MOMENTUM INDEX MOVES HIGHER IN OCTOBER

NEW YORK – November 7, 2019 – The Dodge Momentum Index increased 6.9% in October to 152.6 (2000=100) from the revised September reading of 142.7. The Momentum Index, issued by Dodge Data & Analytics, is a monthly measure of the first (or initial) report for nonresidential building projects in planning, which have been shown to lead construction spending for nonresidential buildings by a full year. October’s increase was due entirely to a recovery in institutional planning projects, which had stepped back over the previous few months. Institutional planning moved 22.8% higher in the month while commercial planning lost 0.5%.

Despite the October increase, institutional projects entering planning remain 4.3% lower on a year-over-year basis compared to October 2018. Commercial projects meanwhile are 14.3% higher than October 2018 as several mega projects have entered the early stages of planning over the last several months. The overall Momentum Index is 6.7% higher than a year ago, although its level remains below the July 2018 peak.

In October, 24 projects each with a value of $100 million or more entered planning. The leading institutional projects were the $470 million Orlando Health Hospital in Lake Mary, FL and a $356 million renovation project at the Rockrimmon Elementary School in Colorado Springs, CO. The leading commercial projects were a $250 million office building in Brooklyn, NY and the $188 million Spirit Airlines Headquarters in Dania Beach, FL.

DUGO MOMENTUM INDEX

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Index</th>
<th>Oct-19</th>
<th>Sep-19</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dodge Momentum Index</td>
<td>152.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional Building</td>
<td>125.0</td>
<td>101.8</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
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</table>

Source: Dodge Data & Analytics

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR TO HOLD MEETING OF THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Labor has scheduled a meeting of the National Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health (NACOSH) on Thursday, December 12, 2019, in Washington, D.C.

The meeting will include an update on key OSHA initiatives from Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health Loren Sweatt, and remarks from National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Director John Howard.

WHAT: NACOSH Meeting
WHERE: U.S. Department of Labor’s Frances Perkins Building 200 Constitution Avenue, NW Room N-5437, Conference Rooms A-D Washington, DC 20210
WHEN: Thursday, December 12, 2019 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. EST

Comments and requests to speak may be submitted electronically at http://www.regulations.gov, the Federal eRulemaking Portal, by mail, or facsimile. See the Federal Register notice for details. The deadline for submitting comments and requests to speak is December 5, 2019.

NACOSH advises, consults with, and makes recommendations to the Secretaries of Labor, and Health and Human Services on matters relating to the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act of 1970 including regulatory, research, compliance assistance and enforcement issues.
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Employers Should Provide Engineering Controls

Engineering controls can be effective in reducing the risk of cold stress. For example, radiant heaters may be used to warm workplaces like outdoor security stations. If possible, employers should shield work areas from drafts or wind to reduce wind chill.

Employers should use engineering controls to protect workers from other winter weather related hazards, for example, aerial lifts or ladders can be used for safely applying de-icing materials to roofs, to protect workers from the hazard of falling through sky lights.

Employers Should Implement Safe Work Practices

Safe work practices that employers can implement to protect workers from injuries, illnesses and fatalities include:

- Providing workers with the proper tools and equipment to do their jobs.
- Developing work plans that identify potential hazards and the safety measures that will be used to protect workers.
- Scheduling maintenance and repair jobs for warmer months.
- Scheduling jobs that expose workers to the cold weather in the warmer part of the day.
- Avoiding exposure to extremely cold temperatures when possible.
- Limiting the amount of time spent outdoors on extremely cold days.
- Using relief workers to assign extra workers for long, demanding jobs.
- Providing warm areas for use during break periods.
- Providing warm liquids (no alcohol) to workers.
- Monitoring workers who are at risk of cold stress.
- Monitoring the weather conditions during a winter storm, having a reliable means of communicating with workers and being able to stop work or evacuate when necessary.
- Acclimatizing new workers and those returning after time away from work by gradually increas-
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ing their workload, and allowing more frequent breaks in warm areas, as they build up a tolerance for working in the cold environment.

- Having a means of communicating with workers, especially in remote areas.
- Knowing how the community warns the public about severe weather: outdoor sirens, radio, and television. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provides multiple ways to stay informed about winter storms. If you are notified of a winter storm watch, advisory or warning, follow instructions from your local authorities: NOAA Weather Radio.

Employers Should Consider Protective Clothing that Provides Warmth

Employers must provide personal protective equipment (PPE), for example, fall protection, when required by OSHA standards to protect workers' safety, and health. However, in limited cases specified in the standard (29 CFR 1910.132), there are exceptions to the requirement for employers to provide PPE to workers. For instance, there is no OSHA requirement for employers to provide workers with ordinary clothing, skin creams, or other items, used solely for protection from weather, such as winter coats, jackets, gloves, parkas, rubber boots, hats, raincoats, ordinary sunglasses, and sunscreen (29 CFR 1910.132 (h)(4)). Regardless of this, many employers provide their workers with winter weather gear such as winter coats/jackets and gloves.

Learn more about PPE requirements and how to design an effective PPE program: Personal Protective Equipment (OSHA Safety and Health Topics Page).

Dressing Properly for the Cold

Dressing properly is extremely important to preventing cold stress. When cold environments or temperatures cannot be avoided, the following would help protect workers from cold stress:

- Wear at least three layers of loose fitting clothing. Layering provides better insulation.
- An inner layer of wool, silk or synthetic (polypropylene) to keep moisture away from the body. Thermal wear, wool, silk or polypro-
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pylene, inner layers of clothing that will hold more body heat than cotton.
- A middle layer of wool or synthetic to provide insulation even when wet.
- An outer wind and rain protection layer that allows some ventilation to prevent overheating.
- Tight clothing reduces blood circulation. Warm blood needs to be circulated to the extremities.

Insulated coat/jacket (water resistant if necessary).
- Knit mask to cover face and mouth (if needed).
- Hat that will cover your ears as well. A hat will help keep your whole body warmer. Hats reduce the amount of body heat that escapes from your head.
- Insulated gloves (water resistant if necessary), to protect the hands.
- Insulated and waterproof boots to protect the feet.

Safety Tips for Workers

- Your employer should ensure that you know the symptoms of cold stress.
- Monitor your physical condition and that of your coworkers.
- Dress appropriately for the cold.
- Stay dry in the cold because moisture or dampness, e.g. from sweating, can increase the rate of heat loss from the body.
- Keep extra clothing (including underwear) handy in case you get wet and need to change.
- Drink warm sweetened fluids (no alcohol).
- Use proper engineering controls, safe work practices, and personal protective equipment (PPE) provided by your employer.

CONSTRUCTION STARTS TO SLIP BACK IN 2020 ACCORDING TO DODGE DATA & ANALYTICS

Dodge Data & Analytics released its 2020 Dodge Construction Outlook, a mainstay in construction industry forecasting and business planning. The report predicts that total U.S. construction starts will slip to $776 billion in 2020, a decline of 4% from the 2019 estimated level of activity.

“The recovery in construction starts that began during 2010 in the aftermath of the Great Recession is coming to an end,” stated Richard Branch, Chief Economist for Dodge Data & Analytics. “Easing economic growth driven by mounting trade tensions and lack of skilled labor will lead to a broad based, but orderly pullback in construction starts in 2020. After increasing 3% in 2018 construction starts dipped an estimated 1% in 2019 and will fall 4% in 2020.”

“Next year, however, will not be a repeat of what the construction industry endured during the Great Recession. Economic growth is slowing but is not anticipated to contract next year. Construction starts, therefore, will decline but the level of activity will remain close to recent highs. By major construction sector, the dollar value of starts for residential buildings will be down 6%, while starts for both nonresidential buildings and non-building construction will drop 3%.”

The pattern of construction starts for more specific segments is as follows:

- The dollar value of single family housing starts will be down 3% in 2020 and the number of units will also lose 5% to 765,000 (Dodge basis). Affordability issues and the tight supply of entry level homes have kept demand for homes muted and buyers on the sidelines.
- Multifamily construction was an early leader in the recovery, stringing together eight years of growth since 2009. However, multifamily vacancy rates have moved sideways over the past year, suggesting that slower economic growth will weigh on the market in 2020. Multifamily starts are slated to drop 13% in dollars and 15%
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in units to 410,000 (Dodge basis).

- The dollar value of commercial building starts will retreat 6% in 2020. The steepest declines will occur in commercial warehouses and hotels, while the decline in office construction will be cushioned by high value data center construction. Retail activity will also fall in 2020, a continuation of a trend brought about by systemic changes in the industry.

- In 2020, institutional construction starts will essentially remain even with the 2019 level as the influence of public dollars adds stability to the outlook. Education building and health facility starts should continue to see modest growth next year, offset by declines in recreation and transportation buildings.

- The dollar value of manufacturing plant construction will slip 2% in 2020 following an estimated decline of 29% in 2019. Rising trade tensions has tilted this sector to the downside with recent data, both domestic and globally, suggesting the manufacturing sector is in contraction.

- Public works construction starts will move 4% higher in 2020 with growth continuing across all project types. By and large, recent federal appropriations have kept funding for public works construction either steady or slightly higher — translating into continued growth in environmental and transportation infrastructure starts.

- Electric utilities/gas plants will drop 27% in 2020 following growth of 83% in 2019 as several large LNG export facilities and new wind projects broke ground.

The 2020 Dodge Construction Outlook was presented at the 81st annual Outlook Executive Conference held by Dodge Data & Analytics at the Renaissance Chicago Downtown Hotel in Chicago, IL. Copies of the report with additional details by building sector can be ordered from the Dodge Analytics website or by calling (800) 591-4462.
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