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A THANKSGIVING MESSAGE

Thanksgiving marks the start of the Holiday Season and the end of a year like no other in our lifetime. We have all experienced the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in our personal and professional lives. The first nine months of this year has been filled with fear and uncertainty not only from the virus but from our societal upheavals as well. Many of our norms and values have been tested in too many ways. The polarization of our society over the wearing of masks to help curb the virus and to help our healthcare workers and each other is disheartening. The bickering and lack of civility coming from our elected officials at all levels of government is appalling. It is sad to say that my message from last Thanksgiving noted the concerns about our politicians in Washington.

Hopefully, this Thanksgiving will help bring some sense of duty and responsibility back to our representatives in Washington. 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 throughout the pandemic. 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 Brands in their enterprise risk management 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.

We had the opportunity this past Tuesday, to hear a message of optimism and love for life from Dan Meers thanks to the MICA Board of Directors’ concern for you, our MICA family of members. This concern for others and the willingness to help 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.

We wish all of you a special Thanksgiving Blessing. We pray that your God will continue to care for you and your family through the uncertain times ahead.
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

TO: THE MICA MEMBERSHIP

"What screws us up most in life is the picture in our head of how it is supposed to be."

Anonymous

I hope everyone enjoyed their Halloween, if it was allowed where you live. We had trick-or-treaters, just not very many at our house. Absolutely beautiful evening, though. Since then, Illinois has been largely restricted again with a COVID positivity rate over 10%. The more testing is done, the more positive tests are going to happen. I’m beginning to think that this just might be an illness that will always be with us, with or without a vaccine. With that being said, the odds of having a board meeting in January are looking grim. I’m beginning to think that this just might be an illness that will always be with us, with or without a vaccine. With that being said, the odds of having a board meeting in January are looking grim. A lot of states are having travel restrictions and quarantines if you leave your state or are coming from certain other states. Those restrictions would keep most people from going anywhere outside their respective state.

The Presidential Election is over, I think. It appears that Joe Biden will be our next President on January 20th, but I don’t think he will be President very long. I heard that Nancy Pelosi has already taken steps to have him removed using the 25th Amendment. I heard one announcer on the radio share his perspective on the election results. He said, “Today, evil has won over love. The people’s hate for Donald Trump is greater than their love for Joe Biden.” This quote stuck with me, because I thought it was an interesting perspective.

We just finished the Thanksgiving webinar with Dan Meers. What a remarkable story and message from Dan. His enthusiasm, optimism and love for life are truly contagious. For those of you who were able to participate in the webinar, I hope you found it as rewarding as I did. I want to extend my sincere thanks to Matt Hymer for his efforts in pushing the Board to approve this webinar. Matt identified Dan as his keynote speaker back in January when we were planning the spring convention, Way to go, Matt! And a special “thank you” to Ben Pfister for his technical expertise in setting up the webinar and making sure that it ran smoothly.

I want to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving! As crazy as this year has been, I think it is important to remember everything we are thankful for at this time. Forget about the trials and tribulations we have gone through this year and remember the positives. We work in a great industry with great people. I’m thankful for my wife, Megan, our three children, and our health. I’m thankful for my thriving 82-year-old mother and my three siblings. I’m thankful for all my wonderful friendships I’ve made over the years, both in and outside of MICA. Think about what you are thankful for this year and make 2021 even better. I hope everyone gets to spend the holiday with their loved ones. That is what I’m planning on doing.

Everyone stay safe and stay healthy.

"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change the way you think about it."

-Mary Engelbreit, American artist

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WASHINGTON – The Internal Revenue Service this month encouraged taxpayers to take necessary actions this fall to help file federal tax returns timely and accurately in 2021.

This is the second in a series of reminders to help taxpayers get ready for the upcoming tax filing season. A special page, updated and available on IRS.gov, outlines steps taxpayers can take now to make tax filing easier in 2021.

2020 has been a busy year, with a lot of changes. To make sure taxpayers don’t miss out on tax benefits or make mistakes, they can take a few simple steps now to make filing their taxes easier in 2021.

An important first step to getting taxes ready is to gather all tax records. Having records organized makes preparing a tax return easier. It may also help discover potentially overlooked deductions or credits.

- Most income is taxable, so taxpayers should gather income documents such as Forms W-2 from employers, Forms 1099 from banks and other payers, and records of virtual currencies or other income. This also includes unemployment income, refund interest and income from the gig economy.
- Beginning in 2020, individuals may receive Form 1099-NEC, Nonemployee Compensation, rather than Form 1099-MISC, Miscellaneous Income, if they performed certain services for and received payments from a business. Please refer to the Instructions for Form 1099-MISC and Form 1099-NEC to ensure clients are filing the appropriate form and are aware of this change.
- Taxpayers may also need Notice 1444, Economic Impact Payment, which shows how much of a payment they received in 2020. This amount is needed to calculate any Recovery Rebate Credit they may be eligible for when they file their federal income tax return in 2021. People who didn’t receive an Economic Impact Payment in 2020 may qualify for the Recovery Rebate Credit when they file their 2020 taxes in 2021.
- To see information from the most recently filed tax return, recent payments and more taxpayers can sign up to view account information online.
- Taxpayers should notify the IRS of address changes and notify the Social Security Administration of a legal name change to avoid delays in tax return processing.

Taxpayers with an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) should ensure it hasn’t expired before filing a tax return in 2021. For example, ITINs not used on a federal tax return at least once in the last three years will expire on Dec. 31, 2020. If the ITIN has expired, IRS recommends taxpayers submit Form W-7. Application for IRS Individual Taxpayer Identifica-
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tion Number, now to renew an ITIN. Taxpayers who fail to renew ITINs before filing a tax return next year could face a delayed refund and may be ineligible for certain tax credits.

Time is running out to use the Tax Withholding Estimator, a tool on IRS.gov designed to help determine the right amount of tax to have withheld from paychecks. Taxpayers can use the Tax Withholding Estimator to help determine if adjustments to withholding are necessary. Withholding changes can be made by submitting a new Form W-4 to the taxpayer’s employer.

Taxpayers receiving substantial amounts of non-wage income like self-employment income, investment income, taxable Social Security benefits and in some instances, pension and annuity income, should make quarterly estimated tax payments. The last payment for 2020 is due on Jan. 15, 2021. Payment options can be found at IRS.gov/payments.

For more information, see Publication 5348, Get Ready to File, and Publication 5349, Year-Round Tax Planning is for Everyone.

DODGE MOMENTUM INDEX POSTS DIP IN OCTOBER

NEW JERSEY – November 6, 2020 – The Dodge Momentum Index fell 1.8% in October to 127.5 (2000=100) from the revised September reading of 129.8. 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. The commercial component of the Momentum Index lost 4.4% over the month, but the institutional component gained 3.3%.

The Momentum Index has struggled to make consistent gains since passing its post-pandemic low in June. Economic growth has slowed over the past few months, creating weaker demand for commercial projects. The fear about a new wave of COVID-19 infections may also be impeding planning activity in consumer-focused projects such as hotels and retail, although planning for warehouse projects continues to impress. Even with this month’s gain, the institutional component of the Momentum Index remains well below levels seen prior to the pandemic as state and local entities come to grips with the widening budget chasm.

In October, 10 projects each with a value of $100 million or more entered planning. The leading commercial projects were a $200 million office complex in New York NY and a $100 million Amazon warehouse in Spokane, WA. The leading institutional projects were two research labs valued at $300 million each, associated with the Dorchester Bay City project - a redevelopment of the Bayside Expo Center in Boston MA.
FUTURE MICA MEETING DATES

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

Fall 2020 Educational Seminar — October 14, 2020, 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. central time. “Understanding Specifications for Insulation”, Virtual Presentation by Ron King.


64th Annual Spring Convention — June 21 — 24, 2021, Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort, Bonita Springs, FL.

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

65th Annual Spring Convention — June 20 — 23, 2022, TBD.

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.
OSHA continues to encourage workers strongly to wear face coverings when in close contact with others to reduce the risk of spreading the coronavirus, if it is appropriate for the work environment.

Visit OSHA's COVID-19 webpage for further information and resources about the coronavirus.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR UPDATES FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS CLOTH FACE COVERINGS AS PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has published an update to its Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to address whether OSHA considers cloth face coverings to be personal protective equipment. The agency is addressing the topic after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently determined that some cloth face coverings may serve as source control while also providing the wearer with some personal protection.

The FAQ states that OSHA does not believe enough information is currently available to determine if a particular cloth face covering provides sufficient protection from the coronavirus hazard to be personal protective equipment under OSHA's standard. OSHA's determination is consistent with statements made by the CDC, which has stated it needs more research on cloth facemasks' protective effects, particularly on the combination of materials that maximize blocking and filtering effectiveness.

OSHA based these documents on data from citations issued, many of which were the result of complaints, referrals and fatalities in industries such as hospitals and healthcare, nursing homes and long-term care facilities, and meat/poultry processing plants.

(Continued on page 13)
The one-pager and guidance document provide available resources that address the most frequently cited standards, including Respiratory Protection, Recording and Reporting Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, Personal Protective Equipment and the General Duty Clause. The one-pager provides examples of requirements employers must follow, such as:

- Provide a medical evaluation before a worker is fit-tested or uses a respirator.
- Establish, implement, and update a written respiratory protection program with required worksite-specific procedures.
- Train workers to safely use respirators and/or other PPE in the workplace, and retrain workers about changes in the workplace that might make previous training obsolete.
- Store respirators and other PPE properly in a way to protect them from damage, contamination, and, where applicable, deformation of the facepiece and exhalation valve.
- Keep required records of work-related fatalities, injuries, and illness.

OSHA is providing the guidance to help employers protect workers and increase compliance with OSHA requirements.

OSHA's On-Site Consultation Program offers no-cost and confidential occupational safety and health services to small- and medium-sized businesses to identify workplace hazards, provides advice for compliance with OSHA standards, and assists in establishing and improving safety and health programs. On-Site Consultation services are separate from enforcement and do not result in penalties or citations.

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This expansion into online ordering comes just three months after the initial launch of CustomerConnect, which introduced the new, easy-to-use, and comprehensive self-service portal to customers across the United States.

“At DI, we are committed to doing what it takes to remain the leader in driving customer success in our industry,” said CEO Steve Margolius. “We are always innovating and making it easier to do business with us, providing unparalleled customer service every step of the way. Customers can now access more than 27,000 products online, request quotes, and ultimately order products — anytime, anywhere, from any device. This is a true game changer for our industry, and it represents our commitment to providing superior service by offering our customers a digital solution that complements our industry-leading team of sales, operations, and customer service professionals.”

Features and benefits of the updated website include:
- Ability to order products or Request a Quote (RFQ) online, anytime, anywhere, on any device
- View pricing for thousands of products
- 24/7 access to the latest information for over 27,000 insulation and accessory products, including specifications and documents such as SDS and Cut Sheets
- Secure account dashboard that serves as a one-stop shop for quote, order, and purchase history visibility
- Easy access to multiple vendors’ downloadable fitting charts and installation guides, along with links to DI training webinars
- Ability to conduct a side-by-side comparison of product attributes and highlight similarities or differences

“With CustomerConnect, everything you need is just a click away,” said CIO Darla Lentz. “Since launching the site in August, the feedback from customers has been extremely positive. By adding the ability to complete orders online, we are further meeting our customers’ needs to be able to order exactly what they need, when they need it — whether that’s during business hours or on the weekend. We are determined to always provide our customers with the most innovative, customer-centric solutions available, and CustomerConnect is yet another example of doing what it takes to help them succeed.”

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ISSUES GUIDANCE FOR USING TIGHT-FITTING POWERED AIR PURIFYING RESPIRATORS AMID CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued temporary guidance for enforcing initial and annual fit-testing requirements related to tight-fitting powered air-purifying respirators. The action marks the Department’s latest step to ensure the availability of res-
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pirators and follows President Donald J. Trump’s Memorandum on Making General Use Respirators Available.

The new enforcement discretion policy permits the use of National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)-approved tight-fitting powered air-purifying respirators for protection against the coronavirus when initial and/or annual fit testing is infeasible due to respirator and fit-testing supply shortages. The guidance applies to healthcare personnel and other workers in high or very high exposure risk activities.

The guidance does not apply to powered air-purifying respirators that:
• Have not been approved by NIOSH;
• Are used by any workers with low or medium exposure risk to the coronavirus;
• Are used by any workers for protection against airborne hazards other than the coronavirus, such as chemical hazards; or
• Are loose-fitting and do not require fit testing.

If respiratory protection must be used, employers may consider the use of alternative classes of respirators that provide equal or greater protection compared to a N95 Filtering Facepiece Respirator, such as N99, N100, R95, R99, R100, P95, P99, and P100 respirators and NIOSH-approved, non-disposable elastomeric respirators or powered air-purifying respirators, either loose-fitting or tight-fitting.

This interim guidance will take effect immediately and remain in effect until further notice. It is intended to be time-limited to the current public health crisis. Visit OSHA’s Coronavirus webpage regularly for updates. For further information about the coronavirus, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

DODGE DATA & ANALYTICS EXPECTS CONSTRUCTION STARTS TO RECOVER IN 2021

Dodge Outlook 2021 predicts a slow and uneven recovery throughout the year.


(Continued from page 15)
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“The COVID-19 pandemic and recession has had a profound impact on the U.S. economy, leading to a deep drop off in construction starts in the first half of 2020,” stated Richard Branch, Chief Economist for Dodge Data & Analytics. “While the recovery is underway, the road to full recovery will be long and fraught with potential potholes. After losing an estimated 14% in 2020 to $738 billion, total construction starts will regain just 4% in 2021.”

“Uncertainty surrounding the next wave of COVID-19 infections in the fall and winter and delayed fiscal stimulus will lead to a slow and jagged recovery in 2021. Business and consumer confidence will improve over the year as further stimulus comes in early 2021 and a vaccine is approved and becomes more widely distributed, but construction markets have been deeply scarred and will take considerable time to fully recover. The dollar value of starts for residential buildings will increase 5% in 2021, nonresidential buildings will gain 3%, and nonbuilding construction will improve 7%. Only the residential sector, however, will exceed its 2019 level of starts thanks to historically low mortgage rates that boost single family housing.”

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

- The dollar value of single family housing starts will be up 7% in 2021 and the number of units will grow 6% to 928,000 (Dodge basis). Historically low mortgage rates and a preference for less dense living during the pandemic are clearly overpowering short-term labor market and economic concerns.
- Multifamily construction, however, will pay the price for single family’s gain. The large overhang of high-end construction in large metro areas combined with declining rents will lead to a further pullback in 2021. Dollar value will drop 1% while the number of units started falls 2% to 484,000 (Dodge basis).
- The dollar value of commercial building starts will increase 5% in 2021. Warehouse construction will be the clear winner as e-commerce giants continue to build out their logistics infrastructure. Office starts will also increase due to rising demand for data centers (included in the office category) as well as renovations to existing space. Retail and hotel activity will languish.
- In 2021, institutional construction starts will increase by a tepid 1% as growing state and local budget deficits impact public building construction. Education construction is expected to see further declines in 2021, while healthcare starts are predicted to rise as

(Continued on page 22)
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- The dollar value of manufacturing plant construction will remain flat in 2021. Declining petrochemical construction and weak domestic and global activity will dampen starts, while a small handful of expected project groundbreakings will level out the year.

- Public works construction starts will see little improvement as 2021 begins due to continued uncertainty surrounding additional federal aid for state and local areas. Additionally, the unfinished appropriations process for fiscal year 2021, which began October 1, raises doubt on the sector’s ability to post a strong gain in 2021. Public works construction starts will be flat over the year.

- Electric utilities/gas plants will gain 35% in 2021, led by expected groundbreakings for several large LNG export facilities and an increasing number of wind farms.

The 2021 Dodge Construction Outlook was presented at the virtual 82nd annual Outlook Executive Conference held by Dodge Data & Analytics. Copies of the report with additional details by building sector can be ordered by contacting Kelli Gaglione at kelli.gaglione@construction.com.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR LAUNCHES EDUCATION, ENFORCEMENT INITIATIVE TO BOOST COMPLIANCE WITH PREVAILING WAGE LAWS ON FEDERAL PROJECTS**

ATLANTA, GA – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division (WHD) has launched an education and enforcement initiative in eight Southeastern states to ensure construction companies that work on federal or federally assisted construction projects meet prevailing wage requirements of the Davis-Bacon Act (DBA) and the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA).

WHD district offices in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, and Tennessee will engage federal contracting agencies, the Small Business Administration, and local chapters of construction associations to educate them about construction industry employers’ responsibilities, and how to prevent violations. WHD also will provide educational seminars directly to employers.
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WHD investigations under these laws in these states during fiscal year 2020 resulted in employers paying $1,329,512 in back wages to 920 employees. Of the investigations conducted, 78 percent had DBRA violations, including investigations that led the Department to debar Wade Kincaid and KCS Construction of Columbia, Tennessee, and Southern Integrated Systems LLC and Jason Dinger, of Tampa, Florida, making them ineligible to bid on government contracts for three years.

“The Wage and Hour Division is committed to ensuring construction industry employers comply with the rules when they receive federal funds for work subject to the Davis Bacon and Related Acts,” said Wage and Hour Division Regional Administrator Juan Coria, in Atlanta, Georgia. “We have outreach staff available throughout the region to answer employers’ and contracting agencies’ questions about compliance. Our work in this area ensures that employees receive the wages they have legally earned, and levels the playing field for all contractors who do business with the government.”

Common violations disclosed during these investigations include employers’ failure to:
- Classify and pay workers for the category of work they actually perform;
- Pay the prevailing wage, including applicable fringe benefits, for all the hours employees work;
- Keep accurate records;
- Accurately track and pay workers the appropriate prevailing wages when they perform work in multiple job classifications; and
- Post the DBRA poster and all applicable wage determinations, as the law requires.

The DBRA requires contractors and subcontractors performing work on federal and certain federally funded projects to pay workers prevailing wage rates and fringe benefits as determined by the U.S. Secretary of Labor and as included in their contracts.

For more information about the DBRA and other laws enforced by the Division, contact the Division’s toll-free helpline at 866-4US-WAGE (487-9243) or visit the Division’s web site. The Division also offers a search tool that allows users to determine if they are owed back wages collected by the Division.
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WILLIAM R. HEASTON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Bill Heaston, MICA’s Executive Secretary from 1956 through 1984, died in 1989 from a lengthy illness. As a lasting memorial to the selfless dedication and service that Bill gave to MICA, the Board of Directors voted to establish the “Midwest Insulation Contractors Association William R. Heaston Memorial Scholarship” at Bill’s alma mater, Creighton University. Bill was also a dedicated and effective teacher at Creighton for over 26 years.

As part of the endowed scholarship, the Board matched the first $10,000 in contributions to the scholarship fund. Through your generosity, this fund is in the twenty-seventh year of providing a scholarship to a deserving accounting major at Creighton University. This year, the scholarships were awarded to Mr. Devin Martini and Patrick Schmitt. We normally recognize the students with the Heaston Scholarship during the fall business meeting. Due to the cancellation of the fall meeting, I have reprinted the thank you letters below:

Dear Dr. Shimerda,
My name is Devin Martini and I am a recipient of the MICA/William R. Heaston Endowed Memorial Accounting Scholarship. I am very thankful for your generosity and support in these difficult times. Your generosity has helped to relieve my financial stress this year, and will allow me to spend more time on my studies and more time giving back to the Creighton and Omaha communities. Thank you so much for your kindness.

Sincerely,
Devin Martini

Dear Dr. Tom Shimerda,
I am sincerely honored to have been awarded the MICA/William R. Heaston Endowed Memorial Accounting Scholarship. Thank you for your generosity. Because of this Scholarship, I will be able to fully concentrate on my studies.

Thank you again for your generous support!

Sincerely,
Patrick Schmitt

The MICA Board extends a sincere “Thank You” to the many MICA members for your financial support in memory of Bill Heaston. The scholarship endowment continues to grow, but any and all financial contributions are always welcomed. If you are interested in contributing to this scholarship fund, contact the MICA office. We will help you with the appropriate contacts at the university.
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