

# THE ILLINOIS MANUFACTURER

SECOND QUARTER 2023



**2023 MAKERS MADNESS:**  
“THE COOLEST THING MADE IN ILLINOIS”  
INGERSOLL MACHINE TOOLS’ ROSENBERG MOON HABITAT

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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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**Share Your Company News with the IMA . . .**

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# VISION 2022: THE SCORECARD

MARK DENZLER, PRESIDENT &amp; CEO



Four years ago, in my second column after being chosen to lead the Illinois Manufacturers' Association, I outlined our brand new strategic and growth plan – VISION 2022 – that would serve as our North Star during the next four years. Developed in concert with the IMA Board, member companies, and our staff, VISION 2022 was predicated on growth, advocacy, and presence with specific targeted goals and action items.

As the oldest state manufacturing trade association in the United States, the IMA has a proud and rich history of advocating for Illinois manufacturers, but we needed to innovate, rebrand, and expand to meet the demands of modern manufacturing. While nobody anticipated the global pandemic that consumed our attention for two years, the IMA focused on our goals and is in the strongest position in our storied legacy. I was extremely proud to present the VISION 2022 scorecard results to the IMA Board of Directors at our latest meeting and share them with you today. We know that your time and treasure are precious, so we do our best to manage them wisely and successfully because the IMA is your association.

## GROWTH:

- 27.4% increase in membership revenue
- 12.7% increase in the number of IMA members
- 96% retention rate (association average is 88 percent)
- 90 new members per year on average
- 2022 membership dues revenue (*the highest in IMA history*)
- Signed a strategic partnership with the Illinois Manufacturing Excellent Center (IMEC)
- 2,100% increase in unique attendees at IMA programs
- 800% increase in program revenue

## PRESENCE:

- Launched Makers Madness to determine *The Coolest Thing Made in IL*
- Initiated the first Makers on the Move statewide bus tour to showcase manufacturing
- Developed a new “Made in Illinois” poster series highlighting Illinois products
- Exponentially grew our presence on social media to tell the IMA story
- Created a new IMA brand representing modern manufacturing
- Expanded our Women in Manufacturing Group
- New June Safety Series, Executive Forum, and CFO Roundtable
- Developed an HR Lunch & Learn Series



## ADVOCACY:

- Wrote the “essential manufacturing” language in the pandemic shutdown Executive Orders
- The IMA Education Foundation leads workforce development efforts
- Initiated new law requiring Career & Tech Education in all high schools in 2025
- Average of 7,281 attendees at IMA programs
- Championed two new world-class Manufacturing Academies
- 5-year extension of the Research & Development Tax Credit
- Negotiated \$4 billion in federal ARPA dollars to eliminate Unemployment Insurance debt
- Quadrupled funds in the Manufacturers Political Action Committee
- Launched new Washington D.C. Fly-In

This year, as we celebrate our 130th anniversary, the Illinois Manufacturers' Association is the strongest and most effective business organization in Illinois. It's been humbling to be honored by ASAE as “One of 100 Associations Saving the World” and by COSMA with their 2022 Leadership Award as the inaugural winner of the best manufacturing association in the nation. The awards are nice recognition by our peers, but we don't do this work for awards. I'm proud that our entire team – from the IMA Board and engaged companies to the amazing IMA staff – is singularly focused on improving the business climate for manufacturers while showcasing amazing companies and careers.

This spring, you will receive a survey asking for your opinion about the IMA along with our programs and offerings. I hope you'll take a few minutes to complete it so we can build upon VISION 2022 and plan for the coming years. Thank you for your investment and participation in the IMA. Please mark your calendars for Friday, December 8, and plan to join us for a very special 130th Annual Luncheon. ♦

## **Moving Makers Forward: A Manufacturing Workforce Solutions Summit**

**Wednesday, June 7, 2023**

*College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn*

Registration: 7:00 AM

Program: 8:00 AM

Networking Lunch: 12:00 PM

Regional Breakouts: 1:00 PM

## **MPAC Golf Outing**

**Tuesday, August 8, 2023**

*Klein Creek Golf Club in Winfield*

Registration: 7:00 AM

Continental Breakfast: 8:00 AM

Shotgun Start: 9:00 AM

Lunch: 1:00 PM

*For sponsorship opportunities please contact  
Donovan Griffith at [dgriffith@ima-net.org](mailto:dgriffith@ima-net.org)*

## **DC Fly-In**

**Tuesday, September 19, 2023 through Wednesday, September 20, 2023**

*Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill*

*For sponsorship opportunities please contact  
Christine Sisk at [csisk@ima-net.org](mailto:csisk@ima-net.org)*

## **Makers on the Move Bus Tour**

**Kick Off: Friday, October 6, 2023**

**Finale: Friday, October 13, 2023**

*For sponsorship opportunities, or if you would like to be considered  
for a stop, please contact Sarah Hartwick at [shartwick@ima-net.org](mailto:shartwick@ima-net.org)*

## **Annual Lunch**

**Friday, December 8, 2023**

*Sheraton Grand Chicago*

Registration: 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Networking Reception and Exhibits: 10:30 AM – 11:45 AM

Lunch Program: 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

*For sponsorship opportunities please contact  
Christine Sisk at [csisk@ima-net.org](mailto:csisk@ima-net.org)*

# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: PREPARING FOR IEPA OR USEPA INSPECTION



**E**nvironmental justice (EJ) has arrived as a focal point for inspection and enforcement from State and Federal environmental agencies. What began in 1964 in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act has become integrated in the Illinois EPA initiated policy-making efforts to conform to executive orders and federal directives. These policy efforts serve to establish definitions and consider EJ in permitting and inspections.

The Illinois EPA has prepared an EJ community map, available online. This tool can be used to verify where a facility

sits in relationship to the EJ mapped areas. The Illinois EPA has already increased focus and enforcement pressure in EJ areas.

In the event a company has multiple locations and a facility within an EJ community, it is important to understand that deficiencies noted during an inspection can be a catalyst for additional inspection among non-EJ located facilities. Manufacturers in EJ areas can prepare for regulatory review and inspection by conducting internal or external audits of key environmental permits and plans to

evaluate compliance with state and local regulations.

Does the facility have a plan when the inspection occurs? Planning for an inspection is an important component of making sure it goes well. In the event of an inspection, a few key components are important:

- Is there a communication plan to inform the facility's EHS lead, and other leadership?
- Is there a safety orientation

plan for the inspector?

- Are permits and inspection records well organized and accessible?

Creating a plan and conducting an internal or external audit will help prepare the facility for an inspection by a regulatory agency. Being well-prepared for an inspection not only save time and expense, it will support the company's relationship with the regulatory agency and promote better outcomes and reduced risk of enforcement actions.

A few of these key environmental permits and plans are listed below with prompts to direct facility leadership in conducting internal audits. Please note that the listed prompts are not a comprehensive checklist for each permit and plan, rather a focused list based on recent Illinois EPA enforcement:

### Air Permitting

1. Is the permit current and does it properly describe processes and emissions?
2. Are required periodic inspections completed?
3. If stack testing is required, have tests been completed on the required schedule?
4. Are air pollution control devices maintained in accordance with manufacturer specifications?
5. Have operations been added to or changed in a way that may impact permit conditions?
6. Have reports, if required, been submitted to the regulating authority as required by permit or regulation?
7. Are air records maintained on site for 5 years?

### Waste Management

1. Have waste determinations been completed for industrial waste streams generated at the facility?
2. Are hazardous wastes managed

on site according to applicable regulations for the facility's generator status?

3. Are wastes shipped to a licensed disposal facility?
4. Have annual reports, if required, been submitted to the IEPA?
5. Are affected employees trained on proper waste management?
6. Does the facility have appropriate emergency procedures or contingency plans in place?
7. Are records related to hazardous waste maintained for three years?

### National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

1. Is the Notice of Intent (NOI) submitted, if required?
2. Is a hard copy of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) onsite?
3. Is the permit current, and appropriate (general vs. individual)?
4. Are quarterly / annual inspections completed?
5. Are the sampling requirements completed, if required?
6. Are staff contacts up-to-date?
7. Does the site map reflect current conditions?
8. Are annual training logs up-to-date?

### Spill Prevention, Controls, and Countermeasures (SPCC) Plan

1. Is a hard copy of the SPCC Plan onsite?
2. Is site-wide oil storage capacity up-to-date?
3. Are oil storage containers labeled properly?
4. Is secondary containment provided for required sources?
5. Are periodic inspections of tanks, drums, and totes completed?
6. Are annual inspections of tanks completed?
7. Are tank integrity tests completed in accordance with STI or API re-

quirements, if applicable?

8. Are staff contacts up-to-date?
9. Does the site map reflect current conditions?
10. Are annual training logs up-to-date?

### Tier 2 Reporting

1. Are Tier 2 reports submitted timely (i.e., before March 1)?
2. Are new chemicals reported as 311 Reports within 3 months of exceeding their reporting threshold?
3. Has the facility filed the required 302 Report for extremely hazardous substances (EHS) that exceed their threshold planning quantity (TPQ)?
4. Are reports submitted to the Local Emergency Planning Commission?
5. Are reports submitted to the Local Fire Department?
6. Does the site map reflect current conditions?
7. Are SDS sheets up-to-date and consistent with chemicals used?

### Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) Reporting

1. Are TRI calculations completed timely (i.e., before July 1)?
2. Are Form R or Form A reports timely (i.e., before July 1 for chemicals exceeding reporting thresholds)?
3. Are TRI records retained on site for a minimum of 3 years?

### Environmental Justice Status Update:

In Illinois, EJ areas are derived from US Census Block Groups where the population consists of a substantial amount of minorities and/or the area is heavily populated by persons and families living below the poverty line. The Illinois EPA prepared a mapping tool to identify EJ areas throughout the state, found here [Illinois EPA EJ Start \(arcgis.com\)](https://www.illinois.gov/ej).◆

# FROM SYMPATHY TO STRATEGY: ELEVATING THE PARADIGM FOR NEURODIVERSE EMPLOYMENT

STANNUM CORE SOLUTIONS

If one were to walk the production floor of an American manufacturer in the early 1940's, they would see sights previously unseen - a diverse workforce of 30-65% female employees. Weapons, munitions, and canned foods dominated production lines as America was working overtime to produce both for its domestic population and for the thousands of soldiers overseas. These times were labeled "unprecedented" for their day. While there was momentum growing in the women's labor movement, the trajectory of American labor was catapulted forward through these challenging times, which looked similar to the ones we are all experiencing today.

Pandemic, social change, The Great Resignation, quiet quitting, inflation, job growth, supply chains, DEIB, and an aging workforce are just a few of the obstacles that today's manufacturing employers face. Though they may sound like the lyrics to a modern-day reimagining of "We Didn't Start the Fire", these obstacles paint a challenging reality. We live in a brand-new world, and with it comes a brand-new way of looking at labor and employment. Much like how America's female workforce was tasked to step up for our country during WWII, today's autistic job seekers are ready to answer the call to action and join in the ranks for the modern employer.

Sustainable success, both for the employer and autistic employee, requires engaged leadership, a foundation of consistency in expectations, and the matching of skill sets between jobs and neurodiverse talent. Though many employers deploy sympathetic hiring initiatives for neurodiverse staffing, few have experienced the magnitudes of impact neurodiverse employees can make. This is why the most successful employers are those that implement a long-term strategy that is mutually beneficial to their organization and the neurodivergent employee.

## Traditional Disability Hiring Does Not Meet the Needs of the Employer

Disability hiring is not new. In early neurodiverse staffing models, adults

who were deemed "job ready" by their state counselor were able to receive sub-minimum wage income through piecemeal work, sheltered workshops, or enclave-style employment. This model has been used by sympathetic companies that are interested in doing the right thing, but these attempts are often unfruitful as employers are left without guidance on how to integrate neurodiverse employees into their operations.

Recently, nonprofit and government organizations have taken interest in placing neurodivergent candidates in competitive, integrated employment. The integrated employment approach proves to be a more financially and personally fulfilling track for neurodivergent employees, but often the business case continues to be lost. Tax incentives, marketing through community service, and a positive company culture are benefits available through an integrated model; but the focus largely remains on imploring companies to "do the right thing" rather than facilitate holistic business strategy through skill-matching and natural support.

## Employment Rates in the Autism Community

Autistic adults currently make up 2.1% of the American population, over 80% of whom are unemployed or underemployed. In other words, roughly 3.5 million Americans are not currently reaching their employment potential. This single demographic could satisfy over a third of the 11 million job openings reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics at the end of 2022. With heightened awareness around autism, a focus on ending stigmatization, and advances in medical diagnostics; this trend will continue upward as the CDC cites Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnoses to be increasing more rapidly than any other developmental disability.

Microsoft, Ford, Google, and many of America's top employers are fascinated by the potential of a neurodiverse workforce. Specifically, these companies are interested in the unique skills and attributes that autistic employees may possess, in-

cluding pattern recognition, technological knowledge, an affinity for numbers, attention-to-detail, a keen ability to focus for long periods of time, and a deep sense of loyalty; but, while many autistic job seekers possess these skills, only a small percentage are qualified for highly sophisticated positions as engineers, data analysts, or software developers. What about the rest of the over 3 million Americans looking to make an impact?

## Companies Like Gilster-Mary Lee are Paving the Way

Tom Welge is the President of Gilster-Mary Lee Corporation (GML) in Chester, IL. As a private label food manufacturer that has been in business for over a century, Gilster-Mary Lee was amongst the employers to have recruited the Rosie the Riveters of the 1940s.

No stranger to the ebbs and flows of the labor market, GML launched their neurodiverse hiring initiative in 2020. When asked why Gilster-Mary Lee decided to recruit a neurodiverse workforce, Tom said, "We had a need for dependable, entry level employees across our business. Knowing that we would have to deploy a variety of different initiatives to try and address, we became aware of the work IMEC and its partners were doing around employment of neurodiverse individuals in manufacturing environments." The need for dependable employees is universal. What the leadership at GML may not have expected, however, were the remarkable ways in which a neurodiverse workforce would serve the business. "It has been a tremendous positive story within our company and communities where we operate. The team is very productive and committed to their jobs. Other employees want to work with them because they know they will get the job done."

The neurodiverse employees at G-ML have learned skills that will stay with them throughout their careers. They have developed communication skills, worked a variety of jobs, gained independent living skills, and are earning as much money as their neurotypical colleagues. This is what true inclusion



looks like and is quite different from the sub-minimum wage sheltered workshop or enclave models that are still widely used today.

Walking the floor of the Gilster-Mare Lee pasta plant, one would be unable to differentiate an autistic worker from the rest of the team. They've made an impact on the business, provided a competitive edge in the labor market, and given GML the reputation of being a destination employer for autistic job seekers.

### **The "Secret Sauce" is Matching Skill Sets**

Successfully hiring and retaining autistic talent requires a dedication to understanding the candidates and providing them with an environment in which they can thrive. Gus Bello is the Director of Human Resources at Magnetic Inspection Laboratory, Inc. (MIL) in Elk Grove Village, IL. In 2022, Gus took on the role as champion of MIL's neurodiverse hiring initiative "As many other organizations struggled to find qualified candidates to fill their positions, MIL decided to tap into every source possible to find the right candidate for the right seat... as we learn the possibilities and benefits for both parties, MIL decided to launch this pilot program and incorporate a neurodiverse workforce. Today, we are proud to announce that we have incorporated a neurodiverse workforce into our production processes and are very excited of the results."

These results are impressive but cannot be achieved overnight. It takes patience, understanding, and teamwork to begin fully integrating this workforce into a business' process. Gus added "the neurodiverse workforce has added value to the MIL culture by creating a safe and unified team environment; coworkers and colleagues have come together not only to help the neurodiverse workforce adapt to the production floor but to keep each other safe. This workforce has contributed by processing specific job orders and meeting our production goals."

Once a foundation of understanding and acceptance is prepared, then the

focus shifts to matching skill sets. Gus states in closing, "My advice to other employers is to learn as much as possible about the neurodiverse workforce and how this may be beneficial to both parties; understand the capabilities of this workforce and match available jobs to their strengths; set them up for success and not failure." Creating an integrated, neurodiverse workforce has positive ripple effects across a company's process, culture, and bottom line.

Nearly 3 years after launching GML's neurodiverse hiring initiative, Tom Welge continues to see the major benefits. Tom states, "Enter into this process knowing that it is not fast, and it will take training (more so of your staff, not so much the neurodiverse employee), but the potential rewards are big... Start small, but don't underestimate the potential of these employees in your business."

### **We Are Living in Precedented Times**

From the establishment of labor laws and safety standards, through war and depression, the American workforce is continuously evolving to meet the challenges of "unprecedented times." With the marching forward of time, technology, and social progress come new demographics of Americans who are tasked to answer the call to action.

Much like the women's labor movement of the 1940's, a growing movement of autistic professionals are ready to jump start their careers while guiding America to a path of post-pandemic recovery. Necessity, often, is that which catalyzes change. Employers that are eager and willing to support these professionals will have a competitive edge into the future. Though we may never know who "started the fire," a dedicated autistic workforce is standing at the ready with a cold bucket of water ready to do their part. ♦

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# RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS UNDER SIEGE

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**R**estrictive covenants, non-competes and non-solicits have been under siege throughout the United States. Historically, this area of employment law has generally been dictated by court decisions. Some states such as California, North Dakota, and Oklahoma have laws that ban non-competes completely, unless the covenant falls within a narrow exception. More recently, states have passed laws, not banning, but restricting such covenants. Such states include Massachusetts and Colorado.

Illinois joined this trend with a law effective January 1, 2023, called the Freedom to Work Act. In Illinois, a non-compete is only enforceable if the employee makes at least \$75,000 annually. A non-solicit of employees or customers is only enforceable if the employee earns at least \$45,000 annually. These threshold amounts will increase over time. This law has many nuances and Illinois employers are encouraged to review and update such agreements.

The federal government recently

weighed in on this issue. On July 9, 2021, President Biden issued an executive order requesting that the Federal Trade Commission (“FTC”) consider banning or limiting non-compete agreements. The FTC issued its proposed rule on January 5, 2023. The FTC is the federal agency designated to protect the public from deceptive or unfair business practices and from unfair methods of competition through law enforcement, advocacy, research, and education. The FTC defines unfair acts as instances that may cause or are likely to cause substantial injury to consumers. Specifically, the proposed rule deems non-compete agreements as harmful to workers seeking better employment opportunities and preventing employers from recruiting top tier talent.

### The FTC Proposed Rule

The Rule as proposed states, “it is an unfair method of competition for an employer to enter into or attempt to enter into a non-compete clause with a worker; maintain with a worker a non-compete

clause; or represent to a worker that the worker is subject to a non-compete clause where the employer has no good faith basis to believe that the worker is subject to an enforceable non-compete clause<sup>1</sup>.” Other rule components include:

- The Proposed Rule defines non-competes as “contractual terms between an employee and a worker that prevent the worker from seeking or accepting employment with a person, or operating a business, after the conclusion of the worker’s employment or employer.”
- The terms worker includes a person who works for an employer, regardless if the individual is paid or unpaid. Surprisingly, worker also includes independent contractors
- Contractual terms would include overly broad provisions written in a manner that inadvertently results in a non-compete provision.
- The rule will supersede any state statute or regulation inconsistent with the rule.

- Non-compete agreements that existed prior to the rule's implementation date must be rescinded and employers must send notices to former employees stating the worker's non-compete is no longer in effect and can no longer be enforced.

- There is one exception: non-compete provisions included in the sale of business entities, including disposing of one's ownership interest, selling a substantial or entire business's operating assets, and individuals who are substantial owners or partners of business at the time the non-compete provision was entered into.

The Biden administration perceives non-competes as an unfair limitation on workers' ability to diversify their work experience and mobility to engage with various employers. Further, the Biden administration believes that non-competes negatively influence the competition in corporate America, driving up prices for consumers; reduces economic growth and innovation; and negatively impacts business development.<sup>2</sup> If passed, this ban is expected to impact over 30 million workers.<sup>3</sup>

There are significant flaws in the FTC's approach. The FTC seems to overlook the protections and advantages non-competes can offer both employees and employers. Some non-compete agreements protect employers from loss when key employees voluntarily separate from the employer<sup>4</sup>. They also protect confidential information from walking out the door and going to a competitor. One commissioner stated that "the proposed Non-Compete Clause Rule represents a radical departure from hundreds of years of legal precedent that employs a fact-specific inquiry into whether a non-compete clause is unreasonable in duration and scope, given the business justification for the restriction. The Commission undertakes this radical departure despite what appears at this time to be a lack of clear evidence to support the proposed rule."

Historically, the FTC has not utilized its authority to regulate companies contracting with individuals to protect its compa-

ny secrets. The proposed rule seeks to eliminate non-compete provisions completely, if passed, companies will be required to rescind active agreements and notify individuals. However, the proposed rule does not have an impact on non-solicitation agreements (provisions prohibiting any contact, solicit, sell to clients, customers, prospects); non-recruitment provisions (prohibiting recruitment of personnel); or confidentiality provisions (prohibiting the disclosure of valuable information).

It seems as though the model adopted by Illinois and some other states strike a proper balance. Limiting the use of restrictive covenants to more highly compensated individuals or those with confidential knowledge makes sense. But, to throw them out completely will harm

employers to a significant degree.

The use of non-competes are still legal, for now. But employers should take precautions in anticipation of a rule restricting their use partly or completely. First, inventory active provisions and ensure you have updated contact information for those individuals; if the rule is passed, employers have 120 calendar days to send notice that provisions will be rescinded. Second, obtain advice on how to draft said provisions moving forward. And lastly, participate in the comment period. It is an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed ban and suggest alternatives for consideration. The FTC will review the comments and may make changes, in a final rule, based on the comments and on the FTC's further analysis of this issue.◆

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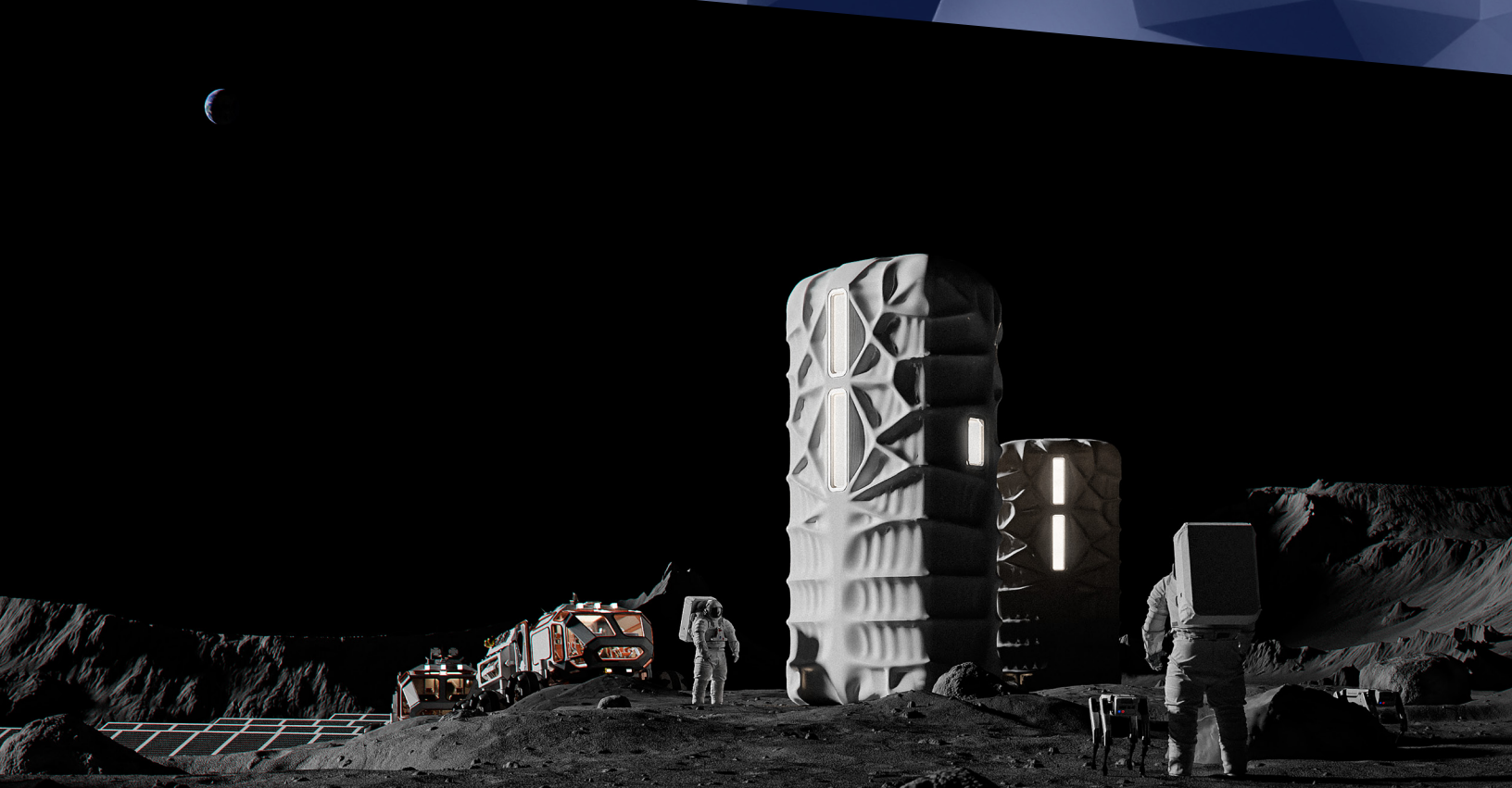


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## 2023 MAKERS MADNESS: “THE COOLEST THING MADE IN ILLINOIS” ROSENBERG MOON HABITAT

This year’s Makers Madness contest – the IMA’s fourth annual online competition to name “The Coolest Thing Made in Illinois” – began accepting nominations on February 2 for any product manufactured in Illinois. Hosted by the Illinois Manufacturers’ Association and sponsored by Comcast Business, the bracket-style competition celebrates the incredible work of manufacturers across Illinois. Manufacturers have long served as the backbone of our state’s economy and produce everything from nutritious food and snacks to life-saving vaccines and medical treatments. Manufacturers also make electric vehicles, sporting equipment and structural products like steel, rebar, and motors, as well as chemicals, high-tech gadgets used for national defense, and energy to power homes and businesses. A recent study found the total economic impact of manufacturing in Illinois is estimated to be between \$580 billion and \$611 billion every year – the largest share of any industry to the state’s Gross Domestic Product.

Illinoisans showed up to recognize just this, with almost 250 unique nominations received from a variety of industries and every corner of Illinois. Voting opened online once again at MakersMadnessIL.com. For the opening round, lasting more than 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 top four contestants. In the final round, these Top 4 products competed against each other, with the winner earning the title of “The Coolest Thing Made in Illinois.”

In the end, after more than 300,000 votes were cast, Ingersoll

Machine Tools’ Rosenberg Moon Habitat emerged as the winner, crowned as The Coolest Thing Made in Illinois by Gov. JB Pritzker on Wednesday, March 29, 2023, during a ceremony at the Governor’s Mansion in Springfield. Manufactured in Rockford by Ingersoll Machine Tools in collaboration with the Institut auf dem Rosenberg of Switzerland, the habitat is a 3D printed polymer structure designed to house humans on the moon. Built to house a crew of two people, the habitat is the world’s tallest single-piece 3D printed polymer structure, with a height of 23 feet but a thickness of only 5 millimeters.



“Ingersoll is humbled by this recognition and proud to be in the company of these amazing manufacturing organizations. The Rosenberg Space Habitat is a current concept for humankind’s first lunar colony and was printed on the large, Ingersoll Master Print 3X platform. Our mission of advancing the possibilities of manufacturing and human exploration is a challenge we readily accept,” said Jeff Ahrstrom, CEO of Ingersoll



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BUSINESS**

Machine Tools. “Our 131-year history in Rockford demonstrates that the manufacturing challenges of today are the standards of tomorrow; Ingersoll will be there to meet those challenges and move American manufacturing forward. Thank you to our 200+ person team of machine tool professionals – you conceive, develop, and realize the challenging solutions manufacturers demand in space, air, land and sea. The future of Illinois manufacturing is bright and the possibilities for Illinois manufacturers even brighter.”

“Congratulations to the Rosenberg Moon Habitat made by Ingersoll Machine Tools for being named the 2023 Coolest Thing Made in Illinois. The habitat represents the very best of our state’s manufacturing industry, where creativity and determination turn dreams into reality— including living on the moon,” said Mark Denzler, President and CEO of the Illinois Manufacturers’ Association. “We are proud of the wide variety of products featured throughout this year’s competition, and hope this contest shines a light on the important work taking place on factory floors across Illinois every day.”

“Illinois is a state built around innovation— from the Ferris Wheel to the dishwasher to the zipper. The best of that legacy continues to shine through with Makers Madness and the Rosenberg Moon Habitat by Ingersoll Machine Tools,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “This team quite literally reached for the stars and imagined a future of space travel and habitation that inspires us all. To them and to all the participants, congratulations, and thank you for all you do to make Illinois a hub of innovation.”

Other finalists for the title included the Drug Terminator manufactured by Elastec in Carmi; a portable drug incinerator designed to help healthcare officials and law enforcement safely destroy prescription drugs or confiscated narcotics; 17th Street Barbecue Sauces produced by 17th Street Barbecue in Murphysboro, which come in various flavors and are made for use on ribs, chicken pulled pork and much more; and the 77GHz Radar for Driver’s Assistance and Automated Driving made by Hella Electronics Corp in Flora, a compact sensor to assist drivers and improve road safety by giving drivers early warning of dangerous situations.

“Comcast Business congratulates the Rosenberg Moon Habitat for being named The Coolest Thing Made in Illinois

2023. This year’s contest was out of this world,” said Sean McCarthy, Comcast’s Regional Vice President of Business Development and Strategic Initiatives. “It was a star-studded push to the end, and we congratulate every maker of all the awesome products manufactured here in Illinois that made it to the finals. You’ve made the State of Illinois proud.”

Previous contest winners include Rivian’s all-electric R1T truck made in Normal, the first all-electric truck in production featuring four motors, with one powering each wheel; the Self-Regulating Traffic Signal Heater by Termico Technologies in Elk Grove Village, which uses conductive particles to heat traffic signals so they remain free of ice and snow and traffic can safely navigate our roadways; and the 797F Mining Truck manufactured by Caterpillar, Inc. in Decatur, the world’s largest mechanical truck. Additional information about the contest can be found at [www.makersmadnessil.com](http://www.makersmadnessil.com).

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.

This year’s top 16 finalist products included:

- 17th Street Barbecue Sauces (17th St. BBQ, Murphysboro)
- 32 Gallon Trash Can and Lid (The Libman Company, Arcola)
- 77GHz Radar for Driver’s Assistance and Automated Driving (Hella Electronics Corp, Flora)
- Accuchiller NQ Series Brewery & Distillery Glycol Chiller (Thermal Care, Niles)
- Astro Physics Telescopes (Astro Physics Inc, Machesney Park)
- Automotive Panoramic Sunroofs (AISIN Mfg. Illinois, Marion)
- Bison PowerSTAR Coffee Roasting Gearmotor (Bison Gear & Engineering Corp, St. Charles)
- Brew Cave (U.S. Cooler Co Inc, Quincy)
- Cook Beacon Tip 5.0 Fr Angiographic Catheter (Cook Medical, Canton)
- Drug Terminator (Elastec, Carmi)
- Hummer EV Headlights (North American Lighting, Salem)
- JAS Knee (Joint Active Systems Inc, Effingham)
- Jessup Safety Track Recon (Jessup Manufacturing, McHenry)
- Magna-Lock USA Magna-Vise (Obsidian Manufacturing Industries, Inc., Rockford)
- Rapid Freeze 51-RL Ice Flaker (Howe Corporation, Chicago)
- Rosenberg Moon Habitat (Ingersoll Machine Tools, Inc., Rockford)

This year’s Top 4 finalist competed for the championship in a final, weeklong contest:

- 17th Street Barbecue Sauces by 17th Street Barbecue
- 77GHz Radar for Driver’s Assistance and Automated Driving by Hella Electronics
- Drug Terminator by Elastec
- Rosenberg Moon Habitat by Ingersoll Machine Tools, Inc.

Makers Madness is an annual competition hosted early each year by the Illinois Manufacturers’ Association. The 2024 contest will open for nominations early next year at [www.MakersMadnessIL.com](http://www.MakersMadnessIL.com).◆


# WHAT DOES THE INFLATION REDUCTION ACT REVISION MEAN FOR MY BUSINESS?

CONSTELLATION

President Joe Biden signed the \$369 billion Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) on August 16, 2022, to minimize inflation and control healthcare costs while spurring clean energy development. IRC Section 45W of the IRA adds a tax credit for qualifying electric vehicles purchased before January 1, 2033. Under this provision, customers could be eligible for up to \$7500 in tax credits when certain requirements are met. The primary requirement is that critical battery materials are domestically sourced and that a certain percentage of the battery be manufactured in the United States. There are other requirements that must be met in order to receive tax credits. For example, the tax credit is limited to those taxpayers earning less than \$300,000 for joint filers, \$225,000 for a head of household, and \$150,000 for a single filer. In addition, tax credits are limited to electric vehicles with a MSRP of \$55,000 or less and \$80,000 for vans, SUVs, and trucks. The Treasury Department is responsible for developing the rules governing implementation of the tax credits.

However, in late December 2022, the Biden administration delayed proposing rules for new tax incentives for electric vehicles, following strong pushback from European and Asian allies that the subsidy program discriminated against their companies. As a result, elements of the regulations still need defining, including exactly which countries have free-trade agreements with the U.S. In addition, the U.S. and EU have set up a task force that will work toward resolving a dispute over EV battery sourcing requirements that the EU claims discriminate against foreign manufacturers.

The Treasury Department has stated that, as a result of the delay, the critical mineral and battery sourcing requirements do not yet apply and may not be resolved until March 2023. Any taxpayer that would otherwise qualify under the IRA will be eligible for the tax credit without the need for complying with the battery-sourcing requirement. In other words, the taxpayer will receive the full tax credit regardless of where the battery materials were sourced. However, vehicles ordered or purchased prior to, but placed in service after Treasury and the IRS issue this proposed March 2023 guidance, will be subject to the critical mineral and battery component requirements. Constellation will continue to inform you of the latest updates to the implementation of the IRA and help you create and implement a sustainability plan for your company.



Thinking about  
your business is  
a big part of ours.

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# HOW MANUFACTURERS CAN ADAPT TO WORKFORCE CHALLENGES WITH MARKETING AUTOMATION

SIMPLE MACHINES MARKETING



If there had been any notions that the workforce challenges magnified by the COVID-19 pandemic would be short-lived, those notions have been put to rest.

In fact, worker absences have been trending up even well after the initial waves subsided. In 2022, workers experienced the highest number of sickness-related absences since the beginning of the pandemic and the most since 1976 when record-keeping began. According to the US Bureau of Labor statistics, about 1.5 million Americans missed work in December 2022 because of sickness. The last time that number was under a million was November 2019.

The spikes and drops in absenteeism tend to correlate with the patterns and spread of COVID, and long COVID has proven to be especially problematic. In a study by New York's largest workers' compensation insurer, 71% of long COVID patients were still unable to work completely six months after infection. As precautions at schools have relaxed and childhood infections have surged, the US saw the highest numbers of childcare-related absences in late 2022. On top of that, mental and emotional fatigue has contributed to the shortages – with one million Americans missing work each day because of stress alone, according to data from Zippia.

## Assessing the Impact on Accuracy and Efficiency

Of course, those missed days add up. According to CDC reports, productivity losses linked to absenteeism cost employers \$225.8 billion annually in the United States

alone. Beyond the more tangible costs of lost productivity, paid leave and workers' compensation, workforce absences also present risks that are harder to quantify but no less impactful to a business's bottom line.

Let's consider sales and marketing teams. When employees are out sick or are present but not working at full capacity due to illness or other reasons, their coworkers are expected to pick up the slack. Perhaps someone who's typically in charge of email and content marketing is suddenly tasked with managing paid advertising, SEO and website management on top of their regular duties. Not only are they taking on responsibilities they may have less expertise in, but they also likely feel they need to rush just to keep up, increasing stress and burnout, and ultimately leading to a higher likelihood of costly mistakes, dissatisfaction and even turnover.

## Adapting With Sales and Marketing Automation

To confront the challenge of having short-staffed front office teams, manufacturers can benefit by onboarding tools that enable more productivity with fewer man-hours. In particular, adopting an intuitive, user-friendly CRM platform like HubSpot that enables automation throughout your sales, marketing and customer success processes not only helps your business run more efficiently every day, but it also helps staff maintain productivity, accuracy and performance even when key players are out of the office.

For example, sales representatives can streamline mundane tasks, better priori-

tize leads, automate follow-ups, and spend more time closing high value deals. Not only do these tools help the sales team do more with less resources, but they can also shorten the sales cycle and improve conversion rates – leading to higher commissions, increased job satisfaction and reduced turnover.

Marketing and customer success professionals can use similar methods to increase productivity when handling their inbound, outbound, and service endeavors. From reducing the burden of scheduling and publishing content to staying on track with campaigns, tasks, and tickets, automation is key to helping these front office teams keep pace and deliver quality work in the face of increased demands.

## Confronting Workforce Challenges Today and Preparing for Tomorrow

Whether your company has already experienced challenges related to absences and sickness, you're dealing with it now, or you've been fortunate enough to avoid it in recent years, implementing sales and marketing automation positions manufacturers well – both in good times and bad. When your team is in full-force, this technology helps you scale and accelerate sales in ways not possible with manual processes. When the next wave hits or the labor market constricts in ways that lead to limited resources, it provides the tools to maintain and “keep the lights on” until you're fully staffed again.

Ultimately, it's an investment in making your business better equipped for whatever comes next. ♦

# MANUFACTURER OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE AMENDED ONE DAY REST IN SEVEN ACT

GREENSFELDER, HEMKER &amp; GALE, P.C.



State of Illinois  
Department of Labor

## Your Rights Under Illinois Employment Laws

### Wage Increases Schedule

Effective Jan. 1, 2023 . . . . .	\$13.00
Effective Jan. 1, 2024 . . . . .	\$14.00
Effective Jan. 1, 2025 . . . . .	\$15.00

### Minimum Wage \$13.00 per hour (Effective Jan. 1, 2023) and Overtime Hotline: 1-800-478-3998

- **Coverage:** Applies to employers with 4 or more employees. Domestic workers are covered even if the employer only has 1 worker. Certain workers are not covered by the Minimum Wage Law and some workers may be paid less than the minimum wage under limited conditions. For more information, visit our website. (See wage increases schedule above.)
- **Tipped Employees:** Must be paid at least 60% of the applicable minimum wage. If an employee's tips combined with the wages from the employer do not equal the minimum wage, the employer must make up the difference.
- **Overtime:** Most hourly employees and some salaried employees are covered by the overtime law and must be compensated at time and one-half of their regular pay for hours worked over 40 in a workweek.

### Unpaid Wages Hotline: 1-312-793-2808 Wage Payment and Collection Act

- Employees must receive their final compensation, including earned wages, vacation pay, commissions and bonuses on their next regularly scheduled payday.
- Unauthorized deductions from paychecks are not allowed except as specified by law.
- Employers must reimburse employees for all necessary expenditures or losses incurred by an employee during the scope of employment and related to services performed for the employer. Employee must submit reimbursement request within 30 calendar days unless an employer policy allows for additional time to submit.

### Meal and Rest Periods Hotline: 1-312-793-2804 One Day Rest in Seven Act

- Provides employees with 24 consecutive hours of rest within every seven (7) consecutive day period.
- Employers may obtain permits from the Department allowing employees to voluntarily work seven consecutive days.
- Employees working 7 ½ continuous hours must be allowed a meal period of at least 20 minutes no later than 5 hours after the start of work, and an additional 20 minutes if working a 12 hour shift or longer.
- Employees must be afforded reasonable bathroom breaks.

### Equal Pay Act Hotline: 1-866-372-4365

- Requires employers to pay equal wages to men and women doing the same or substantially similar work, unless such wage differences are based upon a seniority system, a merit system, or factors other than gender.
- Employers and employment agencies are banned from asking applicants past wage and compensation histories.
- Employees may disclose or discuss their own salaries, benefits, and other compensation with their co-workers and colleagues.
- Employers are not allowed to pay less to African American employees versus a non-African American employees.
- Certain employees at large businesses may request wage/salary history for their job title from IDOL.

### Violent Crime Victims' Leave Hotline: 1-866-372-4365

Provides employees who are victims of domestic, gender, or sexual violence, or other crimes of violence, or who have family members who are victims with up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a 12-month period.

### Child Labor Hotline: 1-800-645-5784 Workers under Age 16

- Children under the age of 14 may not work in most jobs, except under limited conditions.
- 14 and 15-year-olds may work if the following requirements are met:
  - Employment certificates have been issued by the school district and filed with the Department of Labor confirming that a minor is old enough to work, physically capable to perform the job, and that the job will not interfere with the minor's education;
  - The work is not deemed a hazardous occupation (a full listing can be found on our website);
  - Work is limited to 3 hours per day on school days, 8 hours per day on non-school days and no more than 6 days or 48 hours per week;
  - Work is performed only between the hours of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. during the school year (7 a.m. to 9 p.m. June through September); and
  - A 30-minute meal period is provided no later than the fifth hour of work.

This is a summary of laws that satisfies Illinois Department of Labor posting requirements. For a complete text of the laws, visit our website at:

[www.labor.illinois.gov](http://www.labor.illinois.gov)

For more information or to file a complaint, contact us at: 524 South 2nd St, Suite 400, Springfield, IL 62701 • Springfield 217-782-6206  
160 N. LaSalle, St, Suite C-1300, Chicago, IL 60601 • Chicago 312-793-2800 • Marion 618-993-7090

**THIS POSTER MUST BE DISPLAYED WHERE EMPLOYEES CAN EASILY SEE IT.**

On January 1, 2023, amendments to the One Day Rest in Seven Act ("ODRISA") took effect. These changes impact all Illinois manufacturers and are set forth below.

### New Rest Days

Prior to January 1, 2023, the ODRISA required manufacturers to provide employees with at least 24 consecutive hours of rest in every "calendar week," defined as 12:01 a.m. Sunday to midnight the following Saturday.

Effective January 1, 2023, the phrase "calendar week" and its corresponding definition have been replaced with the phrase "every seven consecutive day period." The ODRISA now requires manufacturers to provide their non-exempt employees with a minimum of 24 consecutive hours of rest in every consecutive seven-day period, regardless of where these days fall within the calendar week. For example, if an employee is scheduled to be off on Tuesday and works

Wednesday through Monday, the employee must have that following Tuesday off because to work Wednesday through Tuesday is considered seven consecutive days. This is a rolling consecutive seven-day period; it does not reset after each consecutive seven-day period.

The new 24 consecutive hours of rest in every consecutive seven-day period does not apply to:

1. employees for whom work hours, day of work, and rest periods are governed by a collective bargaining agreement;
2. salaried employees who are classified (properly) as exempt (i.e., not eligible for overtime) under the Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA"); or
3. individuals employed as "supervisors" as defined in Section 2(11) of the National Labor Relations Act ("NLRA"). Section 2(11) of the NLRA defines supervisors as "Any individual having authority, in the interest of the

employer, to hire, transfer, suspend, lay off, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline other employees, or responsibly to direct them, or to adjust their grievances, or effectively to recommend such action."

What remains unchanged under the ODRISA is a manufacturer's obligation to apply for and secure a permit prior to any employee working on the seventh day. A permit is required even if the employee voluntarily chooses to work on the seventh day. Importantly, as part of the permit application, manufacturers must certify that all employees who work on the seventh day are in fact doing so voluntarily. Note, under the ODRISA, no permit is required if the employees are needed in the event of a breakdown of machinery or equipment (or any other type of emergency requiring immediate services of experienced labor to prevent injury to persons, damage to property, or suspension of necessary operation).

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## New Meal Breaks

The ODRISA requires manufacturers to provide non-exempt employees who work 7.5 continuous hours or longer with a meal period (paid or unpaid) of at least 20 minutes, no later than five hours after the start of the employee's shift. On top of this, effective January 1, 2023, manufacturers are now required to provide an additional 20-minute meal period (paid or unpaid) to employees who work a 12-hour shift or longer. Manufacturers must also provide these employees with reasonable bathroom breaks that cannot be counted toward this additional meal break. Thus, for example, for an employee who is scheduled to work from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., the manufacturer must allow the employee to take the first meal break of at least 20 minutes on or before 1 p.m. and the second meal break of at least 20 minutes before 6 p.m.

Several questions have arisen regarding the new additional 20-minute meal break requirement. First, are manufacturers required to provide the additional 20-minute meal break if the employee is scheduled to work a 12-hour shift, but does not actually work the full 12-hour shift? For example, at hour 9 of 12, the manufacturer tells the employee that he is no longer needed and can leave, and the employee does in fact leave at hour 9, prior to receiving the additional 20-minute meal period. In this scenario, the amended ODRISA does not require the manufacturer to provide the employee with the additional 20-minute meal break after hour 7.5, because the employee did not work a full 12-hour shift. The amended ODRISA instructs, "An employee who works in excess of 7 1/2 continuous hours shall be entitled to an additional 20-minute meal period for every additional 4 1/2 continuous hours worked." In the example above, the employee did not work the additional 4.5 continuous hours needed to trigger the manufacturer's obligation.

Second, are manufacturers permitted to provide the employee with two 10-minute meal breaks, in lieu of the additional 20-minute meal break? The Illinois Department of Labor ("IDOL") addressed this question in written guidance issued on January 1, 2023, stating: "If an employee voluntarily agrees to two 10-minute break intervals in lieu of the second break, the

Department would not view that as a violation. However, if an employee seeks to take the second 20-minute break all at once, the Employer must honor that request." Thus, manufacturers must first offer the employee the full additional meal break of at least 20-minutes; if the employee voluntarily requests and/or proposes to split the additional 20-minute meal break into two 10-minute meal breaks, then the manufacturer will be permitted to legally do so without violating the ODRISA. Based on the new enhanced penalties for non-compliance, manufacturers should document that they in fact offered the employee the full 20-minute additional meal break, and the employee voluntarily requested and/or proposed to split the 20-minute meal break into two 10-minute meal breaks and have the employee attest to this fact.

Third, are manufacturers required to provide the additional 20-minute meal period to salaried/exempt employees, or to employees whose hours and meal breaks are established and governed under a collective bargaining agreement? The amended ODRISA and IDOL written guidance confirm that manufacturers are not required to provide either classification of employee with the additional 20-minute meal period if that classification of employee works 12 continuous hours.

Fourth, does the amended ODRISA prohibit a manufacturer from requiring an employee to work through any required meal break or forcing an employee to take the meal break? In its FAQs, the IDOL answered as follows: "An employer may not force an employee to work through a meal break or force an employee to take a meal break ... if an employee works through a meal break, they must be paid." If an employee voluntarily chooses to work through a meal break, because of the new enhanced penalties for non-compliance, manufacturers should document this fact and have time/pay records confirming that the employee was paid for working through the meal break(s).

## New Posting Requirement

On January 1, 2023, the IDOL issued an updated "Your Rights Under Illinois Employment Laws" poster that summarizes, among other things, the ODRISA amend-

ments. A link to the poster is on the IDOL webpage, and the IDOL offers the poster in English, Spanish and Polish. The ODRISA requires manufacturers to "post and keep posted" the poster in one or more conspicuous spaces where other similar posters are customarily displayed. For employees who work remotely or travel, manufacturers are required to provide the notice via email or on a website "regularly used by the employer to communicate work-related information, that all employees are able to regularly access, freely and without interference."

## New Enhanced Penalties for Non-Compliance

Prior to January 1, 2023, if a manufacturer failed to comply with any requirements under the ODRISA, the manufacturer would be assessed a fine for each offense of not less than \$25 and not more than \$100, regardless of how many employees the manufacturer employed at the time of the offense.

Effective January 1, 2023, the amended ODRISA adds more teeth for non-compliance in the forms of enhanced fines and damages. Manufacturers with fewer than 25 employees are subject to damages payable to the employee of up to \$250 per offense, and a penalty payable to the IDOL of up to \$250 per employee, per offense. Manufacturers with 25 or more employees are subject to damages payable to the employee of up to \$500 per offense, and a penalty payable to the IDOL of up to \$500 per employee, per offense. A manufacturer's violation of the posting requirement constitutes a single offense and subjects the manufacturer to a \$250 fine. Each day a meal break is not provided to an employee, and each instance in which 24 hours off within seven consecutive days is not provided to an employee, constitute a separate offense per employee.

Manufacturers should review their meal break scheduling policies and practices to ensure they comply with the amended ODRISA. Additionally, manufacturers should adjust work and/or production schedules to ensure that employees are provided a minimum of 24 consecutive hours of rest in every consecutive seven-day period, regardless of where these days fall within the calendar week. Compliance is key now, as the new enhanced penalties can add up quickly and significantly. ♦



## INVESTING IN ILLINOIS: TCCI AND RICHLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE PAVE THE WAY

In recent years, there has been a global shift toward full electrification of the transportation industry due to rapidly rising carbon emissions. Because carbon emissions reached record highs in 2021, the need to transition has become exceedingly urgent, creating an increased demand for electric vehicles, and causing significant growth within the industry. As history has shown us, time and time again, American manufacturers are always prepared to adapt and innovate in whatever ways needed to uplift the American people and economy, most recently in the emergence from the coronavirus pandemic which helped recenter American manufacturing. The EV revolution is proliferating this recentering of American manufacturing where Illinois manufacturers are, once again, answering the call—this time with a collaborative approach. Investing in American manufacturing and widespread electrification will help alleviate supply chain issues, prevent reliance on foreign manufacturing, and strengthen our local, state, and national economy and community.

Through the strong advocacy of the IMA, Illinois has done just that. In 2021, the Illinois Legislature passed bipartisan legislation creating a new incentive package for auto manufacturers, battery manufacturers, and other companies in the auto supply chain that focus on electric vehicles, components, and supplies. Known as the Reimagining Electric Vehicles (REV) in Illinois Act, this law has helped position the State of Illinois to be more competitive as states across the country consider and offer incentives to companies in the growing electric vehicle, battery, and components market in an attempt to recruit companies to their respective states. With help from the REV in Illinois Act, CEJA (Climate & Equitable Jobs Act), and a \$20 million investment of

their own, TCCI has stepped up to answer the call to accelerate electrification by retooling their 1940s Decatur facility, transitioning from combustion to electric compressor manufacturing.

But TCCI is not the only one stepping up to answer the call—through Rebuild Illinois, the state has granted \$15.3 million to Richland Community College, and \$6 million to the City of Decatur who are working with TCCI to help build an EV Innovation Cluster in Central Illinois. The three are working side-by-side, and in collaboration with the Illinois Innovation Network to develop a new model for addressing the workforce shortage, expanding electrification in Illinois, and driving long-term economic growth through the creation of a first-of-its-kind facility that will house an EV Workforce Training Academy, a Climatic Center for Innovation and Research, and Electric Compressor Component Manufacturing all under one roof on TCCI's Decatur campus. This collaborative electrification project will revolutionize both the future of manufacturing and electrification by creating a new model to solve and prevent the workforce shortage through developing workforce programs including credentials, certifications, STEM pathways and apprenticeship programs, in result, streamlining the talent pipeline.

Both public and private sectors recognize that building an infrastructure to prepare the workforce for the next generation of clean jobs will be crucial to the success of widespread electrification and requires a collaborative approach, hence the EV Training Academy Workforce Development Partnership TCCI and Richland Community College have built. TCCI and Richland are working collaboratively with Illinois Public Higher Education Institutions to build a statewide-regional

pathway program that will provide students with an immersive learning experience and ensure that graduates have the skills and knowledge to enter the workforce or continue their education through a clear and calculated pathway. "Together we are establishing a new model for Illinois that sets the stage for how education, research, and industry work together to cohesively advance us faster, invest in our people and grow our economy," said Richland Community College President, Cris Valdez.

Richland Community College brings more than just their expertise. Richland supplies an essential component to solving the workforce shortage and accelerating electrification through their long-standing commitment to not only serving but creating a bridge for underserved, unemployed, and second chance workers through their EnRich program. This partnership will allow Richland to reach further and build on both their mission and exceptional reputation of guiding underserved individuals to opportunities to participate in high-wage, skilled work in their communities.

In collaboration with the Illinois Public Higher Education Institutions and the Illinois Innovation Network, the TCCI and Richland Community College partnership is developing a curriculum for a series of degree pathways from 2+2 to 3+1 in Advanced Manufacturing, Computer Science Engineering Software/Hardware Development, and CNC Machining. They are also establishing credentials, certifications, and apprenticeship programs as well. "We'll have 3 classrooms here at TCCI that will also open up into one large auditorium. There will be shared space in our engineering tech center, and it will all overlook and have access to our electric compressor component manufacturing lines as well as our climatic center for research," TCCI Vice President & Global Marketing Director, Kara Demirjian Huss. "So, the students will be immersed in the industry every step of the way."

The Climatic Center for Innovation and Research (CCRI) will be a state-of-the-art R+D facility for conducting research that will advance both innovation and disruptive technologies. Designed to enhance high-profile research to advance crucial developments in charging, range, emissions, and data analytics, it will be a world-class center for researchers around the globe. "With these advanced testing capabilities, we are able to

facilitate faster-to-market technology development, enhanced safety, emissions control criteria development, and other benefits that will accelerate the shift to electrification," said Demirjian Huss. "And this is not something that is just for TCCI which I think is really important. Yes, we'll be doing testing for our own products, but the facility will be open to outside industry, outside researchers, and students to all participate and be a part of."

The CCRI will offer partnership opportunities with researchers for climatic testing, key product simulations, performance testing and research, as well as system testing in the Climatic Chamber. It will also be available to rent for those with a need for its unique capabilities from manufacturers and startup companies to researchers and developers. "We have it mapped out, we have a really good strategy, we've got the universities working with us to build curriculum right now, and we hope to have a first-class in the training academy in fall of 2024," said Demirjian Huss.

Through the leadership and collaborative approach of the TCCI and Richland Community College partnership and with the support of the state of Illinois and Illinois Public Higher Education Institutions, Illinois is set to continue to outpace the national growth projection in green energy. This partnership is pioneering our education-to-industry employment pipeline in Central Illinois and establishing a model for the rest of the state to use as a blueprint to build regional pathway programs of their own. The retooled electric compressor component manufacturing facility will be the first in the US and will be critical in achieving zero emissions for last-mile delivery, class 6 and 7 heavy-duty vehicles, which account for the majority of the transportation industry's carbon emissions. TCCI's transition to electric compressor manufacturing in the Decatur facility will meet REV requirements to generate more than 50 new jobs while retaining 103 positions of its current workforce. The demo is set to begin in May 2023 with aims of the facility being completed by quarter two or quarter three of the following year. TCCI and Richland Community College are displaying the importance of what a public-private partnership can do for not only the industry but for the community and have become pillars in both the manufacturing and education communities in Illinois and beyond. ♦



# ILLINOIS' NEW PAID LEAVE MANDATE IMPACTING ALL MANUFACTURING WORKERS

AMUNDSEN DAVIS LLC

On March 13, 2023, Governor Pritzker signed into law the Paid Leave for All Workers Act (the "Act"). While the Act becomes effective on January 1, 2024, employers in the manufacturing industry should immediately evaluate the Act's impact on their operations as the law is littered with new mandates beyond paid time off. Manufacturers will need to review and consider updating many policies and procedures, including: paid leave benefits and related policies; collective bargaining agreements (if any); attendance procedures; performance evaluation forms; and disciplinary protocols.

## What Does the Act Essentially Require?

Beginning January 1, 2024, all private sector employers (and, most public sector employers) must provide all Illinois employees "up to a minimum of 40 hours" of Paid Leave during a 12-month period. Paid Leave will be paid at the employee's hourly rate equivalent (or, at least the minimum wage for those who are compensated by tips or commissions). However, the use of the leave benefit shall be for any reason. In short, employers cannot dictate how employees can utilize the leave.

The Act also allows for two methods to account for and provide the Paid Leave: (1) accrual and carry over; or (2) front loading.

Under the accrual and carryover method, employees start accruing Paid Leave on January 1, 2024, at the rate of 1 hour for every 40 hours worked (or, commencing on the date of hire for employees hired after January 1, 2024). Under this method, an employee's unused Paid Leave must be carried over to the next 12-month period. While employees can carry over Paid Leave to the next 12-month period, they are limited to actually using 40 hours per 12-month period. Additionally, the law caps accrual at 40 hours, which means employees cannot accrue any more Paid Leave once they have accrued 40 hours unless the employer chooses to allow a greater amount or employees decrease their balance by using Paid Leave time.

Under the frontloading method, employees must be advanced the minimum amount of Paid Leave they would accrue during the 12-month period and are not

allowed to carry over unused Paid Leave to the next period (full-time 40 hour/workweek receives 40 hours Paid Leave; or, part-time 20 hour/workweek receives 20 hours Paid Leave). Employers must still track the actual hours worked because if an employee would have received more Paid Leave under the accrual method, the employer must provide that additional time.

Different methods can be used for different types of employees (e.g., frontload for full-time; accrual and carryover for part-time, seasonal, and temporary).

## What Employers are Covered?

All public and private employers in Illinois are covered, except the following:

- School districts organized under the Illinois School Code.
- Park districts organized under the Illinois Park District Code.
- Employers covered by a municipal or county ordinance in effect on January 1, 2024, that requires any form of paid leave, including paid sick leave. However, if the ordinance is enacted or modified after January 1, 2024, those employers will have to comply with whichever provides greater benefits to the employee.

## What Employees are Protected?

All full-time, part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees must be provided Paid Leave, unless they fit within one of the following exceptions:

- Employees in the Construction Industry who are covered by a Collective Bargaining Agreement (a "CBA");
- Employees covered by a CBA with an employer that provides services nationally and internationally of delivery, pickup, and transportation of parcels, documents, and freight;
- Employees subject to the Federal Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act or Railway Labor Act;
- Student-employees, employed part-time and on a temporary basis by their college or university; and
- Short-term employees of an institution of higher learning employed for less than 2 consecutive quarters during a calendar year, who do not have a reasonable expect-

tation of being rehired to provide the same service in a subsequent calendar year.

There is also a limited exception for all employees covered by a CBA in effect as of January 1, 2024. Under this exception, any employee covered by an existing CBA currently in place on or before January 1, 2024, would not have any rights under the Act and the CBA does not have to be changed to comply with the Act. However, CBAs entered into after January 1, 2024, for employees not within another exception, will have to comply with the Act unless the CBA explicitly states in clear and unambiguous terms that the Act's requirements are waived. But keep in mind that an employer who has employees not covered by the Act will likely have employees who are covered.

## How Can Employees Use Paid Leave and Are There Any Restrictions?

Employees must wait 90 days before they can use Paid Leave (90 days from January 1, 2024, or date of hire if hired after January 1, 2024). Also, employees can use Paid Leave for any reason in 2-hour increments (or less if the employee's scheduled workday is less than 2 hours).

While employees can be required to provide up to 7 days' notice to use Paid Leave, if the need for leave is not foreseeable (i.e., illness or injury), then the employee is to provide notice once the employee becomes aware of the need—and when it's practical to do so.

Employees also cannot be required to disclose the reason for leave or produce documentation to support the need for the leave. Additionally, employees cannot be required to find another employee to cover their absence. That said, employers can still inquire as to the reason (just not require). Employers may also inquire as to whether the leave implicates ADA or FMLA obligations, and if so, may be able to ask for additional information and appropriate documentation under such federal law mandates.

Employees also have the ability to choose whether to use Paid Leave prior to using any other leave provided by the employer or established under Illinois law (i.e., VESSA).

## What Are the Implications of Termination, Transfers, and Rehires?

Paid Leave under the Act does not have to be paid out at termination, unlike other PTO/vacation policies which generally require accrued/earned and unused benefits to be paid out at termination under the Illinois Wage Payment and Collection Act (IWPCA). Further, if an employee is transferred (even out of state), the employee must be able to use their accrued Paid Leave. Additionally, employees rehired within 12 months of their termination must have any forfeited Paid leave reinstated and be allowed to use it immediately, without any waiting period – likely impacting temporary and seasonal employees.

## What About Current PTO/Vacation Policies?

Any employer who has a PTO/vacation policy in existence on or before January 1, 2024, that provides all employees the ability to accrue, earn and take at least 40 hours of leave per year, does not have to modify it so long as the employee can use it for any reason. In other words, so long as employers adopt paid time off policies that provide for the minimum time off as mandated by the Act and allow employees to take such time off for any reason, then Illinois employers may not have to change anything. However, in such a case, the Paid Leave is considered PTO/vacation time that must be paid out at termination under the IWPCA.

## Are There Any Record-Keeping or Posting Obligations?

Employers must keep records of employees' hours worked and Paid Leave accrued and used for 3 years, which must be provided to the Illinois Department of Labor (the "IDOL") upon request. Employees who accrue Paid Leave must be provided the amount of Paid Leave they have accrued and used upon their request – with the best practice being to provide the same to those who are fronted Paid Leave.

The IDOL will require all employers to post a formal notice. This notice will be provided by the IDOL, and it must be displayed in the workplace and included in

any employee handbook – and be in one or more other appropriate languages if a significant portion of employees are not literate in English. Employees can be fined by the IDOL for the sum of \$500 for the first violation and \$1,000 for any subsequent violation of this notice/posting requirement.

## What Are the Remedies for Violations?

The Act prohibits adverse actions against an employee for exercising their rights under the Act, opposing practices the employee believes to be a violation of the Act, or supporting others in exercising rights under the Act. Employers are also prohibited from considering the use of Paid Leave as a negative factor in any evaluation, promotion, discipline, or violation of an attendance policy (and, including no-fault attendance policies). While there is no private right of action, the IDOL will be responsible for administering and

enforcing all aspects of the Act. For violations, employees can recover actual underpayment, compensatory damages, a penalty of not less than \$500 and no more than \$1,000, equitable relief including attorneys' fees and costs, expert witness fees, and other costs. The IDOL can also impose civil penalties/fines of \$2,500 for each separate offense (that is not related to posting requirements) to be paid to the IDOL.

## Conclusion

While the Legislature may have had good intentions, the language of the Act is not as straightforward as it may appear and is drafted in a way that creates significant questions. While the January 1, 2024, effective date provides time for planning, employers should immediately begin to evaluate the impact. Further, we await formal Rulemaking by and through the IDOL. The IDOL's anticipated regulations should provide some better insight for compliance purposes. ♦



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# MANUFACTURING MILES RETURNS IN 2023

BLUECROSS AND BLUESHIELD OF ILLINOIS

## MANUFACTURING MILES



A Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company,  
an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

The Illinois Manufacturers' Association (IMA) and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) are excited to bring back Manufacturing Miles for the third year in 2023. The program was created to promote health and wellness among manufacturing workers. Last year more than 900 employees logged more than 600,000 miles, compared to 500,000 in 2021. Some participants saw the program as a way to reach personal goals, and while some lost weight, others used it to start a more active lifestyle by logging any exercise that can be measured in miles, including walking, running, biking, swimming, and even playing mini golf.

During this friendly competition, co-workers and other manufacturing teams compete against each other to win prizes -- and improve their health. In 2022, we recognized the top three individual winners and the top three company winners among small-sized manufacturers (>250 employees), medium-sized manufacturers (251-500 employees), and large-sized manufacturers (500< employees).

### 2022 Top Individual Winners

1. Rick Weaver of Novelis with 4,761.5 miles
2. Jose Vargas of Hoffer Plastics Corporation with 4,231 miles
3. Darryl Hodges of Phoenix Packaging with 4,950 miles

### 2022 Top Company Winners

Small-size manufacturers (>250 employees) – Gilster-Mary Lee with 45,676 miles

Medium-size manufacturers (251-500 employees) – Hoffer Plastics Corporation with 59,389 miles

Large-size manufacturers (500< employees) – United Scrap Metal, Inc. with 108,625 miles

### Help Yourself While Helping Your Team

The Department of Health and Human Services recommends getting at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week, such as brisk walking, biking, swimming, or mowing the lawn. That's about 30 minutes a day, five days a week. If you prefer vigorous aerobic activity such as running, tennis, or aerobic dancing, the HHS recommends 75 minutes a week. Why not log your miles in the Manufacturing Miles competition, win prizes, and help your team while you also meet the HHS recommendations?

### Your Health is the Biggest Prize

We've also picked out some exciting new prizes to motivate you to log as many miles as you can throughout the competition. We've adjusted some of the milestones you worked hard to meet last year to reflect the change in the length of the competition. Once you've logged 200 miles (width

of the state), you'll win a set of resistance bands-- great for maintaining muscle and preventing injury. Once you've logged 400 miles (length of the state), you'll win a protein shaker bottle, and once you've logged 1,000 miles, you'll win a portable speaker. Whether you do 300 miles a week – like last year's winner – or five miles a week, your health and well-being will be your greatest prize.

### Wellness Can't Wait

Manufacturing Miles provides a friendly competition that may improve your health and encourage wellness in the workplace. But your wellness can't wait for a competition. Regular care visits are very important to help you and your family stay healthy. Regular health screenings can detect problems early when chances for successful treatment are greatest. And now is the time to get caught up on annual exams and checkups, especially if you have chronic conditions such as COPD, diabetes, or high blood pressure. We want you to keep your health and wellness a top priority.

Register today for 2023 Manufacturing Miles. The competition begins tracking Manufacturing Miles from June 5 through October 15. Please note that there will be a registration deadline this year. All teams and participants must be registered on or before July 3, 2023. Enter your team's miles each week and watch the leader boards to see how your company stacks up against the rest of the state. ♦



# DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF WORKPLACE SAFETY

HARPER COLLEGE

**C**ulture within a culture? How to develop a culture of workplace safety, awareness and prevention that is effective for culturally diverse workers.

Data and statistics on workplace injuries are gathered and reviewed annually for many reasons. One of the main reasons this data is so important is because the information shows what types of injuries are most frequent. While the data helps to direct attention to the most frequent types of injuries and potential causes for these incidents, there are also data points on injury rates among different ethnicities/cultures that are important for employers to review, so they know where to place their attention when it comes to prevention strategies.

Injury rates for individuals for whom English is their second language are higher than for native English speakers. It is reasonable to assume that a language barrier is an obstacle to understanding typical safety messages and instructions. For effective prevention strategies to be developed, not only does the issue of English literacy level need to be considered, but the matter of culture needs to be considered as well.

Workplace safety is a major priority for all employers and employees as each workday begins. Safety, awareness, and prevention are discussed and considered throughout each work activity that staff begins. Whether through pre-work checklists or pre-established procedures, the processes for performing and completing a task are typically approached with a mindset that includes steps to avoid actions that could lead to an injury. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. No matter what industry or the type of task at hand, the possibility of something going wrong or a process not being followed is possible. In these instances, an injury or accident can happen.

A common approach by employers is to promote a culture of safety within the company to protect employees from injury and keep workplace safety top of mind. Take a moment to step back and imagine that you are a visitor at your place of work and list all the ways your company promotes this culture. Is it a safety poster or checklist? Is it a picture of an employee who won a monthly safety award? Could it be an active safety meeting that happens every morning at the same time? How much time is devoted to safety training? What stands out to you? Finally, how serious are employ-

ees about safety? Employees' commitment to safety can typically be observed when crews work together.

## How would an organization promote this type of mindset?

- Training, along with the development of standard operating procedures
- Top-down commitment to the development and maintenance of workplace safety practices
- Empower every employee to advocate for safety and recognize when workplace injuries are reduced, minimized, or avoided
- Provide training and training materials to employees in the language they best understand

How can an organization establish a safety process for workers who may not speak fluent English, or if English is their second language and the fluency level varies from one person to the next? Not to mention, some individuals might come from a part of the world that may not place value on or implement workplace safety training.

The first step is confirming that all training and materials are offered in the employees' language. Encouraging employees to embrace a safety culture helps ensure safety is prioritized while engaged in any task. A follow-up step should include post-training discussions with staff who focus on training to ensure everyone understands what was

covered. It could be as simple as asking "what if" questions, allowing the employee to explain how they would address an issue, and encouraging them to not only have the answer but to also provide an example of how to best act. This basic step is the beginning of introducing a workplace safety culture and encouraging employees to make this part of their regular approach to all work tasks. By providing training and safety materials in the language best understood by the employee, the chances are much higher that there will be a greater understanding of general safety practices, along with a better understanding of why it is so important. It can also encourage employees to share this information with colleagues from similar cultures.

For reference, the OSHA Worker Rights and Protection standards list several employer responsibilities, including the following: [Employers must provide safety training in a language and vocabulary workers can understand](#). Building a culture within a culture is possible. By taking time to be intentional and creative, employers can help lead their organizations toward this goal and effectively connect with diverse groups within their teams.

Harper College offers FREE OSHA based workplace safety classes, with some offered in Spanish. For more information, visit <https://www.harpercollege.edu/safety/request-info.php> or contact the author. ♦



**About the Author:** Pete Almeida is a Project Coordinator for the Susan Harwood Grant Program focused on Occupational Health and Safety (OSH), Community Education and Workforce Solutions at Harper College. He may be reached at [ap32525@harpercollege.edu](mailto:ap32525@harpercollege.edu), or (847) 925-6023.

# INFLATION REDUCTION ACT: OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLEAN TECH MANUFACTURERS

COHNREZNICK

The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, the most significant action Congress has taken on clean energy and climate change in U.S. history, was signed into law by President Biden on Aug. 16, 2022. While a main focus of this law is climate policy, many businesses – namely those in the clean tech manufacturing and distribution sectors – stand to reap significant benefits; and here’s why.

The \$739 billion dollar Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) contains several new environment-related tax credits that specifically address clean tech manufacturing businesses. The objective of the climate portion of the law is to dramatically reduce the level of greenhouse gas in the atmosphere and to mitigate the damage associated with climate change while simultaneously increasing social justice. Therefore, a primary objective of the IRA is to provide tax incentives that invigorate investments in the electrification of America, while reducing or replacing fossil fuel-based electricity generation and transportation fuels with cleaner sources.

While manufacturers and other businesses can directly benefit from the energy efficiency, and clean energy and storage tax incentives under IRC section 179D or the Investment Tax Credit under section 48, manufacturers with facilities where these products and components are made can now also benefit from tax credits that specifically incentivize the manufacturing of such products.

This express focus on incentivizing specific types of manufacturing and industrial products with a federal tax code is significant. Thus, the IRA not only provides an incentive for manufacturing clean tech equipment and components (under IRC section 45X), but the law also contains other federal income tax credits for the cost of such manufacturing equipment. Now, if you manufacture certain clean tech energy and storage components, including batteries – or even if you’re mining lithium

or other critical minerals for use in such components – you may be eligible for a federal manufacturing income tax credit on a per unit basis. The types of equipment and components that are eligible under this credit are truly broad, making the opportunity for eligible manufacturers notable. Furthermore, in many cases, the value of the credit allows these new U.S. made products to be cost and price competitive with overseas manufacturing. In addition, because the IRA also contains new domestic content incentives for the end-user of the products, demand and price support is also being incentivized by the IRA.

## “MANUFACTURERS WITH FACILITIES WHERE THESE PRODUCTS AND COMPONENTS ARE MADE CAN NOW ALSO BENEFIT FROM TAX CREDITS THAT SPECIFICALLY INCENTIVIZE THE MANUFACTURING OF SUCH PRODUCTS”

Another example of this is the separate production and investment credits for the manufacturing, storage, and transportation of hydrogen. Hydrogen is one of the cleanest sources of fuel because when you burn hydrogen in air, the byproduct is clean, pure water. Thus, the IRA is incentivizing the switch from traditionally brown or black fossil fuel-based power sources to sources that will be using hydrogen, whether it’s for use as a fuel with fuel-cell technology, or for hydrogen-powered transportation, the direct manufacturing of

hydrogen itself now has credits available through the IRA. The details are contained in sections 45V and section 48(a)(15) of the tax code, respectively, either for the production of green-hydrogen or for electrolyzers used in producing hydrogen.

Another example of a manufacturing credit is Internal Revenue Code section 48C, which is an investment tax credit allowing a 30% federal investment credit for clean tech manufacturing equipment. For instance, suppose you have a solar panel manufacturing facility, and you buy a piece of equipment that is part of the production function of making that solar panel. In that case, you could be eligible for this tax credit. Furthermore, the types of equipment and related manufacturing that qualify for 48C is quite broad.

### More on IRC 48C: The Qualifying Advanced Energy Project Credit

To receive the Qualifying Advanced Energy Project Credit a portion of the project must be pre-certified by the IRS in conjunction with the Department of Energy. Taxpayers must pre-apply and then will be allocated an allotment of credit by the IRS before being eligible to claim such credits. The credits are federal income tax credits and are only available after the equipment has been placed in service for use in a trade or business. To be clear, this is not a grant or an advanced funding mechanism. However, a qualifying advanced energy project does not include any portion of a project to produce any property used in refining or blending any transportation fuel other than renewable fuels. To determine the amount of qualified investment for purposes of the qualifying advanced energy project credit, the eligible property is any property which is necessary for:

- The production or recycling of property including any property that re-equips, expands, or estab-



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lished an industrial or manufacturing facility for the production or recycling of renewable resources

- Re-equipping an industrial or manufacturing facility with equipment designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20%
- Re-equipping, expanding, or establishing an industrial facility for the processing, refining, or recycling of critical materials

On Feb. 13, 2023, the IRS released initial guidance on applying for the 48C credit in the form of IRS Notice 2023-18. To apply for certification under this subsection, you will have two years from the date of acceptance by IRS to provide evidence that the certification requirements have been met. Then an applicant

who receives a certification has two years from its date of issue to place the project in service. The certification will be valid if the project is in service by that time. The credit allocation amount from any certification revoked under this rule shall be added to the \$10 billion pool of available credits under Code Sec. 48C. In addition, should the IRS determine that an applicant who received a certification has placed the project in service at a location that is materially different from the location specified in the application for the project, the certification will also be invalid.

In addition, one other change made by the IRA is the ability to actually sell many of the new climate and energy related tax credits for cash. Once you qualify for these tax credits, some, but not all of them, can be sold, thus serv-

ing as a means for recovering your investment or manufacturing cost. While the rules have limits, this new flexibility can make the manufacturing of clean energy, or related products, more competitive when compared to offshore manufacturing. In cases where the business has little or no tax liability, greater tax efficiency can be realized. Plus, such sales are tax free to the seller of the credits.

All in all, the Inflation Reduction Act provides \$739 billion worth of federal incentives for the country's electrification. While we are just at the very beginnings of such sweeping legislation, manufacturers can make a significant impact by providing an aggressive response to this new mode of economic and ecological reform. ♦

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# ILLINOIS SUPPLY CHAINS: THE KEY TO SUCCESS

ILLINOIS MANUFACTURING EXCELLENCE CENTER  
DAVID BOULAY, PRESIDENT



The Illinois economy benefits from a robust supply chain network that readily connects our state to markets worldwide. Illinois is in a strategic location at the heart of the Midwest region, which has made us a hub for transportation and manufacturing. Illinois boasts extensive air, rail, highway, and water transportation systems that make it possible to serve any market, anywhere in the world. Our state's highly diverse and resilient manufacturers have developed a leading-edge supply chain network that is a source of pride for the state.

Recent geopolitical events and the pandemic have shown how fragile global supply chains can be. This has led to renewed interest in reshoring, buying American made products, and local supply chains to reduce risks associated with global supply chains. However, Illinois' supply chain has proven to be incredibly resilient in the face of adversity. During the pandemic, IMEC worked closely with the IMA and witnessed firsthand over 1,000 Illinois manufacturers respond to the call to ramp up production of essential products, fostering collaboration among companies to help meet the demand. This moment stands, for me, as a testament to the incredible resilience of Illinois supply chains.

Illinois' supply chain strengths present a unique opportunity for the state to thrive in today's new risk filled supply chain landscape. To maintain our position as a supply chain leader, continued investment in workforce skills, physical infrastructure, and innovative research and development is essential. This investment will enable the state to stay ahead of the curve and meet the evolving needs of its customers and partners. It will also ensure that Illinois remains a hub for transportation and manufacturing.

Small and mid-sized manufacturers play a critical role in Illinois' supply chains. These companies are the essential links of supply chains and contribute significantly to job creation and economic growth. They provide key inputs such as raw materials, components, and finished goods, which are then used in the production of larger products. They are both suppliers and customers. This means that they are deeply integrated into complex networks of delivering society's needed products. These companies often have the flexibility and agility to respond quickly to changing market conditions and to develop new products and processes. Overall, the importance of small and mid-sized manufacturers in Illinois cannot be overstated. These companies are essential to the state's economy and play a critical role in its supply chains.

That's why building partnerships between suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, and retailers and creating forums for information sharing and collaboration can enhance the strength of the supply chain. By doing so, companies can work together to identify and mitigate risks, streamline processes, and create efficiencies that benefit everyone involved in the supply chain. Additionally, local supplier scouting and sourcing materials locally whenever possible can help to reduce dependence on distant sources, ensuring a more stable and predictable supply of materials. This can support the local economy by creating jobs and promoting economic growth.

There's no doubt, Illinois has a long history of manufacturing excellence and a highly skilled workforce, making it well-positioned to embrace the supply chain shifts underway, such as reshoring. We are home to a diverse range of industries, including aerospace, automotive, food, chemical, and medical devices. We have a robust transportation infrastructure, with access to major ports, airports, and rail networks, that can support the efficient movement of goods. We have a strong tradition of collaboration between academia, industry, and government, which can facilitate innovation and help businesses stay competitive in the global market. By forging strong partnerships and collaborating with local and regional partners, Illinois can safeguard its position as a supply chain leader, attract new businesses and investment, and become a hub for transportation and manufacturing. With a strategic focus on long-term economic prosperity, Illinois can reduce the risks associated with global supply chains and ensure a sustainable future. ♦

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Boulay'.

# MEMBER NEWS

## Ameren Announces 2022 Results and Issues Guidance for 2023 Earnings and Long-Term Growth



ST. LOUIS, Feb. 15, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Ameren Corporation (NYSE: AEE) today announced 2022 net income attributable to common shareholders of \$1,074 million, or \$4.14 per diluted share, compared to 2021 net income attributable to common shareholders of \$990 million, or \$3.84 per diluted share.

Earnings results for 2022 were driven by solid operating performance and execution of the company's strategy. Higher earnings were the result of increased infrastructure investments across all business segments. Ameren Missouri earnings were positively impacted by higher weather-driven electric retail sales, new electric service rates effective Feb. 28, 2022, and higher energy efficiency performance incentives in 2022. Earnings also benefited from a higher allowed return on equity at Ameren Illinois Electric Distribution due to a higher 30-year U.S. Treasury bond yield in 2022 compared to 2021. Ameren Illinois Natural Gas earnings increased due to higher delivery service rates effective in late January 2021. These positive factors were partially offset by higher operations and maintenance expenses at Ameren Missouri and Ameren Illinois Natural Gas driven, in part, by unfavorable market returns in 2022 on company-owned life insurance investments compared to favorable market returns in the prior year and increased energy center-related costs. Finally, the earnings comparison also reflected increased interest expense, primarily due to higher long-term debt outstanding at Ameren Missouri and Ameren Parent.

"We made significant strides in executing our strategy during 2022, for the benefit of our customers, communities and shareholders," said Martin J. Lyons Jr., president and chief executive officer of Ameren Corporation. "This included advocating for constructive regulatory and legislative outcomes, accelerating our company-wide net zero carbon emissions goals and completing substantial energy infrastructure investments driving safer, more reliable and resilient service for customers as we

transition to a cleaner energy future. In 2022 our residential customers honored us for the third year in a row with top quartile Midwest utility customer satisfaction scores. We are confident our achievements this year will provide significant long-term value for our customers, communities we serve, shareholders and the environment."

Ameren recorded net income attributable to common shareholders for the three months ended Dec. 31, 2022, of \$163 million, or 63 cents per diluted share, compared to net income attributable to common shareholders of \$125 million, or 48 cents per diluted share, for the same period in 2021.

## Carr Machine & Tool's Jim Carr Tells All in New Podcast

# MY TRUE POSITION

On February 1, Carr launches "my TRUE POSITION," a free podcast on which he will share the intimate details of his business journey: the good, the bad, and the not-so-sexy, yet oh-so-important.

The podcast title is apropos not only because Carr intends to share his true position on how he feels about growing up in manufacturing, but it also gives a nod to a standard industry term for geometric measuring tolerance. Carr will record from within his favorite four walls, those of his 15,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in Elk Grove Village.

"It's certainly going to be introspective," Carr said. I need to share my authentic experience because I stumbled in so many ways on my own business journey. This will allow me to lift up my community and industry. It will be different from other manufacturing podcasts in that I'm not just going to interview people each week. I'm going to be open and honest and just put my story out there and talk about the successes and the mistakes."

No stranger to the podcast world, Carr was a co-founder and co-host of #1-rated manufacturing podcast "MakingChips" since 2014. On "my TRUE POSITION," he hopes to inspire other manufacturing professionals, equip them with the knowledge to help them make better decisions and solve problems, and show them they are not alone on their manufacturing journey.

## Diageo North America expands HBCU endowment to help advance equity in education

# DIAGEO North America

New York, NY, February 28, 2023 – Diageo North America is providing an additional \$1.75 million in endowments to support Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority-Serving Institutions. The additional funding is an expansion of the company's initial \$10M in endowments granted to 25 HBCUs in 2021, as part of Diageo's commitment to inclusion and diversity. This unique endowment and development program works to shape a more equitable society and address educational barriers in underrepresented communities across the U.S.

The initiative provides direct grants for talented students in need and funds development programs that complement traditional learning. These resources will be available to students and faculty, and include lectures and mentorship from Diageo executives, skills training to cultivate future-ready talent, and bringing together leaders across public and private organizations to create solutions that help advance sustainable growth across these institutions.

"Diageo recognizes the critical role HBCUs and minority-serving institutions play as ladders of opportunity for underrepresented communities. Expanding our program to additional higher education institutions further affirms our recognition and commitment to address structural barriers to educational and economic opportunities in the U.S.," said Stephanie Childs, Executive Vice President, Corporate Relations, Diageo North America. "We believe our additional investments, will help provide students with employable skills and support the development of the next generation of entrepreneurs and leaders."

The three new HBCU schools, Tougaloo College in Jackson, MS; Cheyney University of Pennsylvania in Cheyney, PA; and Southern University in Baton Rouge, LA will each receive \$250,000 in grants for need based scholarships.

## Women MAKE Awards Recognize Kim Woods of PHOENIX



# PHOENIX™

Aurora, IL, March 1, 2023: The Manufacturing Institute—the workforce development and education partner of the National Association of Manufacturers—announced that PHOENIX, Materials Manager, Kim Woods has been recognized as a 2023 Women MAKE Awards honoree. This annual national awards program honors women who have demonstrated excellence and leadership in their careers and represent all levels of the manufacturing industry, from the factory floor to the C-suite.

“This recognition is important to me because I did not expect to be nominated or to become a Women MAKE Award honoree, as I was just doing what I love,” said Kim Woods. “I’m so grateful to the Manufacturing Institute and PHOENIX for choosing and nominating me despite of all the talented nominees. I’m also thankful to my husband. He supported me while I trained, work countless hours, and immersed myself in my studies and certifications. I’m also very grateful to PHOENIX cross functional teams. I could not have accomplished this recognition without the team.”

The Women MAKE Awards honor exceptional women in manufacturing and motivate them to mentor the next generation through an annual awards gala and associated leadership training program. The stories of these women and the leadership they exemplify will help inspire the next generation of women leaders in manufacturing and support talent already within the industry.

“Kim’s leadership during our supply chain crises ensured that PHOENIX was able to source materials and produce products for our customers,” said PHOENIX, Co-President, Giles Miller. “She is exactly the kind of professional that Women MAKE America was intended to recognize, and we are proud that she is on our team!”

“The biggest challenge facing manufacturers continues to be the growing workforce crisis, and women are the industry’s largest talent opportunity; bringing just 6%

more women into manufacturing would fill all open jobs in the sector today,” said MI President and Executive Director Carolyn Lee. “That is exactly why the Women MAKE Awards are so important and powerful. These are the women who will inspire our next generation of female talent to pursue a career in this industry.”

## S&C Electric Company Expanding U.S. Manufacturing Operations to Meet North American Demand for Its Grid Resiliency Technologies



**S&C ELECTRIC COMPANY**  
Excellence Through Innovation

- Expanded operations supports growth and creates approximately 200 production and engineering jobs.
- This expansion in capacity enables S&C to meet increasing demand for technology that makes the electrical grid more resilient and reliable.
- Full occupancy and production start-up are expected in early 2024.

CHICAGO, March 21, 2023 – S&C Electric Company, a leader in smart and resilient electrical grid solutions, today announced the expansion of its U.S. manufacturing footprint with a 275,000-square-foot facility in Palatine, Illinois, approximately 25 miles from S&C’s 47-acre Chicago headquarters and manufacturing campus in Rogers Park. The company employs 3,500 team members globally and more than 2,000 in Chicago, making it the second-largest manufacturer in the city.

“Chicago has been home to S&C for over 110 years, and the talent here is an essential part of our growth and success. This expansion strengthens our commitment to U.S. manufacturing and the Chicagoland area, allowing us to better serve customers with solutions that advance a resilient, intelligent electrical grid,” said Anders Sjoelin, S&C’s president and CEO. “Additionally, we’re pleased to add jobs, create value, and support our local team members and communities.”

S&C was recently recognized as a top employer in the United States for the third

year in a row by Top Workplaces USA. For the past five years, S&C has been named as one of Chicago’s best large employers in the Chicago Tribune’s Top Workplaces list.

In addition to jobs at the new facility, the company is hiring across the organization, including roles in assembly, fabrication, maintenance, manufacturing technology, cybersecurity, engineering, and quality assurance.

## Valley Industrial Association and GCAMP Host Workforce Strategies Forum



**VALLEY INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION**

Geneva, Illinois, February 23, 2023: Valley Industrial Association (VIA) and the VIA’s nonprofit workforce development partner, GCAMP, hosted a Workforce Strategies Forum for members their Geneva, Illinois office. The Forum was a hit, with over 40 attendees, online and in-person, it is clear that hiring issues are a universal issue in today’s climate.

During the forum, manufacturers quickly scribbled down notes as our guest speakers revealed some exciting news. They told our colleagues in manufacturing not to give up hope—that your new workforce is out there. There are skilled men and women ready and eager to take on opportunities in manufacturing. You just need to be willing to look outside the box.

The VIA and GCAMP hosted a variety of speakers with innovative solutions to solve for the workforce shortage, including speakers: Bryan VanDyke and Karrie Pearce from AutonomyWorks; Judith Dawson, Director of Diversion and Reentry Programs at the Kane County Sheriff’s Office; and AnnMarie Fauske, Deputy Director for CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) Kane County.

Solutions ranged from preparing for and hiring a neurodivergent workforce, focusing on providing detainees with employable skills prior to their release and helping them find jobs upon release, and training young adults as they transition out of the foster care system and into the working world.◆

# NEW IMA MEMBERS

**ADP**

DOWNERS GROVE, IL

**AMAZON**

Chicago, IL

**BENVENUTI & STEIN**

EVANSTON, IL

**BYTE**

Sana Monica, CA

**CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY**

Calgary, AB

**CHICAGO BEARS**

Lake Forest, IL

**CHRISTIAN COUNTY ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Taylorville, IL

**CLARK HILL PLC**

Chicago, IL

**CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD INC**

Rosemont, IL

**DARMOK DESIGNS**

Coal Valley, IL

**EQUICHEM INTERNATIONAL, INC.**

Carol Stream, IL

**FABTEK AERO LTD**

Sandwich, IL

**FOOD PACKAGING INSTITUTE**

Falls Church, VA

**GALLAGHER ASPHALT CORP**

Thornton, IL

**GEVO**

Englewood, CO

**GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY**

University Park, IL

**GRECIAN DELIGHT FOODS INC**

Glendale Heights, IL

**ILLINOIS VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Oglesby, IL

**MEMINGER METAL FINISHING**

Aledo, IL

**PACTIV EVERGREEN**

Lake Forest, IL

**PETERS PRECISION MACHINING**

Manhattan, IL

**SCS ENGINEERS**

Madison, IL

**SERVICE STEEL A VAN PELT COMPANY**

Moline, IL

**SIMPLEX SYSTEM CONTROLS INC**

Elmhurst, IL

**STEEL CITIES STEELS, INC**

Burns Harbor, IN



**MANUFACTURERS**  
POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

# 2023 GOLF OUTING



**Tuesday, August 8, 2023**

**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/>**

# How can I get all my utility data in one place?

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To learn more about the Pear.ai platform please contact Rich Cialabrini at [richard.cialabrini@constellation.com](mailto:richard.cialabrini@constellation.com) or **847.738.2510**.



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