

SUNERGY

OUR 62nd YEAR

CONTRA COSTA CHAPTER

November 2025



In this issue:

- Annual Meeting of the Contra Costa County Electrical Industry Trust December 10th
- Sound and Communications Wage/Fringe Benefit Increases Effective December 1, 2025
- CE/CW Wage/Fringe Benefit Increases Effective January 1, 2026
- Inside Wireman Wage/Fringe Benefit Increases Effective March 1, 2026
- Important Notice: Employers Signatory to the Inside Wireman's Agreement
- NECA 2025 CA Legislative Scorecard
- Politico Group Capitol Alert: Governor Newsom Signs SB440—Extending Fair Change Order Protections to Private Construction
- Sweeney Mason: 5 Important Ways Employers Can Limit Class Action Liability and Reduce PAGA Penalties
- Contra Costa Electric, Inc.—Seventy-Five Year Membership Award
- The "Bob" 2025 Golf Tournament
- Remaining Holidays for 2025
- Synergy eLinkş
- Calendar

Annual Meeting of the Contra Costa County Electrical Industry Trust

December 10, 2025



The Annual Meeting of the Contra Costa County Electrical Industry Trust will be held at Flemings Prime Steak House, Wednesday, December 10, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m. in the Sonoma Room. Our NECA Chapter Membership Meeting will be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting, and is open to all signatory contractors.

Each year the Board of Trustees report on the progress of the Electrical Industry Trust and the other Trust funds that are included in the hourly contribution rate, which include the Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee, our local LMCC, and our Statewide LMCC.

One of the major functions of the Electrical Industry Trust is to provide continuing education classes for our contractors to make them more efficient and more effective. Please give some thought to any programs you believe our signatory contractors could benefit from and be prepared to share them at our meeting.

Click Here to RSVP

Sound and Communications Agreement

Wage/Fringe Benefit Increases Effective December 1, 2025

The IBEW members working under our Sound and Communication Agreement in Northern California have allocated their December 1, 2025 increases. Keep in mind there are five distinct Wage/Fringe benefit Schedules (A, B, C. D.& E), each one covering a different geographical area. Schedule E covers work performed in Contra Costa County. Depending on the nature of your operation, you probably work in more than one Schedule area. Also available on-line are our representative cost-per-hour sheets and the shift-rates (reference Schedule E).

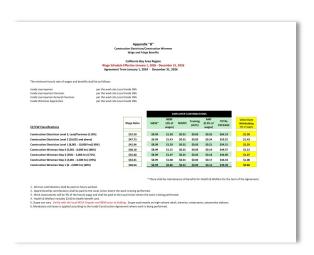


CE/CW

New Wage & Fringe Benefits

Effective January 1, 2026.

Click Here to View/Download.



Inside Wireman Agreement

UPCOMING: Inside Wage Adjustment

This will serve as a reminder that there will be a \$4.50/hour increase to Local 302 Inside (Journeyman) wage package on March 1, 2026. Local 302 will be making their allocation shortly. As soon as we are made aware of the allocation, we will let you know here in our newsletter.

Important Notice Employers Signatory To The Wireman's Agreement

On May 31, 2026, our Inside Wireman Agreement with Local 302 will expire. The Chapter intends to negotiate a successor agreement that will be binding to all employers signed to a Letter of Assent. The process begins in late February and will conclude by the end of May. The new agreement will become effective June 1, 2026 As a practical matter, this is not an issue for most of our employers, however, if you intend to terminate your relationship with the IBEW, you must do so in a timely manner by notifying the union of your intention. For employers signed to a Letter of Assent A, that notification must be sent to the Chapter and the Local Union prior to the end of December 2025. For employers signed to a Letter of Assent B, the notification to the union must be sent prior to February 20, 2026. Since bargaining is a complicated legal process, an employer choosing to terminate should not do so without competent legal counsel.

If you have any specific items you would like addressed during negotiations, please contact Joey Reed at the Chapter Office.



NECA 2025 CA Legislative Scorecard

The 2025 California Legislative Session concluded on October 13, the final day for Governor Gavin Newsom to sign or veto legislation. This year, NECA experienced one of its most successful sessions to date, advancing major industry priorities, including landmark reforms to cap private-works retention at 5% and to extend the proven public-works change order claims process to private construction. Both measures represent significant progress in addressing the cash flow and payment challenges that NECA contractors often face on private projects.

At the same time, the year presented considerable challenges on the broader employer-policy front, particularly concerning the use of emerging technologies to track employee hours, enhance jobsite safety, and prevent theft. Many of these proposals targeted all employers uniformly, without accounting for the unique nature of construction work, where employees operate across multiple jobsites that must be kept secure, perform service and maintenance calls, and often take-home employer owned vehicles and tools.

As reflected in the attached scorecard, a substantial portion of NECA's advocacy efforts continues to focus on opposing legislation that would negatively affect contractors. With both houses of the Legislature controlled by Democratic supermajorities, it remains difficult to stop or amend progressive and environmental proposals that disproportionately burden our industry. Nonetheless, NECA successfully defeated or improved numerous measures that would have otherwise harmed electrical contractors and the broader construction community.

Click <u>here</u> to see a summary of the key bills **NECA** engaged on during the 2025 session, along with their final outcomes.



<u>Governor Newsom Signs SB 440 - Extending Fair Change Order</u> <u>Protections to Private Construction</u>

We are proud to announce that Governor Gavin Newsom has signed SB 440 (Ochoa Bogh), our industry-sponsored change order reform bill. SB 440 extends the successful public works change order process (AB 626, 2016) to private construction projects, creating a fair, transparent, and timely framework for resolving contractor-initiated change order claims.

Change orders are common in construction, typically used to modify a project's scope, design, schedule, or cost. Without clear procedures, unresolved or unpaid change orders can cause significant delays, costly disputes, and financial strain on contractors. SB 440 addresses these challenges head-on.

Key reforms include:

- Allowing contractors to initiate the payment process for work performed outside the original contract scope.
- Requiring private project owners to review and respond to change order claims within a defined time period.
- Maintaining the owner's right to dispute or reject claims, while requiring prompt payment of all undisputed amounts in accordance with California's prompt payment laws.
- Mandating non-binding mediation before litigation to encourage early and cost-effective dispute resolution.

The new law takes effect January 1, 2026, and will apply to all nonresidential private works of improvement contracts executed on or after that date.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all NECA contractors, Chapter Managers, and staff who supported this effort through our grassroots outreach program. Your engagement was instrumental in achieving this important reform for California's construction industry.



5 Important Ways Employers Can Limit Class Action Liability and Reduce PAGA Penalties

Roger M. Mason, Esq., Christopher J. Olson, Esq., Rachael E. Brown, Esq., Caitlin E. Kaufman, Esq.

We previously updated you on recent legislative PAGA reform:

2024 PAGA Reform - Sweeney Mason LLP.

In light of this reform, following are five ways your business can potentially limit class action liability and substantially reduce PAGA penalties. Sweeney Mason can provide your business with everything it needs to utilize these tools to minimize your company's exposure. Please contact us to discuss how we can help.

1. Utilize Mutually Binding Arbitration Agreements

Carefully crafted valid mandatory arbitration agreements with class action waivers can cut off class liability and potentially stay PAGA litigation until a determination is made in arbitration as to whether the Plaintiff has standing to prosecute a PAGA lawsuit.

2. Complete Annual HR Compliance Audits

Annual compliance audits during which a review of all company policies and practices is performed, and policies are updated and improved as appropriate, providing critical protection in class and PAGA litigation. An HR Compliance audit is a key aspect of the "reasonable steps" an employer must take to significantly reduce potential PAGA penalties, by up to 85%.

3. Conduct Regular Wage and Hour Compliance Training

Employee and manager training also are "reasonable steps" an employer must take to significantly reduce potential PAGA penalties. Wage and hour compliance should be treated as seriously as safety in the workplace and should be an important measure of any performance evaluation.

4. Track Meal and Rest Period Compliance and Pay Premiums When Applicable

This remains the single most litigated wage and hour issue. Employees must clock out and back in from meal breaks. A meal break must be taken within the first five (5) hours of work, must last at least thirty (30) minutes, and must be uninterrupted. A second meal break must be taken if the employee works more than ten (10) hours in the workday. Rest breaks lasting at least ten (10) minutes must be taken for every four (4) hours of work, or major fraction thereof. Employees must be free to leave the premises during rest and meal breaks.

Employers should set up a system for employees to report missed, late, or interrupted meal/rest breaks, for tracking the reasons for non-compliant breaks, and for paying of one additional hour of pay ("premium pay") for every non-compliant meal or rest break. Employees should be trained on proper meal and rest break compliance and counseled when out of compliance.

5. Ensure Accurate and Contemporaneous Time Tracking

Employees should track time down to the minute and all time should be entered immediately and exactly, including for meal periods. Employees should sign or otherwise acknowledge the accuracy of their time records. Time rounding should be eliminated. Off-the-clock work should be strictly prohibited. Proper timekeeping is one of the best ways to eliminate liability in individual, class, or PAGA litigation.

For more information about any of these employment legal updates, including information about updating your employee handbook, conducting an HR Compliance Audit, and/or Management Training, please contact our employment team at 408-356-3000 or via email: Roger Mason at rmason@smllp.com, Christopher Olson at colson@smllp.com, Rachael Brown at reb@smllp.com, or Caitlin Kaufman at ckaufman@smllp.com.



The information provided in this publication is general in nature and is not intended to answer every question that may arise under different fact situations and should not be relied on in the place of professional advice in a given case. If you have specific questions, please contact Sweeney Mason LLP.

SWEENEY MASON LLP is a Limited Liability Partnership located at 983 University Avenue, Suite 104C, Los Gatos, California, 95030, telephone (408) 356-3000. This notice is designed to assist our clients and other business owners in spotting issues which may result in costly litigation and court awarded damages if allowed to continue unaddressed.

SWEENEY MASON LLP's philosophy is that by educating our clients, and other businesses, about their legal obligations, including changes in the law, we best serve our legal goal of minimizing or preventing expensive litigation.



Contra Costa Electric, Inc. 75-Year Member of NECA

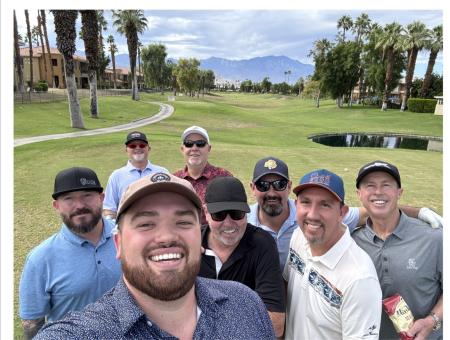
Contra Costa Electric, Inc., was founded in 1946 and became a NECA member on March 21, 1950.

Chapter President, Casey Dias (great-grandson of the founder, Wayne Willis) presents Charlie Hadsell of
Contra Costa Electric with a plaque commemorating 75 Years of NECA membership at the September 29th
Chapter Membership meeting.









"The Bob" 2025 Palm Desert, CA

Representing the Contra Costa Chapter, NECA

Joey Reed (Chapter Office)
Rick Crowell (RC Electric)
Casey Dias (Watson Electric)
Charlie Hadsell (Contra Costa Electric)
Barry McGraw (BME Construction)
Sasha McGraw (BME Construction)
Sean McPeak (McPeak Electric)
Jordan Nunez (Dawson Electric)





Remaining Holidays for 2025

Inside Wireman

Thanksgiving and Day After
11/27 & 11/28
Christmas Day
12/25

Sound and Communications

Thanksgiving and Day After
11/27 & 11/28
Christmas Eve
12/24
Christmas Day
12/25



SYNERGY ELinks

SOUND and COMMUNICATIONS WAGE and FRINGE SCHEDULES A, B, C, D, & E

SOUND AND COMMUNICATIONS COST PER HOUR SCHEDULE E

SOUND AND COMMUNICATIONS SHIFT RATES SCHEDULE E

NOTICE OF SUMMARY PLAN INFORMATION
FOR THE NATIONAL ELECTRICAL BENEFIT FUND

CALIFORNIA NECA SUBCONTRACTOR CONTRACT & COLLECTIONS GUIDEBOOK



November 2025

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thur | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|---|-----|---|---|-----|
| Upcoming Meetings December 8 - Health & Welfare @ 11:00 a.m. December 10 - Chapter Board of Directors @ 4:30 p.m. December 10 - Annual Industry Trust @ 6:00 p.m. | | | | | | 1 |
| Clocks "Fo Back 1 Fo SET CLOCKS BACK 1 HOUR REF CO TO BED ON NOVEMBE | 3 cour | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 VETERANS DAY | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | JATC Training Center Martinez 2:00 p.m. | 19 | Retirement Trust Training Center Martinez @ 2:00 p.m. | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | Industry Trust Training Cent Martinez @11:30 a.m | er | 26 | Nov | ksgiving & Day After HOLIDAY vember 27 th & 28 th Inside Wireman & nd & Communications | 29 |