

THE ILLINOIS MANUFACTURER

THIRD QUARTER 2022



2022 MAKERS MADNESS
“THE COOLEST THING MADE IN ILLINOIS”
RIVIAN’S R1T

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Illinois Manufacturers' Association is the only statewide association dedicated to boldly moving Illinois' makers forward. The IMA is the oldest and largest state manufacturing trade association in the United States, representing nearly 4,000 companies and facilities.

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For address changes and adjustments, write to *The Illinois Manufacturer*. Presort standard postage paid at Bloomington, IL. Postmaster: Send address changes to *The Illinois Manufacturer*, 220 East Adams Street, Springfield, IL 62701. Telephone: (217) 522-1240.

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Share Your Company News with the IMA . . .

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THE PRICE OF PROGRESS: ELECTRIC PRICE HIKES & BROWNOUTS IN THE FUTURE?

MARK DENZLER, PRESIDENT & CEO



Twenty-five years ago, Illinois deregulated the electricity market and introduced consumer choice resulting in tens of billions of dollars in savings for residents and businesses according to a 2013 economic study. Electric rates dropped from some of the highest in the nation to among the lowest in the nation. Energy costs are critically important to the manufacturing sector which consumes one-third of all energy in the United States.

Manufacturers are very proud of our record when it comes to sustainability and a cleaner environment. Since 1990, the industrial sector has reduced emissions by more than any other sector. Over the last decade, manufacturers have reduced emissions by 21 percent while increasing economic output by 18 percent according to NAM. Manufacturers not only use this new groundbreaking technology – we create it!

Starting in 2007 (Renewable Portfolio Standard), and subsequently in 2016 (Future Energy Jobs Act) and 2021 (Climate and Equity Jobs Act), Illinois officials started re-regulating the electricity market while enacting significant policy changes around nuclear energy, carbon emission limits, formula rates, and renewable energy. Each of these laws set goals for renewable energy, but Illinois has failed miserably in meeting them. Today, after fifteen years and billions of dollars, Illinois gets less than 8 percent of its energy from renewable sources despite setting a goal of 20 percent in 2007 (later changed to 25 percent and then 40 percent by 2030).

For years, the IMA has issued warnings about the need for a smooth transition in the energy sector as more renewable energy is built. Cost and reliability are paramount. Closing baseload generation without the ability to backfill that energy would be disastrous for families and businesses that need power when they hit the light switch or turn on air conditioning.

Unfortunately, warnings issued by the IMA, public utilities, regional grid operators, and even the Illinois Commerce Commission fell on deaf ears for politicians who created artificial targets for the reduction or elimination of baseload generation without a plan to replace that it. Illinois has seen the early retirement of 7,000 MW - significant baseload generation - creating severe capacity issues that are resulting in higher costs and potential brownouts this summer according to regional grid operators and utilities.

The MISO regional grid operator (central and southern Illinois) held their capacity auction on April 18 with prices skyrocketing from \$5/MW-day to \$236/MW-day. This is a 47-fold increase. Capacity auctions are held to price the cost of securing “capacity” to back up the energy needed in times of heavy usage.

The Illinois Power Agency subsequently held two auctions to procure energy from electric generators for customers that do not buy through alternative suppliers. The cost of power supply is a direct pass through by the utilities but comprises between one-half and two-thirds of an energy bill. The IPA auction saw a significant hike in the cost of generating electricity with the price tripling from \$30/MW-hour to more than \$90/MW-hour.

As the IMA noted repeatedly, closure of baseload generation without the ability to replace that energy would lead to devastating price hikes and potential brownouts. The Illinois Commerce Commission, whose members are appointed by the Governor, issued a warning in front of a legislative committee on April 8, 2021. The Chief of the Public Utilities Bureau stated:

“The elimination of fossil fuel plants in Illinois that is currently the source of such a significant share of Illinois’ power generation, will substantially impact energy and capacity market prices and reliability in Illinois... the Ameren service territory is likely to be disproportionately impacted... It’s not clear how Illinois’ electricity needs will be fully met in the event fossil fuel plants are eliminated... the impacts on electric power reliability are likely to be significant.”

Ameren has also been sounding the alarm in front of elected officials and issued a release following the MISO capacity auction noting “we have been sounding the warning bell that the transition to renewable generation must occur in a steady and measured fashion and that moving too fast could drive up prices for downstate. It is likely to have a substantial impact on heating and cooling costs starting in June.” Families in the Ameren territory will face energy bill increases of \$650 annually while commercial and industrial customer will see costs spike significantly higher.

The IMA has testified twice in the Public Utilities Committee and Energy & Environment Committee in the last month. Lawmakers will soon start hearing from irate constituents during an election year, but there are no easy solutions. Environmental advocates testified that rolling brownouts and higher energy costs are simply the price of progress.

Manufacturers need to talk with experts like our preferred provider, Constellation, who can review your bills and usage and offer some potential solutions (demand response, blending rates, process improvements, or energy efficiency upgrades). Our partners at the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center also have resources to help streamline processes and reduce energy usage.

The IMA will continue to lead the business community efforts to mitigate these higher costs and reduce the likelihood of brownouts. We can move to a cleaner future while also ensuring that the lights work when we flip the switch. ♦



MANUFACTURERS
POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

2022 GOLF OUTING



Tuesday, September 13, 2022

7:30am-2:00pm | Klein Creek Golf Club

1N333 Pleasant Hill Rd, Winfield, IL 60190

For more information visit: <https://www.ima-net.org/MPAC/>

THE 2022 GENERAL ELECTION: ELECTIONS HAVE CONSEQUENCES

DONOVAN GRIFFITH, SENIOR DIRECTOR
OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



There is a saying in politics that “elections have consequences.” That short but powerful phrase refers to the actions those who are elected to office take that change the law in a manner that could impact anyone. That impact of course could be either good or bad, depending on the individual, family, community, and company. Nevertheless, the saying is true. Elections do have consequences and Illinois is facing its most important election in the past decade. The outcome of the coming election will have consequences that could alter how Illinois citizens are lead and how Illinois businesses are regulated.

This year’s election is shaping up to be a momentous event in Illinois. With new legislative districts drawn throughout the state, every seat in the Illinois General Assembly will be on the ballot, and there is a unique, once-per-decade, ability to make sweeping changes. Legislators who have been in office for years will suddenly have slightly different to vastly different districts with a new electorate who may be unfamiliar with who they are or more familiar with another candidate. Meaning, legislators who were once safe in their positions may now find themselves battling to keep their seat in office, or fresh faces may be running for office with new ideas on how the state should be run and businesses should be regulated.

Additionally, the Governor’s Office and every constitutional officer will be on the ballot this year along with every member of Congress. This all adds up to the possibility of real change being made in Illinois.

In recent years we have seen action taken in Illinois that has been less favorable to the manufacturing community. The minimum wage has risen dramatically, energy has been reregulated and energy costs are skyrocketing, environmental regulations are being pressed with little concern to the regulated community, mandatory leave and work schedules have been touted, BIPA reform has been ignored and the costs of doing business have risen while the workforce shortage and supply chain issues hurt companies of all sizes.

Yes, there have been victories for manufacturers as well. The IMA has championed additional funding for a statewide manufacturing campaign and training grants, the REV and MICRO Act have brought needed incentives to necessary sectors of industry, the IMA brought forth requirements for schools to implement state-approved career exploration pathway programming for students, the manufacturers purchase credit was revived and numerous anti-business proposals have been stifled, to name a few.

Regardless of the action, both good and bad policies come from those we elect, and that must be a focus in this election.

Illinois manufacturing often acts as a community, and that sense of working together should be harnessed in the coming election to help have an impact that is beneficial to businesses across the state. Manufacturing leaders can make an impact by:

1. Vote – Educate yourself on the candidates in your area and support those who support manufacturing. Visit the IMA’s website to find our Election Center for more information.
2. Spread the Word - Help educate employees on the potential consequences that ideas and ideologies of political candidates could have on the business and community.
3. Open Your Doors - Get to know your local, state, and federal legislators and leaders by opening your doors and sharing your story. Show the importance that your business, employees, and products have on the community.
4. Give – If viable, donate to candidates or groups, such as the IMA’s Manufacturers’ Political Action Committee, that support manufacturing. If you cannot give financially, give your time to local candidates.
5. Lead – Not happy with the leadership of your elected officials? Consider running for office and giving manufacturers a real voice for your community. While it may be too late this year, learning from this election could be critical.

When going to cast your ballot, either early or on Election Day on November 8, remember that the decisions we make at the ballot box will have consequences regarding the policies and regulations implemented at the local, state, and federal level. So vote for those who support manufacturing, not just by their words, but also by their actions. ♦



YOU DESERVE THE BEST

IT'S TIME TO MAKE THE CALL.



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WHAT'S A PBM? THE ANSWER MAY SAVE YOUR COMPANY A LOT OF MONEY ON EMPLOYEE HEALTH COVERAGE

PCMA

In the world of health, medicine and medical coverage, acronyms reign supreme. ACA, HMO, DHS, HSA and so on, and so on. In this sea of interchangeable capital letters, one could be forgiven for not understanding what a PBM is and how it effects both you personally and your company's overall health coverage strategy.

PBM stands for Pharmacy Benefit Managers, and they play a vital role in keeping prescription drug costs down for employers and employees alike. PBMs serve as the main conduit between a variety of employers, health plans, organizations, and drug manufacturers. In short, PBMs connect employers, members, drug wholesalers, pharmacies, and drug companies, and work to facilitate the best possible health outcomes at the best possible costs.



PBMs do the work of negotiating with drug manufacturers to reduce costs and pass savings on to patients and payers. Having an effective pharmacy benefit strategy and selecting the right PBM to meet an employer's needs is critical to ensuring the success of a benefits plan and protecting the well-being of employees.

There are many good reasons employers utilize PBMs when building the health coverage plan they will offer employees, but the most important is cost control. Prescription drug costs can be among the most volatile aspects of a health coverage plan. Working with a PBM, employers can lower costs while still providing coverage for the wide variety of medications a diverse pool of employees would require.

And the facts show PBMs work when it comes to saving money on prescription drugs and drug coverages. Industry studies have shown that, by using a series of sophisticated tools and strategies, PBMs negotiate with drug compa-

nies to lower prescription drug costs, reducing patient drug costs by nearly \$1,000 each year.

PBMs offer employers and patients safety benefits beyond just the substantial cost savings. Through an aggressive process of reviewing newly prescribed drugs, cross-checking drug interactions and alerting pharmacies of possible risks, PBMs are anticipated to prevent as many as 1 billion medication errors over the next 10 years. PBMs also use their expertise to improve drug therapies and help patients take their medication properly, preventing hundreds of thousands of strokes, heart failures, kidney disease, and amputations.

PBMs engage in advocacy to achieve savings for employers by driving more

competition in the drug marketplace as well as other areas where health savings are at stake. In order to maximize their effectiveness, several PBMs organize under the Pharmaceutical Care Management Association (PCMA). PCMA is proud to be a member of the Illinois Manufacturers Association and is proud to work hand in hand with its many great members to help more Illinois employers and employees save on their bottom line when it comes to prescription drug costs.

To learn a little more about how PBMs can help your company or organization by visiting pcmanet.org or learn more about PBM advocacy for lower drug costs at onyourrxside.org. ♦

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CHICAGO COLUMBUS INDIANAPOLIS ST. LOUIS MILWAUKEE

PUBLIC LAW 86-272: IS A 63-YEAR-OLD LAW DYING IN 2022?

HMB LEGAL

Public Law 86-272 ("P.L. 86-272") is a federal law originally implemented in 1959 to protect out-of-state businesses from state net income taxes. This law, a bulwark for many businesses over the past 63 years, has withstood numerous attacks from states' taxing agencies, but a recent change in the way some states interpret P.L. 86-272 with regards to business activities conducted over the internet may eliminate the law's protections for many businesses.

Background

Congress passed P.L. 86-272 in response to a 1959 U.S. Supreme Court decision which held that a state could impose its net income taxes on out-of-state taxpayers whose only activities in the state were sales in interstate commerce. The law states simply that a state or locality may not impose its net income tax on an out-of-state business whose activities within that state are limited to soliciting sales of tangible personal property if any orders are sent outside the state for approval and fulfilled from an out-of-state location. Subsequent decisions from the U.S. Supreme Court have clarified that any activities which are entirely ancillary to soliciting sales of tangible personal property are also protected.

The Multistate Tax Commission

As you may imagine, state taxing agencies have never particularly liked P.L. 86-272 and have worked diligently over the years to narrow its scope as much as possible. In order to make their positions on P.L. 86-272 clear, many of these state tax agencies have worked through a representative group called the Multistate Tax Commission ("MTC") to publish a "Statement of Information" listing specific business activities which are protected or not protected by P.L. 86-272. This Statement, first published in 1986, is not binding law, but many states have formally incorporated the lists of protected and unprotected business activities into their income tax nexus statutes and regulations or informally adopted it as their income tax nexus policy. The MTC has revised its Statement several times since 1986 but had never updated the Statement to address ecommerce or other online business activities.

What's Changed?

In August 2021, the MTC issued a revised Statement to address online business activities and discuss the income tax nexus implications of eleven factual scenarios. From a manufacturer's perspective, the implications of nine of these scenarios are particularly significant. More specifically, the MTC's factual scenarios state that P.L. 86-272's protections do not apply to:

- Businesses which provide post-sale assistance to in-state customers through an electronic chat or email function that is embedded into the business' website;
- Businesses whose websites have a job application function which allows job seekers to apply for non-sales positions with the business;
- Businesses whose websites use "persistent" cookies that gather customer search information and browsing information for future use in advertising, product development, or product production;
- Businesses which provide post-sale remote repair or upgrade services to in-state customers by transmitting software code or electronic instructions via the internet;
- Businesses which offer and sell extended warranty plans through their website to in-state customers; and
- Businesses which sell their products through a Fulfillment by Amazon ("FBA") or similar program when the third-party seller maintains that business' inventory in a state – even if the business had no control over the decision to place inventory in that state.

The MTC's revised Statement also outlines several internet activities which the MTC believes are protected by P.L. 86-272; namely:

- Posting lists of static FAQs with answers on the business' website;
- Websites that use session cookies to enable customers to navigate the site and make purchases;
- Websites that only sell items of tangible personal property and enable customers to search for items, read product descriptions, select items for purchase, select a delivery option, and pay for the items.

In summation, the MTC's revised Statement takes the position that any website which has features beyond basic Web 1.0 functionality creates income tax nexus

for a business in any state where customers may access that website. In 2022, it is difficult to imagine that many websites fall into the narrow category of protected internet activities as customers demand sophisticated websites and easily-accessible customer service while businesses increasingly rely on persistent cookies and the valuable data they provide. From a business perspective, websites more often than not must have some or all of the features which the MTC deems to exceed P.L. 86-272's protections simply to remain competitive in the online marketplace. Nevertheless, these features may soon create income tax nexus for businesses in every state where their website is accessible to customers.

What Comes Next?

The MTC's revised Statement received significant attention in the tax press when it was released but, because it is not a statute or regulation, the Statement has no force of law. However, states did not issue formal guidance on the issue until the California Franchise Tax Board ("FTB") published an advisory memorandum in February 2022 indicating that the FTB will follow the MTC's revised Statement when determining whether an out-of-state business' internet activities create income tax nexus with the state. Like the MTC's Statement, California's advisory memorandum is not a statute or regulation — but it is a warning shot that the FTB will take an aggressive audit position when analyzing whether an out-of-state business has income tax nexus with California. Not willing to be outdone, New York's Department of Taxation and Finance released draft regulations in May 2022 which adopted the MTC revised Statement's position on internet activities. Setting aside the question of whether the regulation is valid, this is a more meaningful development than the California FTB's memorandum because a regulation is binding, enforceable law. It is possible that other states will wait to see how businesses (and their lawyers) react to these developments before jumping onto the bandwagon, but other states have a tendency to follow where California and New York lead on tax policy. Illinois manufacturers should therefore keep an eye on these developments in order to avoid being caught off-guard by an audit notice from a state they have never before considered an audit risk.



CARUS: INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

The Carus story is one of extraordinary persistence, innovation, and resilience. Founded in 1915, when the First World War caused product shortages, Dr. Edward Hegeler Carus, a twenty-five-year-old mathematics professor at the time, successfully invented a new method of manufacturing potassium permanganate in a barn on his family's property in LaSalle, Illinois. Potassium permanganate was a widely used chemical solution but had never before been produced in the United States as it had been manufactured and supplied from Germany for many years. Dr. Carus' breakthrough made it possible for his newly formed company to help supply the United States with potassium permanganate while the country was at war. The building where Dr. Carus lived is now a National Historic Landmark, known as the Hegeler Carus Mansion.

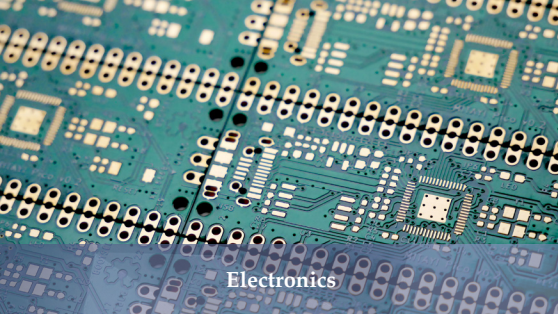
During the war, several other American companies had started producing permanganate. After the war ended in 1918, foreign product began flooding the market again, causing severe price declines that forced all American permanganate manufacturers to close their doors. However, during this period, Dr. Carus focused on improving manufacturing efficiency and lowering costs, and Carus was back in business by 1923. Production has not stopped since then, nor has the company's commitment to innovation.

The 1980s were a period of growth and discovery for Carus. Carus completed a major plant expansion, but just one year later, a global recession threatened Carus' business once again. Following intense research and development, Carus emerged with new applications for wastewater treatment, air purification, the electronics industry, and even the fashion industry. Potassium permanganate began to be used in a multitude of markets as a versatile solution, and in the 1980s and 1990s it was even used to treat denim for the popular "stone washed" look.

The company's commitment to innovation has never stopped. Production methods are continuously being improved and new products continue to be developed. Carus chemists and engineers are continually searching for the next big breakthrough in both product and process development. The products of Carus' commitment to innovation and development due to the global recession are proof that adversity can push companies to achieve new levels of growth and achievement.

Beyond innovation and expansion, in the late 80s, before it became a trend, Carus began focusing its efforts toward participating in community outreach programs like the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' "Adopt a Trail" program, the American Chemical Society's National Chemistry Week, and the Scientific Work Experience Program for Teachers (SWEPT). "Today, Carus continues to operate in the same community as the one where it started over 100 years ago. Carus is more than just a business, it is part of both the history and the future of LaSalle County. Many Carus employees are native to the area, and some boast a tenure of 20, 30, or even 40 years with the company. It is important for Carus to take care of employees, their families, and the community where they live. Serving the community is an investment in the future," said Lyndsay Bliss, Vice President of Human Resources.

Carus has a Community Outreach Committee which focuses on identifying sponsorship, donation, and volunteer opportunities in the community. Carus gives employees time off to volunteer to serve the community because Carus believes in giving back and because many employees hold those same beliefs. Carus has employees that volunteer as firemen, school board members, and serve on boards and local associations to name a few.



Electronics



Soil Remediation



National Historic Landmark: The Hegeler Carus Mansion



Water Treatment



2019 Science Camp Chemistry Day

Carus makes a point to serve their community in every way they can, and this includes sustainability and education endeavors as well. Carus has been a four-time recipient of the Responsible Care® Energy Efficiency Award, and a 2014 recipient of the Governor's Sustainability Award. "Sustainability honors future generations and the earth they inhabit. Carus' longevity is a testament to the importance of planning for the future. For over 100 years, Carus has invested in people, technology, and community, and each of those elements support the success of the business," said Allen Gibbs, Vice President of Operations.

Carus also invests in employees' families in unique ways, but most notably through their Tuition Assistance Program and the Carus Summer Science Camp which both celebrate some pretty significant milestones this year. Since 1987, Carus has funded over \$5 million in college tuition for children of Carus employees. The program is open to students in any field of study attending an accredited college or university. Carus is a family-owned company and takes pride in providing unparalleled benefits to employees and their families.

This year marks the 20-year anniversary of the Carus Summer Science Camp. The science camp curriculum focuses on developing valuable skills like communication, problem solving, and critical thinking. "The camp is a great opportunity for young people to experience STEM outside the classroom, and Carus is proud to support their journey to explore different passions and career paths. Science Camp is just one example of how Carus is investing in the next generation of America's workforce," said Andy Johnston, CEO. This weeklong program is open to students entering 6th grade in the fall, and it is completely free of charge. The camp averages about 30 students per year, which means the program has now reached about 600 local students.

Carus is also a sponsor of the Illinois Valley Community College Discover Manufacturing Expo, an event which serves to educate high school students about opportunities in manufacturing and connect them with individuals in the community who work in manufacturing. Carus has a world class internship program as well. "This summer, the company welcomed six interns from a variety of disciplines—two chemical engineers, an electrical engineer, an industrial engineer, a health and safety specialist, and a finance accountant. Carus is proud to invest in the next generation of thinkers, dreamers, and leaders," said Bliss.

Today, Carus still manufactures products in its LaSalle, IL plant that are used around the world to clean the water, air, and soil in a multitude of applications. Thousands of communities across the globe depend on the high-quality products Carus manufactures both in LaSalle, Illinois as well as Belmont, North Carolina.

Carus products are also used to clean up contaminated soil found on air force bases and military sites, and Carus supplied the clean-up of the site of the 2012 London Olympics. In addition to environmental applications, Carus products are also used in the manufacturing of electronic chips, as well as pharmaceuticals. Carus products take harmful contaminants, such as formaldehyde, hydrogen sulfide, and carbon monoxide out of the water and air.

The Carus family history of investing in small towns since 1915 continues to this day. Inga Carus, Chairman of Carus, and her husband Peter Limberger, founded the family investment firm CL Enterprises, with the catch phrase "Small towns. Big ideas." CL Enterprises invests in manufacturing companies and towns throughout Illinois and the Midwest. These companies include Starved Rock Wood Products, Tangled Roots Brewing Company, Automated Kitchen Technology (AKT), Alexander Chemical, REVV Aviation, and several others.

Starved Rock Wood Products, located in Mendota, IL, not far from Carus Headquarters, is another success story of manufacturing high-quality, world-class products in rural Illinois. In 2014, CL Enterprises invested in the small woodworking business with 13 employees, built a modern, automated manufacturing plant for kitchen and bathroom cabinets, and within several years the business grew to 180 employees. A cutting-edge cabinet showroom was recently opened in Glenview, IL which showcases their high-quality Illinois-produced cabinets. The company became the largest employer in Mendota and is the employer of choice for many.

Alexander Chemical, based in rural Indiana is a manufacturer and distributor of products which are mostly used in water treatment in various industries and in the water treatment plants of many cities. Alexander Chemical has also embarked on a major investment. Tangled Roots Brewing Company, headquartered in Ottawa, Illinois, manufactures a unique "Farm to Foam" beer brand with the ingredients for the beer—hops and malt—being grown on their own family farm in Ottawa. The four brewpubs in Ottawa, Lockport, DeKalb, and Glenview (with several more under development) are considered to be among the best in the Midwest.

All of the businesses owned by the Carus-Limberger family believe in the strength and resilience of small-town America, and they understand the importance of investing in employees and communities who support their success. The Carus-Limberger family is rooted in history and optimistically focused on the future. ♦

NAVIGATING THROUGH REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND COMPLIANCE UPDATES

FLAGSOURCE



HR professionals manage recruiting efforts, payroll processing, benefits administration, supporting employees and leadership, creating development initiatives, and are often found on the front lines navigating reporting requirements and compliance updates for the company as well. Often, HR professionals have a general understanding of labor laws, but proposed changes and passed amendments can cause that understanding to become outdated. Surely, there is a quick way to stay compliant and manage reporting deadlines, right?

Unfortunately, there is no quick fix to ensure that you are compliant. According to The Workforce Institute's study surveying 812 HR and payroll professionals in the U.S., "on average, HR and payroll departments spend approximately 36 hours per week on compliance-related activities ranging from tracking regulatory proposals to creating and communicating new policies." The Risky Business

Survey concluded that "organizations with fewer than 500 employees average 23 hours per week on compliance duties, while those with 500-999 employees average 31 hours per week. It increases to 36 hours per week for organizations with 1,000-2,499 employees." For HR teams responsible for all HR functions in-house, this is a time-consuming assignment.

Remaining compliant is a multi-step process. During the creation of new policies, handbook updates, termination or disciplinary action decisions; it's imperative to do your research. What labor laws might apply to the situation? Does more than one labor law apply? Start by reviewing the act to find the issue or topic; you can't assume that you know the requirements for the act. Consider all sections of the act and the obligations that apply. Are there any exemptions or special standards such as industry specific requirements? Full research should be completed before any type of action is performed.

To avoid litigation risk and class action lawsuits related to employment law violations, partnering with or retaining a legal professional to review policies for state and local compliance is a great way to remain protected. There are constant changes in health and safety laws such as added paid leave of absence regulations, COVID-19 related changes, and the increase of remote/hybrid work options, making staying up to date a must. Many law offices have newsletters, websites, or legal update email subscription services offered at no cost. Some legal professionals host webinars which can go into more detail about labor law requirements and any amendments on the horizon.

Another source while on the search for updates is through following various media reports. Though this is not all encompassing, receiving a notification of an amendment can point you in the right direction to learning more about any new obligations included with

the act. Media reports can include an HR newspaper, HR blogs, and business newsletters to gain insight into the latest amendments, highlights of any new reporting requirements, and HR relevant news. Most of these virtual newsletters and blogs are free to subscribe to and can offer valuable information. Social Media, such as Facebook and TikTok, have groups of HR Professionals that are willing to collaborate, offer advice, and share experiences. Joining these HR groups can offer insight into common HR trends, offer a different perspective on how other HR professionals work through reporting requirements, and provide another way to learn of new labor law updates. There are even outlook calendars of reporting deadlines that are available through companies such as GoCo. Compliance tools are available through many payroll providers and are often worth the added cost to gain access to the support they provide

verses the time that would be spent on the paperwork, research, and pulling the data needed to meet the reporting requirements.

If you discover you are non-compliant, rectify quickly to avoid further financial penalties. Creating a compliance checklist can promote a regular review of labor force requirements and aid in preventative measures that reduce the risk of becoming non-compliant. The compliance checklist should include all areas that will need to be reviewed for compliance such as benefits, wage, hiring/recruiting standards, safety, record keeping and that company policies meet local, state, and federal regulations. As employment laws are amended, a checklist can help monitor and ensure the company remains compliant. This method can be most effective through regular auditing of documents and records.

Compliance is a key requirement and responsibility of the HR professional.

Updates for this year have already been rolled out and scheduled effective dates are approaching other new amendments with reporting deadlines. Taking a proactive approach to meeting all legal obligations is the best way to successfully remain compliant. Performing a policy review to update your employee handbook, reviewing your benefit plans to ensure compliance with minimum value/affordability regulations, and thoroughly reviewing the data collected for EEO-1 reporting are all recommended annually. This will not be a one-and-done function. Continual compliance audits and routine review of labor law updates will need to be a frequent task and will remain a responsibility of HR and business organizations. ♦

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ENERGY OPTIMIZATION STRATEGIES

– GOING BEYOND THE LED

CONSTELLATION

Organizations today are becoming increasingly more aware of their carbon footprint and environmental impact stimulating the introduction of new corporate initiatives focused on achieving energy efficiency, sustainability and resiliency goals. These initiatives have spurred renewed interest and focus on behind-the-meter energy optimization strategies.

These onsite optimization strategies typically involve the renewal of infrastructure and targeted system retrofits designed to increase overall energy efficiency and operating performance through a holistic, system-based building analysis and approach. This approach allows organizations to optimize energy consumption and manage costs, while in turn embarking on a path to achieve sustainability goals.

The benefits of deep energy retrofits

Energy optimization strategies are implemented for a variety of reasons:

- to apply an integrated, life cycle approach to address the proactive renewal of all building systems.
- to meet internal sustainability and decarbonization targets.
- to comply with new mandates, regulations or codes.
- to mitigate the underlying losses, both economic and operational, associated with equipment failure and downtime; and
- to introduce cost-saving efforts to your overall building maintenance and operations spend.

Deep energy retrofits, while requiring extensive and coordinated planning, can provide greater than 50 percent energy savings, according to a study by the Rocky Mountain Institute.¹ Additionally, they can put your facility on the path to net-zero path.

Deep energy retrofits, while requiring extensive and coordinated planning, can provide greater than 50 percent energy savings.

Some of the upgrades that comprise a deep energy retrofit may include:

- Installation of the right-sized high efficiency heating and cooling systems
- Implementation of enhanced building automation systems and technologies, known as smart building technologies, as well as advanced monitoring and metering to align the overall systems with building occupancy (e.g., dynamic scheduling, load sensing, occupancy sensors for lighting and HVAC)
- Evolving past the traditional lighting retrofit exploring the installation of intelligent lighting systems and incorporating day-light harvesting and advanced control strategies
- Building envelope upgrades such as roof insulation/radiant barrier/cool roof and wall insulation

Where to start

Appropriate timing with other capital expenditures, system replacements, or moving to a new building or occupancy type can help offset the cost into existing expense plans. Retrofits costs can also be integrated into existing energy agreements.

1. Determine if your facility should pursue deep energy retrofits

As the term retrofit denotes, Deep Energy Retrofits are focused on existing buildings. Not all facilities are the best candidates for a deep energy retrofit.

The best fit for a deep energy retrofit includes:

- Facilities facing escalating deferred maintenance challenges and system-related resiliency challenges that have budgeted upgrades or replacements,
- Facilities with high Energy Use Intensity (EUI) or higher-than-average energy costs, and
- Buildings faced with any governmental mandates are the best fit for a deep energy retrofit.

2. Identify your business' needs and goals

If you are looking to implement a deep energy retrofit strategy for your facility,

you will need to look at the entire scope of the situation. For example, deep energy retrofits should begin with the creation of a defined set of needs and goals to help you realize your intended design before researching any solutions. Additionally, understand the building as it currently exists, as well as the scope of the renovations that are critical before moving to product selection.

3. Consider the use of technologies to find areas of opportunity

Many facilities looking to implement significant “Deep Energy Retrofits” and that are committed to the holistic process should begin by first understanding their energy consumption profile and associated Energy Use Intensity (EUI), as well as where and when is energy being consumed and by what end-use systems. This is where data analytics, system modeling and technology meet. This holistic analysis will lead toward researching and selecting the technology, systems and analytics that would reduce energy consumption.

Finally, to ensure the execution and performance of a Deep Energy Retrofit, initiatives could leverage the allocation of internal capital in combination with traditional debt or one of many structured funding mechanisms like managed energy services agreements, as well as rebates, grants, financial incentives and various energy programs available to public and private entities, including the Energy Saving Performance Contract (ESPC) or Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE).

Given the breadth and complexities of a Deep Energy Retrofit, facility managers may want to look to a strategic partner like Constellation to assist in the deployment of a performance based, integrated delivery approach.

Constellation can connect you to the products, strategic relationships, and technology that can help you develop and execute your deep energy retrofit and meet your budgetary and sustainability goals. We provide the expertise and resources for a customized strategy unique to your business. ♦

Constellation – 24/7 access to billing and energy usage data

HOW CRM DATA & PROCESSES CREATE A CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND PROACTIVITY

SYNCSHOW

In today's world of high burnout and intense outputs required for an average workday, it's easy to lose track of what's important to achieve success. Whether you're a sales leader or a sales team member, ensuring you have a process and are using data to make decisions unlocks a program for success that creates a culture of autonomy, proactivity, and accountability. This allows high performers to run toward their goals and allows for difficult performance conversations to take a black and white approach thanks to the data available.

The Average State

Experienced salespeople know sales is a combination of math and psychology. You have to hit a certain threshold of activities and eventually those activities will result in opportunities, proposals, and closed deals. They also know that aside from the general math, you need to know your industry, your buyers, and offer some type of trust-building to get those activities to progress the way you want them to.

Aside from going on gut, maintaining a list in an email inbox, or using an excel spreadsheet, many people aren't using the benefits of math (data) to help them work smarter, not harder.

As a salesperson myself, I know it's easy to hit the lists hard when the pipeline feels like it's low, and it's equally easy to take a break after you've closed some deals and are feeling strong.

As a sales leader, it can be difficult to make projections and get insight from your team without feeling like a micromanager, especially when you don't have insight into your salesperson's day-to-day activities. It can feel equally impossible when it comes to training and managing your team if you don't have insight into why some team members are successful and others are struggling.

How to Level Up

Whether you're a sales person or a sales team lead, the good news is that managing your inbox or spreadsheet doesn't have to be a forever task - there is a more successful solution that can give you back your day, make you feel confident in your activities and timing, and guide you toward some autonomy.

Leveling up is a two-step process that includes creating a strategy for how you or your team will reach your pipeline goals, and then implementing a tool to help you get your activities completed - all the while gathering data to help you make future decisions.

Create a Sales Strategy

Before continuing to tactically implement sales activities, it's important to take a step back and put a process in place that maximizes your results. Consider the following steps to make your sales team more effective:

1. Target your sales outreach to 1-2 main industries - niche deeply into them for sales outreach.
2. Build an Ideal Customer Profile (ICP) in these niched industries so you know exactly who you are targeting and what they want and need from you.
3. Develop 1-2 content proof points that show how you're successful for companies just like them - this can be a video, case study, testimonial, or thought-leadership blog.
4. Develop a sequence of outreach so you're actively touching each prospect 7-9 times over the course of your engagement
5. Work backward to determine the number of cold sales outreaches that needs to take place in order to close the number of deals you need to be successful. If you don't know this answer, then assume your close rate is 10% and work from there.

Onboard to a CRM & Marketing Automation Tool That Fits Your Needs

Once your sales strategy is created and rolled out to your team for collective understanding and buy-in, it's time to leverage a tool that is going to help you get where you want to go both quickly and easily.

CRMs and Marketing Automation tools, when correctly used together, offer easy automation for sales outreach and great data that can be leveraged. This allows you to do more of what's working and less

of what isn't.

When looking for a CRM, you'll want something that is easy to use, effective for what you need, and cost effective. If you aren't already using a CRM or are unhappy with your current CRM, HubSpot offers a free CRM starter.

SyncShow is a HubSpot Platinum Partner who also uses HubSpot for our website, marketing automation, and CRM. For sales outreach this means I'm able to:

- Create sales sequences that automatically remind me of my tasks that are due, along with prompts to quickly complete them - like email templates where I can review & send.
- See what content prospects have engaged with and when, so I can decide who to follow up with first.
- Look at sales activities to ensure my team and I are on track to hit our daily, weekly, and monthly metrics that lead up to our quarterly and annual sales goals.
- See completion rates and goal attainment so I can do more of what works and less of what doesn't.

Implement & Evaluate

Once your strategy is set and your tool is decided on it's time to implement your sales sequences, email templates, call scripts, and dashboard reports so you can effectively execute your sales plans. Not only will this allow onboarding and training to run smoothly resulting in better employee retention, but you'll see shorter sales cycles and higher average order values because you're using a system that works to empower your team to do what works for them.

Once your tools are implemented and you're running on the program, ensure there's a weekly sales meeting where dashboards are reviewed and team members are collaborating on what's working and what isn't, then dig into the "why" of each insight. Implementation should be automated but not forgotten. Ensure you're updating your emails, scripts, and collateral to reflect what your team is hearing in the field and to respond to industry challenges. ♦

NEW SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION OBLIGATIONS AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR MANUFACTURERS LOCATED IN CHICAGO

GREENSFELDER, HEMKER & GALE, P.C.



The Chicago City Council recently adopted an ordinance amending the city's anti-sexual harassment laws. The ordinance, among other things, revises the definition of sexual harassment to include sexual misconduct; requires Chicago employers to establish and distribute to employees a written anti-sexual harassment policy that meets the requirements under the ordinance and display a poster advising employees of the prohibition of sexual harassment; enhances training requirements for employees and managers, including additional training on how bystanders who witness sexual harassment in the workplace should respond; and imposes stricter penalties for violations. The written policy, displaying of the poster and required training components of the ordinance went into effect July 1, 2022.

As of July 1, 2022, all employers in the city of Chicago must have a written policy prohibiting sexual harassment that meets the requirements set forth under the ordinance. Under the ordinance, an "employer" is defined as "any individu-

al, partnership, association, corporation, limited liability company, business trust, or any person or group of persons that provides employment to one or more employees in the current or preceding calendar year and any agent of such an entity or person." However, to be considered an "employer" and subject to the ordinance, an "employer" must (1) be subject to Chicago licensing requirements; or (2) maintain a business facility within the geographic boundaries of the city of Chicago limits. Under the ordinance, "employee" is defined as "an individual who is engaged to work within the geographical boundaries of the city of Chicago for or under the direction and control of another for monetary or other valuable consideration."

To be in compliance with the ordinance, the written policy prohibiting sexual harassment must include the following:

- A statement that sexual harassment is illegal in the city of Chicago;
- The following definition of sexual harassment: "any (i) unwelcome sexual

advances or unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature; or (ii) requests for sexual favors or conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for any employment decision affecting the individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment; or (iii) sexual misconduct, which means any behavior of a sexual nature which also involves coercion, abuse of authority, or misuse of an individual's employment position";

- A requirement that all employees participate in anti-sexual harassment prevention training annually (see details below);
- Examples of prohibited conduct that constitutes sexual harassment;
- Details on how an employee can report an allegation of sexual harass-

ment, including, as appropriate, instructions on how to make a confidential report, with an internal complaint form, to a manager, employer's corporate headquarters or human resources department, or other internal reporting mechanism;

- Information on legal services, including governmental agencies, that are available to employees who may be victims of sexual harassment; and
- A statement that retaliation for reporting sexual harassment is illegal in the city of Chicago.

The written policy must be made available in the employee's primary language within the first calendar week of starting their employment.

As of July 1, 2022, employers subject to the ordinance will be required to have all their employees participate in the following trainings annually (i.e. by June 30, 2023, and every June 30 thereafter) and for the specified time periods: (a) One hour of sexual harassment prevention training for all employees; (b) two hours of anti-sexual harassment prevention training for all supervisors/managers; and (3) one hour of bystander intervention training for all employees. Bystander intervention training teaches strategies on how onlookers can involve themselves directly and indirectly into harassment incidents to help those being targeted.

Employers also must retain written records of the policies and trainings given to each employee, as well as other records necessary to show compliance with the ordinance. The records must be retained for a period of at least five years or for the duration of any claim, civil action, or investigation pending pursuant to the ordinance, whichever is longer. Failure to maintain the required records creates a presumption (rebuttable only by clear and convincing evidence) that the employer violated the ordinance.

By July 1, 2022, all employers must conspicuously display, in at least one location where employees commonly gather, posters designed by the Chicago

Commission on Human Relations discussing prohibitions on sexual harassment. Employers must display at least one poster in English and one in Spanish.

An employer that fails to comply with the mandates related to the information required in the written anti-sexual harassment policy, fails to provide the required trainings and for the time-specified periods, or fails to display the required posters, are subject to fines between \$500 and \$1,000 for each offense.

Every day the violation continues and is not cured constitutes a separate and distinct offense. Other violations of the ordinance will have fines imposed between \$5,000 and \$10,000 for each offense.

Finally, employees who are victims of any form of discrimination, including sexual harassment, will now have 365 days, instead of 300 days, to file a complaint with the Chicago Commission on Human Relations. ♦

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2022 MAKERS MADNESS: “THE COOLEST THING MADE IN ILLINOIS” RIVIAN’S R1T

Founded in 2009, Rivian Automotive, Inc. is manufacturing fully electric trucks and SUVs that are comfortable and efficient enough for everyday use but are also capable of rugged off-road adventures. Their R1T pickup truck began rolling off the assembly line in Normal, IL last year and features four electric motors that launch the vehicle down the road, accelerating from zero to 60 MPH in just 3.0 seconds. It’s 7,776 individual cylindrical battery cells give it an EPA-estimated range of more than 300 miles when fully charged, and up to 11,000 pounds of towing capacity.

Named Motor Trend’s 2021 Truck of the Year, the R1T has more than 70,000 pre-orders. The manufacturing plant in Normal, IL, originally constructed and owned by Mitsubishi, has now expanded to almost 4,000,000 square feet after billions in investments. Rivian now employs more than 5,000 people at the plant which also produces their R1S electric SUV and electric delivery trucks in partnership with online retailer Amazon.

This year’s Makers Madness contest – the IMA’s third annual online competition to name “The Coolest Thing Made in Illinois” – began accepting nominations in March for any product manufactured in Illinois. Over 400 unique nominations were received, and voting opened online at MakersMadnessIL.com. For the opening round, lasting two weeks, voters could vote – up to five times per day per device – for their favorite items. At the end of the nominations round, the top 16 products advanced to seeded, bracketed, head-to-head contests. Voters narrowed those top 16 products to eight, and then from eight products again to a Final Four. Finally, in April, these Final Four products competed against each other, with the winner earning the title of “The Coolest Thing Made in Illinois.”

In the end, after more than 200,000 votes were cast, Rivian’s all-electric R1T truck emerged as the winner, crowned as The Coolest Thing Made in Illinois by Gov. JB Pritzker on Wednesday, April 27, 2022, during a ceremony at the Governor’s Mansion in Springfield.



“Rivian R1T is an outstanding example of the innovation and ingenuity of our state’s manufacturing sector and has rightfully earned the title of The Coolest Thing Made in Illinois. The R1T is leading a revolution in the automotive industry, and we are proud Illinois is home to such exciting technological advancements,” said Mark Denzler, President and CEO of the Illinois Manufacturers’ Association. “While the R1T emerged victorious this year, we are proud of every product featured in the competition, as they helped showcase the dynamic nature of our state’s manufacturing sector and the strength of the men and women who work on our factory floors.”

Rivian is building on Illinois' long, proud history of auto manufacturing by serving as a national leader in electric vehicle production. Last year, the IMA partnered with lawmakers and the governor's office to put in place new tax incentives to help grow electric vehicle and auto battery production in the state.

"Illinois' leadership in innovation is a story of our present as much as our past, and you see that in what manufacturers like Rivian are doing in 2022," said Governor JB Pritzker. "Rivian's all-electric R1T is a gamechanger in the auto industry, and through my administration's strategic investments in apprenticeships, training academies and tax credits, we can open doors for more Illinoisans to access 21st century manufacturing careers."



"Rivian is honored to have the R1T all electric adventure vehicle chosen as IMA's 2022 Coolest Thing Made in Illinois. Rivian's mission to "Keep the World Adventurous Forever" is based on the premise that technology, innovation, and collaboration can address our planet's greatest challenges, while also providing 21st Century jobs that support our community and all who live in and around the Bloomington-Normal area," said James Chen, Vice President of Public Policy & Chief Regulatory Counsel for Rivian. "The mission of sustainability through investment in zero emissions transportation technology and economic growth is evident throughout our operations in Illinois—from our shipping containers made of ocean-bound plastics, and innovative vehicle paint process, to our manufacturing operations—which include a diverse workforce and a welcoming community. We are proud to call Illinois home and honored to accept this year's award. So much credit goes to the plant team members who make the R1T every day and who made this accomplishment possible today."

Other finalists for the title included Fruit by the Foot made by General Mills in Belvidere; the Orion Spacecraft Capsule's Aft Bulkhead, Barrel and Tunnel made by Ingersoll Machine Tools Inc. in Rockford; and Custom Blazed Diffraction Gratings manufactured by Inprentus Precision Optics in Champaign.

"Comcast Business congratulates the Rivian R1T for being named The Coolest Thing Made in Illinois 2022. What a slam dunk. This year's contest was truly electrifying," said Sean McCarthy, Comcast's Regional Vice President of Business Development and Strategic Initiatives. "It was a full-court press to the end, and we congratulate the makers of all the awesome products manufactured here in Illinois that made it to the finals. Illinois is standing proud today."

Presented by Comcast Business, the Makers Madness competition shines a light on Illinois' diverse manufacturing sector, which played a critical role in the state and nation's response and emergence from the coronavirus pandemic. Manufacturers have and are developing life-saving vaccines and treatments, producing needed personal protective equipment, keeping store shelves stocked with important goods and nutritious foods, and powering our homes and businesses.

Voters chose the R1T from a field of more than 400 individual products initially nominated from across the state, with over 200,000 votes cast over the course of the competition. The original nominations were initially narrowed by voters to a top 16 products, which competed weekly in bracketed, seeded contests.

The top 16 products were:

- Bison Pull-Tight Pool Cover Gearmotor (Bison Gear & Engineering Corp., St. Charles)
- Camper Van Foldaway Seat with Table (Freedman Seating Company, Chicago)
- Combine (John Deere, Moline)
- Custom Blazed Diffraction Gratings (Inprentus Precision Optics, Champaign)
- Custom Semi-Trailer Bar (Onken's Incorporated, Easton)
- D11 Track Type Tractor (Caterpillar, Inc., East Peoria)
- Fruit by the Foot (General Mills, Belvidere)
- Jackpoint Jackstands (Jackpoint Jackstands LLC, Montgomery)
- Libman Tornado Spin Mop (The Libman Company, Arcola)
- Orion Spacecraft Capsule's Aft Bulkhead, Barrel and Tunnel (Ingersoll Machine Tools Inc., Rockford)
- Orion Spacecraft Command Module Control Switches (Otto Engineering, Inc., Carpentersville)
- Power-Grip LB-7Gx2 Lift Magnet (Obsidian Manufacturing Industries, Inc., Rockford)
- R1T (Rivian, Normal)
- Rapid Freeze Flake Ice Maker - 1000 - RLE (Howe Corporation, Chicago)
- TCFW375 Series Ice Rink Chiller (Thermal Care, Inc., Niles)
- TexWalk Print Media (Jessup Manufacturing Company, McHenry)

The top four products competed for the championship in a final, single contest: Fruit by the Foot, R1T, Orion Spacecraft Capsule's Aft Bulkhead, Barrel and Tunnel, and Custom Blazed Diffraction Gratings.

Makers Madness is an annual competition hosted early each year by the Illinois Manufacturers' Association. The 2023 contest will open for nominations early next year at www.MakersMadnessIL.com. ♦



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THE NLRB IS READY TO RESHAPE LABOR LAW IN ORDER TO FORCE AND SPREAD UNIONIZATION

SMITHAMUNDSEN

Union membership is down to a modern day all-time low. Indeed, labor unions continue to lose members. In 2021, the total U.S. workforce belonging to a labor union dropped to 10.3% — matching the all-time low in 2019. Among private-sector workers, the numbers were even worse — union members made up just 6.1% of the private sector workforce.

Since her confirmation in July 2021 as the National Labor Relations Board's General Counsel, Jennifer Abruzzo, has vocally supported radical changes in labor law aimed at making unionization easier by tilting the playing field to be decidedly pro-union. On April 11, 2022, Ms. Abruzzo filed a brief in a case pending before the NLRB, *Cemex Construction Materials Pacific*, seeking two fundamental changes to modern day labor law: 1) resurrecting a long-abandoned form of "card check"; and 2) stripping employers' free-speech rights by discouraging the education of employees on labor unions.

Card Check 2.0 in the Making?

General Counsel Abruzzo's public filing calls for a return to the NLRB's long-abandoned Joy Silk doctrine. Under that doctrine, unions may obtain representational status, simply by claiming to have the support of a majority of a private employer's employees (typically through union card signing)—and putting the burden on the employer to affirmatively demonstrate a good-faith doubt as to that majority status in order to lawfully refuse to recognize the union as the employees' exclusive representative without an election.

For years, advocates for organized labor have sought to establish "card check"—as opposed to secret ballot elections—as the manner in which a union may gain representational status. Under a card check system, a union would secure employees' signatures on authorization cards; if a majority of employees in the unit sign such cards, the union would then demand the employer recog-

nize the union as the employees' exclusive bargaining representative. Currently, an employer has no obligation to recognize a union on the basis of authorization cards—instead, an employer may insist that the question be determined through a secret ballot election conducted by the NLRB.

Secret ballot elections allow employees to cast their vote privately and anonymously. By contrast, card signing is often completed by pro-union employees approaching other employees to have them sign an authorization card in their presence. Often, card signing is carried out in group meetings, where employees may feel pressured into signing in front of their peers. Also, the process is nearly completely unregulated, and employees may not fully understand the purpose of the card—many times they are told the card is simply to gain more information, or to seek an election. For these reasons, the NLRB has, for the last 50 years, established the secret ballot election as the preferred method of determining employee support for a union.

Union adherents have tried to establish the card check system through federal legislation, but such attempts have failed in Congress. Because of these failures, the NLRB's pro-union General Counsel now seeks to have the current NLRB (which, is comprised of majority pro-union appointees), reverse 50 years of precedent in order to make card check a reality, without the need for legislation.

Specifically, in *Cemex Construction*, GC Abruzzo argues for the NLRB to reinstate the 1960s-era Joy Silk doctrine. Under that doctrine employers would be required to recognize and bargain with a union claiming to have majority support of the employer's employees, unless the employer could affirmatively establish a good-faith doubt as to the claimed majority status of the union. In the years when the Joy Silk doctrine was used, it was modified by the NLRB to put the burden on a union to demonstrate an employer's bad faith in failing to recog-

nize a union that claimed to have majority support, and the doctrine eventually required a showing that the employer had committed a serious unfair labor practice before the NLRB would require the employer to recognize and bargain with the union absent an election. By the late 1960s, the NLRB abandoned Joy Silk completely and established that an employer did not have to accept card check (or any other method of claimed majority status) but could insist that the question be determined by a secret ballot election. Here, GC Abruzzo argues for a return to the original Joy Silk method, placing the burden on any employer to affirmatively establish that it has a good-faith doubt of the union's claimed majority status if it refuses to voluntarily recognize a union upon demand. Factors sought to be considered when determining an employer's alleged good-faith doubt of claimed majority status would include all relevant circumstances, including any unlawful conduct of the employer, the sequence of events, and the time lapse between the refusal and any alleged unlawful conduct.

It remains to be seen how the NLRB will decide this issue: will it maintain precedent from the last 50 years allowing employers to rely on a secret ballot election; or will it mandate that the burden is on employers to prove a good-faith doubt, if they refuse to voluntarily recognize a union claiming majority support of the employees? The current make-up of the NLRB, being majority pro-union, puts the secret ballot election at severe risk of extinction.

Stripping Employer Free-Speech?

In the *Cemex Construction* case GC Abruzzo also calls for the end of so-called "captive audience" meetings. Typically, once a union files a petition for an election, an employer will hold meetings with its employees in order to educate them on the election process, the specific union involved, and the collective bargaining process.

Treat ‘em like mushrooms is an expression that is never actually uttered out loud by union organizers, but it’s certainly implied when it comes to organizing a workforce. Keeping the worker in the dark concerning key facts and the fine print before casting an official vote for or against union representation is something organized labor tries to ensure. In fact, under current labor law, unions not only don’t have an obligation to share key information to prospects, but they can also lawfully mislead workers and provide them with false information while making wild promises that they cannot possibly deliver. In short, when attempting to organize workers to join a union, union organizers intentionally fail to disclose unflattering facts related to the union and union membership. It’s a common and expected tactic.

Having a well-informed worker is not a winning strategy for the union. This is why it’s always left to the employer to actually educate the workforce on the good, bad, and ugly of becoming part of a particular labor union. This practice is often referred to as captive audience meetings and such meetings have been deemed lawful in the private sector for generations.

While unions commonly perceive the captive audience meeting as being anti-union, in reality it’s typically anything but. If an employer decides to simply trash the union, it often backfires. Rather, the better and more common approach is to heavily focus on educating workers on everything union representation means (the good, bad, and ugly). Examining the labor organization at issue under a microscope and educating the worker on the fine print leads to a more informed voter. And this scares union organizers like nothing else.

The Take Away...

Coupled with card check recognition under a return to Joy Silk, the muzzling of employers’ ability to conduct any

educational or counter-campaign is the NLRB GC’s cynical attempt to completely upend all current procedures for determining whether employees truly wish to be represented by a union. The motivation is clear: since more and more employees are choosing to remain non-union, pro-union advocates in the current administration are seeking to establish procedures that allow union adherents to gain signatures on binding authorization cards through promises, propaganda, and peer pressure, while eliminating employers’ ability to educate employees and eradicating the secret ballot.

Non-union employers should act now to protect against a union demand for recognition based on a clandestine card-signing campaign. First, the best-way to stave off any union organizing attempt is through good and fair

employment practices. But more important than ever, employers should learn to recognize union organizing efforts and, if it is likely such an effort is afoot, to begin to carefully educate employees on what it would mean to belong to a union and how they can see through common union false promises and propaganda. These efforts should focus on educating employees on what signing a union card may mean—so that they can make a full, informed decision before signing a card. Under a return to Joy Silk, it would be too late to educate employees on the facts and perils of unionization after a majority have already signed cards. ♦

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HOW MANUFACTURERS CAN REMAIN COMPLIANT AMID INCREASED THREATS & REGULATIONS

CORO CYBER SECURITY



Cyber incidents are increasing in both quantity and sophistication. No one is immune from a potential attack, particularly small to mid-sized manufacturing organizations.

Cybersecurity within the manufacturing industry has been lacking – and hackers are noticing. In 2020, there was a 300% increase in cyber-attacks on manufacturing. Forty percent (40%) of manufacturing firms experienced a cyber-attack last year and 85% of breaches involved the human element. In fact, manufacturing took the brunt of cyber-attacks in 2021, dethroning financial service companies as the most attacked industry by cyber criminals.

With increasing threats and an array of regulations to comply with, it's critical that manufacturers have the right strategy and tools in place to remain secure and compliant. By being vigilant and implementing the right solution, manufacturers can overcome cyber security challenges, protect themselves from threats, and adhere to ever-increasing industry regulations.

Top Cyber Threats for Manufacturing

According to IBM, manufacturing was the top industry targeted by cyber attackers in the past year; with ransomware and vulnerability exploitations imprisoning businesses and further burdening global supply chains.

The Association of Equipment Manufacturers confirms that ransomware remains a top threat. Since 2019, ransomware attacks have increased 239% and

the cost to recover increased by 228%. The most common type of ransomware attack happens when someone unwittingly clicks on a link in an email that contains malicious code. The code is then executed and proceeds to steal sensitive data. The attackers threaten to exploit the data unless a ransom is paid.

Remember in 2021 when JBS Foods fell victim to a ransomware scheme from a Russian hacker group? The disruption cost the global distribution of meat products a fortune. The manufacturer ultimately had to pay \$11 million to get its systems back up and running.

Other top threats facing manufacturers include vulnerabilities from multiple devices and hybrid work environments, phishing and spear-phishing schemes, and insider threats.

Multiple Devices & Flexible Work Environments: As a company's digital footprint and connectedness expands, so does its risk landscape. The Manufacturer's Alliance reports that 80% of manufacturers will offer hybrid work options to employees once the pandemic ends. As more manufacturers embrace this flexibility, they'll depend on the cloud to conduct business. The multiple devices that workers use today also create more entry points for attackers. This environment is ripe for attacks and breaches as it's incredibly complex to manage cyber security in an "anywhere access" world.

Spear Phishing Schemes: Spear phishing is a social engineering attack in which a scammer, disguised as a trusted individual, tricks a target into reveal-

ing sensitive data by clicking a link in a spoofed email, text message, or instant message. The attacker typically already has some information about the victim, which they use to appear trustworthy. Common examples involve a scammer posing as a company executive and requesting that an unsuspecting employee wire money to a fraudulent account or getting the victim to click on a malicious link they think is coming from a trusted source. These types of attacks are becoming more popular against small and medium sized businesses.

Insider Threats: No organization is immune to insider threats. Seventy percent (70%) of data breaches are caused by current or former employees, contractors, or partners who have access to an organization's systems or sensitive information. Insider threats can be negligent (like an employee who sends files to a personal email and unknowingly exposes sensitive customer data) to malicious (like when a former GE employee stole trade secrets for financial gain).

Current Regulations & Standards

In addition to protecting critical and sensitive data from exploitations, there's a dizzying list of cyber security and privacy standards that manufacturers must adhere to, whether government-mandated, industry-mandated, or voluntary. Here are a few:

- **Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS):** A security standard used to ensure the safe and secure transfer of credit card data.

- **Sarbanes-Oxley:** Requires any publicly traded company to have formal data security policies and to communicate and enforce those policies.

- **Children's Online Privacy Protection Act:** Governs the collection of information about minors.

- **Federal Trade Commission Act:** Gives the FTC broad authority to protect consumers against organizations that fail to follow basic cybersecurity and privacy best practices.

- **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):** Governs the collection, use, transmission, and security of data collected from residents of the European Union.

If a manufacturer sells products to the U.S. government, it must comply with the minimum cybersecurity standards set by FAR. If its products are used by the DoD, it must also comply with DFARS and have at least a Level 1 certification of the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) program by 2026, which verifies that DoD cybersecurity requirements have been implemented.

Many U.S. states also have their own privacy laws covering how businesses can collect and use information about consumers. Illinois' cyber security strategy can be viewed online at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/doit/Strategy/Cybersecurity/Documents/CyberSecurity-Strategy-2021-25.pdf>.

At best, noncompliance with mandated regulations can result in hefty fines. At worst, it can cause reputational damage and potentially cause a business to shut down completely. Together, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) have developed a helpful framework that manufacturers can use to develop a sound and compliant cyber security strategy.

Remaining Compliant & Secure

While large enterprises opt for point-solutions to protect various end points, most manufacturers simply don't have the budget or staff to implement these tools.

The manufacturing industry tends to ebb and flow with the economy. Additionally, much of the work is not predictable or recurring. Manufacturers are always trying to do more with less and,

as a result, are unlikely to invest a lot of money or resources into IT staffing or technology.

While they have neither the expertise nor the budget to detect and mitigate attacks, they also can't risk any suspension in their activities. Such a suspension would result in damaging financial (and reputational) loss, not to mention the impact to the supply chain. As a result, many manufacturing companies hit by ransomware attacks prefer to just pay the ransom.

Since cyber security is not the main priority and resources cannot be devoted to it, criminals view manufacturing companies, especially small and medium-sized ones, as easy targets.

So, how can manufacturers remain compliant while still protecting them-

selves against ransomware attacks and other threats if they don't have the budget or staff? An all-in-one cyber security solution is a smart, affordable, and scalable option that can provide enterprise-grade security at a fraction of the price without any reliance on IT.

By getting a single, real-time view into a manufacturer's entire security posture – including cloud apps, email, users, devices, data, and networks – potential areas of exposure can quickly be identified and fixed before they are exploited. A unified tool that, for example, leverages AI and machine learning can continuously monitor for vulnerabilities across all endpoints and automatically apply fixes, protecting against leaked data, stolen funds, regulatory fines, and reputational harm.

Taft/

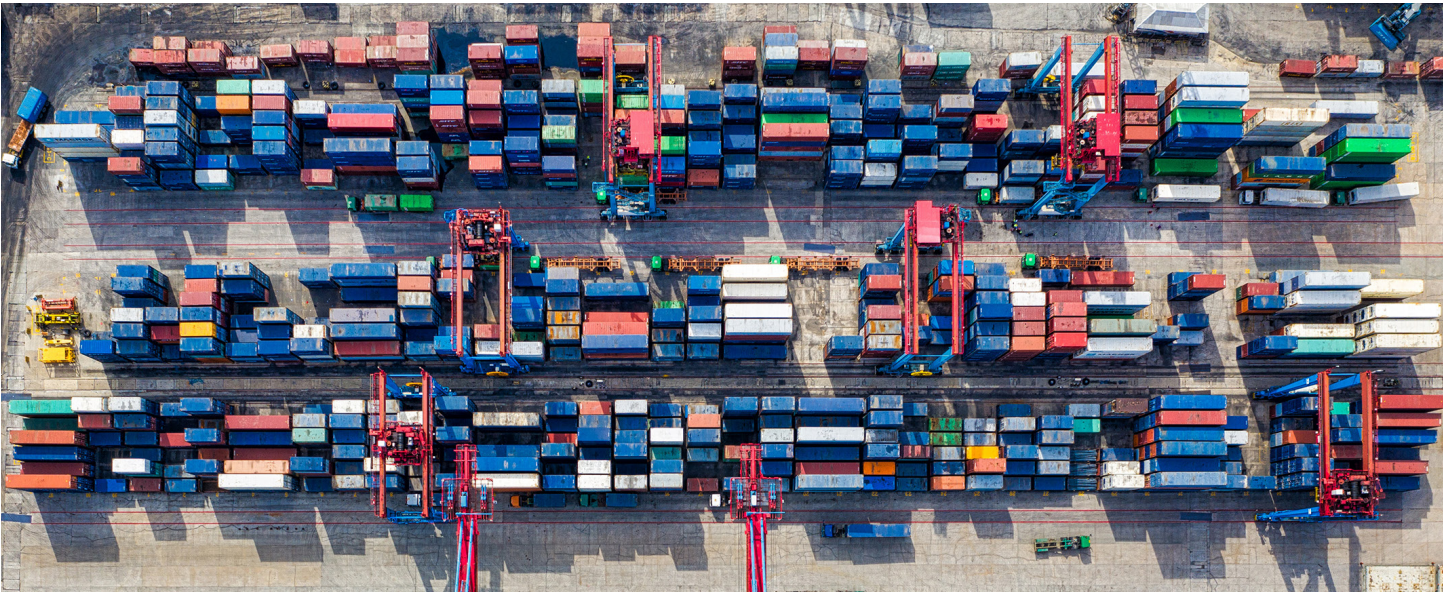
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GOVERNMENT REGULATION AND YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN

AM TRANSPORT



The COVID-19 pandemic illuminated the importance of the transportation industry to the United States economy. Shutdowns at manufacturing facilities, backlogs at ports and warehousing facilities, and a shortage of drivers and other transportation workers disrupted supply chains throughout the US. This unique swirl of events created more shortages in the workforce and caused rates to skyrocket.

But disruption in the logistics industry and the supply chain is nothing new. With 70% of all goods in the US moved by truck, it doesn't take much to create a ripple effect. Like the COVID-19 pandemic, government regulations (or deregulation for that matter) can upend the transportation space. And when this happens, manufacturers are faced with truck capacity shortages, excessive rates, and shoddy service.

Brief History of Deregulation

Consider briefly, the Motor Carrier Act of 1980 which made it easier for truckers to secure certificates of public convenience and necessity. It also required the ICC to eliminate most restrictions concerning commodities, routes, and geographical regions. In addition, the law allowed trucking companies to "price

freely within a zone of reasonableness" which, simply put, means they could increase or decrease rates by 15%.

This deregulation changed the industry. Rates fell. Trucking companies were better able to negotiate rates and services, experiment with new prices, and restructure routes, reducing empty return hauls. At the same time, shippers were able to work with third-party-logistics providers who were able to negotiate better rates and secure predictable capacity.

As deregulation strengthened the logistics landscape, it also improved service to smaller communities. Most experts would agree that deregulation in the 1980s and 1990s created a more flexible logistics environment with a wider variety of carriers and 3PLs able to provide manufacturers with enhanced service and better rates.

In recent years, however, we've seen some new regulations impact the transportation industry.

The ELD-Rule

One such example of this is the implementation of the ELD-Rule.

Electronic Logging Devices (ELD) are electronic logbooks that include hardware connected to the electronic control

module of the truck's engine. This device tracks drive time and stores the record of duty status (RODS) as well as monitors drive time and hours of service (HOS) compliance.

In February of 2016, carriers or drivers were able to begin using registered ELDS, and by December 16, 2019, all carriers and drivers subject to the rule were required to use a certified ELD. ELDs record the date, time, and location. They monitor engine hours, miles driven and identifying information of the driver, motor carrier, and vehicle. They also record duty status which records vehicle movement whether or not the driver is on or off duty.

Before the rule went into effect, many experts believed the rule would create skyrocketing rates and lots of disruption. Rather than completely change the landscape of trucking, it created a ripple effect for manufacturers and distributors because the rule limited drive time for trucks.

Before the ELD-Rule, shippers were able to hold drivers well-beyond their appointment or delivery times without paying much of a penalty. In this new environment, shippers were forced to be timelier in loading and unloading trucks. Attaining Shipper of Choice status became an important requirement for

manufacturers in need of excellent carriers during times of tight capacity. Manufacturers unable or unwilling to stick to appointment or delivery times found trucks hard to find or too expensive to hire.

What Does the Future Hold?

Due to unprecedented disruption in the supply chain over the last two years, President Biden has created a Supply

Chain Disruption Task Force. While experts are unsure what this will mean for the trucking and freight brokerage industry and for the manufacturers they serve, we can expect new regulations that will most likely affect both rates and service going forward.

In order to navigate this ongoing disruption while creating more resilient supply chains, smart manufacturers will consider outsourcing some of all of their

logistics to forward-thinking 3PLs. Third-Party-Logistics providers have access to superior carriers, use premium technology, and provide transparency and communication. But partnering with a 3PL gives manufacturers the added advantage of working with savvy industry experts who engage in government advocacy intended to benefit the manufacturers they serve in the logistics marketplace.

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DATA CENTER CONNECTIONS DRIVING MANUFACTURING SECTOR GROWTH IN ILLINOIS

COMCAST BUSINESS

The need for connectivity and technology has never been greater, with increasing growth in everything from remote and hybrid work, use of cloud-based applications, distance learning, web-based sales and customer service, to streaming entertainment and online health and wellness services.

As businesses continue to embrace digital innovation and network transformation to accommodate these phenomena, they need technology solutions that are flexible, secure, and easy to manage. Data centers have taken center stage in Illinois, providing businesses of all sizes redundant, fiber-based connections that offer a combination of reliable connectivity, network management capabilities, and cybersecurity protocols.

In fact, according to siteselection.com, this state is one of the best markets for data centers – the Illinois data center investment program boosted our leadership in data center development. The program, which was included in the state's \$45 billion capital construction budget passed in 2019, exempts owners and operators of qualify-

ing Illinois data centers from a variety of state and local taxes. It also provides a 20% tax credit on wages paid to construction workers for projects located in underserved areas.

Now, with more than 60 data center locations in the Chicago market alone, we are starting to see the fruits of this legislation. Increased access to data centers means streamlined data management for businesses of all industries and sizes – though perhaps no industry will benefit more from data center connections than the manufacturing industry.

The digital transformation in manufacturing, known as Industry 4.0, has undoubtedly impacted the manufacturing industry by enabling manufacturers to connect and automate machines and allowing them to apply data analytics to make smarter, real-time decisions on production floors. These newer manufacturing functions generate huge amounts of data that need to be processed and stored, making data center connections ideal solutions.

According to the National Association of Manufacturers, Illinois manufacturers

make up more than 12% of the state's total output, accounting for more than \$106 billion of its annual economy. The incorporation of data centers into regular manufacturing operations will not only help streamline existing workflows but make it simpler for manufacturers to expand operations and development teams, ultimately raising the value that the broader manufacturing industry provides for the state.

This technological advancement for manufacturing companies represents an exciting time for Comcast Business. We have never been more ready to help facilitate further data center connections for manufacturers. To date, we've connected nearly 40 data centers across Illinois and became the first connectivity provider onsite at Elk Grove Technology Park in 2019. Our hope is that Comcast Business' proactive network investments to bring state-of-the-art connectivity services to data centers in the state will help accelerate business growth in the manufacturing sector and drive our state's economy forward. ♦



The Workforce Solutions Summit was a huge success – lots of energy, ideas and participation from manufacturers around the state.

Thank you to our sponsors for helping make this such a strong program!



MEMBER NEWS

American Beverage Announces “More Choices, Less Sugar” Awareness Campaign



In April 2022 American Beverage announced their new “More Choices, Less Sugar” awareness campaign which showcases the incredible innovation and intentional actions by The Coca-Cola Company, Keurig Dr Pepper and PepsiCo to bring more choices with less sugar – or no sugar at all – to market. This is all part of our ongoing effort to support our customers and consumers in reducing sugar in their diets – and supports their Balance Calories Initiative. As part of this awareness campaign, I hope you are able to catch our new spot – Find Yours – which is airing here in the DC media market, among others. You can also see it on our refreshed BalanceUS.org website where we are showcasing beverage choice in a more engaging and dynamic way. America’s beverage companies are working together to support your efforts to find balance by providing more choices in the beverage aisle. Today nearly 60% beverages sold have no sugar at all. This includes your favorite soft drinks, teas, sports drinks, sparkling and flavored waters, and more. We’re collaborating with partners in communities across the country to increase awareness of the wide range of beverage choices with less sugar being made available. It’s all part of how we’re supporting trusted local organizations in their efforts to build healthier communities for years to come.

Comcast Marks Step Toward Carbon Neutral Goal with 250 MW Solar Agreement



On March 31, 2022, Comcast announced an agreement to purchase 250 megawatts (MW) of solar electricity from Constellation that will power approximately 12 percent of its U.S. operations and the vast majority of its Mid-Atlantic operations with clean, renewable energy. The agreement will support construction of the Blue Sky Solar Project, currently being developed by Scout Clean Energy in Illinois, creating local jobs and bringing additional clean electricity to the U.S. power grid. “This marks the first of many major green investments that are al-

ready underway or on the immediate horizon which demonstrate our commitment to sustainable, responsible business.” said Peter Kiriacoulacos, Executive Vice President and Chief Procurement Officer at Comcast. Comcast is committed to being carbon neutral by 2035 for Scope 1 and 2 emissions, or the direct and indirect emissions it owns and controls, across its global operations. With purchased electricity accounting for the majority of these emissions, sourcing renewable energy is critical to meeting this goal. Comcast’s renewable energy strategy will prioritize securing green tariffs, direct power purchase agreements (PPAs), and virtual PPAs through contracts that bring new renewable capacity to the grid. It will also include building onsite renewable energy capacity and supplementing electricity needs with purchases from existing clean energy projects or renewable energy certificates (RECs). “We commend Comcast on its carbon neutral commitment and are pleased that our offsite renewable solution will serve as a significant steppingstone toward achieving that goal,” said Jim McHugh, Chief Commercial Officer, Constellation. “As our nation transitions to a clean energy future, Constellation is dedicated to offering the products, services and expertise that help our customers strategically manage their energy use and reduce their carbon footprints.” Project Highlights: Comcast will source 250 MW of carbon-free solar electricity from the 300 MW Blue Sky project – a majority share of the project’s total output. Blue Sky is one of the largest solar projects approved to date in the PJM power grid, which spans the U.S. Mid-Atlantic region and portions of the Midwest, and Comcast is currently the sole customer. 250 MW Of carbon-free solar electricity will be sourced from Blue Sky. The agreement will allow Comcast to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions associated with its energy use by nearly 360,000 metric tons annually – equivalent to avoiding the emissions from more than 65,000 homes’ electricity use for a year. 360K Metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions to be reduced through the agreement annually. The project will create up to 400 construction jobs and 20 new local long-term jobs, and generate \$36.3 million in tax revenue over the life of the project, including \$25.4 million slated to go directly to local schools. \$36.3M in tax revenue to be generated by the project. Blue Sky is expected to reach commercial operation by December 2024. Comcast has signed a corresponding 15-year agreement with Constellation be-

ginning in 2025 to receive energy and RECs from Blue Sky as part of its retail electric supply contract.

Constellation Launches as Largest U.S. Clean Energy Company After Completing Separation from Exelon



Company aims to accelerate the transition to a carbon-free future amid growing demand for climate solutions. BALTIMORE (Feb. 2, 2022) – Constellation (Nasdaq: CEG) today announced the completion of its separation from Exelon Corp. (Nasdaq: EXC) and its launch as a standalone, publicly traded company and the nation’s largest carbon-free energy producer and leading supplier of clean energy solutions to millions of homes and businesses. Constellation will begin “regular way” trading on the Nasdaq Global Select Market today under the symbol “CEG.” Headquartered in Baltimore, Constellation will be a Fortune 200 company and operates in 48 states, Canada and the U.K., employing approximately 13,000 people. “The future health and prosperity of our nation is inextricably linked to our success in eliminating carbon pollution, and our entire focus will be on helping our customers and communities achieve that goal,” said Joseph Dominguez, CEO of Constellation. “Our clean generation fleet and leading customer-facing platform are the foundation on which we will sustain and grow our business. Today begins an exciting transition for our company and employees as we affirm our mission to accelerate the transition to a carbon-free future and advance economic progress and equity in the communities we serve.” Constellation is the nation’s largest producer of carbon-free energy and leading supplier of sustainable solutions to millions of residential, public sector and business customers, including three fourths of Fortune 100 companies. Its generation fleet powers more than 20 million homes and businesses and is helping to accelerate the nation’s transition to clean energy with more than 32,400 megawatts of capacity and annual output that is nearly 90 percent carbon-free.

Constellation also is exploring growth opportunities that build on its core businesses and capitalize on the rapidly expanding demand for carbon-free energy and solutions to reduce emissions. The company can pursue numerous avenues for growth, including potential acquisitions of clean energy assets, creating clean hydrogen using

MEMBER NEWS

its nuclear fleet, introducing new products and services for business customers or leveraging the generation fleet for repowering, co-location of data centers and other opportunities. In connection with the separation, Exelon shareholders received one share of Constellation common stock for every three shares of Exelon common stock held at the close of business on January 20, the record date for the distribution. The transaction was tax-free to Exelon and its shareholders for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Exelon shareholders will retain their current shares of Exelon stock.

Elastec, Inc. Acquires Kepner Plastics Fabricators, Inc.



Elastec (Carmi, IL) is excited to announce the acquisition of Kepner Plastics (Torrance, CA). Kepner was founded in 1961 and grew to become well known in industrial circles as one of the outstanding custom plastic fabricators in the world. Kepner broke into the oil spill response industry in 1968 after the invention of the SeaCurtain Boom. The international success of the SeaCurtain Boom allowed the expansion of products to build a large and impressive portfolio. Over the decades, Kepner has gained a worldwide reputation for quality response products which reflect their slogan, "When it has to work!"

Recognizing the quality of the product, Elastec approached Kepner President, Frank Meyers, and made an offer to acquire the entire product line and assets. Elastec CEO, Mark Hilliard commented "The technology that Kepner has developed will fit perfectly into the Elastec family of products. We are looking forward to working with their existing clients as well as introducing their equipment to new users." As of April 29, 2022, all inquiries to Kepner Plastics will be received by Elastec. "We look forward to continuing the tradition of building equipment that has to work." Hilliard added.

Global OEM Flake Ice Leader



Howe Corporation is celebrating its 110th anniversary as a Global OEM flake ice leader. With its manufacturing facility located in the Chicago West Town neighborhood, it is a landmark in the Chicago manufacturing scene.

Howe Corp is a fourth-generation family-owned business, serving the refrigeration and food processing industry since 1912. As the "Original" flake ice equipment manufacturer, Howe has built a global reputation as an industry leader in food preservation across diverse industry verticals. Howe's quality flake ice is a key cooling ingredient that contributes to their customers' bottom line, sustainability, and diversity goals. "Howelce® is subcooled, which helps retailers retain the freshness of perishable food items and food processors to ensure the integrity of a recipe," says President and CEO Tammy Phillips.

Howe is committed to building sustainable machines and has earned partner recognition with Energy Star since 2012. The EPA recently presented Howe with a Sustained Excellence Award after earning the Energy Star program's Partner of the Year award the last two years. Howe's ice machines seamlessly recycle unused water, ensuring zero wastage, while reducing energy consumption. These features make Howe equipment eco-friendly while saving huge expenses for their clients.

Howe is eager to share its knowledge and experience with the next generation of refrigeration professionals. Through the Jane Addams Resource Corporation (JARC) apprenticeship program, Howe employs engineering and sales/marketing college apprentices. The program is expanding to include upper class high school level students to encourage young people to explore engineering.

"We understood the importance of keeping products fresh as well as energy and water conservation long before it was a topic. Our goal is to continue offering quality ice machines compatible with many refrigerants to address the diverse demands of the food industry, now and for another 110 years," Tammy concludes.

Test Force. "I don't know of any other platform that has undergone such a rapid test program and it's been incredible to be a part of the team that's bringing this to reality."

With a payload capacity of 29,500 lbs. (13,300 kg), including outsized weapons, the F-15EX delivers affordable mass to address rapidly evolving threats. When this payload is combined with range, high-speed mission systems, advanced sensors and an electronic warfare suite, the F-15EX gives the U.S. Air Force the ability to present peer adversaries with multiple challenges both inside and outside of threat rings.

Tek Pak Celebrates 30 Years Of Operation In The Fox Valley Region



ST. CHARLES – June 15, 2022 - Tek Pak Inc. kicked off the celebration of its 30th anniversary last weekend with a special event for its team and the presentation of awards for its long-standing employees. A top-ranking packaging manufacturer specializing in carrier tape and thermoforming solutions for electronic, food, healthcare, and industrial customers in the U.S. and across the globe, the company has achieved steady growth over the past three decades with revenues reaching \$18.5 million in 2021.

Often referred to as the preferred employer in the Fox Valley region, Tek Pak has been a steady job creator, employing more than 100 workers across three locations in the Kane County area. The mid-sized manufacturer is renowned for its demonstrated commitment to operational safety, personal safety, workforce development and the overall well-being of its workforce.

"In total, we have more than 300 years of experience in our toolroom staff. We work hard each day to push the limits of what our tooling people think they can do and constantly exceed even their own expectations," said Tony Beyer, president and founder of Tek Pak, Inc. "We've built a legacy of teamwork, I'm incredibly proud to lead this team of professionals who never shy away from a challenge and pride themselves on their commitment to the community, their family and fellow members of our Tek Pak team.

Twenty-one employees were honored with long-service awards during the anniversary party held on June 11 at The Graceful Ordinary in St. Charles for having been with Tek Pak for twenty-five years or longer, some since the company's inception in 1992. The awardees commended the company for its long-standing commitment to employee safety, advanced job training opportunities as well as investment in their personal and professional success over the past 30 years.

"The investment that Tek Pak makes in its employees is remarkable," said Chad Miller, manager, sales and customer service, one of the awardees who has spent 28 years at Tek Pak. "The company continuously invests in employee safety on the work floor and employees are constantly exposed to cross-training in different areas of the manufacturing, tooling and thermoforming process to develop their knowledge and skills.

Intertape Polymer Group Named as a Finalist in 2022 IndustryWeek Best Plants



Intertape Polymer Group, located in Carbondale, has recently been named as a top 10 finalist in the 2022 IndustryWeek Best Plants Awards for demonstrating excellence in practices and performances, as well as a devotion to continuous improvement. IndustryWeekly certifies that all 10 finalists are plants with engaged workforces and teamwork at their core. "They are facilities that strive to be their best, each and every day. They are problem-solvers who never let a challenge get the best of them. Nevertheless, these teams know they always can do better." The IMA is proud to see the Intertape Polymer Group getting recognized for their great efforts. Congrats!

LG - MAGNA E-Powertrain Celebrates Groundbreaking Of New Facility In Mexico



SEOUL, Apr. 19, 2022 — LG Magna e-Powertrain, a joint venture (JV) between LG Electronics (LG) and Magna International Inc. (Magna), celebrated the groundbreaking of its new plant in Ramos Arizpe, Mexico. Scheduled for completion in 2023, the new facility will produce inverters, motors, and on-board chargers to support General Motors' electric vehicle (EV) production. The 260,000 square foot plant will be LG Magna e-Powertrain's first production base in North America and is expected to create around 400 new jobs.

"Strengthening our JV's ability to develop and produce advanced EV sub-assemblies, the Ramos site represents one of the key pillars of LG's long-term strategy to become the auto industry's go-to innovation partner," said Eun Seok-hyun, president of the LG Vehicle component Solutions Company. "This new facility demonstrates the continuing growth of LG Magna e-Powertrain," said Cheong Won-suk, chief executive officer of LG Magna e-Powertrain. "The JV's ongoing success will enable us to better support our customers with best-in-class compo-

nents for the next generation of electric vehicles, and help us to expand our presence in the fast-growing global EV market." The groundbreaking event, which took place on April 19, was attended by executives from LG Magna e-Powertrain, LG Electronics, Magna, General Motors and local government officials. "In the space of just over one year, we've added an expansion agreement, identified a strategic location to support our customer, and are now in the process of realizing our plans," said Tom Rucker, president of Magna Powertrain. "The building of a new facility is a true testament to the strength of this collaboration and commitment in delivering innovative solutions to customers to meet their challenges. It also reinforces our active participation in the electrification transformation whether by eDrive sub systems or full systems." General Motors is the foundational customer for the new facility, and it will play a key role in GM's journey to build a strong, scalable, sustainable and North America-focused EV supply chain.

Richland Community College Celebrates 4 Years of The EnRich™ Program



Four years ago we started the EnRich™ Program at Richland Community College and I never imagined the impact it would have today and how it could shape our future. What started as a focus on the manufacturing sector and industrial skills has grown across multiple sectors including healthcare, education, entrepreneurship, college prep and transportation. Not only are providing skilled training, but we providing essential skills to build a stronger, more resilient workforce. Since 2018, we have trained over 1,500 individuals with a 90% completion rate and 95% of graduates hired within two weeks. An even greater testament is that 90% are still employed (and promoted) after one year. Earlier this month, Richland hosted our inaugural Enriching Our History Gala & Fund-raiser and it was an honor to celebrate those that championed the success of this program while recognizing the participants for their success. ♦

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