



MINNESOTA BUILDERS EXCHANGE

Weekly Bulletin

Issue No. 20 • Wednesday, May 15, 2024 • www.mbox.org

Five Quick Things To Know/Do This Week:

- 1.) Add the following events to your calendar and register to attend: [Member Appreciation BBQ](#) (June 5), [Twin Cities Golf Tournament](#) (June 18), MBEX POWER: Women, Money & Happiness (June 26), and newly opened, [Duluth Harbor Cruise Aboard the Sundew](#) (July 17).
- 2.) ABC reported on May 14 that its [Construction Backlog Indicator](#) increased to 8.4 months in April, which is down 0.5 months from April 2023, but expanded 0.2 months from March 2024.
- 3.) Congratulations to Paul Frank with [Mulcahy Company](#). He was named Vice President of Sales and Business Development after 35 years of extensive industry experience, including 17 years of dedicated service within Mulcahy Company.
- 4.) During Minnesota's 2023 legislative session, Gov. Walz signed an expansive cannabis legalization bill into law, which went into effect August 1. Established [clear company policies](#) regarding cannabis use that comply with state laws around privacy while also prioritizing worker safety should be in place, and if not, it's time to do so.
- 5.) Enjoy this [breathtaking video](#) from the top of Michigan's second tallest skyscraper under construction at its highest point of 685-feet.

Working with wood can be a splintering experience.

IN BRIEF:

- **Live Demo:** Our next Online Plan Room walk-thru is Thursday (5/16)
- **Legislature 2024:** Updates on the bonding bill and AGC's worker safety & underground utility bill
- **Tips & Tricks:** New feature allows members to update company profiles directly
- **Project Abandonments:** Ticking down, but more builds are being mothballed
- **Minneapolis' 2040 Plan Revived, Tire Monitoring for Company Savings & New Guide on Electrifying Space Heating in Large Commercial Buildings:** Five construction-related headlines to know now
- **Project of the Week:** Polar Semiconductor facility expansion in Bloomington
- **NPP Member Benefit:** Save on office supplies, technology, and more with Staples

MEMBER NEWS + EVENTS

A red banner with white text and corner brackets is overlaid on a background image of a modern office interior with a desk and chair.

ONLINE PLAN ROOM DEMO: MAY 16

Online Plan Room Demo on Thursday (5/16)

Join MBEX staff for a live online walk-through of our digital platform to learn the basics, refresh yourself on its offered tools, or to explore if our plan room would benefit your business.

- **DATE:** Thursday, May 16
- **TIME:** 9:00am - 10:00am
- **LOCATION:** Virtual Event
- **COST:** Free!

From the Deskpad to setting up filters, to project information to bidders lists, this one-hour session is a great introduction to our Online Plan Room. There will be time at the end of the presentation for question and answer.

If interested in joining this demo, please be signed up by 12:30pm the day before (Wednesday, May 15) to receive Zoom link and other information in a timely manner.

[Sign Up Here](#)

A red banner with white text and corner brackets is overlaid on a background image of a legislative chamber with rows of desks and chairs.

LEGISLATURE 2024

Proposed Bonding Bill, Independent Contractor Test, and Worker Safety & Underground Utility Bill

This week represents the final week of the 2024 session. Only a handful of legislative days remain out of the 120-day limit for the two-year biennium. A legislative day is a day when either the House or Senate meet on the floor. Floor session days will be long this week and leaders will meet behind-the-scenes to negotiate remaining issues.

They must adjourn by Monday, May 20, and it's expected they will work up until 11:59pm on Sunday, May 19. The legislature cannot pass any bills on its final day.

BONDING BILL

As is typical, capital investment and bonding bill negotiations are coming down to the wire.

The House Capital Investment Committee approved their public construction projects proposal (HF5220). The bonding proposal uses \$980-million in spending from proceeds of bond sales. They also approved HF5162, as amended, which would use \$38.7-million in General Fund spending for a variety of infrastructure projects including replacing high-priority bridges and state asset preservation. There is more than \$300-million set as a

placeholder for local projects that will need to be negotiated between both parties and legislative bodies to get the necessary three-fifths majority of votes to pass a bonding bill.

The House Ways and Means Committee approved their bill that included \$930-million overall. There is still a lot to be worked out, namely the overall number and local designated projects. A capital investment package, if agreed to and passed, is almost always the last piece of legislation to be passed during session. [View the 2024 Capital Budget spreadsheet](#)

Independent Contractor Test for Construction Contractors

Fast-tracked legislation that establishes a new multi-part independent contractor test for building construction and improvement services was included in the House Labor, Transportation, and Housing omnibus bill. The goal of the legislation is aimed at curbing misclassification of workers.

The new multi-part test increases the current nine-factor test to 14 requirements to be a legitimate independent contractor operating in construction. If the worker fails to meet even one of the 14 criteria, the bill states the worker is an employee. Then, the legislation uses individual and successor liability with substantial penalties for misclassification.

The bill intends to enforce these requirements on building construction and improvement services, including private and public commercial sector or residential building or improvement services.

An author's amendment was offered and adopted that seeks to address many AGC and construction industry concerns, but some ambiguities remain as of the week of April 29th.

UNDERGROUND UTILITIES

AGC's worker safety and underground utility legislation was passed last week by both the House and the Senate and is on its way to the Governor for his signature.

The bill was included in the transportation policy conference committee report, which is the final product when a select group of Representatives and Senators negotiate between their respective positions on a bill or multiple bills within an issue area.

Regarding the Underground Utilities bill, they came to an agreement on transportation policy issues, and the full House and Senate then voted to approve. The conference committee report that includes the safety and underground utility bill received broad bipartisan support in the Senate.

To access the bill's full language, read pages 66-73 of [this report](#).

We thank AGC for its coverage of the 2024 legislative session as well as its tremendous work on the safety and underground utilities bill. View more in past issues of their weekly newsletter: [April 26, 2024](#) | [May 3, 2024](#) | [May 10, 2024](#)

TIPS & TRICKS

**NAVIGATING THE
ONLINE PLAN ROOM**



NEW FEATURE: Update Your Own Company Profile

A new powerful feature is now available within the Online Plan Room. Members can directly update their own company profiles.

This enhancement empowers members to:

• **Keep Information Current** •

Easily update contact and company details, personnel, company types, business designations, and labor affiliations to ensure your company profile always reflects your latest offerings and capabilities.

• **Enhance Visibility** •

Showcase your company's strengths and unique selling points by keeping your profile comprehensive and up-to-date.

• **Streamline Communication** •

Ensure accurate and up-to-date contact information, facilitating smoother communication and strong connections within the industry.

Where is this new feature located within the Online Plan Room?

Once logged in, click on the Administration tab from the top menu. From the drop-down, select 'Edit Your Company Information.'

Follow the prompts on each screen to make any necessary updates. If everything is current and up-to-date, simply click the green 'Next Step' button found at the bottom of each section.



Will these updates / changes take effect immediately?

Every change requested must first be approved by a member of MBEX's staff before they will be reflected on the company's profile. These change requests are typically processed within 1-business day, if not sooner.

Please do not submit the same updates / changes multiple times; this will only slow down the approval process, not speed it up. If we have questions about the requested changes, we will reach out to the individual / email address that submitted the change requests.

Is this the only way to update my company's information?

No. You can, as before, **email us** your needed updates / changes, **call us**, or wait until the annual *Buyers Guide & Membership Directory* contract is sent to all current members in August.

This new feature underscores our commitment to providing tools that help our members grow and thrive. Log in today to explore and update your company profile.

Should you have any questions or need assistance, we're here to help. Simply **email Ashlee** or call **(612) 381-2620**.

Thank you for being a valued member of MBEX, where your success is our priority.



Abandonments Tick Down, But More Builds are Being Mothballed

Project abandonments ticked down 6.7% over the past month, according to Cincinnati-based ConstructConnect's Project Stress Index, a measure of construction projects that have been paused, abandoned, or have a delayed bid date.

Delayed bid activity inched lower 0.4% but work put on hold increased 10.1%. Overall, the project stress index ticked up 0.2% over the past month.

Projects put on hold on the public side, which includes infrastructure work, dropped 10.6% compared to the same week a year ago, according to ConstructConnect.

Despite the drop, the American Clean Power Association released a report that said clean power installations are falling behind on their expected start dates, according to Reuters.

On the private side, projects put on hold increased 124% compared to the same week in 2023.

For example, developers of District Detroit, a \$1.5-billion mixed-use project in downtown Detroit, recently announced a construction delay due to the current lending environment for office projects.

Abandonments fell in both the public and private sectors especially over the last three weeks. For public projects specifically, the abandonment reading is now lower than at any time since later January.

[Dive Deeper with Construction Dive](#)



A valuable benefit of an MBEX membership is invitations to our social and educational events; by being an employee of a member company, you too can take advantage and attend any and all MBEX-sponsored events.

*** indicates a newly added event*

May 16 - MBEX Online Plan Room Demo

From navigating the Desktop, setting up filters, understanding project information, and bidders lists, this free, one-hour session is a great introduction to our Online Plan Room. There will be time at the end for questions and answers. [Register Here](#)

May 21 - Crane Safety

Join Minnesota OSHA Compliance's next free construction seminar in-person or online to learn what the general contractor's roles and responsibilities are when there's a crane on site and what is required for lift plans, inspection records, operator's qualifications, training, renting, and more. Plus, learn what ASME 30.5 covers and requires. [Sign Up Here](#)

May 27 - Memorial Day

MBEX will be closed on Monday, May 27 in observance of Memorial Day.

May 31 - Deadline for 2024-2025 MBEX Construction Scholarship Applications

Qualifying students pursuing a construction-related degree at an accredited post-secondary institution in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin are highly encouraged to apply for this financial opportunity. [See Eligibility Rules](#) | [Apply Here](#)

June 4 - Bluebeam 1: Baseline Basics

Attendees will learn interface navigation including menu dropdowns, toolbars, various tool panels, keyboard shortcuts and a few recommended settings. While learning various markup and measurement tools, several tips and tricks will be shared to increase accuracy and speed. [Register Here](#)

June 5 - Bluebeam 2: Material Takeoffs & Estimates (Basic)

Attendees will go through the standard measurement tools and settings, then move into various customization options and discuss the results in the Markups List. [Register Here](#)

June 5 - MBEX Member Appreciation BBQ

Let MBEX treat you to lunch as a thank you for your continued membership and support! Join us for a casual afternoon of Famous Dave's barbecue, cold beverages, a handful of door prizes, and great company and networking. Each member company receives 2 complimentary tickets. [Register Here](#)

June 6 - Bluebeam 3: Material Takeoffs & Estimates (Advanced)

After finishing the Bluebeam Takeoffs & Estimates (Basic) course, attendees will move into creating custom columns, embedding formulas, and information organization. [Register Here](#)

June 12 - WEBINAR: Deep Dive into Construction Work in Progress

Work in progress (WIP) is key to construction job costing, allowing contractors to proactively manage their jobs and businesses. By leveraging WIP reports, contractors can set their projects and businesses up for success. *Presented by Construction Executive.* [Register Here](#)

June 18 - Twin Cities Golf Tournament

Join MBEX out on the greens not just to golf, but to also meet and mingle with fellow members and industry professionals. [Register Here](#)

June 26 - MBEX POWER: Women, Money & Happiness

Led by Nicole Middendorf, this fun and empowering workshop will leave attendees with actionable steps to kickstart one's journey towards financial happiness, all while uncovering the intriguing secrets of how men and women approach money. *Registration opening May 15*

**** July 17 - Duluth Harbor Cruise on the Sundew**

Join MBEX for an evening of fun and comradery aboard the Sundew, a retired Coast Guard Cutter. Space is limited to the first 150 people who register. Members, spouses, co-workers and families are welcome to attend (children must be ages 12 and up). [Register Here](#)

[View Full 2024 MBEX Event Calendar](#)

CONSTRUCTION HEADLINES



LOCAL NEWS - MINNEAPOLIS + MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

✓ [New Rule Revives Minneapolis' 2040 Plan, But the Legal Drama Over Housing Development Isn't Over Yet](#)

Minneapolis' "2040 Plan" --- which legalized duplexes, triplexes, and more housing density citywide --- is back in effect after a new court ruling made on May 13. Mayor Jacob Frey has argued housing development that brings density is key to Minneapolis' push to keep prices and rents down. For now, the ruling means certain multi-family housing projects promoting this goal will be able to move forward again. But the long-running saga is far from over --- and the plaintiffs suing the city have vowed to appeal, their attorney Jack Perry said. (*Axios Twin Cities*)

FLEET MAINTENANCE

□ [How Tire Monitoring Created Savings for a Concrete Supplier](#)

Summer is tough on tires, especially when those tires are hauling a heavy load, like those on the Terex front discharge mixers. When empty, Terex front discharge mixers weigh in at 33,500-lbs --- loaded up, it tips the scale at closer to 70,000-lbs. Tires that were properly inflated that morning can pick up debris on the construction site and lose air throughout the day. In addition to the schedule disruptions and delays caused by roadside tire service, there is the potential to ruin a fresh batch of concrete, and the out-of-pocket costs. A tire monitoring program is helping to eliminate the run flats and all of the problems associated with them, saving Ernst Concrete time and money, while also improving their service. (*For Construction Pros*)

CODES + STANDARDS

□ [Guide on Electrifying Space Heating for Large Commercial Buildings with Boilers Released](#)

The U.S. Department of Energy guide summarizes key considerations for people seeking to retrofit existing large commercial and multi-family buildings, particularly those that currently heat spaces using fossil fuel-fired boilers. It provides an overview for building owners, contractors, and other stakeholders involved with heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) about possible design and purchasing decisions. (*Building Design + Construction*)

INFRASTRUCTURE

□ [White House Offers Progress Update on Infrastructure Act Rollout](#)

Since the IIJA's November 2021 enactment, the Biden administration has announced about \$454-billion in IIJA funds, which have supported more than 56,000 projects and funding awards, according to a White House fact sheet released on May 13. The release coincides with the start of Infrastructure Week. One high-profile project cited by the administration is the Fargo-Moorhead flood diversion project in Minnesota and North Dakota, which has received \$437-million from the IIJA to protect the cities of Fargo, ND and Moorhead, MN from floods along the Red River of the North. (*Engineering News-Record*)

CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT

□ [Top-Selling New and Used Construction Equipment So Far in 2024](#)

Over 48,300 new and used machines in the top 11 types of construction equipment were financed during the first quarter of 2024, according to Fusable's latest EDA finance data, a 4.5% bump over the same period last year. Depending on the type of machine, financed machines can represent 40%-75% of the total number of machines of that type sold in the United States. EDA does not track machines bought by cash or letter of credit. Buyers of higher priced equipment, such as dozers and excavators, tend to use financing. *(Equipment World)*

[PROJECT OF THE WEEK](#)

[Polar Semiconductor to Expand Minneapolis / St Paul Plant with CHIPS Funding](#)

Polar Semiconductor will expand and renovate its facility in the Twin Cities, a project that will create 160 construction and manufacturing jobs, after landing \$120-million in federal funding. Polar and the U.S. Commerce Department announced the funding agreement on Monday (May 13), which is part of the federal CHIPS (Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors) and Science Act passed in 2022. It's the first Minnesota award from the law. Polar said the expansion, which has a total estimated cost of \$525-million over the next two years, will allow it to double production capacity of 200mm semiconductor wafers, increasing production from approximately 20,000 wafers per month to nearly 40,000 wafers per month. *(Minneapolis-St. Paul Business Journal)*



Polar Semiconductor received \$120-million in federal funding to expand its facility in Bloomington, Minn.

INDUSTRY EVENTS



[Networking Event for Metro-Area Professional / Technical Firms](#) Presented by MnDOT

DATE: Monday, May 20

TIME: 1:00pm - 4:00pm

LOCATION: [Arden Hills Training Center](#)
(1900 County Road I, Shoreview, 55126)

[Register Here](#)

COST: Free!

Come meet your peers and potential partners at this networking event.

Large and small consulting firms and suppliers have been invited, as well as members of MEDA, WTS, and NAMC to participate in an organized "meet and greet" with others who are working in the highway / heavy consulting world. This event will include a panel discussion, formal presentation by MnDOT and FHWA, and formal networking activities.

There will also be food, free parking, and an opportunity to find new friends and potential partners.

Questions about this seminar should be directed to ann.johnson@peservices.com.

Regional Economic Conditions: Construction Sector Outlook Presented by the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis

DATE: Tuesday, May 21

TIME: 9:00am-9:30am

[Register Here](#)

LOCATION: Virtual Event

COST: Free!

How are current conditions in the construction sector? How are interest rates affecting construction activity? What's the outlook for the spring and summer building seasons across the Ninth District?

Join Regional Outreach Director Ron Wirtz for a live webinar discussing the results from an April survey of activity levels, challenges, overall conditions, and outlook in the construction sector.

Networking Event for Southern Minnesota Large Contractors & Subcontractors | Presented by MnDOT

DATE: Monday, June 3

TIME: 1:00pm - 4:00pm

[Register Here](#)

LOCATION: [MnDOT Rochester Office](#)
(2900 48th St NW, Rochester, 55901)

COST: Free!

Come meet your peers and potential partners at this networking event.

MnDOT has invited both large and small consulting firms and suppliers, as well as members of MEDA, WTS, and NAMC to participate in an organized "meet and greet" with others who are working in the highway / heavy consulting world. This event will include a panel discussion, formal presentation by MnDOT and FHWA, and formal networking activities.

There will also be food, free parking, and an opportunity to find new friends and potential partners.

Questions about this seminar should be directed to ann.johnson@peservices.com.

Running a 401(k) doesn't have to be a challenge



Find out if the MBEX 401(k) MEP is right for your company. Call Daniel at 612-743-4961



MEMBER BENEFITS



Benefit of the Week: Staples Business Advantage

You know your business better than anyone, so Staples works with you to build a customized program that addresses your specific needs. Staples also reviews every account quarterly so your program is always getting better.



What benefits can MBEX Members enjoy with Staples Business Advantage?

- Aggressive Cooperative contractor pricing on more than 30,000 items, including office supplies, technology, janitorial, furniture, printing, and more;
- Free next-day business delivery on most standard orders over \$35; and
- Access to a direct furniture program that spans more than 90 manufacturers.

When MBEX members take advantage of Staples savings through National Purchasing Partners (NPP), they get a leader in office procurement, as well as a supplier who recognizes the close connection between success and the ability to make a positive impact on the community and environment.

[Log in today and save with Staples.](#)

National Purchasing Partners (NPP) is a trusted savings and solutions provider for businesses and their employees. NPP delivers negotiated contract pricing for leading-edge products. Membership is free and there is no obligation to purchase.

If your MBEX member company is not already an NPP member, [enroll today](#) and enjoy the buying power of large corporations.

Fredrikson
& BYRON, P.A.

Skilled dealmakers and strong
litigators helping clients with
projects of all types and sizes.

PROJECT INFORMATION + UPDATES

- Total Projects Received at MBEX from 5/6/2024 - 5/10/2024: **105**
- Total Projects Leads Reported on at MBEX from 5/6/2024 - 5/10/2024: **27**
- Total Active Projects Received/Reported on at MBEX as of 5/14/2024: **415**
- Total Projects in the Online Plan Room as of 5/14/2024: **1,953**

[DOWNLOAD HERE](#)

Click the button above to view the most recent project data from 5/8/2024-5/14/2024.

For information about the *Bulletin's* content, technical issues, or to place an ad (such as a Minority Notice, Job Posting, or Event Notice), contact [Ashlee](#), Membership + Communications Manager.



The MBEX *Weekly Bulletin* brought to you in part by [The Builders Group \(TBG\)](#).

UPCOMING MBEX EVENTS

- [May 16](#) - Online Plan Room Demo
- [May 21](#) - Crane Safety [MNOSHA Construction Seminar]
- [May 27](#) - MBEX Closed (Memorial Day)
- [May 31](#) - Deadline for 2024-2025 MBEX Scholarship Applications
- [June 4](#) - Bluebeam 1: Baseline Basics
- [June 5](#) - Bluebeam 2: Material Takeoffs & Estimates (Basic)
- [June 5](#) - Member Appreciation BBQ
- [June 6](#) - Bluebeam 3: Material Takeoffs & Estimates (Advanced)
- [June 12](#) - Deep Dive into Construction Work in Progress [Webinar]
- [June 18](#) - Twin Cities Golf Tournament
- [June 26](#) - MBEX POWER: Women, Money and Happiness
- [July 17](#) - Duluth Harbor Sundew Cruise

Connect with the Builders Exchange:



Revisit Past Bulletins:

[May 8 - No. 19](#) | [May 1 - No. 18](#) | [April 24 - No. 17](#) | [April 17 - No. 16](#)

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2024 BOARD OFFICERS: President - Mike Carlson, *Max Gray Construction*; Vice President - Heidi Sedlacek, *KLJ Engineering*; Treasurer - Brian Kalla, *St. Cloud Acoustics*; Past President - Greg Grazzini, *Grazzini Brothers* | **2024 DIRECTORS:** Allie Brady, *Veit*; Kevin Bohrer, *Donlar Construction*; David Brandt, *Schadegg Mechanical*; Jason DuVal, *Tenet*; Chuck Geisler, *American Engineering Testing*; Chris Niemand, *Frattalone Companies*; Sean Ochis, *Northern Industrial Insulation*; Jason Rentmeester, *Kraus-Anderson Construction*; and Nate Sapik, *Benson Electric Company* | **STAFF:** David Siegel - *Executive Director*; Julie Miller - *Executive Assistant/Project Coordinator/Accounting*; Jeff Boelter - *Project Acquisition & IT*; Ashlee Hartwig - *Membership & Communications Manager*; Melanie Hendrickson - *Events & Membership Coordinator*; Don O'Connor - *Duluth Branch Manager*; Shauna

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