

electricITY

A Publication of the Electric Association • www.eaichicago.org • Volume 23 • No 4 • Winter 2019-20



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A publication of the Electric Association

Our Mission:

To provide members of the electrical industry of Chicagoland and their employees with formal educational opportunities, professional development, information exchange, and member services.

— and —

To serve as the interface between various organizations serving the same industry, and foster the interchange of ideas, product knowledge, and programs in order to create the best external environment possible for conducting business in the electrical industry.

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President's Report

George Callas
Callas Kingsley Electrical Sales

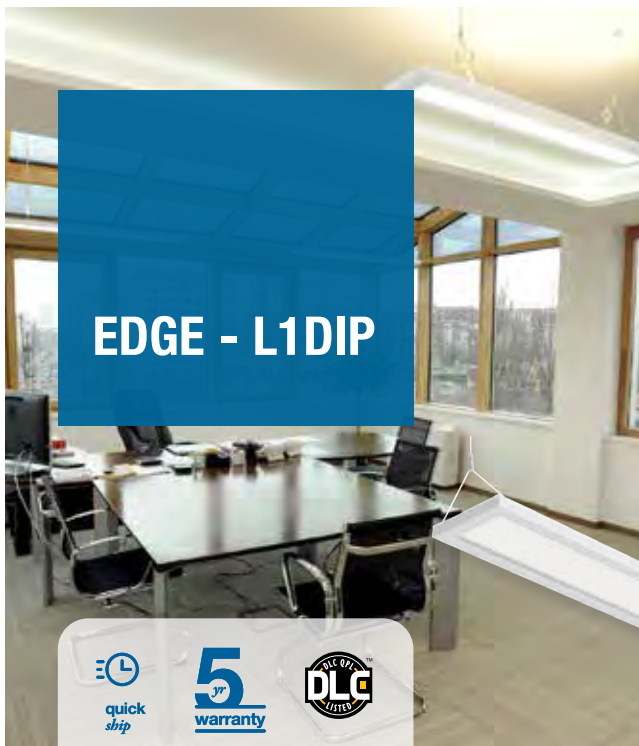
Looking forward

At the Electric Association Annual General Meeting on December 12, 2019, we gathered to recap the year of 2019 for our association with the largest conference to date, growth in our divisions, as well as an increased online presence for our membership. The Chicagoland Electric Association Education Foundation awarded multiple scholarships and enrolled over 150 students in continuing education classes throughout the year.

Looking to 2020, the Association has plans started for a new look for our website, more tours and events for our divisions and an Electric Association presence at the National Electrical Contractors (NECA) Convention held in Chicago in October 2020.

The new year will kick off with the Annual Electric Association Conference and Trade Show, January 9th and 10th at Drury Lane in Oakbrook Terrace. It is on track to be another outstanding event with education classes over the two days, expanded networking opportunities, and a two-day trade show. This will be a premiere event to strengthen relationships in our industry and welcome newcomers. You can read all about the conference in the feature story of this magazine edition.

I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their leadership and efforts in a successful year. ●



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Executive Director's Report Ali Novinger

2019 Highlights and 2020 Super Easy Resolutions

The Electric Association has seen increased member engagement across all of our events, divisions, and affiliate groups in 2019.

2019 HIGHLIGHTS

Electric Association

- ⚡ The Electric Association Conference welcomed over 850 attendees at the January 2019 conference.
- ⚡ Industry colleagues gathered at the October awards dinner to honor Gold Medal Award winner Rick Kerman of Steiner Electric and Hall of Fame Honorees Michael Wall of Industrial Electric Supply and Robert Fimbiani of Linear Electric.

Consulting Electrical Engineers

- ⚡ The CEE May Technical Forum held another sold out tabletop trade show at the Union League Club of Chicago
- ⚡ Monthly meetings continue to produce important presentations from a variety of sponsors.
- ⚡ The December Forum toured the Old Post Office in Chicago, hosted by McGuire Engineers.



Communications Technologies Forum

- ⚡ The CTF hosted a spring conference at the Carlisle in Lombard
- ⚡ The CTF summer social was hosted at a Chicago Dogs baseball game in Rosemont. The group enjoyed networking in the Rivers Stadium Club at Impact Field.
- ⚡ The All Industry CTF Golf Outing returned to Cog Hill Golf Club a day of the perfect golf weather.

The Women's Division

- ⚡ The summer social was combined with a tour of the Wanda Vista Tower in Chicago. Attendees enjoyed breathtaking views and insight on this engineering marvel.
- ⚡ The Women's Division holiday party was sweeter than ever at the Sugar Factory in Rosemont with 120 party guests.



Young Electrical Professionals

- ⚡ The professionals took over G Cue Billiards in Chicago in May.
- ⚡ Volunteers joined at the Greater Chicago Food Depository in August to help repack 10,317 pounds of bread!
- ⚡ The fall panel event was a success thanks to our moderator Josh Fluecke of Syska Hennessy and panelists Matt Barrett of BURNDY, Jeff Casey of Casey Electrical Sales, Kendra Dinkins of Taylor Electric, Joe Romano of Syska Hennessy Group and David Rosenstein of ConneXion.



Chicagoland Electric Association Education Foundation

- ⚡ The foundation awarded six scholarships, honored at the annual EGC Dinner dance. The CTF also awarded a scholarship in 2019. There were two scholarships awarded on behalf of the CEE including a new scholarship in honor of late CEE and EA board member Gerry Ryan.
- ⚡ Volunteers from the industry gathered at a new location for the annual Christmas Party for Chicago area homeless children and their families. We are so grateful for the coordination and support of Powering Chicago, NECA Chicago and IBEW 134 for use of the IBEW 134 hall in Chicago for this amazing event.

SUPER EASY NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

1. Attend the Electric Association Conference January 9 and 10, 2020 at the Drury Lane Conference Center. This year's event features a TWO-day tradeshow, live demos, hours of valuable education sessions and endless opportunity to connect with industry colleagues.
2. Make sure you and your company are represented in all of the EA divisions and affiliate groups. Review the list of divisions above or look at eachicago.org. Strong presence and community supported by our member companies is where our industry thrives!
3. Let the EA get your news out there! Send us your press releases, updates, and social media platforms so the Electric Association can help your company.
4. Save the Date for NECA Chicago! Members of the electrical construction industry from across the US will convene in Chicago October 3-6, 2020.

As always, please contact me at anovinger@eachicago.org or at the EA office at 630-305-3050 to help you maximize your membership value. ●



Dave Anderson
The Agency
2019 Electric Golf Club President

Electric Golf Club looks to 2020

The year of 2019 produced another successful season for the Electric Golf Club. The club hosted the Annual Dinner Dance and six outings. Membership is strong and most of the outings sold out of space.

If you have yet to join the EGC, we encourage you to join us in 2020 for valuable membership and experience with industry colleagues. Please contact Amy Kasser at akasser@eachicago.org for more information on EGC membership.

Don't miss the All-Industry Electric Golf Club Dinner Dance on February 8th at the Westin in Itasca. At this event, I will pass the gavel onto Kris Fedoruk of Acuity Lighting to take the reigns as the 2020 EGC President. We will also honor the following:



Mark Franzen, CEMCO
2019 J.P Simons Award recipient

Dan Bradfield, J. P. Simons
2019 President's Award recipient

In addition to these honorees, the Dinner Dance also hosts the Electric Association Auction to benefit the EA and CEAEF Scholarship programs. If you are interested in donating to this auction, please contact the EA staff.

Thank you to all who have helped throughout the year during my EGC presidency. I look forward to seeing you all on February 8th, 2020. ●

~~~~~

**If you have yet to join the EGC, we encourage you to join us in 2020 for valuable membership and experience with industry colleagues. Please contact Amy Kasser at [akasser@eachicago.org](mailto:akasser@eachicago.org) for more information on EGC membership.**

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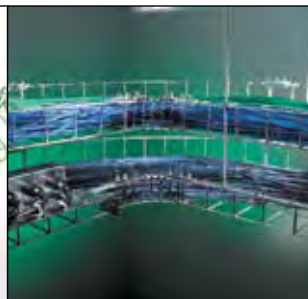

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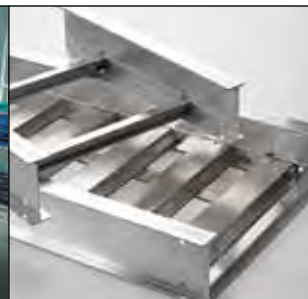
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2020 Conference Highlights

The Electric Association Conference has grown, evolved, and improved year after year and 2020 is no exception. Once again, the Electric Association Annual Conference and Trade Show will be held at the Drury Lane Theater and Conference Center in Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois. This event will feature educational sessions on the 2020 National Electrical Code, Workplace Training on Sexual Harassment Prevention and Marijuana Use in the Workplace, Software Informational Sessions, and four sessions presented by the Construction Safety Council including NFPA 70E-2018.

The 2020 Conference program schedule has been updated to include dedicated tradeshow and networking breaks in the morning and afternoon, between sessions to allow the attendees to walk the show floor. This also allows more time to build relationships with fellow attendees in addition to the breakfast and lunch sessions.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:

“Ask the Inspector” feature, staffed by the International Association of Electrical Inspectors Illinois Chapter, to answer all your most pressing code and installation questions. This will be available during the trade show hours on Thursday, January 9th.

Party at the Show: 3:00 pm–5:00 p.m.

Don’t miss this premier event to network with hundreds of electrical industry professionals and visit the 75 exhibitors at the sold-out tradeshow. Plus—Open bar, raffle prizes, and more!

Can't attend the conference? You can attend the Trade Show complimentary from 3:00pm–5:00 p.m. (registration is suggested, but walk-ins are welcome)

NEW to 2020:

Powering Chicago will host LIVE TECH DEMOS! Don’t miss the Powering Chicago booth and demonstration area to see some of the emerging technologies for our industry.

New Floor Plan! The foyer will feature exhibit booths easy to see on your way to education classes. The dining area will be located on the show floor so you don’t miss any of the features and exhibits at the sold out tradeshow.

TWO-DAY Tradeshow! The event tradeshow will be open on Thursday AND Friday so every attendee can have time to visit all of the exhibitors!

Register today! You can complete your online registration at <https://eachicago.org/chicago2020/>. Please contact EA staff at 630-305-3050 with any questions. We appreciate your support and attendance at the largest Electric Association event of the year.

Conference and Trade Show Schedule

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9

TWO DAY TRADE SHOW:
THURSDAY
11:00AM- 5:00PM
FRIDAY
7:30AM-11:00 AM

Start /End Time(s):

Seminars:

8:00am to 10:00am	2020 National Electrical Code Update Review Session 1
8:30am to 10:00am	Jobsite Safety of "Others" presented by the Construction Safety Council
8:00am to 10:00am	NFPA 3000 Active Shooter Training
10:00am	NETWORKING BREAK
10:15am to 11:15am	CSC Special OSH Trench and Excavation Training presented by the Construction Safety Council
10:15am to 11:15am	Sexual Harassment Awareness and Prevention Training
10:15am to 11:15am	NABCEP Certification (Solar Inspector Certification)
11:30am to 1:30pm	LUNCH AND TRADE SHOW OPEN
12:00pm to 1:30pm	ECA MEMBERSHIP LUNCH AND MEETING- Crystal II
1:30pm to 3:30pm	2020 National Electrical Code Update Review (continued) Session 2
1:30pm to 2:30pm	Improve Your Design Review Process with Bluebeam Revu
1:30pm to 2:30pm	What you need to know: Marijuana in the Workplace
2:30pm to 3:00pm	NETWORKING BREAK AND TRADE SHOW OPEN
3:00pm to 4:00pm	LEED Certification and the Green Alliance
3:00pm to 4:00pm	Are you really qualified? presented by the Construction Safety Council
3:00pm to 5:00pm	PARTY AT THE SHOW AND TRADE SHOW OPEN

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10

Start /End Time(s):

Seminars:

7:30 am - 9:30 am	Attendee Breakfast in Foyer
8:00am to 12:00pm	NFPA 70E-Electrical Safety (certification card to be issued by the Construction Safety Council), Change to "NFPA 70E-Electrical Safety presented by the Construction Safety Council
8:30am to 10:30am	Energy Storage
11:00am to 12:00pm	MBE WBE Training
11:00am to 12:00 pm	Energy Efficiency Presented by ComEd
11:00am to 2:00 pm	Exhibitor Break down
Noon	Conference Adjournment

2020 EA Conference Exhibitors

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Computer Software Training (ie: Microsoft Office)
English as a Second Language
Team Development
Executive Leadership Development
Supervisory / Management Skills
Finance
Coaching, Mentoring

Change Management
Time Management
Strategic Planning
Behavioral Interviewing
Human Resource Topics
Negotiating
Planning / Project Management
Conflict Resolution

Visit eachicago.org/education
for details and registration.



Contact us today for more information! | Chicagoland Electric Association Education Foundation
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**ECA Electrical Contractors
Association of City of Chicago**
Richard Jamerson | ECA President,
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ECA Membership Meeting Highlights

The Electrical Contractors' Association of City of Chicago (ECA) is a construction trade association that provides business and labor relations services to nearly 600 electrical contractors in Cook County, Illinois. The Association works with its industry partner, Local Union #134, IBEW to negotiate and administer labor agreements, coordinate apprentice and journeyman level training, as well as promotion of the industry on behalf of these employers. The ECA is also known as the Chicago and Cook County Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA). Currently, 70 signatory firms are members of the Electrical Contractors' Association of City of Chicago (ECA) / Chicago and Cook County Chapter, NECA.

Throughout the year, the ECA holds monthly meetings, excluding the months of July and August, as well as an Annual Spring Conference and a Holiday event. The regular meetings usually feature a guest speaker discussing industry issues. The following highlights a number of recent sessions.

The Electrical Contractors' Association of City of Chicago (ECA) January Regular Membership Meeting was held in conjunction with the Electric Association Annual Conference. The Membership Meeting featured discussions concerning the new installation of the ECA Officers and Executive Committee for 2019, a review of the 2018 Budget and proposed 2019 Budget, Committee Chairman appointments, among other areas. The session was highlighted by a presentation from Mr. Marco Giamberardino, NECA Government Affairs Executive Director. He discussed the elections and the impact on NECA's business / contractor agenda.

The February meeting featured guest speaker Mr. Ryan James Boyle, a Vice President and Senior Economist within the Global Risk Management division of Northern Trust assisted by Mr. Michael Nieves, Northern Trust. Mr. Boyle gave a presentation covering a number of economic forecast topics, including the following: 2019 Economic Forecast for the United States, Chicago outlook, State and political outlook, and an international perspective.

At the March meeting, City of Chicago Department of Buildings (DOB) Commissioner Judy Frydland assisted by Mr. Michael Reynolds, Chief Electrical Inspector, Mr. Grant Ullrich, Deputy Commissioner and Mr. Gregg Cunningham, Department of Buildings staff gave a presentation covering a number of issues affecting electrical construction in Chicago, including the following: 60 tower cranes have been up in the last two years, 48,000 Building Permits were issued in 2017 and 2019 was on pace, the DOB has implemented many reforms and long-term initiatives concerning making the permit process more streamlined, additional Inspectors had been included in the budget for 2019, and a major effort to review and enhance the entire Chicago Building Code would soon be underway.

For the April meeting, Mr. Don Finn, Local Union #134 IBEW Business Manager was the main speaker. Also, Mr. Robert Hattier, Local Union #134 IBEW gave a brief presentation. Each discussed industry concerns, including the following: Mr. Finn and representatives of Local Union #134 IBEW, as well as ECA representative(s) are to work together to gather information concerning worker's needs through work forums and by visiting job sites, the Chicagoland Union Electrical Construction

Industry must continue to promote solar work in the area and throughout the state.

The May meeting had two guest presenters: Mr. David Long, NECA CEO and Dr. Paul Lisnek, WGN-TV Political Analyst. Mr. Long offered comments on his new position and discussed changes that are to be made to better enhance membership benefits. His discussion points regarded the following: as CEO, he will continue efforts concerning market expansion, enhancement of member services, increase viability of NECA membership, as NECA is in the process of restructuring to expand its presence. He also commended the Chicago Chapter and Local 134's Training Program. Dr. Paul Lisnek, WGN-TV Political Analyst offered comments on the national, state and local political landscape.

The Electrical Contractors' Association of City of Chicago (ECA) held its 48th Annual Spring Conference on June 5 - 6, 2019 at the Grand Geneva Resort in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Over 80 individuals registered for the event. The golf outing scheduled for Wednesday, June 5, 2019 at the Brute Course was a success, as the weather cooperated with a sunny afternoon. Wednesday night's Membership Meeting provided all with the opportunity to catch up with industry updates. The conference concluded on Thursday morning, June 6th with an informative presentation facilitated by Ms. Maureen O'Brien, a Business Strategist / Consultant - Global Women's Leadership Forum (GWLF), called, "Diversity & Inclusion: What Does It Even Mean and What's the Business Impact?"

The September meeting featured guest presenters from ComEd: Mr. Chris Siambekos, ComEd Director of Support, Mr. Michael Mann, ComEd Regional Manager of New Business (NB) - Commercial, Industrial, Public Authority (CIPA), and Mr. Michael Norris, ComEd CIPA South Manager. Each presenter discussed the New Business section of ComEd and its relation to member's utilization of ComEd services. The presenters emphasized the importance of using the ComEd website for basic inquiries, shutdown, normal outages / cut-overs, as well as dedicated outages information and scheduling.

Each speaker emphasized the importance of follow-up by ComEd, and consistent communication with customers.

The October Membership Meeting welcomed Acting Chief Development Officer of the Design and Construction Divisions for the Chicago Department of Aviation, Frank Grimaldi. He focused on the new projects planned at O'Hare and Midway, as well as the status of current activity. He also discussed the impact of the work on the construction industry. He also informed the members in regard to bidding requirements for work at O'Hare and Midway.

The November program was highlighted by a presentation made by Mr. David Ward, NECA Midwest Field Representative. Mr. Ward's presentation highlighted the NECA 1025 Initiative - increasing overall market share by 10% by 2025. Utilizing the overall NECA membership, the many IBEW locals and other major players in the unionized electrical construction industry, is crucial for the success of this effort. He further discussed the various issues concerning promoting growth in the industry through this joint effort. Issues discussed included the following: portability, innovative technology, attrition, alternate classification of workers, market recovery programs, collaborative recruiting efforts, manpower needs, manpower growth, construction growth, market share growth, among other areas.

We thank all of these individuals, as well as the many member volunteers that have been able to address the Association on issues pertinent to the members' businesses.

The above information is a sampling of the year-round activities of the Association. It is through the participation of our member volunteers that has kept the Association on the forefront of the industry. We hope that all signatory contractors within the Cook County area will make the commitment to the industry and join our Association. Please contact the ECA office at: (708) 531-0022 or visit our website at: www.ecachicago.com for membership information, as well as information regarding Chapter and NECA programming. ●



NECA National Electrical Contractors Association Craig Martin | Chapter Governor

Peer Into Your Peers' Businesses

However, for decades hundreds of electrical contractors have formed "Peer Groups" for that very purpose. Within NECA, many Peer Groups have been formed by members, independently from the Association itself, and they continue to thrive. In more recent years, such groups have been launched and administered by consulting firms (*on a fee basis*), accounting firms, and even insurance brokers are in the mix of pulling groups together these days.

The typical structure for the groups that NECA members have launched involve meeting to discuss estimating, accounting, marketing, purchasing, tool management, safety, insurance, motivation of personnel, long-range planning, construction claims, change orders, service work, and labor relations. In addition, they often routinely travel as a group to one another's firms to conduct critiques of each other's operations. When Peer Groups are formed, companies are often grouped together within a certain range of annual sales, in order to be more relevant, and are selected to avoid having direct competitors involved. My own positive past experience was with a group that followed the above approach and structure (*An Academy White-Paper that I contributed to on this topic is readily available*).

Of course, not everyone can fit the commitment of joining a formal Peer Group into an overcrowded schedule. But there are some alternatives. One in particular that I would like to mention is the NECA Network. As a monitored service offered by the Association, the NECA Network hosts an Open Forum on-line. The on-line platform has a variety of communities, but the Open Forum itself has over 23,000 registered users. Users post discussion topics, with over 320 currently listed. The topics are wide ranging, but all of them are pertinent to electrical contractors. You will see people asking questions ranging from software reviews to how to evaluate job performance of their estimators, best practices for daily time cards, service operations, prefab best practices...you get the idea. With so many users on-line, it is always interesting to see the candid and well thought out responses that come in. Much like Peer Groups, this community can be surprisingly open about what has worked in their businesses and what has not. I haven't seen anything quite this targeted or useful on the standard social media sites. The NECA Network doesn't fully substitute for the in-depth interactions of a Peer Group and clearly nothing on-line can match the personal relationships we build. However, this is a great tool for getting quick and useful feedback on a variety of electrical contracting topics. To find out how you, your company, and your employees can easily tap into this service please contact the local NECA Chapter office at 630-876-5360. ●

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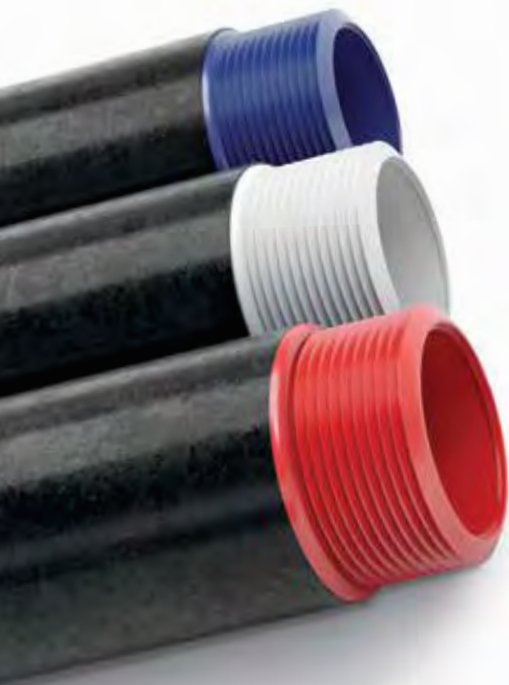
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