

ALABAMA UTILITY CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

TIM AYERS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MAY 2024



Director's Comments:

The month of May brought a few significant personal milestones. During the month I celebrated my 50th birthday. I also reached the 10-year anniversary from when the AUCA Board of Directors voted back in 2014 to name me as the next Executive Director to succeed the retiring Philip Lee.

With aging comes some drawbacks. As I've previously written about, I was recently diagnosed with two different forms of skin cancer. This month, I had a procedure to remove a Basal Cell Carcinoma on my shoulder and am pleased to report that this procedure was a success. In March, I underwent a successful procedure to remove a Melanoma on my leg.

May is officially recognized as Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness Month. So, if you haven't done so recently, I would strongly encourage you to visit a Dermatologist and have a check-up, as early detection is critical. And with the summer months now upon us, please make sure to protect yourself while working or spending time playing in the sun.

Tim

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Upcoming Meetings & Events:

AUCA Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, June 6, 2024



51st Annual Summer Auction
June 11 - 13, 2024
Montgomery, AL



The Lodge at Gulf State Park - Gulf Shores, AL
Tuesday, September 17 - Thursday, September 19, 2024



AUCA 2024 Fall General Meeting
& Sporting Clay Shoot
Thursday, October 10, 2024
Lower Wetumpka Shotgun Sports Club
Montgomery, AL



AUCA Industry Lunch Meetings
Dates and Locations To Be Announced



News & Notes:

OSHA:

On May 8th, the United States Department of Labor announced they have taken an important step in addressing the dangers of workplace heat and moved closer to publishing a proposed rule to reducing the significant health risks of heat exposure for U.S. workers in outdoor and indoor settings.

More information is available at the following link: [OSHA National News Release](#)

AUCA New Member Companies:

Trawick Construction Company, LLC

Dothan, AL

Company Representative: Andrew Gwin

www.trawickconstruction.com

Zeis Energy & Infrastructure Solutions, LLC

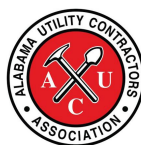
Newnan, GA

Company Representative: Chad Zeis

www.linkedin.com/company/zeis-energy-infrastructure-solutions



AUCA Sponsored the recent Alabama 811 Utility Coordination and Damage Prevention Meeting in Huntsville, as well as participated in similar meetings in Tuscaloosa, Birmingham & Dothan. In addition to being educational, the meetings provided great networking opportunities with fellow stakeholders from the underground utility industry.



NORTHEAST ALABAMA COMMUNITY
COLLEGE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR

Course Details:

Registration Fee: \$25.00

June 3, 2024 - Orientation

- On-site at NACC

- 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

June 10 - June 14th:

- On-site at Lambert, Inc

- 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

ledbetterm@nacc.edu
256.638. 4418 ext. 2361



SUMMER QUICK TRAIN

**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN A CAREER IN
COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION?**

**JUNE 5 - JULY 1
11 AM - 3 PM**



This course is designed and recommended for recently graduated high-school students and adults who are interested getting a head start on learning a trade in the commercial construction industry. This is a 4 week program that will teach you basic construction skills, construction safety and employability skills that contractors are looking for when hiring.

- Basic Safety
- Basic Hand and Power Tools
- Intro to Construction Math
- Intro to Construction Drawings
- Basic Rigging
- Basic Communication Skills
- Basic Employability Skills
- Intro to Material Handling

STUDENTS WHO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE 4 WEEK PROGRAM WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO INTERVIEW WITH LOCAL AREA CONTRACTORS FOR POTENTIAL FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT.



APPLY TODAY!

Scan the QR code to
access the online application.
Applications due no later than
June 1, 2024.



ACRI Job Board Employers



1. What is the new Job Board offering on the Go Build Alabama website?

- ▶ The Go Build Alabama Job Board gives career seekers a central location to easily search for job opportunities from Alabama-licensed commercial and industrial construction employers. From skilled craft/field positions to administrative to sales, this job board offers a streamlined user experience for both the applicant and employer. Career seekers only upload their profile once to have their information dynamically populate the jobs they apply to, speeding up the tedious process of job-hunting online. Employers get a comprehensive view of interested and targeted applicants, can rate applicants on a star system for a convenient overview of qualifications, and even add recruitment notes. Email reminders and notifications are also incorporated, keeping you in the loop even when you aren't logged in.

2. How do I create an account and post my open positions?

- ▶ To take advantage of this free resource, visit jobs.gobuildalabama.com and click the "Employers" button in the website's header. Once you've clicked the "Employers" button, you will be taken to a registration page to share basic information about yourself and your company. Once you sign up and confirm your email address, you can update your company page with additional information, including social media links, company overview, logo, etc., while your company is pending approval. Once your company has been approved by the team at ACRI, you can start posting jobs and hiring qualified leads!

3. How can I best use the Go Build Alabama Job Board for my company?

- ▶ This job board was developed with companies, recruiters and career seekers in mind! Our goal is to make it as easy as possible to post your open positions and rank qualified leads. We recommend having at least three open jobs on the job board and being as descriptive as possible as you explain job requirements, education and qualifications. You can add details about your job opening such as type of job (travel, on-site, hybrid, etc.), location of position (city, state, permanent, seasonal, apprenticeship, training, etc.), and even pay expectations (hourly, salary, competitive, range). Giving an applicant as much information as possible increases your chance of gathering interested, qualified leads that will last. We also hope you find value in the built-in internal review process by adding relevant notes and rating applicants. While this is not built to replace your current hiring or HR processes, we do hope this acts as a support tool for your team.

4. I've signed up as a company through the employer form, when can I expect to be approved?

- ▶ We are so excited you've decided to join! Our ACRI team is small but mighty, and you should expect to receive a notification about your company approval in three to five business days.

- ▶ Visit jobs.gobuildalabama.com to take advantage of this free resource.

News & Notes:

June is Trench Safety Month:

June 2024 has been declared "Trench Safety Month" by the National Utility Contractors Association. This declaration of safety further highlights the association's innovative educational and safety program, the "Trench Safety Stand Down" week, that will held June 17-21, 2024.

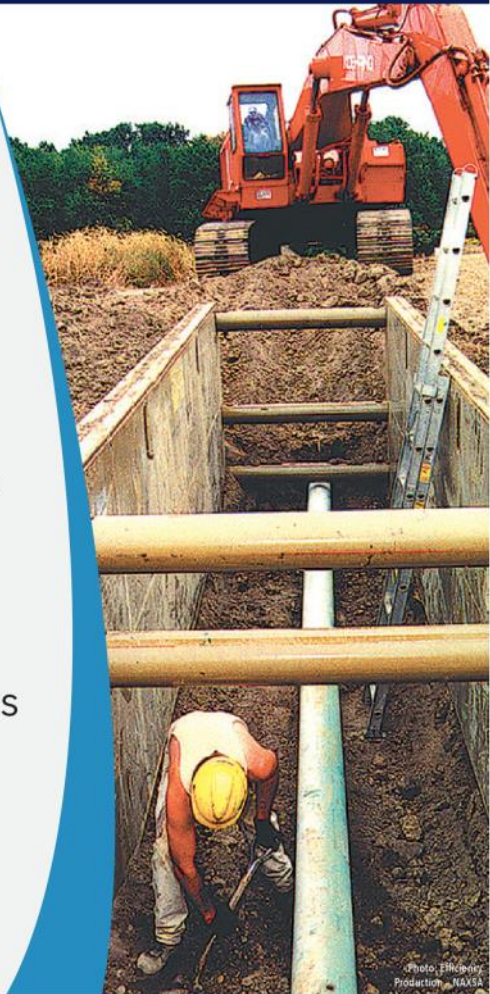
**PROTECT WORKERS
IN TRENCHES**

Prevent trench collapses and save lives:

SLOPE or bench trench walls,

SHORE trench walls with supports, or

SHIELD trench walls with trench boxes



WWW.OSHA.GOV/TRENCHING • 800-321-OSHA (6742) • TTY 877-889-5627

Photo: Eric
Production: NAXSA
OSHA 3215-008-2018



TRENCHING SAFETY

5 Things You Should Know to Stay Safe



1 Ensure there's a safe way to enter and exit.
See 1926.651(c)



2 Trenches must have cave-in protection.
See 1926.652(a)

3 Keep materials away from the edge of the trench.
See 1926.651(j)



4 Look for standing water or other hazards.
See 1926.651(h)



5 Never enter a trench unless it has been properly inspected.
See 1926.651(k)



News & Notes:

Alabama Underground Damage Prevention Authority (ALUDPA)

The Alabama Underground Damage Prevention Authority (ALUDPA) was established for the purpose of enforcing the Alabama Underground Damage Prevention State Law, for reviewing penalty provisions, and for reviewing the adequacy of the Alabama State Law Enforcement Program.



The Enforcement Program is a complaint-driven process where a complaint may be submitted against an entity for violation of the Alabama Underground Damage Prevention State Law. A complaint may be submitted as information only and not designated for enforcement penalties.

A complaint may be submitted using the Complaint Form [at this Website](#) no later than 30 days after the occurrence of an alleged violation. The submitted Complaint Form is reviewed by the ALUDPA for determination of an alleged violation and for penalty provisions that may apply. The reported violator is then notified by the ALUDPA that a response may be submitted using the Response Form at this Website no later than 14 days after the ALUDPA notification.

A GUIDE TO ALABAMA'S

Enforcement Process

HOW TO SUBMIT AND RESPOND TO COMPLAINTS
AT WWW.ALUDPA.ORG

| STEP 1 | STEP 2 | STEP 3 | STEP 4 | STEP 5 |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| | | | | |
| Report any violations within 30 days of incident. Can be reported for info only or enforcement purposes. | Alleged violator will be notified with time/date/location of incident. Alleged violator has 14 days to respond. | Exec. Committee reviews the complaint/response. Then makes a recommendation. | Exec. Committee notifies the alleged violator and complainant of any penalty action recommended. | Alleged violator can accept and pay the penalty, or submit an appeal to be heard by entire Damage Prevention Authority |

Alabama Legislative News:

The 2024 Alabama Legislative Session concluded on the 30th Legislative Day when lawmakers adjourned Sine Die in Montgomery on Thursday, May 9th.

The legislature passed a record \$3.3 billion General Fund Budget and a record \$9.3 billion Education Trust Fund Budget. After falling short by one vote in the Senate the previous week, gaming legislation was not brought back up during the final three days. Despite her support of the legislation, Governor Ivey indicated that it is highly unlikely she would call for a special session on this issue. Ethics reform had been another hot topic, but the Senate did not bring up the ethics bill that had passed the House earlier in the session.

Governor Ivey did sign into law a package of bills known as the "Working for Alabama" legislation. This package includes several workforce development initiatives that officials hope will improve the state's labor participation rate. Before signing the bills, the Governor stated "Our state leaders over the past few years have taken up several ambitious challenges to address Alabama's top areas of need. And the results are paying out in dividends. From broadband to infrastructure to The Game Plan we passed last year and now, Working for Alabama, we have come together to put Alabama first and have paved the way for a stronger economy and a better quality of life for all Alabamians."

Bills of Interest Signed into Law:

Act #2024-115 - Alabama Workforce Transformation Act

This bill would merge and consolidate duplicative workforce development agencies, programs, and funding mechanisms into one single, repurposed state agency that will be led by a cabinet-level official who has primary responsibility for the state's workforce development activities.

Act #2024-126 - Alabama Workforce Pathways Act

This bill would establish a Workforce Pathways diploma at the K-12 level and reinvest in Career & Technical Education (CTE) centers across the state. This pathway would better prepare those students to enter the workforce and/or earn credentials that will help lead directly to employment in their chosen field.

Act #2024-139 - State Licensing Board for General Contractors Sunset Bill

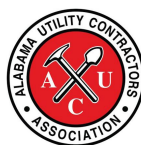
Relating to the Alabama Sunset Law; to continue the existence and functioning of the State Licensing Board for General Contractors until October 1, 2027.

Act #2024-154 - Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board Sunset Bill

Relating to the Alabama Sunset Law; to continue the existence and functioning of the State of Alabama Plumbers and Gas Fitters Examining Board until October 1, 2028.

Act #2024-210 - Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers

Under existing law, there is an intrastate hours of service limitation applied to drivers of commercial motor vehicles operating in intrastate transportation, within a 75 air-mile radius of their normal work reporting location, following 10 consecutive hours off duty, except when prohibited by federal rule or law. This bill would increase the air-mile radius for intrastate motor carriers from 75 to 150 to reflect the current federal allowance.



Alabama Legislative News:

(Continued from page 10)

Act #2024-230 - Alabama Onsite Wastewater Board Sunset Bill

Relating to the Alabama Sunset Law; to continue the existence and functioning of the Alabama On-site Wastewater Board until October 1, 2025, with certain modifications; to amend Section 34-21A-4, Code of Alabama 1975, to allow an organizational meeting of the board to be considered a regular quarterly meeting of the board.

Act #2024-277 - State Licensing Board for General Contractors

Relating to the State Licensing Board for General Contractors; to amend Sections 34-8-1 and 34-8-7, Code of Alabama 1975, as last amended by Act 2023-99, 2023 Regular Session, to increase the threshold cost of undertaking where an individual is deemed to engage in the business of general contracting; and to exempt labor brokers and other temporary labor providers from certain licensing requirements.

Act #2024-280 - Public Contracts

Relating to public contracts; to amend Section 41-16-51, Code of Alabama 1975, as last amended by Act 2023-544, 2023 Regular Session, to further provide for an exemption to the competitive bidding requirements, to include certain county public building authorities within the exemption.

Act #2024-281 - Joint Transportation Committee

Relating to transportation; to amend Section 29-2-4, Code of Alabama 1975, as last amended by Act 2023-534 of the 2023 Regular Session, to require the Department of Revenue rather than the Department of Transportation to annually report to the Joint Transportation Committee the total amount of local motor fuel excise tax revenues collected for the immediately preceding fiscal year and the total amount of the revenues expended on road and bridge maintenance and improvement during that same fiscal year; and to require the Department of Examiners of Public Accounts rather than the Joint Transportation Committee to complete an annual report of the performance of the Department of Transportation in terms of highway construction, maintenance, and costs of the same.

Act #2024-285 - Child Labor Laws

Under existing law, an employer who violates child labor laws is subject to civil and criminal penalties. This bill would increase civil and criminal penalties for an employer who violates child labor laws.

Act #2024-295 - Alabama Move Over Act

Relating to the Alabama Move Over Act; to amend Section 32-5A-58.2, Code of Alabama 1975, to increase the penalties for a violation; to provide increased criminal penalties under certain circumstances; and in connection therewith would have as its purpose or effect the requirement of a new or increased expenditure of local funds within the meaning of Section 111.05 of the Constitution of Alabama of 2022.

Act #2024-302 - Housing Tax Credit

This bill would establish a state workforce housing tax credit like programs implemented in 29 other states. It would complement the existing federal housing tax credit program created by the Reagan Administration designed to incentivize private capital investment in the development of affordable



Alabama Legislative News:

(Continued from page 11)

workforce housing.

Act #2024-303 - Childcare Tax Credit

This bill would create tax credits to incentivize employers to fund childcare options and childcare providers to expand access to and quality of childcare. The tax credits would be available for employers that provide on-site childcare or stipends to employees for childcare expenses. Tax credits would also be available to for-profit childcare providers that voluntarily participate in the state's childcare quality rating program, and donors to nonprofit childcare providers for the improvement or operation of the facilities.

Act #2024-308 - Research and Development Corridors Bill

Relating to research and development; to provide for the establishment of research and development corridors to support economic development activities using state, federal, and other public support; to provide for the creation and dissolution of research and development corridors; to provide the powers of research and development corridors and the powers and duties of their boards of directors; to exempt research and development corridors from certain laws and requirements, including taxation and competitive bid laws.

Act #2024-309 - Alabama Growth Alliance Act

This bill would create the Alabama Growth Alliance, a public corporation governed by a board of public and private leaders. The Alabama Growth Alliance would be formed to coordinate the development, tracking, as well as providing input and support for the creation and maintenance of the state's long-range economic development strategy, annual objectives, and key tactics to achieve the long-range strategies.

Act #2024-322 - County Engineer Residency Requirements

Relating to Escambia County; to amend Section 2 of Act 101 of the 1963 Regular Session (Acts 1963, p.280), relating to public roads and bridges in the county, to make permissive the requirement that the county engineer reside in the county.

Act #2024-340 - Labor Unions and Economic Development Incentives

Relating to labor organizations; to condition an employers' eligibility for economic development incentives upon the employer refraining from certain practices relating to employee representation by a labor organization; and to provide oversight.

Act #2024-352 - Child Labor Laws

Under existing law, a person 14 or 15 years of age is required to obtain an eligibility to work form to be able to work. This bill would eliminate the eligibility to work form.

Act #2024-375 - Alabama Board of Electrical Contractors Sunset Bill

Relating to the Alabama Sunset Law; to continue the existence and functioning of the Alabama Board of Electrical Contractors until October 1, 2026, with certain modifications; to amend Sections 34-36-7 and 34-36-16, Code of Alabama 1975, to prohibit the issuance of new provisional electrical contractors licenses; and to permit the renewal of existing provisional electrical contractors licenses.



Alabama Legislative News:

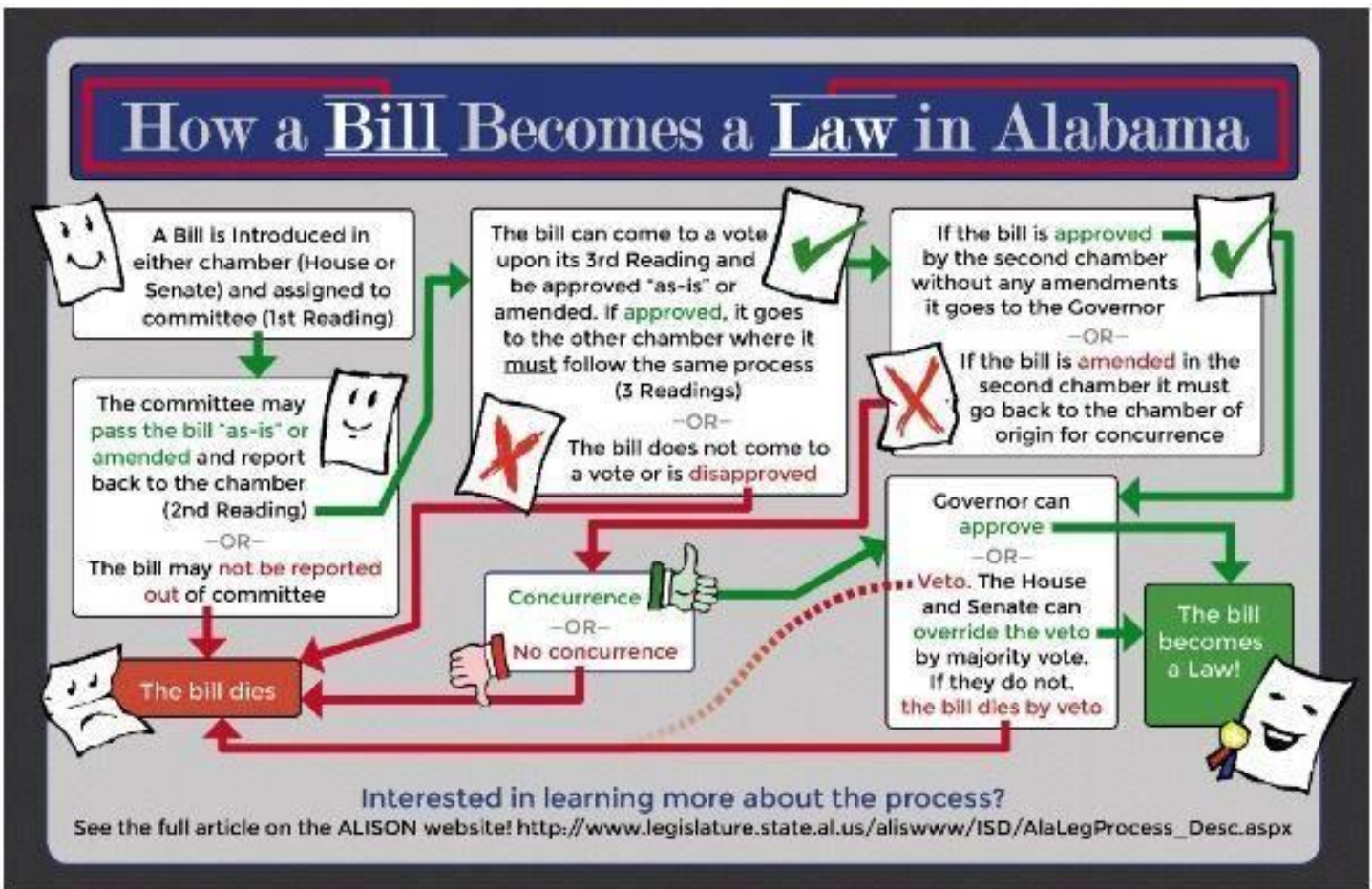
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Act #2024-395 - Critical Infrastructure Security

Under existing law, it is unlawful for a person to intentionally enter without authority any critical infrastructure facility. This bill would further provide for the definition of the terms "critical infrastructure" and "critical infrastructure facility."

Act #2024-450 - Development of Alabama's Inland Ports and Waterways

To authorize the transfer of additional motor fuel excise taxes to the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs; and to authorize the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs to facilitate and coordinate the development, improvement, maintenance, and construction of inland ports and transfer facilities within the state.



Clean Water Construction Coalition Report

From Ryan Sharpe - Chairman CWCC & Sante Esposito - Key Advocates

May 1, 2024

Final FY24 SRF and WIIN Grant Appropriation

The final Clean Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs) state allocation in the FY24 Budget was \$851 million with \$787 million in earmarks, while the final appropriation for Safe Drinking Water SRFs was \$494 million with earmarks adding an additional \$631 million.

Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) grants were funded at \$20 million.

FY25 Budget Proposal and CWCC Funding Requests

President Biden proposed a FY25 Budget that includes \$1.24 billion for the Clean Water SRFs, \$1.12 billion for the Safe Drinking Water SRFs, no funding for SRF related earmarks, and \$4 million for WIIN grants.

The Clean Water Construction Coalition (CWCC) is advocating for a minimum of \$4.49 billion for the Clean Water SRFs and \$4.37 billion for the Safe Drinking Water SRFs and \$20 million for WIIN grants. In addition, we continue to oppose the use of earmarks as a takedown from the water funding allocations in the Budget.

Budget Future Uncertain

Budget hearings are currently underway but, because this is an Election year, the timetable for passage of the Budget is uncertain and it is likely Congress will pass a Continuing Resolution that will extend the process into next year.

House Republicans Target Spending

Republicans in the House continue to push to limit spending and passed a Budget Resolution in March that would limit discretionary spending increases, slash the federal deficit, and create a multi-billion surplus over the next ten years.

Other Legislative Issues

Discussions on the STREAM Act are ongoing among Senate staff but details on the bill have not been shared. The CWCC continues to advocate for enactment of this bill that would provide \$300 million for water recycling, \$750 million for surface and groundwater storage and conveyance, \$150 million for desalination, \$100 million for drinking water, and \$250 million for environmental restoration.

The CWCC also supports Senate action on the Garamendi Amendment which passed the House in

Clean Water Construction Coalition Report

From Ryan Sharpe - Chairman CWCC & Sante Esposito - Key Advocates

(Continued from page 14)

March. The amendment would let the EPA issue National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) permits for 10 years, instead of 5 years, for public works facilities owned or operated by local governments.

Legislation was recently introduced that would increase the federal share for Water Funding Infrastructure and Innovation (WIFIA) funding from 80% to 90% for projects in disadvantaged communities and areas experiencing extreme droughts.

The Coalition is also lobbying for additional funding for alternative water source programs and mega recycling projects.

National Water Week Fly-in & CWCC Virtual Meeting

CWCC attended the Water Environment Federation's (WEF) National Water Week Fly-in activities in Washington, DC in early April which featured a number of interesting panels and included remarks from the Commissioner of the US Bureau of Reclamation.

During the Fly-in, the CWCC held a virtual meeting that included an update from our Washington lobbyist and an interactive discussion of various issues related to the water construction sector.



Health & Safety:

Provided by Marsh McLennan Agency - Southeast Risk Control Services

Hearing Protection

Don't take your ability to hear for granted.

If you are not careful, you *can* lose your hearing. If you are exposed to very loud noise or moderately loud noise for an extended period, you must take some form of hearing protection precautions.

When must hearing protection be provided and worn?

- The "Best Practices" approach to hearing protection requires that whenever a worker's noise exposure is at or above an 8-hour average of 85 decibels, hearing protection should be worn.
- The best defense against hearing loss is to use engineering and work-practice controls to eliminate the excessive exposure wherever possible.
- If you are exposed to loud noises intermittently - wear protection.
- Rule of thumb: If you have to raise your voice to talk to someone, you are in an area where the noise level is at or above 85 decibels, and you should be wearing hearing protection.

How can noise exposure be reduced or eliminated through engineering and work-practice controls?

- Periodic rotation of workers to less noisy areas.
- Adding or replacing mufflers on motorized or pneumatic equipment.
- Following equipment maintenance procedures to keep bearings and other moving parts lubricated.
- Isolating loud equipment such as compressors and generators away from work areas.
- Replacing older, noisier equipment with newer, quieter models.
- Installing sound absorbing materials on walls and ceilings.

What are the types of hearing protectors?

- **Foam plugs:** Disposable and cheap with good noise reduction ability. Insert correctly to ensure the plugs expand for maximum hearing protection.
- **Reusable plugs:** Provides protection similar to foam plugs, but are made of PVC or a polymer blend. Good for people who are allergic or sensitive to foam plugs.
- **Canal caps:** Designed to fit into the outer ear and to be held in place by a headband. Good for situations where protection must be removed frequently.
- **Ear muffs:** Come in a range of noise reduction levels to meet different needs. More comfortable than plugs or canal caps.

Know the noise level of the job and how long your exposure will be. Then use the information provided by your safety supplier to select the best hearing protection.



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***AUCA IS A MEMBER-DRIVEN, NEEDS
FOCUSED TRADE ASSOCIATION CREATED
SOLELY TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE THE
UTILITY INDUSTRY IN THE STATE OF
ALABAMA.***

**We're on the Web!
www.aluca.org**

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**Let AUCA Be Your Source For All Your
Training Needs**

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