



**Cal/OSHA Approves Third Adoption of COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard**

Cal/OSHA has revised and readopted its [COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standard](#) (ETS) for the third time. The updated ETS went into effect on May 7, 2022 and remains in effect through December 31, 2022, at which time Cal/OSHA is expected to implement permanent standards going forward. Cal/OSHA has also updated its [COVID-19 ETS Frequently Asked Questions](#) to include information on the most recent revisions. See full article inside.

**Have you reserved your spot at the 40th Annual Golf Tournament?! You don't want to miss it!**

Supporting VCE's Hands On Tools Mobile Construction Training (MCT), the golf tournament is a way to mix and mingle with friends while helping our industry grow a much-needed workforce. MCT provides industry opportunities to our local youth, training to our local population and upskilling to our local workers. No other program has a truck and trailer going to our schools and communities, educating not only about the careers available in construction, but actually putting tools in their hands and getting people involved.

Gather a group, host a hole, tag a flag – we have lots of ways for you to participate.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Live or work in Chico? The City is in the process of updating its Housing Element, which is a community plan for all types of housing for the next eight years. Visit the [Housing Element website](http://www.chicohousingelement.com/resources) to review the draft document and additional resources: [www.chicohousingelement.com/resources](http://www.chicohousingelement.com/resources)



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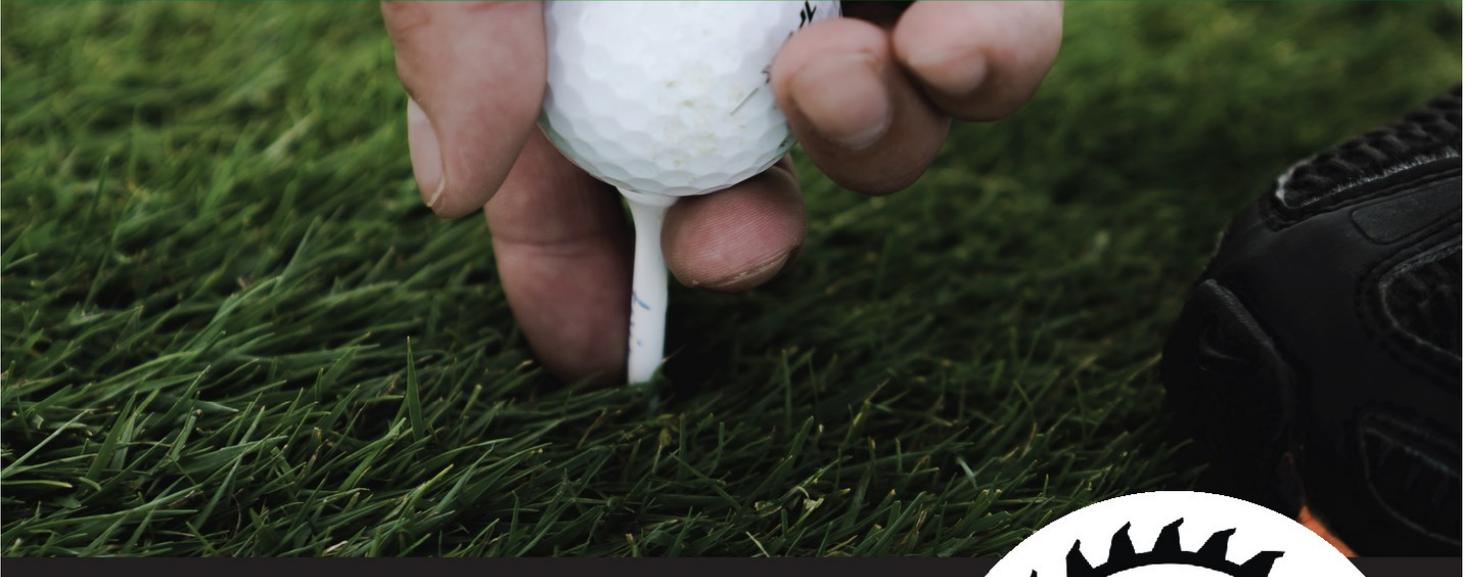
**VCE's 40th Annual  
Golf Tournament  
June 20, 2022**



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**Valley Contractors Exchange**  
**951 E. 8th Street**  
**Chico, CA 95928**  
**(530) 343-1981**  
**www.vceonline.com**

40<sup>th</sup>

# VALLEY CONTRACTORS EXCHANGE ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT



## Proceeds benefit VCE's Hands On Tools Mobile Construction Training

- Youth Education
- Community Rebuilding
- Worker UpSkilling
- Local Safety Training



**06.20.22** 10:00AM SHOTGUN START  
**BUTTE CREEK COUNTRY CLUB**





# VALLEY CONTRACTORS EXCHANGE ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

## \_\_ TITLE PARTNER

**\$3,500**

The tournament Title Partner gets some great perks! Advertising on all printed material; Custom rule sheet, cart signs and course signage; Logo swag for all participants; Time on the mic to address the players; Foursome in the Tournament.

### \_\_ BURRITOS & BLOODY MARYS \$800

Breakfast Burritos and Bloody Marys for all participants. Signage at event lets them know who to thank for their morning pick-me-up!

### \_\_ FOOD STATION (1 LEFT) \$500

Foods stations are available on the front and back of the course. Signage approaching and at the station announce your sponsorship.

### \_\_ DRINK HOLE HOST SOLD OUT!

Decorate your table, bring the swag, run a game AND we'll have a cooler full of refreshing beverages for you to give out.

### \_\_ DRINK CART \$350

Signage on the no-host, roving drink cart. Includes water, soda & Gatorade to be given to the players.

### \_\_ HOLE HOST \$400

Show off your wares, bring a banner, give out some goodies, have a contest and staff with your personnel to promote yourself!

### \_\_ FLAG HOST \$200

Custom Flag on the course. Your name/logo and hole number. Yours to have after the tournament.

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### \_\_\_ FOURSOME \$775.00

### \_\_\_ INDIVIDUAL \$194.00

Includes green fees, cart, breakfast, lunch, on-course food, entry in on-course contests plus a goodie bag!

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#### Reservation Information:

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Information: *Credit Card - Register Everything Online at [www.vceonline.com/events](http://www.vceonline.com/events)*

Check Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ Invoice Me (VCE members only) \_\_\_\_\_

Return this Registration Form and Payment to:

Valley Contractors Exchange ~ 951 E. 8th Street, Chico, CA 95928

Questions?? Call Carrie at (530) 343-1981

## CHICO HIGH TINY HOME BUILD

Wednesday, June 1, we got to see a very special presentation of Ben Rohrer, Chico High Build Leader, hand over the keys to the Tiny Home recipient, Margarita Saldivare.

Joined by VCE board members, industry partners, Chico High, and several media outlets, we heard from Amy Roher, VCE Executive Director, and Chelsea Irvine, Economic Development Consultant, about the dedication of the students and the generosity of the construction industry partners, making a new home a reality for one very lucky survivor!



***VCE Members make it happen!***

# Third Time's the Charm? Cal/OSHA Approves Third Adoption of COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard

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## COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standard Revisions

Key revisions to be aware of include changes regarding face coverings, vaccination status, cleaning and disinfection, testing, and exclusion/return to work standards.

### Face Coverings

- Eliminates the requirement that face coverings be made of material that does not let light pass through.
- Requires employers to provide respirators to all employees, not just unvaccinated employees, upon request.
- Eliminates social distancing requirements for employees exempt from face covering requirements due to a medical condition or job duty exception who cannot wear a non-restrictive alternative.
- Largely eliminates indoor face covering requirements except:
  - When required by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).
  - For 10 days following an asymptomatic employee's first positive test or after an employee first develops symptoms.
  - For all indoor employees in an exposed group during a workplace outbreak or major outbreak or outdoor employees in an exposed group who cannot socially distance.

### Vaccination Status

- Eliminates the term "fully vaccinated" and no longer distinguishes between employees on the basis of vaccination status.

### Cleaning & Disinfection

- The ETS no longer includes any cleaning and disinfecting requirements.

### Testing

- COVID-19 testing must be made available at no cost during work hours to all symptomatic employees and all employees with a workplace close contact, regardless of vaccination status.
- COVID-19 tests may be self-administered and self-read, without third-party observation, as long as additional independent verification—like a time-stamped photograph—accompanies the results.
- No testing is required for "returned cases" who have recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days and remain symptom-free.

## Exclusions and Return to Work

- Regardless of vaccination status, positive employees can turn to work after 5 days if the employee has a negative test, symptoms are improving, and they wear a face covering at work for an additional 5 days. If the employee cannot test or the employer does not require a test, the employee must be excluded for 10 days.
- Employers are to defer to CDPH guidelines for exclusion and return to work criteria for “close contacts.”

Employers are encouraged to continue monitoring Cal/OSHA’s website, as well as updated guidelines issued by the California Department of Health and local public health agencies pertaining to face covering requirements and exclusion/return to work criteria. Cook Brown remains at the ready to provide detailed assistance regarding these issues as well.

DANIEL F. C. KOZIEJA / MAY 26, 2022

**COOK | BROWN** LLP

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Respectful Revolution, in collaboration with Camp Fire Restoration Project, will be premiering a video called “Building a Simple Greywater System in CA” on Friday June 3 from 7 PM to 9 PM in the dome at Sol Sanctuary, 4791 Round Valley Ranch Rd in Paradise.

Learn about materials, installation specs, California legal code, and caring for your system and watch the CFRP team, led by Janel Luke, build a laundry-to-landscape system. The event is free!

California is experiencing an increase in wildfire occurrences and severity, exacerbated by drought conditions. Greywater systems--using water that has already been used once--are a cost-efficient, eco-friendly, LEGAL way to recycle your household water and create lush, healthy defensible space around your home.

For more information, contact Stacey Wear (530) 514-7475 or Janeva Sorenson at [campfirerestorationproject@gmail.com](mailto:campfirerestorationproject@gmail.com) or go to Facebook: <https://fb.me/e/1HY6aQe5R>



## NEWS RELEASE

News Release No.: 2022-43

Date: May 23, 2022

### Cal/OSHA Reminds Employers to Protect Outdoor Workers from Heat Illness

**Oakland**—Cal/OSHA reminds all employers with outdoor workers to be prepared and take the necessary precautions to prevent heat illness, as high temperatures are expected throughout the state this week. Employers in California must take steps to protect outdoor workers from heat illness by providing water, rest, shade and training.

“As we shift towards summer, employers need to ensure they have updated their written heat plans and provided effective training to all of their employees who work outdoors,” said Cal/OSHA Chief Jeff Killip. “For those who want help, Cal/OSHA is ready and available to provide consultation and outreach.”

Cal/OSHA’s [heat illness prevention standard](#) applies to all outdoor worksites. To prevent heat illness, the law requires employers to provide outdoor workers fresh water, access to shade at 80 degrees and whenever requested by a worker, cool-down rest breaks in addition to regular breaks and maintain a written prevention plan with training on the signs of heat illness and what to do in case of an emergency.

- Plan – Develop and implement an effective written heat illness prevention plan that includes emergency response procedures.
- Training – Train all employees and supervisors on heat illness prevention.
- Water – Provide drinking water that is fresh, pure, suitably cool and free of charge so that each worker can drink at least 1 quart per hour, and *encourage workers to do so*.
- Rest – Encourage workers to take a cool-down rest in the shade for at least five minutes when they feel the need to do so to protect themselves from overheating. *Workers should not wait until they feel sick to cool down.*
- Shade – Provide proper shade when temperatures exceed 80 degrees. Workers have the right to request and be provided shade to cool off at any time.

Cal/OSHA’s Heat Illness Prevention special eD emphasis program includes enforcement of the heat regulation as well as multilingual outreach and training programs for California’s employers and workers. Details on heat illness prevention requirements and training materials are available online on Cal/OSHA’s [Heat Illness Prevention web page](#) and the [99calor.org](#) informational website. A [Heat Illness Prevention online tool](#) is also available on Cal/OSHA’s website.

Cal/OSHA helps protect workers from health and safety hazards on the job in almost every workplace in California. Employers who have questions or want assistance with workplace health and safety programs can call [Cal/OSHA’s Consultation Services Branch](#) at 800-963-9424.

Workers who have questions about heat illness prevention can call 833-579-0927 to speak with a Cal/OSHA representative during normal business hours. Complaints about workplace safety and health hazards can be filed confidentially with [Cal/OSHA district offices](#).



2022

# MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY ADVERTISING

### Bold Listing

Have your name stand out 'boldly' in the Directory. Bold your main company information for just \$25. Add bold to your specialty listings for \$10 each section.

Ad Size	Color	B & W
Business Card (3.5x2)	\$300	\$135
1/2 Page (4.5x3.75)	\$450	\$185
Full Page (4.5x7.5)	\$685	\$365

**ADS DUE BY**

**May 10th**

Questions?

Call (530) 343-1981

Bus. Card: B & W \_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_ Bold Name \_\_\_\_  
 1/2 Page: B & W \_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_ Bold Specialty \_\_\_\_  
 Full Page: B & W \_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_ (# of categories?)

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Information: Credit Card - reserve online Check \_\_\_\_

Mail to: VCE 951 E. 8th Street, Chico CA 95928

Email to: elizabeth@vceonline.com

**Reserve your spot at [www.vceonline.com](http://www.vceonline.com)**

PDF FILES PREFERRED. CAN ACCEPT JPG, GIF, EPS. ANY ADVERTISEMENTS THAT REQUIRE MANIPULATION BY VCE PERSONNEL WILL BE CHARGED A \$50 PER HALF HOUR FEE. ALL CONTRACTOR ADS MUST FOLLOW CSLB ADVERTISING GUIDELINES.

# California Supreme Court Delivers One-Two Punch to Employers Related to Break Premium Pay

The California Supreme Court delivered a one-two punch to employers this week with respect to the penalties for missed breaks. It held that the penalty for a missed break (one hour's pay) constitutes "wages" that must be reported on statutorily required wage statements during employment. It further held that if an employer fails to pay all missed break penalties during employment, the employer will be liable for waiting time penalties. This means employers may be liable for up to thirty days of full pay for each employee who was not fully paid all break penalties on or before the termination of employment.

## *Naranjo v. Spectrum Security Services, Inc.*

*In Naranjo v. Spectrum Security Services, Inc.*, the plaintiff had filed a putative class action on behalf of Spectrum employees, alleging that the employer had violated state meal break requirements under the Labor Code and the applicable Industrial Welfare Commission (IWC) wage order and seeking "premium pay" – an additional hour of pay – for each day Spectrum failed to provide its employees a legally compliant meal break.

The Court of Appeal found that unpaid premium wages for meal period violations did not entitle employees to pay stub penalties or waiting time penalties. *Naranjo*, 40 Cal.App.5th 444, 444 (2019). But the California Supreme Court overturned that decision noting that meal and rest period violations "remain pervasive throughout California, disturbingly so in low-wage industries." As a result, the Legislature adopted Section 226.7 to "incentivize claims for meal and rest period violations." The Court found it would be absurd for the Legislature, concerned about widespread failure to provide basic worker protections, to strip—without comment—two critical enforcement tools applicable to all other wages due immediately. That is, section 203 waiting time penalties and section 226 wage statement penalties.

Although Labor Code section 226 contains no separate requirement that missed-break premium pay be reported, the California Supreme Court held that pursuant to section 226.7, an additional credited hour of work and the corresponding premium pay owed must be reported on the wage statement. It found that the intent behind section 226 was "to enable employees to verify they have been compensated properly, without shortchanging or improper deduction" and detailing such premium payments meets this goal. The Court specifically held that California employers are required to include these "premium payments" on an employee's wage statement for any missed, late, or short meal period for the pay period that any such premium payment is incurred.

While the decision places all employers at risk of draconian penalties for the failure to identify a missed break and/or the failure to pay the applicable penalty in a timely fashion, it does recognize that such penalties are not automatic. The Court pointed out that employees who seek such penalties will still need to prove the alleged break violation was known and the failure to pay the premium was willful. So an employee who confirms to have taken timely meal breaks in writing and further confirms that his or her time records are accurate may not be able to establish that full penalties are due.

Unfortunately, because the potential penalties are substantial for large employers, in particular, this decision is sure to increase class action and PAGA claims that are already rampant in the Golden State. Based on this recent ruling, California employers should immediately confirm that their paystubs separately detail meal and rest break premium payments. In addition, employers may want to explore asking questions about any possible missed meal or rest breaks during exit interviews to ensure no waiting time penalties begin to accrue after employees' separation.

## CREATE MENTORS NEEDED ACROSS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA



The CREATE Mentoring Program and Competition will celebrate its 5<sup>th</sup> year as a workforce development initiative this fall! We are excited to introduce CREATE to schools in the Modesto/Stockton region and welcome all of our returning schools from Chico, San Francisco, and the Greater Sacramento.

The success of this program relies heavily on the time, expertise, and guidance of our industry mentors. Last year the program served over 240 students representing 27 teams and who were coached by more than 140 industry professionals. With the expansion of participating schools this fall, we aim to recruit the largest number of industry mentors yet! As a mentor, not only will you support the efforts in taking a team to victory at the December competition, but you will be a formative asset to the future of the built environment.

QUESTIONS? Contact Carlisle Sanden at  
[csanden@cie.foundation](mailto:csanden@cie.foundation) or 916.465.8348

# Total Construction Starts Inch Higher in April

## *Healthy growth in building construction offsets infrastructure weakness*

HAMILTON, NJ — May 17, 2022 — Total construction starts rose 3% in April to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$945.8 billion, according to [Dodge Construction Network](#). Nonresidential building starts rose 6% and residential starts increased by 4%, while nonbuilding starts fell 4%. Year-to-date, total construction was 6% higher in the first four months of 2022 compared to the same period of 2021. Nonresidential building starts rose 19%, residential starts gained 3%, while nonbuilding starts were 2% lower. For the 12 months ending April 2022, total construction starts were 12% above the 12 months ending April 2021. Nonresidential starts were 24% higher, residential starts gained 11% and nonbuilding starts were down 1%.

“The construction sector is seemingly shrugging off the fear of higher interest rates and a potential recession,” said Richard Branch, chief economist for Dodge Construction Network. “Many building sectors have made the turn from weakness to recovery as underlying economic growth and hiring are solid. With the pipeline of projects in planning continuing to expand, this trend should continue in the months to come. However, the concern that the Federal Reserve will force the U.S. into recession later this year may thwart the momentum in construction starts. While recession is not our baseline forecast, it can not be fully discounted.”

Below is the breakdown for construction starts:

- **Nonbuilding construction starts** fell 4% in April to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$187.1 billion. Starts in the environmental public works category rose 8%, while utility/gas plant starts moved 10% higher. Starts for highway and bridge projects fell 14% and miscellaneous nonbuilding starts dropped 2% during the month. Through the first four months of the year, total nonbuilding starts were 2% lower than in 2021. Highway and bridge starts gained 28% through four months and environmental public works projects were 2% higher. At the same time, miscellaneous nonbuilding and utility/gas plants starts dropped 37% and 39% (respectively) through four months.

For the 12 months ending April 2022, total nonbuilding starts were 1% lower than in the 12 months ending April 2021. Environmental public works starts were up 10%, and street/bridge starts gained 6%. Miscellaneous nonbuilding starts were 33% lower and utility/gas plant starts were down 3%.

**The largest nonbuilding projects to break ground in April** were the \$531 million Gross Reservoir Expansion in Golden, CO, the \$450 million Seven Cowboy wind project in Washita and Kiowa counties, OK, and the \$338 million Great Pathfinder wind farm in Boone and Hamilton counties, IA.

- **Nonresidential building starts** rose 6% in April to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$295.9 billion. In April, commercial starts rose 2%, institutional starts gained 8% and manufacturing starts increased 16%. Through the first four months of 2022, nonresidential building starts

were 19% higher than during the first four months of 2021. Commercial starts advanced 11% and institutional starts 1%, while manufacturing starts soared 189% on a year-to-date basis.

For the 12 months ending April 2022, nonresidential building starts were 24% higher than in the 12 months ending April 2021. Commercial starts grew 19%, institutional starts rose 11%, and manufacturing starts swelled 163% on a 12-month rolling sum basis.

The largest nonresidential building projects to break ground in April were the \$500 million Caesar Virginia hotel and casino in Danville, VA, the \$430 million Aggie Square Life science building in Sacramento, CA, and the \$400 million The Rose Gaming Resort in Dumfries, VA.

- **Residential building starts** rose 4% in April to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$462.9 billion. Single family starts gained 1% and multifamily starts rose 13%. Through the first four months of 2022, residential starts were 3% higher than in the first four months of 2021. Multifamily starts were up 16%, while single family housing slipped 2%.

For the 12 months ending April 2022, residential starts improved 11% from the same period ending March 2021. Single family starts were 6% higher and multifamily starts were 27% stronger on a 12-month rolling sum basis.

The largest multifamily structures to break ground in April were the \$420 million 2-10 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue apartments in Long Island City, NY, the \$400 million Civic Square condominiums in Seattle, WA, and a \$300 million mixed-use building in Long Island City, NY.

Regionally, total construction starts in April rose in the Northeast, South Atlantic, and South Central regions, but fell in the Midwest and West.

Cailey Henderson | 104 West Partners | [cailey.henderson@104west.com](mailto:cailey.henderson@104west.com)

## MONTHLY CONSTRUCTION STARTS

(Millions of Dollars, Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate)

	Apr 2022	Mar 2022	% Change
<b>Nonresidential Building</b>	\$295,884	\$279,693	6
<b>Residential Building</b>	462,865	443,865	4
<b>Nonbuilding Construction</b>	187,054	195,483	-4
<b>Total Construction</b>	\$945,803	\$919,041	3

## YEAR-TO-DATE CONSTRUCTION STARTS

Unadjusted Totals, in Millions of Dollars

	4 Mos. 2022	4 Mos. 2021	% Change
<b>Nonresidential Building</b>	\$97,060	\$81,419	19
<b>Residential Building</b>	144,704	140,722	3
<b>Nonbuilding Construction</b>	61,227	62,627	-2
<b>Total Construction</b>	\$302,991	\$284,768	6

# Encourage young women to choose construction industry careers |

Published: May. 18, 2022, 3:15 p.m.

**By Samantha DeAlmeida**

Growing up, parents tell their little girls they can be anything they want to be and the future is limitless in terms of jobs and opportunities. Never before has this been more accurate, including choosing a career in the rewarding field of construction.

When planning for their future, young women — and their parents -- should look to the construction industry for lucrative and exciting careers. While traditionally a male-dominated field, the amount of women working in construction is greater than it's been in 20 years, according to the [Institute for Women's Policy Research](#). And importantly, more women are being promoted to leadership roles and owning their own businesses.

Young women are choosing construction careers for a variety of important reasons. First, women bring a different perspective than their male counterparts that is highly valued by employers in the trades. They tend to be fantastic problem solvers, team players, and detail-oriented workers, which is well-suited for managing a job site. Additionally, many women enjoy having a direct impact on their communities and seeing a project come to fruition. Construction also offers the opportunity to start a well-paying career without the cost of a college degree and massive student loan debt.

According to the [2022 Levelset Women in Construction report](#), the top reasons women said they liked working in construction include: pride in creating physical buildings, being creative and solving problems, helping customers and clients, flexible work schedules, fast-paced and ever-changing work, and the people they get to work with. And an overwhelming 80 percent of women surveyed said they loved their job! It's time to kill the outdated perception that construction jobs are all about manual labor and women are not strong enough to do them. Modern technology and innovation have changed the nature of construction work. There is a huge diversity of rewarding roles in the construction industry, ranging from project managers to planners, to operators and engineers, design managers, and executive roles. And the demand for trade work continues to grow. In fact, there are millions of jobs for high-skilled trade positions but [too few workers](#) who can fill them.

So, where can a young woman interested in construction get started? The Associated Builders and Contractors of New Jersey launched its Apprenticeship Training program two years ago to help young people start their careers in the industry. Our program provides paid, on-the-job training, and classroom based theoretical education in 15 skilled craft trades. Working alongside local schools and businesses, we provide pre-apprenticeship construction readiness training and can help prospective apprentices get hired with one of more than 1,100 of our member companies. Our apprentices earn while they learn, pursuing an education while working full-time on the path to a successful lifetime career.

Apprentices benefit from on-the-job learning from an experienced mentor, combined with education courses to support work-based learning. Registered with the U.S. Department of Labor, all programs comply with strict federal and state requirements for formal apprenticeship and prevailing wage work. Upon successful completion, craft workers are eligible to be recognized at the journey level in their trade and receive a certificate of completion.

Parents, don't be discouraged if your daughter chooses a hard hat over a tiara. Trade work provides high salaries, fulfilling careers, and the opportunity to run one's own business. For young women in construction, the sky is truly the limit.

# CA workers could get ‘ultrahigh’ heat conditions protections if bill passes

by: [Jacque Porter](#)

Posted: May 30, 2022 / 07:52 AM PDT

Updated: May 30, 2022 / 02:42 PM PDT

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (KTXL) – A bill making its way through the California state legislature could potentially set new protections for employees working in “ultrahigh” heat outdoors.

If passed, [Assembly Bill 2243](#) would require that the state’s Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board consider revising the heat illness standard for workers in industries like agriculture and construction when outdoor temperatures exceed 105 degrees Fahrenheit.

## [These are your rights if you live in California and work outdoors in temperatures above 80°](#)

The board would need to consider requiring employers to ensure workers get paid rest breaks every hour, have more accessible cool water than normal, and that employers pay closer attention to workers for symptoms of heat-related illnesses.

Employers could also be required to distribute their heat illness prevention plans, which they are already required to have, to workers when they are first hired and when temperatures first exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit or on an annual basis.

Assembly Bill 2243 would also require the standards board to consider lowering the limit the quality of the air must exceed before “respiratory protective equipment becomes mandatory.”

The bill, which was introduced by Assembly Members Eduardo Garcia and Luz Rivas, passed the Assembly 47-19 on Wednesday and was sent to the Senate for consideration.

California already legally requires [certain safeguards from heat-related illness for outdoor workers](#) like making sure employers provide at least one quart of water per employee per hour.

# Overcome Barriers to Addressing Mental Health in the Workplace

By Cal Beyer | Sunday, March 6, 2022

After leading hundreds of live and virtual presentations and group conversations on mental health, substance misuse and suicide prevention in the workplace, several recurring barriers have been identified that limit leaders and organizations from addressing these topics. Make no mistake, it is becoming considerably easier to talk about these topics in the workplace. Yet, there is zero doubt that many leaders, managers, supervisors and employees are afraid to discuss these topics.

This is sad and can lead to unfortunate—if not tragic—circumstances. The reality is if society was better at tackling mental health challenges, then the necessity of doing so in the workplace would be less of an imperative. Mental health remains a taboo topic with significant levels of stigma and shame associated with talking about it in the workplace, which is understandable after hundreds of years of not doing so. The concept of a caring culture remains an alien thought to workers whose perception is to have been treated as machines and “human doings” more than as human beings.

## STIGMA AND SHAME

Stigma is a major barrier that keeps people from acknowledging that they are not okay. Stigma is a fear of the unknown combined with a fear of judgement from others or a fear of consequences—real and perceived. A real concern expressed by workers about disclosing a need for mental health support is fear of adverse job consequences.

Therefore, stigma remains a barrier that keeps people from either offering or seeking help. Acknowledging help is needed historically has been seen as a sign of weakness rather than as a sign of strength. Stigma and shame go hand in hand. Where stigma and shame exist people are uncomfortable or afraid to talk about mental health, which leads to people suffering in silence.

**Example of barriers to be overcome to address mental health in the workplace include:**

- Social stigma of others;
- Self-stigma and shame;
- Employers are unsure of how employees will respond to programs and practices;
- Privacy and confidentiality centered on HIPAA compliance;
- Unsure of the level of risk employees and families are experiencing when suffering in silence; and

Companies are not sure where to start.

## INTENTIONAL STIGMA-BREAKING

The most important starting point is intentionally undermining stigma centered on mental health issues. The most effective of the group presentations delivered to audiences in workplaces or on jobsites start with a moment of silence to honor those who have struggled or fallen due to these deeply intense issues. The personal appeal to those who have lost a loved one is palpable.

Stigma is a silent killer by preventing people from offering, seeking or accepting help. Only by reducing stigma can progress really be made in addressing the underlying issues leading to mental health, substance misuse and suicide prevention.

## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN CONSTRUCTION PULSE SURVEY

In September 2021, the Center for Workplace Mental Health released the results from the Pulse Survey on [Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Construction Industry](#). This pulse survey focused on opportunities to continue moving forward in effectively addressing worker mental health and wellbeing in construction. The final survey report highlights findings, strategies, recommendations and resources to improve mental health for construction workers. The Mental Health and Wellbeing Survey addresses four crucial challenges.

1. **Engaging company leaders to support mental health initiatives visibly, vocally and vulnerably.** Leaders who exhibit these “three Vs” lead by example and let workers know “it is okay to not be okay.” Leaders who care share resources to help workers and families in need of support. Where these “three Vs” exist, a fourth “V” for “vertical” emerges as workers up and down the organizational structure begin to freely share their lived experience.
  2. **Raising mental health awareness by regularly sharing resources with employees.** It is important for employees to better understand the services and supports available to them and their dependent family members. Teaching employees how to tap into employee assistance programs and employee health insurance programs is important education.
  3. **Creating a mentally health culture to reduce the stigma and shame associated with mental health.** It is important to increase the literacy of health and mental health for leaders at all levels in a company. Take time to educate leaders and supervisors why mental health is a workforce safety and health issue. Provide training to promote and reinforce psychological safety in the workplace and on jobsite.
- Removing barriers and enhancing access to mental health services and support.** Barriers to care seeking and acceptance can be removed by integrating mental health into human resources functions, employee benefits programs and safety/health and wellness practices.

#### A CALL TO ACTION: IMMEDIATE STEPS LEADERS CAN TAKE NOW

- Read the 2021 Mental Health and Wellbeing in Construction Survey Final Report.
- Read the flipbook, [Building a Caring Culture: Addressing Mental Health in the Workplace](#).
- Discuss mental health with the senior leadership team and develop a simple strategy to develop a mentally health culture and to improve sharing resources with employees and family members.
- Commit to stamp out stigma in the organization by creating a no-shame zone with a psychological safe work environment where managers and supervisors support workers with empathy and understanding.

## CAPITOL UPDATE 05.06.22

### [Construction material costs continuing to soar](#)

Double-digit year-to-year cost increases are evident in 13 out of 15 Producer Price Index series listed in a table of construction material costs documented in March. And there's little sign of change, with double-digit gains in nine out of the 15 categories over the latest three months. **Full Story:** [Daily Commercial News \(Ontario\)](#)

### [OMB offers new guidance on infrastructure spending](#)

The Office of Management and Budget has issued new guidance to minimize any possibility of "fraud, waste and abuse" of funds from the bipartisan infrastructure law. The guidance draws on lessons from implementation of the American Rescue Plan and addresses the use of data and evidence in program development, compliance, documentation, reporting and governmental stakeholder engagement. **Full Story:** [Route Fifty](#)

### [Using building codes to green up energy supply](#)

Revisions to the state building code in Washington state now require electric heat pumps in the place of natural gas, marking one effort out of several by states to bring about gas bans. It's part of a broad effort using building codes to promote clean energy that continues to face stiff opposition from the gas industry and others who argue the moves pose a threat to the energy grid and shut out other green solutions. **Full Story:** [E&E News](#)

### [Report: Poor planning, procurement derail transit work](#)

Transit megaprojects in California are often beset by poor planning and suboptimal procurement methods, but shifting away from design-bid-build and giving builders more of a voice in the design stage can help, according to a report by the University of California at Berkeley. The report looks at five case studies to illustrate how big rail projects run over budget and behind schedule. **Full Story:** [Construction Dive](#)

## CAPITOL UPDATE 05.06.22

### [PPI for final demand advances 0.5% in April; goods rise 1.3%, services are unchanged](#)

The Producer Price Index for final demand increased 0.5 percent in April. Prices for final demand goods advanced 1.3 percent, and the index for final demand services was unchanged. Final demand prices moved up 11.0 percent for the 12 months ended in April.

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### [CPI for all items rises 0.3% in April; shelter, food, airfare indexes rise](#)

In April, the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers rose 0.3 percent, seasonally adjusted, and rose 8.3 percent over the last 12 months, not seasonally adjusted. The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.6 percent in April (SA); up 6.2 percent over the year (NSA).

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### [Compensation costs up 1.4% Dec 2021 to Mar 2022 and up 4.5% over the year ending Mar 2022](#)

Compensation costs increased 1.4 percent for civilian workers, seasonally adjusted, from December 2021 to March 2022. Over the year, total compensation rose 4.5 percent, wages and salaries rose 4.7 percent, and benefit costs rose 4.1 percent.

## **'Risk of further outages': California warns of blackouts as another hot summer looms**

Officials said California has made considerable progress in shoring up the grid, including the addition of nearly 4,000 megawatts of battery storage in just over two years. But climate change is creating ever-worsening heat waves, and supplies are tightening all over the West, making it harder for the state to import electricity in a pinch. Wildfires can knock transmission lines out of commission. **Dale Kasler** in the [Sacramento Bee](#)

## **[White House seeks to speed infrastructure permitting](#)**

Speedier permitting without sacrificing attention to environmental factors is the goal of a new action plan for infrastructure released by the White House. The plan calls for agencies to coordinate their efforts early in the permitting process, but critics say the plan could lead to cutting corners and less thorough reviews. **Full Story:** [The Hill](#) [The White House](#)

## **[Study: Nonunion firms struggle more to find workers](#)**

The ongoing worker shortage in construction is affecting nonunion firms more than those with unions, according to a review of surveys by Associated General Contractors of America from 2018 to 2021. The disproportionate shortage began before the pandemic, with nonunion firms 16% more likely to have difficulty filling positions and 13% more likely to lose qualified workers to other industries, according to AGC. **Full Story:** [Contractor Magazine](#)

## **[Economists see uncertain outlook for construction](#)**

A long list of factors, including the war in Ukraine and the pandemic, could bring a slowdown in US construction after a good first quarter, according to five economists, including the Associated General Contractors of America's Ken Simonson, participating in an online presentation. Although recession is possible, AIA chief economist Kermit Baker pointed to other factors that could sustain a good pace of growth, including job gains, corporate profits, consumer spending and business investment. **Full Story:** [Daily Commercial News \(Ontario\)](#)

## **[Demolition begins at site of new Calif. hospital tower](#)**

Demolition of temporary structures is underway at the site of a new hospital tower at the University of California at Davis Medical Center. The \$3.75 billion California Tower is designed to meet seismic standards set to take effect in 2030. **Full Story:** [The Sacramento Bee \(Calif.\) \(tiered subscription model\)](#)

## **[Contract goes out for \\$235M Calif. transit project](#)**

Kiewit Shea Traylor has received a \$235 million contract to design and prepare for construction of a Bay Area Rapid Transit extension in San Jose, Calif. The Valley Transportation Authority board, which awarded the contract, is concurrently beginning an independent review of the single-bore tunnel plan for the 6-mile project. **Full Story:** [The Real Deal/San Francisco](#)

## **[Balfour Beatty tapped for \\$16M in Calif. light-rail work](#)**

California's Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority has awarded Balfour Beatty a \$16 million contract for renovation, modification and replacement of the overhead contact system along the Guadalupe light-rail corridor. The work will include replacing 38 miles of contact wire and an array of other components as well as introducing safety improvements at a maintenance facility. **Full Story:** [The Construction Index \(UK\)](#)

## **[Calif. port sees \\$1.5B train project as congestion fix](#)**

It will take about a decade, but California's Port of Long Beach plans to update its rail capacity so that more cargo can be moved out of the port by trains rather than trucks. The planned \$1.5 billion Pier B On-Dock Rail Support Facility has won final environmental approval, and federal funding is the next step. **Full**

**Story:** [Courthouse News Service](#))

## **CAPITOL UPDATE 05.31.22**

### **[Economist: Economy transitioning to stability](#)**

The economy is shifting from high growth to "stable and resilient" growth that benefits families, said Brian Deese, director of the National Economic Council. "There's no doubt we face serious global challenges right now, inflation first and foremost among them, and it's hitting families hard, but there's also no doubt that the United States is in a better position than any other major country around the world to address inflation," Deese said. **Full Story:** [MarketWatch \(tiered subscription model\)](#)

### **[Construction starts up 3% in April](#)**

The nonresidential category led the way with a 6% gain as total construction starts rose a seasonally adjusted 3% last month, according to Dodge Construction Network. Nonbuilding starts were down 4%, but residential was up by the same percentage as "the construction sector is seemingly shrugging off the fear of higher interest rates and a potential recession," said Richard Branch, chief economist for Dodge Construction Network. **Full Story:** [Dodge Data & Analytics](#)

### **[White House: \\$110B in infrastructure funding delivered](#)**

The White House has made \$110 billion in funding available to states in the six months since the federal infrastructure bill became law, and the support is benefiting more than 4,300 projects, the White House said Monday, the first day of Infrastructure Week. "We're hitting the ground running on the projects that are shovel-ready," said White House Infrastructure Implementation Coordinator Mitch Landrieu. **Full Story:** [Reuters](#)

### **Survey: 57% Of Small Businesses Expect Economy To Worsen**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) reported that small businesses are losing confidence in the economy. A survey of more than 600 small businesses conducted in May for The Wall Street Journal by Vistage Worldwide Inc. found that 57% of small-business owners expect economic conditions to worsen over the next year. That is an increase from 42%.

### **WPost Analysis: Rising Gas Prices Create Challenges For Economy**

The [Washington Post](#) reported, "Gas prices have emerged as a particular worry amid other troubling signs about the U.S. economy. ... The price of fuel keeps passing earlier milestones, now averaging more than \$4.59 per gallon nationwide. That is 50 percent higher than gas was at this time last year, according to AAA." The Post explained, "While the war in Ukraine is playing a major role...it is not the only challenge. The plunge in fuel demand during the pandemic moved producers to cut back on their investments in drilling and refining capacity." Now, the oil and gas sector "finds itself ill equipped to meet...demand," and the federal government "has exhausted most of the limited tools it has to confront price spikes." Plus, as gas prices "force Americans to change their spending habits, one thing Americans aren't doing is driving significantly less. All that driving in this moment of low fuel supply is pushing prices up further."

### **[AGC: Employment up, but unfilled openings persist](#)**

Construction job openings remain at a record high even as employment in the industry across 32 states topped prepandemic levels last month, according to an analysis of employment data by the Associated General Contractors of America. "Construction employment gains have stalled in many states in recent months as the pool of available workers has dried up," making it difficult to meet demand for private and infrastructure projects, says AGC Chief Economist Ken Simonson. **Full Story:** [Pit & Quarry](#)