



### A Word from the Chair

## 2021 Legislative Wrap-Up

by Clayton Schenck, Chair, Board of Directors

The 2021 Legislative Session ended on May 17, so I asked Michelle Dreier, the Association's Government Affairs

Manager, to summarize. Thank you to Michelle for staying on top of these issues for us!

On May 17, Minnesota's legislative leaders and Governor Walz announced the framework of a budget deal but will need a special session to complete their work. Here's what we know now:

- Minnesota will fully conform on PPP loans and full Unemployment Insurance conformity for tax relief for employers and employees.
- Budget targets do not raise any taxes.
- Most of the federal funds provided for COVID recovery will be guided by legislative oversight.
- There is still lots of work to do. Working Groups (the name for Committees when Legislature is not in Session) must align their budget targets within spreadsheets of funded items by May 28. As line items are documented, disagreements may arise.
- All policy agreements must be aligned by June 4 in time for a special session scheduled for June 14. Emergency powers and police reform will continue to be contentious items up for debate.
- The final agreement does not appear to contain the most onerous workplace mandates on employers.

- Bonding numbers are yet undecided. Legislative focus will be on regional and state projects, and less focus on local projects.

The Electrical Association entered the 2021 Session with two major legislative initiatives. Eliminating Duty to Defend (D2D) and pursuing Conservation Improvement Program reform in the Energy Conservation Optimization Act (ECO).

D2D performed very well and made it through 3 of the 4 committees necessary to move to a floor vote. Public agencies had some concerns about the language, which required a pause to determine how best to alleviate these concerns while still protecting subcontractors from paying attorney fees for disputes that they did not cause.

ECO passed on the last day of session and is headed to the Governor's desk! Thank you to everyone who contacted your legislators to make this happen. The Electrical Association also assisted in helping the North Minneapolis Clean Energy Training Center get funding to build out their program. We look forward to adding graduates of this Center to our Workforce Development Program for members to consider as their next new hire!

### Look for a survey in your inbox next month as we develop our legislative initiatives for 2022!

D2D and Safety Employing Minors in Construction are several items on the table. Let us know what areas of Legislative Protection are necessary for your business to be better!



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## From the Executive Director From the Board Room

by Clara Albert, CAE, Executive Director

This past April we held our (hopefully) last virtual conference. I want to thank the leadership of the Association for their ability to continue to provide guidance and governance through this past year of unknowns. I am proud of the way the Electrical Association will be coming out of the pandemic. The conversations held at the Committee Meetings were vibrant and forward thinking. What will Electrical Contractors need as we navigate our way forward?

### Membership

**Connection and Communication.** Finding new ways to share information and resources as well as harvesting the comradery that our group creates is continuously being looked at through a new lens. With all the challenges COVID has brought to business owners, the Association wants to be the conduit to make other areas in the business easier. Online communities for you to get peer advice, business webinars evolving into eventual podcasts and new member benefit programs for health insurance, 401k and payment processing are all being created for you.

### Education

**Growth.** The Association's educational offerings took the biggest hit throughout 2020. First quarter of 2021 is showing a different picture. Attendance at public classes exceeded projections. With strong systems in place and all varieties of learning available, growth in our offerings is in the plans. Enhancing our self-paced and apprenticeship course offerings, attracting new audiences and creating a trainer certification program are all in the works.

### ETN of MN

**Compliance.** With recently approved updated standards of operation from the Department of Labor and fulfillment of affirmative action initiatives, this program is set up so you can perform prevailing wage work with less of a headache. We have the answers you need to jump right in.

### Product Service Members

**We plan to meet again.** Our industry partners are important to us. We will be reuniting this group to discuss new and innovative ways for you to connect with our electrical contractor members.

### Building Committee

**Our office is getting a face lift.** In order to best serve our members and customers with the best staff, we need to create space that works for employees. New desks, new shipping area, new paint, new carpet and a new conference space. Pictures to follow once updates have been completed.

The staff at the Association has also been phenomenal at rolling with the punches throughout the year. We are excited to begin a phased approach of working back at the office on a scheduled basis June 1st. Our future work will be hybrid as we have evaluated the best ways to retain talent and be there for our customers and members. We are also pleased to share that we have received funding through PPP 1, PPP 2 and Employee Retention Credits. We continuously work to make your Association strong so we can serve your business needs.

Let us know how else we can guide you!



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## COMPLIANCE

**MN Tax Law and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021...** As of May 17, the end of the 2021 Legislative Session, Minnesota will fully conform on PPP loans and full Unemployment Insurance conformity for tax relief for employers and employers. Consult your account to ensure compliance with the new tax laws. (MN DLI. May 2021)

**OSHA Form 300A...** While March 2 was the deadline for reporting your 300A data for 2020, the reporting system is still active. MNOSHA encourages you to send your info using the fed. OSHA data collection website. **All Minnesota establishments with 20 or more employees** are required to submit their 300A data to federal OSHA. The Injury Tracking Application Login page is at [www.osha.gov/injuryreporting/ita](http://www.osha.gov/injuryreporting/ita).

## CONSTRUCTION TRENDS

**US Residential Construction...** Privately-owned housing starts in April were 9.5% below the March estimate but is 67.3% above the April 2020 rate. Single-family housing starts in April were 13.4% below the revised March figure. (Census.gov. May 2021)

## Business Owners! Employee Retention Credits

**FREE Online Webinar • June 16 (10:00-10:30am)**

Presented by Kyle Spencer  
Smith Schafer Associates



Electrical businesses with greater than a 20% drop in revenue for any quarter in 2021 over the same quarter in 2019 may be eligible for this credit. (Fourth quarter 2020 compared to 2019 also qualifies the business for first quarter 2021.)

Smith Schafer Associates are hosting a free 30-minute webinar to discuss this credit and other tax planning changes affected from all of the recent legislation.



[www.electricalassociation.com/webinars](http://www.electricalassociation.com/webinars)

Scroll down to "Other Organizations' Webinars"

## LABOR & MANAGEMENT

**US Unemployment Rate...** Both the unemployment rate, at 6.1% and the number of unemployed persons, at 9.8M, were little changed in April. These measures are down considerably from their recent highs in April 2020 but remain well above their levels prior to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic (3.5% and 5.7 million in Feb 2020). (BLS. May 2021)

## SOUTH DAKOTA

**SD to End Fed. Pandemic Unemployment Benefits...** Effective June 26, SD will terminate its participation in the federal pandemic-related unemployment assistance programs. SD will continue to pay regular State claims. (SD Dept of Labor & Reg. May 2021)

## EDUCATION & EVENTS

**Electrical Association 2021 Summer "Reunion"...** Save-the-Date and book your hotel for the the summer conference! We are meeting in Breezy Point Aug 13-14.

[www.ElectricalAssociation.com/conferences](http://www.ElectricalAssociation.com/conferences)



## Project Build MN Golf Tournament

**August 19**

**Willinger's Golf Club, Northfield**

Project Build Minnesota is a state-wide construction workforce campaign that aims to reach students and young adults across Minnesota and to produce helpful information about careers in construction.

With funds raised during its first golf tournament, the 501c3 non-profit organization will continue to promote construction as a lifelong career choice for young men and women of all backgrounds.

A room block has been reserved at the Hampton Inn Lakeville for Aug. 18-19. To receive the discounted rate of \$119/night, mention Project Build Minnesota. Reserve your room before July 19.



[project-build-minnesota.perfectgolfevent.com](http://project-build-minnesota.perfectgolfevent.com)



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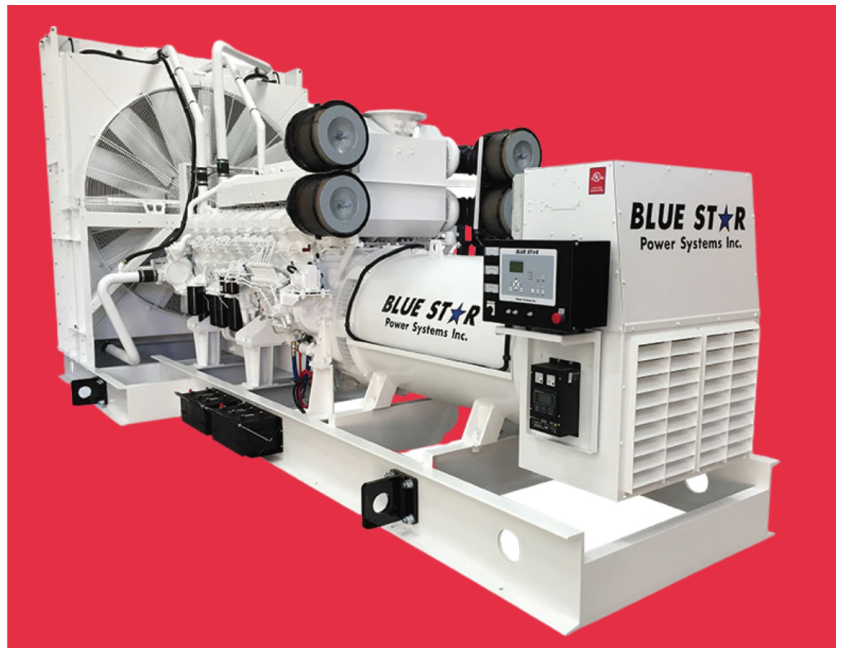
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## 2021 Education Calendar

### CODE TRAINING Based on the 2020 NEC®

#### 16 Continuing Ed. Credits

**Classroom**—Multi-State Approval; check our website. (2 days; 8am-5pm)

- Aug 13-14** **St Cloud** Grounding & Bonding; Motor Installations; Overcurrent Protection. Mike Miller, Trainer.  
**Oct 7-8** **Duluth** Code Highlights; Motor Installations; NFPA 70 E Safety. Mike Miller, Trainer.  
**Oct 22-23** **Minnetonka** Code Highlights; You Be the Inspector. Chad Kurdi, Trainer.

#### 2 Continuing Ed Credits

**Live, Online**—Multi-State Approval; check our website.

- June 1** (8:00-10:00AM) 2020 NEC® Branch Circuit, Feeders, Service Calculations. Tim Zinniel, Trainer.  
**July 13** (6:30-8:30PM) 2020 NEC® Motors, Controls, GFCI Requirements. Jeff Kunkel, Trainer.  
**Aug 12** (8:00-10:00AM) 2020 NEC® Motors and Transformers. Jeff Kunkel, Trainer.  
**Sept 9** (6:30-8:30PM) 2020 NEC® Branch Circuit, Feeders, Service Calculations. Chad Kurdi, Trainer.

#### 2 & 4 Continuing Ed Credits

**Self-Paced Online Anytime, Anywhere**—MN-State Approval

- Grounding & Bonding (2 CE)
- Overcurrent Protection (2 CE)
- You Be the Inspector, Pt 1 (2 CE)
- You Be the Inspector, Pt 2 (2 CE)
- Code Highlights, Pt 1 (4 CE)
- Code Highlights, Pt 2 (4 CE)

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### EXAM PREP COURSES Based on the 2020 NEC®

- June 5-6** **Bloomington.** Renaissance Minneapolis Bloomington Hotel. Chad Kurdi, Trainer.  
**Aug 7-8** **Bloomington.** Renaissance Minneapolis Bloomington Hotel. Chad Kurdi, Trainer.  
**Oct 2-3** **Bloomington.** Renaissance Minneapolis Bloomington Hotel. Chad Kurdi, Trainer.



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## Safety Training— NFPA 70E Safety Training

### Who Will Benefit:

Anyone concerned with electrical safety including safety managers, electrical engineers, plant managers, facility maintenance personnel, electricians, electrical contractors, electrical inspectors, risk managers, and project managers.

The safety of your employees and customers is of the utmost importance to your company!

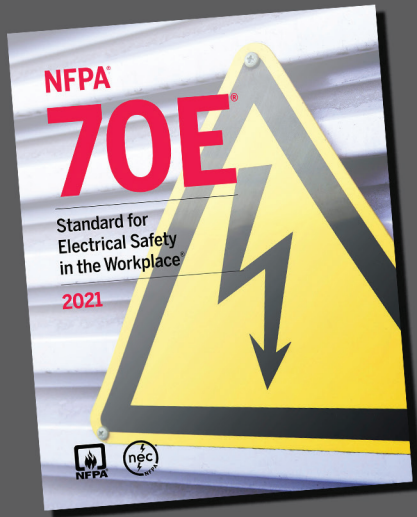
- Save Lives & Increase Employee Loyalty
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