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NASSAU ELECTRIC LEAGUE BULLETIN

PUBLISHED MONTHLY IN THE INTEREST OF THE
ELECTRIC INDUSTRY By The
NASSAU ELECTRIC LEAGUE, INC.

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IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM, OR NEED INFORMATION, FEEL
FREE TO CALL A COMMITTEE MEMBER, or CALL
THE NEL OFFICE, (516) 354-1300.

MEETING DATES 2022/2023

Regular meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of
each month – September through May.

SEPTEMBER 14	JANUARY 11	APRIL 12
OCTOBER 12	FEBRUARY 8	MAY 10
NOVEMBER 9	MARCH 8	
DECEMBER 14		

COME TO OUR NEXT MEETING!!!

*To discuss and learn about Industry News and Issues
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**Nassau Electric League
90 W. Nicholai Street, Hicksville, NY 11801
(516) 354-1300**

GENERAL MEETING

March 8, 2023

info@nassauelectricleague.com

***Program: Legal Advice
By: Michael Ganz of***



***And
Some New Products from Klein Tools***



**When: March 8, 2023
Place: Knights of Columbus
45 Heitz Place
Hicksville, NY 11801
Time: 7:30 PM**

90 W. Nicolai St., Hicksville, NY 11801



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members:

The League would like to thank Jim Domozych of PSEG, for his review of the Red Book at our February meeting.

We would also like to thank Monarch, N&S, and Schwing Electrical Suppliers for their generous donations of supplies needed for this year's Regional Skills Competition to be held on March 21.

Our March Program will be provided by Michael Ganz of Kaufman, Dolowich, Voluck Attorney's at Law with some legal advice.



Klein Tools will also show us some of their new products. So come on down and see what is new!

Dates to Save

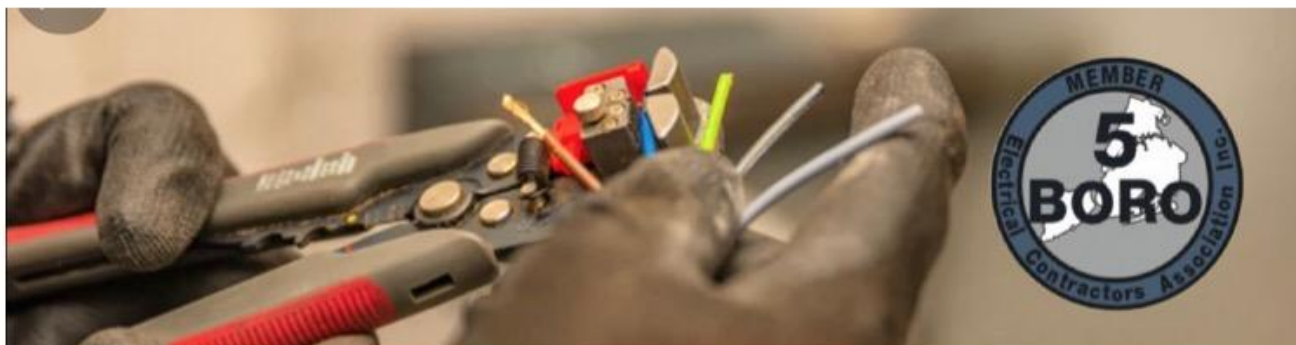
May 17, 2023 Installation Dinner at the Fox Hollow

October 25, 2023 NEL EXPO at the Plainview Holiday Inn

Sincerely,
Thomas Walsh
President, NEL



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Ben & Adam will discuss the firm's national leadership roles in such major litigations as listed below — and how they impact electrical contractors:

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- ▶ **CAMP LEJEUNE WATER CONTAMINATION**
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The Age of Experience

Safety concerns for new and young workers

By Tom O'Connor

ACCORDING TO THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC), 352 workers younger than 25 died from work-related injuries in 2020. Workers under 25 years old are 1½ times more likely to incur job-related injuries than older employees. Given the hazardous nature of electrical and construction work, these statistics are alarming. However, there are measures that employers can take to protect these individuals.

Why are the under-25s at greater risk?

There are several reasons why new and young workers are at a greater risk of being involved in a workplace incident. One is that these workers are inexperienced and are conducting unfamiliar tasks. Younger and newer workers are also less likely to ask questions or bring up concerns about hazardous situations for fear of rocking the boat. Additionally, these workers may underestimate hazardous situations or be unfamiliar with their rights and employer's obligations.

According to the CDC's Young Worker Safety and Health guide, "Limited or no prior work experience and a lack of safety training also contribute to high injury rates. Middle- and high-school workers may be at increased risk for injury since they may not have the strength or cognitive ability needed to perform certain job duties."

Compounding the risk to new and young workers in the construction industry is the hazardous and physical nature of the work. Additionally, construction industry workers frequently change job sites. It often takes experience to recognize constantly changing hazards. The seasonal nature of the work also presents problems due to the high turnover.

Surprisingly, there are still many contractors that do not provide safety orientation or basic safety training for new employees. Lack of awareness is a major contributing factor to higher incident rates among new and young workers. The likelihood of a worker becoming hurt on the job is exponentially higher in the first year of employment.

According to Scott Schneider, director of occupational safety and health at the Laborers' Health and Safety Fund of North America, "It's less an issue on unionized sites, where people have a substantial amount of safety training in apprenticeship programs. They also, as apprentices, get mentored along the way. It's still an issue in the sense you're going to a different job site, and you may not be familiar with that job site."

OSHA's response

In recent years, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has implemented initiatives and launched campaigns to protect young and temporary workers. The agency believes that these workers have far too often not adequately received safety training.

OSHA's Safe Work for Young Workers Guide outlines new workers' rights: "All employees have the right to a safe workplace; receive safety and health training in a language that you understand; ask questions if you don't understand instructions or if something seems unsafe; use and be trained on required safety gear, such as hard hats, goggles and ear plugs; exercise your workplace safety rights without



retaliation or discrimination; file a confidential complaint with OSHA if you believe there is a serious hazard or that your employer is not following OSHA standards."

Training is critical

In an effort to reduce the risk for new and young workers, safety orientation training is critical. Equally important is reinforcing that training to ensure workers have fully digested the material, know their rights and practice safe work habits. Keep in mind that people learn in different ways. Some absorb things more quickly by being told how to complete a task, while others learn better by being shown. Conducting toolbox talks is a good reinforcement.

Effective orientation programs should establish safety culture and include site-specific hazards and how to handle them, hands-on training and any necessary PPE for the job and location. It should also include a risk assessment and encourage employees to identify and alert management of any safety hazards and report injuries and incidents. Other components of a good orientation program would inform employees of their rights and what to do in the event an emergency occurs.

Finally, mentorship programs can be helpful in reducing incidents among new and young employees. Such workers must be supervised closely and should never conduct a task they have not been trained to do. Workers should begin by conducting lower-risk tasks before graduating to higher-risk or more dangerous jobs.

O'CONNOR is safety and regulatory affairs manager for Intec, a safety consulting, training and publishing firm. Reach him at toconnor@intecweb.com.

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A Wonder Drug for Service Electricians

The reward of altruism when dealing with customers

By Andrew P. McCoy and Fred Sargent

DEREK IS A GREAT SERVICE ELECTRICIAN AND LOVES HIS JOB. He relishes the satisfaction of knowing he has solved people's problems at the end of each workday.

He looks forward to applying his training and experience to the challenges he encounters with every new service call. Most of all, though, he enjoys the personal gratification in knowing he has made an impact and helped people.

They are his company's customers. But they are Derek's clients. To the company, the value in having them is profitability. To Derek, their value is priceless.

Customers who call for service give Derek great reviews. The next time they call, many ask for him by name. The third time around, before they can remember the name of the company, they are apt to say, "Let's get Derek back here to handle this."

Business gurus always remind us that in every industry, the frontline workers dealing directly with customers are truly the face of their company. But those experts seldom mention how fulfilling customers' needs can be equally rewarding to the ones who make it happen.

When done right, the successful delivery of electrical service is as rewarding to the electrician as it is satisfying to the customer. It's a main ingredient in the glue of employee retention.

It's potentially a magnet for recruitment as well. Many apprentices were initially inspired to apply after having an opportunity to observe and talk to electricians like Derek on the job.

In this article, Derek is representative of many great service electricians we have gotten to know over many years, with their best qualities compressed into a composite character. Admittedly, what we have expressed thus far has been purely the product of anecdotal evidence, not scientific observation.

But here come two physicians who co-authored a New York Times bestseller crammed with data that backs up everything we have always said and believed about this subject.

In "Wonder Drug: 7 Scientifically Proven Ways That Serving Others Is the Best Medicine for Yourself" (St. Martin's Essentials, New York, 2022), Stephen Trzeciak and Anthony Mazzairelli provide a research-rich case for something we all have merely sensed. And they repeatedly remind readers that their conclusions are based on findings, not just "mushy stuff."



Early on, the authors frankly admit that doctors are not always known for having "soft skills." They recall from their medical school training that "customer service is for nurses and social workers." They were taught that doctors should remain detached and aloof in ministering to patients.

After becoming chief medical officer at a center with 8,500 employees—and confronted with a report from outside consultants on the sad state of employee engagement and patient satisfaction—Mazzairelli (with Trzeciak's help) resolved to mount a vigorous campaign to raise the level of compassion that their doctors, nurses and others would exhibit in treating patients. Dauntingly, it meant that their 500 doctors, for example, would have to start being more personable, acting more courteously and becoming better listeners when face-to-face with patients.

Compassion makes a difference

One of the easier solutions called for taking more time to talk with patients during the doctors' regular rounds. This very small but important dosage of added compassionate behavior, as Mazzairelli soon found out, would only take 40 more seconds in conversation to make a difference.

The compassionate campaign was a success and benefited patients and staff. In subsequent consumer surveys, discharged patients and their families now rated the medical center as being a "compassionate" institution. The number of medical staff members who complained of being "burned out" also began to plummet.

As the caregivers introduced compassion, they were rewarded in return with a boost to their own psychological and physiological well-being. Compassion made all the difference.

Mazzairelli and Trzeciak detail all the dividends returned to caregivers from a compassionate style of work. But, more important, they go on to tell the even larger story of how regularly dealing with everyone, everywhere in an "altruistic" way "is the best medicine for yourself."

Top service and maintenance electricians have a big lead on most of us in this regard. They are our industry's "caregivers." The very best of them bring to their jobs every day the principles spelled out in "Wonder Drug." We can all learn from them. ⚡

MCCOY is Beliveau professor in the Dept. of Building Construction, associate director of the Myers-Lawson School of Construction and director of the Virginia Center for Housing Research at Virginia Tech. Contact him at apmccoy@vt.edu. **SARGENT** is president of Great Service Forums, provider of management education dedicated to service managers. Contact him at fred@greatserviceforums.com.

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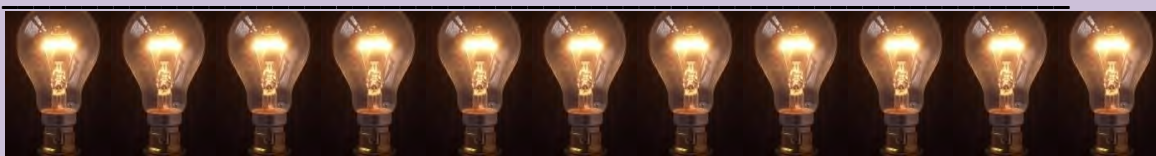
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GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

February 8, 2023

President Tom T. Walsh opened the meeting and led all attending in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Thomas T. Walsh

President Walsh introduced Jim Domozych, representing PSEGLI. Mr.Domozych presented an enlightening program on Red Book training. (See programs).

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT: Bill Cain

Everything is going well. I hope you are all still getting your monthly bulletins.
Please sign the book that's going around.

Pot of Gold is being taken around by Guy Mauro
All attending were asked to sign the attendance book taken around by Matteo Gaudio.

INSPECTION AGENCIES: Matt Gaudio

We have learned that NYS is not going to adopt the New Code at this time.
Matt is going to ask the inspection agencies to please have representation at our meetings. We welcome their input and advice.

UTILITY COMPANIES PSEG: Tom Bailey, Phil Zuardi

PSEGLI Trade Ally has begun to meet again. Looking for member input.

LICENSING:

Dennis Bott (City of Long Beach) –

Dennis Bott (Village of Freeport) –

Guy Mauro (Village of Hempstead) –

Anthony Segarra (Village of Westbury) –

Giuseppe DiBartolomeo (Town of North Hempstead) – The Unlicensed task force committee met with the building commissioner for the town of North Hempstead.

Phil Zuardi (Town of Hempstead) – the task force is in line to meet with the Building commissioner for the Town of Hempstead.

******* (Town of Oyster Bay)** – Letter was sent to commissioner's office, waiting on a response.

Tom Walsh (Suffolk) – SCECA – Continued Education classes are ongoing; Contact SCECA for information. This month the class will be on March 25th.

MEMBERSHIP: Steve Walters

Please continue to encourage others not only to join, but also to attend our meetings and functions. We all know the many benefits of doing so.

GOOD AND WELFARE: John Lemaire, Guy Mauro

Rich Jenzo had a triple bypass and still attended the meeting looking great!

Giuseppe DiBartolomeo's Father suffered a stroke. Prayers for his well being.

Please contact John or Guy if you have anything to add to Good and Welfare.

BULLETIN/DIRECTORY: Bill Cain

March Bulletin is out. Please notify us if you are not getting the bulletin emails.

Articles and pictures are welcome. If you want to see or sell something, See Billy or contact the office.

INSTALLATION NIGHT: Tom Walsh

Will be on May 17, at the Fox Hollow in Woodbury. Honorees are being considered.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND: Ken Dickenson, Guy Mauro

The Regional Competition for the **Skills** will be on Tuesday, March 21 at Suffolk Community College. We are grateful to New Ross Electric, Monarch, Schwing and N & S Electrical Suppliers for their material donations.

EXPO 2023: Tom T. Walsh, Guy Mauro, Dennis Bott, Tom Bailey, John Lemaire

If you wish to be an exhibitor at the Expo next year, please see Tom Walsh or one of the board members. The success of this event is reliant on Vendor and Member participation. Please consider joining us.

WEBSITE: Ken Dickinson, Guy Mauro

All good. We will be updating contact information and addresses in the near future. Please contact Ken Dickinson if your information has changed or needs updating.

UNLICENSED TASK FORCE COMMITTEE: Anthony Segarra, Ray Coyle, Matt Gaudio, Andrew Popkin
Making progress meeting with town Building Commissioners.

PROGRAMS AND EDUCATION: Steve Walters, William Cain, Ray Coyle

Jim Domozych of PSEGLI was nice enough to bring new Red Books to the meeting for all to take home. His discussion was most informative, giving examples and highlighting how the Red Book can be a great reference tool "to get the job done right". He gave a lesson on ***Load Letter Applications*** that can be found in the Red Book as well. Information on height tables, 600 amp service, roof clearance, riser location, property line responsibility, and property easement were discussed among many other topics. Jim advised taking lots of pictures and talking to PSEGLI first. Thank you Jim Domozych for a great program!

Please contact Steve Walters or anyone on the board with what topics you'd like to learn about so he can incorporate them into the monthly programs and education.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

DOOR PRIZE WINNERS:

John Cangemi , Bob Rezney, Neil Slattery, Carl Kleeman, Sean Owens, Goetz, Dan Sherry, Michael Paolli, Andy Lennon.

50/50: John Cangemi

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Receptacles in Damp or Wet Locations

Notable NEC changes for dwelling units

By Mark C. Ode



THERE HAVE BEEN SOME MAJOR AND MINOR CHANGES in Section 406.9 applications of the 2023 *National Electrical Code* dealing with receptacles installed in damp or wet locations. It is important for users to keep track of any changes in the *Code*, because installing in these conditions could cause hazardous conditions.

Existing text in 406.9(A) for damp and 406.9(B) for wet locations state that all 125V and 250V nonlocking receptacles must be a listed weather-resistant type. Weather-resistant receptacles are manufactured with a built-in flexible plastic boot located within the receptacle where the cord cap blades will penetrate. Weather-resistant receptacles are a safety function that keeps water out of the receptacle slots even if it intrudes through the weatherproof cover.

New text in 406.9(A) and (B)

New text inserted into 406.9(A) and (B) is a requirement that hinged covers of outlet box hoods must be able to open at least 90 degrees, or fully open if the cover is not designed to open 90 degrees from the closed to open position, after installation. This is one of the 2023 *NEC* changes that is more of a clarification, since not being able to open covers to permit connection to the receptacles is more of a common-sense issue. However, anyone who has ever tried to insert a cord cap into a receptacle with a weatherproof cover that did not open to 90 degrees or more would impress a professional contortionist. Always keep in mind who the users are. Many of us may not even be able to get down to a ground-mounted receptacle, let alone put a cord cap in, and then less-than-gracefully stand up.

Section 406.9(B) dealing with wet locations is subdivided into two subsections, with (1) covering receptacles of 15A and 20A in a wet location and (2) covering all other receptacles installed in a wet location. Section 406.9(B)(1) states the following: Receptacles of 15A and 20A, 125V and 250V installed in a wet location must have a waterproof enclosure, whether or not the attachment plug cap is inserted.

An outlet box hood installed for this purpose must be listed and identified as extra-duty. Other listed products, enclosures or assemblies providing weatherproof protection that do not use an outlet box hood do not need to be identified extra-duty. These types of identification and requirements are not applicable to listed receptacles, faceplates, outlet boxes, enclosures or assemblies identified as either being suitable for wet locations or rated as one of the outdoor enclosure-type numbers of Table 110.28 that does not use an outlet box hood.

What about exceptions?

An exception states that 15A and 20A, 125V through 250V receptacles, installed in a wet location and subject to routine high-pressure

spray washing, are permitted to have a waterproof enclosure when the attachment plug is removed.

Section 406.9(B)(2) does not apply to receptacles rated 15A or 20A, 125V and 250V. It does apply so all other receptacles installed in a wet location must be listed weather-resistant type, and installation must comply with 406.9(B)(2)(a) or (B)(2)(b).

Section 406.9(B)(2)(a) applies to receptacles installed in a wet location where the product intended to be plugged into it is not attended while in use, so it must have a weatherproof enclosure with the attachment plug cap inserted or removed. Section 406.9(B)(2)(b) permits a receptacle to be installed in a wet location, where the product intended to be plugged into it will be attended while in use (e.g., portable tools), to have a weatherproof enclosure when the attachment plug is removed.

Bathtubs and shower spaces

Section 406.9(C) covering bathtub and shower spaces has been totally rewritten. Receptacles must not be installed inside of the tub or shower or within a zone measured 3 feet horizontally from any outside edge of the bathtub or shower stall, including the space outside or below the zone. The zone also includes the space measured vertically from the floor to 8 feet above the top of the bathtub rim or shower stall threshold.

The identified zone is all-encompassing and includes the space directly over the bathtub or shower stall and the space below this zone, but not the space separated by a floor, wall, ceiling, room door, window or fixed barrier.

There are four exceptions to these rules, two of which are as follows: (Exception 2) In bathrooms with less than the required zone, the receptacle(s) required by 210.52(D) shall be permitted to be installed opposite the bathtub rim or shower stall threshold on the farthest wall within the room. (Exception 4) In a dwelling unit, a single receptacle shall be permitted for an electronic toilet or personal hygiene device such as an electronic bidet seat. The receptacle shall be readily accessible and not located in the space between the toilet and the bathtub or shower. Become familiar with these rules. ⚡

ODE is a retired lead engineering instructor at Underwriters Laboratories and is owner of Southwest Electrical Training and Consulting. Contact him at 919.949.2576 and neccode7@gmail.com.

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Never Skip the Grounding Wire

When the NEC and PQ converge

By Richard P. Bingham

IT HAS BEEN NEARLY TWO DECADES since incompatibility between the *National Electrical Code* requirements and the design criteria for a high reliability of electrical supply resulted in the addition of Article 708, Critical Operations Power Systems.

However, this article was not intended as a how-to for designing an electrical system to minimize the effects of power quality phenomena. *NEC* Article 90.1 clearly states that the *Code's* purpose "is the practical safeguarding of persons and property from hazards arising from the use of electricity" and it "contains provisions that are considered necessary for safety."

It also states, "Compliance therewith and proper maintenance results in an installation that is essentially free from hazard but not necessarily efficient, convenient, or adequate for good service or future expansion of electrical use."

Even after Article 708 was adopted, there are still those who say that all that they need to do is follow the *NEC* requirements and the equipment should operate properly, which isn't always true. The following example shows on a small scale what could potentially be a safety hazard and equipment misoperation or failure due to not following the *Code*. It does illustrate many of the problems found in the field that affect the quality of the electrical supply, such as illegal neutral-to-ground bonds.

A picture speaks a half-dozen violations

The picture is from a two-story colonial house, originally built in 1942, with a major renovation 15 years ago. The house recently underwent another renovation to remove the wall between the kitchen and dining room and support with two microlam beams. Three switches and two receptacles in the wall needed to be relocated. One of the switches was a three-way, which was part of a circuit in the kitchen.

On a wall in the kitchen near the side door were two metallic single-gang boxes screwed together to make a double-gang. The left side housed a dimmer switch (not shown, but it was connected to the red, black and blue-taped wires heading off the picture), and a three-way switch that had one of the black wires broken off the screw terminal. The dimmer controlled a ceiling chandelier and the three-way switch was part of the circuit that controlled two recessed lights over the counter. Above the "double-gang" box was a display for the alarm system, which needed power.

To the right is a single-gang, nonmetallic, low-voltage old work box with two wires to a receptacle. Since there were no receptacles nearby on that wall, someone added this box and ran white and black wires over to the metallic box (without a strain relief). To hide the power supply wires for the display, they ran them through the wall and over to the side of the low-voltage box and out the side.

When the cover was on the box, the wires were protruding slightly out the bottom, and then the power supply was plugged into that receptacle. Perhaps because the power supply didn't have a ground pin, they decided it wasn't necessary to run the ground wire over to



the receptacle. Instead, they twisted and capped the ground wire pig-tail from the grounding screw in the metallic box to the neutral wire.

Power supply circuit wiring

Though there are at least a half-dozen *NEC* violations in this example, the display power supply circuit wiring is the most concerning from a PQ perspective. While this power supply had no grounding pin, there is no guarantee that something else plugged into it in the future would not have one. The grounding conductor allows for a path for surge protection devices to divert the transient energy to. Though this display device communicates wirelessly to the rest of the system, some security alarm systems are hard-wired to the phone system. When a lightning strike couples the energy into the phone wiring, having no ground or surge protection can lead to destructive results throughout the house.

The neutral (or grounded) conductor is only to be grounded at the service entrance bonding point. When there are secondary bonds between them, the current in the neutral conductor now has multiple paths back to the service entrance bonding point. Normally, the current in the grounding conductor is very small, but put the half of the load current of the neutral into it, and the equipment ground will have an elevated voltage. In addition, fault current carried in the grounding conductor can now make its way into the neutral conductor and equipment powered by it.

This situation was one of a dozen in this house demonstrating why only licensed electricians should be doing this work. It took the electricians an extra week to correct all of the problems while trying to relocate those few switches and receptacles.

BINGHAM, a contributing editor for power quality, can be reached at 908.499.5321.

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Hire for Culture, Train for Skill

Grow your company by finding the right talent

By Matt Firestone

HAVE YOU STRUGGLED TO FIND WAYS to help your business reach its potential and stay competitive? If so, hiring the right people for your team is essential. It's not enough to hire based on skill; understanding how an applicant's values align with your organization is vital. Equipping these employees with adequate training related to their job will lead to a thriving workplace culture.

Hire to fit the organizational culture

When hiring new talent, it's important to ensure they fit into your organization's culture. If someone doesn't mesh well with the company's values and way of doing things, it can lead to tension and conflict. This tension can be damaging to the team's productivity and morale.

It's crucial to take culture into account when screening candidates. Ask yourself how each potential hire would likely fit in with the rest of the team. Look for qualities that align with your organization's standards, such as a shared commitment to teamwork or dedication to customer service.

Identify potential employees' values

When hiring new employees, it is important to identify the values they hold. This will help you find individuals who will be a good fit for your company and its culture. Consider whether the potential employee is honest, reliable, hardworking and respectful. It is also essential to communicate your company's goals and values. Ensure that the person you hire shares the company's values and is motivated by the same things.

One way to identify a potential employee's values is to ask them questions about their past experiences. For example, you could ask what they are most proud of or consider their most significant achievement. This will give you a sense of what is important to them.

It can be helpful to have a list of values you are looking for in potential employees to quickly identify a good match for your company. Some examples are integrity, teamwork, dedication and innovation. If you can find someone who embodies these values, you know they will be a good fit for your organization.

Ensure employees have the necessary skills

Employers should take time to assess the skills their employees need to do their jobs and then provide the appropriate training and development opportunities. These can include on-the-job training, online courses or workshops. Employees with access to various training and development opportunities are more likely to succeed in their roles. If not, it can impact their ability to do their jobs properly and lead to lower productivity.

Strategies to provide quality training

There are several different strategies to provide quality training programs, including ensuring the programs are relevant to employees' needs. You should also take care that the programs are interactive and engaging so they will be motivated to participate.

Another critical factor is the level of support you provide to employees once they have completed the training programs. You should follow up with them to ensure they are using the new skills in their work and finding the training helpful.

Benefits of a thriving culture at work

A thriving workplace culture has many benefits for employees and employers. A positive culture can lead to increased productivity, creativity and job satisfaction. Employees who feel valued and appreciated in their work environment are more likely to be engaged and invested in their job. A positive culture can also help to reduce employee turnover rates.



For employers, a positive workplace culture can lead to increased morale, teamwork and customer satisfaction. Employers who create a positive work environment are more likely to attract and retain top talent, and a positive culture can help to improve company performance and reduce costs.

Your company's culture is essential to attracting and retaining the best talent. By taking the time to identify the values important to your organization, you can ensure everyone joining your team is on the same page. Providing quality training programs and ensuring employees have the skills to do their jobs effectively will help create a thriving workplace culture where everyone can excel.

What steps will you take to define and nurture your company culture? ⚡

FIRESTONE, a former contractor, is the owner of Firestone Consulting Group. He can be reached at mdf@firestonecg.com.

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
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New Life for Tax Deduction

Lighting's role in the expanded CBTD

By Craig DiLouie

PASSED IN AUGUST 2022, the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) expanded the Commercial Buildings Tax Deduction (CBTD), increasing the scope of qualifying projects, allowing it to be claimed multiple times and increasing the potential value of the energy-efficiency incentive.

Created by the Energy Policy Act of 2005, the CBTD (Section 179D of the U.S. tax code) offers a financial incentive for commercial building owners to invest in energy-efficient interior lighting, HVAC/hot water systems and building envelope. The incentive takes the form of an accelerated tax deduction, allowing owners to take the deduction in a single year rather than over a period, which helps reduce initial cost. The accelerated deduction value is in dollars per square foot, earned by achieving satisfactory energy reductions compared to a reference building.

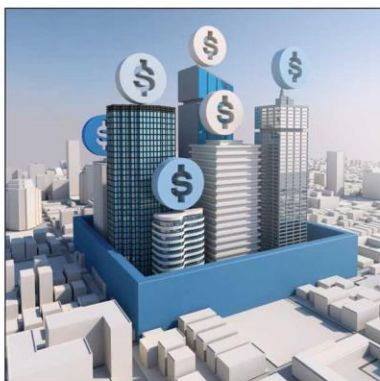
Over the years, the CBTD frequently expired and was then reinstated, often retroactively. In 2015, a tax bill recognized the reference building as being one complying with the 2007 version of the ANSI/ASHRAE/IES 90.1 energy standard rather than the 2001 version, making the CBTD harder to gain. In 2021, the Consolidated Appropriations Act made the CBTD permanent, built in an inflation adjustment for the incentive and authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to update the reference building in the future.

The IRA significantly revised the CBTD, making it repeatable and more robust. The previous partial deduction, however, was eliminated. So was the Interim Lighting Rule, which offered a simpler path for lighting retrofit projects. A new one was added.

Qualifying projects: Commercial buildings in the United States and within the scope of 90.1 that install energy-efficient property.

"Property" means normally tax-depreciable equipment installed as part of interior lighting, HVAC/hot water systems or the building envelope. "Energy-efficient" means it reduces total annual energy and power costs by 25% or more compared to a reference building.

Who claims it: Typically, the owner. In the case of any tax-exempt entities, public or otherwise, however, the IRA authorizes the property's designer to claim the CBTD.



The reference building: The reference building is one that satisfies the minimum requirements of the 2007 version of 90.1, unless the Secretary of the Treasury has affirmed a later (more stringent) version.

The incentive: The CBTD is \$0.50/sq.ft. for achieving a 25% reduction in energy and power costs compared to the reference building. This increases \$0.02/sq.ft. for every 1% of energy reduction beyond the 25% baseline, up to a \$1/sq.ft. maximum.

There is a bonus if the project satisfies prevailing wage and apprenticeship requirements. The CBTD is \$2.50/sq.ft. for 25% savings, increasing \$0.10/sq.ft. for every 1% of energy reduction, up to \$5/sq.ft. max.

Repeatability: Before, the CBTD could be claimed only once. The IRA allows commercial building owners to claim it every three years and tax-exempt entities every four, as long as they satisfy the requirements in 179D.

Certification: Treasury must define how to calculate and verify energy and power consumption based on the California Non-residential Alternative Calculation Method Approval Manual. They must also detail how to certify projects, including qualified software for modeling and who can determine compliance. The certification must include an explanation of energy-efficient building features and projected annual energy costs.

Retrofit projects: Last but not least, the CBTD now includes an alternate deduction for retrofit projects that demonstrate a 25% decrease in energy use intensity—measured in BTU—compared to the preretrofit building. A retrofit plan is required. To qualify, the building must have been in service at least 5 years before the plan. The deduction must be taken in the year of final qualifying certification.

Lighting's role: The Interim Lighting Rule's elimination made lighting's part in the CBTD more complex, encouraging it as part of a building systems approach with software-based energy modeling.

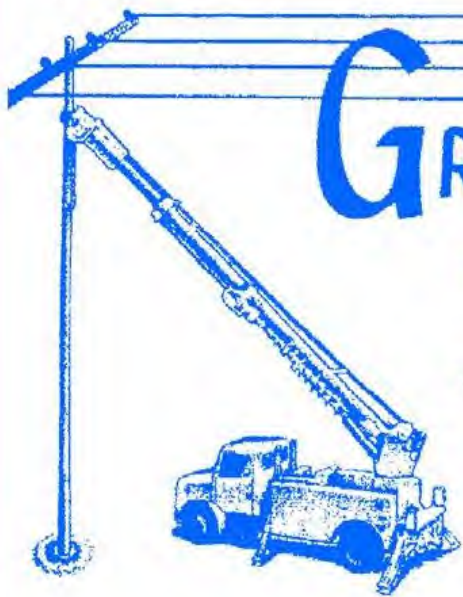
Permanently installed interior lighting—and, arguably, lighting controls—qualify as energy-efficient property. Compared to the 2007 version of 90.1, LED lighting, advanced controls and good design emphasizing energy savings but not compromising lighting quality can make a significant contribution, but this becomes more challenging against later versions of 90.1.

For retrofits, the reference is the existing building rather than a theoretical standard-compliant one, which can make the threshold 25% energy reduction easier to achieve. As plug loads are now a significant energy user, the potential to include automatic receptacle control into the lighting control system may contribute additional savings.

The new CBTD takes a fairly simple and straightforward incentive path for lighting retrofits, but it is more robust and still includes an important role for lighting. Coupled with utility rebates, it can significantly reduce initial cost, which is often a major inhibitor to investing in the most energy-efficient options. ⚡

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Control of Hazardous Energy (lockout/ tagout), general industry



Photo: khomsan rakphong / iStock / Getty Images Plus via Getty Images.

Regulation 29 CFR 1910.147

Key Provisions:

- The OSHA standard for The Control of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/Tagout) (29 CFR 1910.147) for general industry outlines measures for controlling different types of hazardous energy. The LOTO standard establishes the employer's responsibility to protect workers from hazardous energy.
- Employers are also required to train each worker to ensure that they know, understand, and are able to follow the applicable provisions of the hazardous energy control procedures:
 - Proper lockout/tagout (LOTO) practices and procedures safeguard workers from the release of hazardous energy. The OSHA standard for The Control of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/Tagout) (29 CFR 1910.147) for general industry, outlines specific action and procedures for addressing and controlling hazardous energy during servicing and maintenance of machines and equipment. Employers are also required to train each worker to ensure that they know, understand, and are able to follow the applicable provisions of the hazardous energy control procedures. Workers must be trained in the purpose and function of the energy control program and have the knowledge and skills required for the safe application, usage and removal of the energy control devices.
 - All employees who work in an area where energy control procedure(s) are utilized need to be instructed in the purpose and use of the energy control procedure(s), especially prohibition against attempting to restart or reenergize machines or other equipment that are locked or tagged out.
 - All employees who are authorized to lockout machines or equipment and perform the service and maintenance operations need to be trained in recognition of applicable hazardous energy sources in the workplace, the type and magnitude of energy found in the workplace, and the means and methods of isolating and/or controlling the energy.
- Specific procedures and limitations relating to tagout systems where they are allowed.
- Retraining of all employees to maintain proficiency or introduce new or changed control methods.

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