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CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY

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Alaska Mechanical

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PLANT UPGRADES PHS I
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A general contractor, I’ve been curious as to whether or not owners share the same concerns as contractors, or whether they have a completely different perspective on what issues are important to the construction process.

FMI Corporation recently released its Fifth Annual Survey of Owners and the findings are very interesting. Construction owners from both the private sector and the public sector were surveyed on issues such as scheduling, costs, phases of construction, communication and collaboration, and ethical practices.

In reading through the survey, it became apparent that owners were facing the same dilemmas as contractors. Perhaps the most interesting item to be gleaned from the survey is one that contractors have been discussing for years. Owners are finding that failure to focus more on the up-front planning and pre-design phase can lead to disputes and cost overruns.

From the owners’ perspective, cost overruns are caused primarily by:

- Incomplete drawings
- Poor preplanning
- Escalating cost of materials
- Lack of timely decisions by the owner
- Excessive change orders

When asked why owners did not spend more time on the pre-design phase, 21 percent answered they did spend a lot of time in the pre-design phase, but failed to create a thorough project definition. A lack of in-house expertise in the areas of design, contracting and construction means the owner has fewer and less-qualified people to oversee the design phase. This lack of oversight appears to lead to the owners’ conclusion that incomplete drawings and construction documents are a significant cause of cost overruns.

More than 70 percent of respondents say they have experienced a decline in the quality of design drawings. The suitability of as-built drawings was considered less than good by over 46 percent of the owners. This could be a direct result of the quality of the initial design documents.

More than 50 percent of owners agreed that construction documents presented to the construction team still have “significant information needed.” One owner noted that the “quality of design documents has declined to the point where subcontractors, such as electrical and mechanical, are actually completing the design through the shop drawings.” Nearly 60 percent of respondents say having subs complete the design increases miscommunications and delays.

So what do owners want? Among other things, they want better communication, collaboration, and coordination with construction managers, architects, engineers, and contractors. They also want relationships built on trust and sound ethical practices, according to Dennis Doran, author of the survey. In addition, owners continue to struggle with communication and collaboration issues. More effective communication was rated as the top change that will most significantly contribute to improving the quality of the project delivery process.

The top five practices owners identified that could improve communication and collaboration are:

- Provide a clear contact for decisions and approvals
- Openly share project information
- Assemble the project team early and meet frequently
- Meet with service providers to share mission and goals for the project
- Delegate communication and collaboration responsibility to the project manager or construction manager

With staff cutbacks by owners, construction managers and occasionally A/E firms are hired to oversee the construction project. Forty percent of owners use project managers consistently, and 40 percent sometimes do. Mostly, construction managers are brought into the construction process at the design or pre-design phase, and are usually expected to pro-
vide management of the project from beginning to end – including scheduling, A/E design and construction.

Nearly 80 percent of owners believe project collaboration software can help avoid disputes and miscommunications, but about 65 percent still do not mandate its use on their projects.

Ultimately, owners concluded that the top three responsibilities they could carry out better to achieve project success are:

• Make timely decisions
• Engage in more effective communications
• Define the project scope earlier in the project and communicate clearly to the project team what that scope is.

Since change in project scope is the leading cause for change orders, improving project planning is one way to reduce change orders. Owners also noted that unrealistic expectations in creating project schedules and timelines can affect the quality of the project.

This survey of owners duplicates the concerns of most contractors and subcontractors. As the author points out, “There is a frustrating aspect of the results of this survey – the same top owner concerns resurface each year, but the leadership or sense of urgency needed to change the status quo remains elusive.”

With today’s practice of contractors not being brought into the picture until the project is out to bid, it appears that it is up to the owners to insist their design teams provide adequate design documents, hire qualified construction management personnel, and develop effective lines of communication – within their organization and with contractors.

The survey should cause the entire industry to reflect on how they can help solve some of the problems outlined above. The owners recognize that they must play a major role in addressing the problems, but all sectors of the industry have a part to play.

If you would like to receive a copy of the survey, contact Phil Warner at pwarner@fminet.com.
Proposed Legislation Addresses Workers’ Compensation Reform

O
VER THE PAST TWO YEARS, workers’ compensation premi
ums have increased by an average of 30 percent. For man
y employers this item represents their fastest growing cost category. Premium costs, however, represent only the visible aspect of the problem, and do not reveal the numerous components that drive those increases. For example:

◆ Medical Benefits represented 51.6 percent of total benefits paid in 2002. In 1994 medical benefits represented 46.3 percent of total benefits paid. Medical benefits are the fastest growing component of the workers’ compensation system.

◆ Reemployment benefits in 2002 were $15.7 million dollars, almost triple the amount spent in 1994.

◆ The number of injuries and/or illness reported to the Workers’ Compensation Division has declined almost 20 percent since 1994. Lost time cases represent approximately one third of all claims.

◆ The number of claims filed with the Workers’ Compensation Division has increased by almost 70 percent since 1994.

◆ The number of injuries controverted has declined by 10 percent since 1994.

◆ The average cost per claim has doubled since 1994 to $9,086.

◆ The number of fatalities declined by 50 percent since 1984.

◆ Employers receiving their insurance from the assigned risk pool are assessed a 25 percent premium. Unfortunately, this premium is insignificant to cover all the losses incurred by the pool. By statute, those excess losses are covered by all employers in the normal insurance market.

◆ The largest insurance carrier in Alaska writes more than five times the workers’ compensation insurance of the next largest carrier.

The workers’ compensation system in Alaska can then be summarized as a system in which the number of injuries is declining yet the costs continue their inexorable march higher. An attempt to address the underlying problems failed during the last legislative session, and another attempt is currently underway. In the past, an Ad Hoc Committee of management and labor representatives worked on system reform. Put in place almost 25 years ago, the intent of the ad hoc process is to remove system reform from the political process. A grassroots effort of qualified employer and employee representatives has been successful since 1981.

The issue is significant, and all employers should be involved.

This year, the administration determined that the crisis was so severe that it was appropriate to revert to the political system that existed prior to 1981. That strategy may be appropriate. Unfortunately, the first attempt at reform was replete with significant problems that will have to be addressed – or the bill is doomed. The issue is significant, and all employers should be involved. The AGC Legislative Committee is following the bill and will attempt to assure that the interests of the industry are protected. But to make sure that the interests of your firm are addressed, you either need to testify at the legislative hearings or attend the AGC Legislative Committee meetings. The issues are too important for firms to assume others are protecting their interests.
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Testing Your Seasonal Employees For Drugs

As contractors, you probably spent the past several months responding to requests for proposals, ordering materials and working on staffing schedules. Now you should shift your attention to what worked with your seasonal employees last year – and what didn’t – and look for ways to streamline your process to your advantage.

From a drug-testing perspective, you should make sure prospective employees know that they MUST pass a drug test to get the job. Prospective employees who consciously decide to not give up their drug use while applying for work make a dangerous choice. Don’t let that choice cost you. WorkSafe has Drug-Free Workplace signage that puts prospective employees on notice that they must test drug free. Place these signs where applicants will see them so you do not waste time and money on positive tests.

This protective action helps insulate contractors from costly accidents and mistakes. There is a down side for contractors who do not test for drugs. They may end up with even more seasonal employees who use drugs, and that could cost their safety performance records as well as the bottom line.

For those of you who conduct your own instant tests, now is the time to check the expiration date and order more, if necessary. For those of you with work in rural Alaska, now is the time to let WorkSafe know where you will be working so we can make sure our rural collection sites have sufficient supplies. For those of you who have hired new supervisors, now is the time to train them to recognize the signs and symptoms of drug use.

If you require pre-hire physicals, now is the time to review your job requirements to make sure they still meet the job conditions and that your occupational health provider knows the physical job requirements. Drug testing, plus an up-to-date and active occupational-health program, reduce workers’ compensation claims and enhance your bottom line.

As we prepare for the busy summer season, consider WorkSafe your partner in success. We’re here to make your hiring decisions and ongoing operations more effective from the drug testing point of view. Let us know what we can do to assist.

STEPHEN A. MIHALIK is general manager for WorkSafe.
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OB WEINGART grew GMG General Inc. from a $300,000-a-year paving contractor to a multi-faceted business with $6.5 million in annual revenues, in 15 years, managing conservatively as he developed working relationships with major contractors and suppliers, created a family atmosphere for employees, reached new plateaus, and acquired bread-and-butter contracts, which have consistently renewed. Employees and satisfied customers of GMG share the company’s success.

Asphalt is GMG’s mainstay. While the company does bid many projects, much of its business comes directly from contractors that request services. Weingart attributes GMG being selected for jobs to three key factors – pricing, scheduling and reliability.

“We offer a fair price and are competitive in the market,” he said. “Scheduling-wise, we will always meet their schedule; and we pride ourselves in getting through the job successfully – their success is our success.”

Weingart avoids friction by working through harmony. “There is a lot of competition in paving here, helping contractors complete their projects by working to solve problems – not be part of the problem – is a successful formula. We get lots of referrals that way.”

Asphalt division jobs include: patch and repair, driveways, parking lots, subdivisions and highways. Commercial, residential and highway projects comprise GMG’s workload, which is not all in asphalt paving. The company has three other divisions: concrete, commercial landscaping, and snow removal.

Concrete jobs vary among foundations, curbs and gutters, sidewalks, and the increasingly popular work in specialized, stamped and colored concrete. The company performs commercial landscaping for utility companies that tear up yards when laying lines and making repairs.

Commercial snow removal for BP, ACS and the Municipality of Anchorage helps sustain some of GMG’s workforce through the winter. The company employs an average of 60 people – 20 permanent and 40 seasonal. The asphalt, concrete and landscaping divisions are active from May 15 to October 15. Weingart employs three people in the office, and three people in the shop, year round. He has six estimators in the summer; and beefs up the construction crew, some of whom work snow removal in the winter.

“I’ve got the greatest comptroller in the world,” he said. “Cori Williams has been with the company eight years. She keeps us in line. I know at any point in time where we are as a company, financially.”

Another key employee Weingart speaks highly of is Richard Hill, lead mechanic, who heads the shop.

“In six years, the shop has never missed a single day of down time. It is very important that everything is operational every day – with a large inventory of specialized equipment, if something goes down things can come to a halt in a hurry.”

Weingart holds weekly meetings with all the estimators, and sets percentage goals on an ongoing basis. He uses internal competition for everyone to get the most out of their jobs, and the company benefits.

“We always know the work will be there – we have some of the best people here who can find the work, and I micro-manage all my people,” he said. “I’m the oldest of seven – my father was involved in an industrial accident when I was 10 years old – that’s when I started learning leadership skills. It’s a family atmosphere here, and I make it a point to know something about all my employees. They are my extended family in Alaska. I grew up in western Montana and learned a good work ethic at a very young age, so I look for that in my employees.”

In some ways, Anchorage reminds Weingart of his boyhood home in St. Ignatius, north of Missoula, with mountains at his back. He said it is the same here, mountains at his back.
Weingart moved to Alaska in 1982. He put himself through college to be a high school biology teacher, and was looking for a teaching job after college. He was offered a job in asphalt paving because of his background in mathematics involving science and biology.

“I couldn’t even spell asphalt,” he said. “But, I took the job.”

When the Alaska economy took a downturn, the company was going to move him to California. He decided to stay.

“Alaska was my home by then.”

Weingart started out as a paving contractor, with one partner. He had the foresight to organize the company as a general contractor to allow for future expansion. That was in 1989. Another partner joined up a year later. Gradually, over 12 years, the two partners left and now he is the sole owner. GMG went from a small upstart company in a failing economy to where it is today, a successful fixture in Alaska’s construction industry.

“I learned early on scheduling was the key to satisfying customers,” Weingart said. “These jobs have such short schedules. We work hard to know the what, when and where, and spend the time working out the schedules.”

One tool that has helped is Master Builder software, which Weingart started using eight years ago. “It was more than we needed, but looking to the future, and where I was taking the company, it was a great fit.”

Another means of success for GMG is Weingart’s style. “My approach is very conservative, because of the 80s. I watched the company I worked for take the punches – I now see them coming and I know when to duck.”

Although the company has successfully completed projects in Seward, Homer, Glennallen, and as far north as Denali Park, most of its work is in Anchorage and the Valley. “We concentrate on the Anchorage market because it has been our home for so long; but we have been paving in the Valley for some time now, realizing it was going to boom there, and it has – we look for that market to continue to grow.”

Prices are another area of growth, with across the board increases over the past year. Weingart says asphalt prices went up because of oil, concrete is up 10 percent; and Anchorage lost a Fairbanks-based, asphalt-oil supplier, which might result in a supply-and-demand increase since now there is only one source.

He wonders where the breaking point will be with increasing prices – when projects will be so cost prohibitive that the next downturn will come about.

“The Alaska economy has been steadily going up for some time now, without slowing down. One of the things we do – that we’ll always do – is secure what I call our bread-and-butter, contracts to pave and patch when the utilities dig up the streets. That goes back to the days of taking punches. I maintain those contracts, because if things were to get bad, that type of work always continues for us to do.”

AGC of Alaska is another essential element of endurance for GMG. “We’ve been AGC members for at least 10 years,” Weingart said. “We run our insurance through them. We gather knowledge from other contractors; and the AGC gives us an idea of what’s coming up, what’s happening, and who the players are.”

When Weingart isn’t working, he spends most of his time with his family. He is raising two daughters, and they have both worked summers in the business. He also gives back to the community. “I support a lot of Anchorage Police Department programs and youth hockey,” he said. “I sponsor a musher who is progressing to get into the Iditarod, and I was a sponsor to Iron Dog riders. I like supporting things that make Alaska Alaska.”

And that includes his work. The company takes part in building Alaska. Some of the big projects include the new Lowe’s on O’Malley and in Wasilla, the Abbott Road Carr’s-Safeway, the Abbott Road Fred Meyer, the Wrangell St. Elias Visitor’s Center in Glennallen, Shoreline Drive in Seward, Byer’s Lake campground, and numerous Valley subdivisions.

As for plans for the future, Weingart wants to stay on each plateau he reaches, until he’s ready to climb to the next one.

“It has taken me 16 years to consider myself at the top, or near the top, of my game.”
If you are interested in taking the next step towards safety with your company, it’s time to consider getting involved with the Safety Trained Supervisor (STS) program. The STS certification program is a nationally recognized program that recognizes the accomplishments of supervisors through a process of application and testing.

The typical certified STS helps an employer implement safety programs at the worker level through supervisory, safety committee or similar safety and health leadership roles. Safety tasks often include monitoring for job hazards, helping ensure regulatory compliance, training employees in safety practices, performing safety record-keeping tasks, coordinating corrections for safety problems within or among work groups, and communicating with safety specialists or management. There are currently 61 Safety Trained Supervisors registered in Alaska, and the ranks are growing every week.

The STS safety responsibility is a part-time responsibility, usually less than one-third of the total job duties. If safety responsibilities involve a greater portion of job duties, the role is more likely to be that of a safety technician/technologist or safety professional.

The STS certification is intended for individuals who:

- Are managers at all levels
- Are first line supervisors of work groups or organization units
- Have a safety responsibility for a work group that is part of other work duties

Safety Trained Supervisors are not safety specialists or safety practitioners. Typical candidates have a safety responsibility that is adjunct, collateral or ancillary to their job duties. Their main job duties are in a craft or trade, in leadership, supervision or management, or in a technical specialty.

The STS certification establishes a minimum competency in general safety practices. To achieve the certification, candidates must meet minimum safety training and work experience and demonstrate knowledge of safety fundamentals and standards by examination. Those holding the STS certification must renew it annually and meet recertification requirements every five years.

To gain eligibility for a Safety Trained Supervisor examination, you must be of good moral character and meet the following requirements:

1. Have two years of experience in any industry or in the industry related to the version of the STS examination to be taken.
2. Have one year of experience as a supervisor or safety leader of a work group. Examples are manager, foreman, crew chief, superintendent or member of a safety committee. This experience can be concurrent with requirement No. 1.
2a. If you are training to become a supervisor or safety leader and do not have the one year of experience in such roles, you can substitute two additional years of industry experience in requirement No. 1.
3. Have completed 30 hours of formal safety training through a single course or multiple training courses.

To achieve the STS certification, you must pass a Safety Trained Supervisor examination. The examination contains 100 multiple-choice questions and candidates have two hours to complete it. The STS examination is offered by computer at over 200 Prometric Testing Center locations in North America every business day. Alaskans can take the test in Anchorage and Fairbanks.

Additionally, AGC/NANA Training Systems offers Examination Preparation Workshops to assist candidates prepare for the STS exam. Our STS preparation workshop is a two-day classroom session where we define the scope of the exam, give examples of test questions and materials encountered on the test, review basic math skills and basic calculator functions, discuss good test-taking strategies, and provide a very fast-paced overview of the subjects referenced in the examination blueprints.

Participants should review and complete the AGC/NANA Training Systems STS Study Guide prior to the workshop. This study guide is based on the STS Examination Blueprint provided by the Council on Certification of Health, Environmental and Safety Technologists, known as CCHEST. The test specifications and test blueprint give the candidate the emphasis and study areas that will be tested.

The study materials referenced in this guide are available from AGC/Nana Training Systems, or the National Council on Construction Education and Research, referred to as NCCER, and include the Field Safety and Safety Technology textbooks.

The pace of this workshop will be extremely fast – not at all in-depth – to give participants an expectation of the
body of knowledge required. It is anticipated that each participant will develop their own study plan, based on their particular strengths and weaknesses. Workshop participants will receive a calculator approved by CCHES for use in the exam, and practice some math in the workshop.

Supervisors, managers, safety committee members, foremen, crew chiefs, and other work group leaders play very important roles in making work safe. Safe work practices add to productivity and profit.

Benefits for Employers and Owners
The overall benefits to employers and owners of the STS certification program may include any of the following:

- Evaluation of its employees’ fundamental safety knowledge
- Demonstrated competency of its employees by examination
- Increased safety awareness among employees
- Improved safety culture
- Reduced workers’ compensation claims and reduced insurance premiums
- Reduced need for safety professionals on smaller projects or assignments
- Improved productivity from better communication among and higher confidence within work groups
- Higher profits from safe work
- Recognition by having employees who hold a nationally accredited credential

Benefits for Employees
Benefits for employees may include any of the following:

- Demonstrated knowledge of fundamental safety practices
- Opportunities for increased job responsibilities or employment
- Increased value to an employer
- Recognition for safety leadership from an employer or other employees
- Increased confidence when dealing with safety and health matters

(Continued on page 54)
FOR ALL THINGS CONSTRUCTION – look to the Kenai Peninsula’s Smith brothers – Larry and Dan. They are lifelong Alaskans – born in Seward and raised in Cooper Landing. The brothers started D & L Construction Company in 1982, and incorporated the business four years later. According to Larry, the company does just about everything there is that’s construction.

That everything includes roads, bridges, dock work, pile driving and felling lumber. D & L uses hydro-axes for clearing and maintenance work the company performs for the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, and for utility companies throughout Southcentral Alaska.

Like many Alaska contractors that have endured the fluctuating economy, D & L has worked in many areas of the state doing a variety of construction work. They have worked as far north as Livengood, as far east as Northway, and down the Yukon River to Kaltag, where they were the subcontractor for construction work at the airport there.

The business idea came after some experience in the field. Larry joined the Marine Corps after high school and spent time in San Diego and Yokosuka, Japan. Dan joined Local 302, at the beginning of the pipeline and worked as an oiler on the North Slope; he also worked Local 798, the pipeliners out of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

After Larry returned from the Marines, he worked as a carpenter for Modern Construction from Fairbanks, building schools in Tuluksak, Atmauthluak and Nunapitchuk near Bethel. Dan worked for Kodiak Oilfield Haulers on the North Slope. They both ended up with Chris Berg in Seward by 1981. The following year, D & L Construction Company came into existence.

The more work the company has, the more people can be employed. Now there are 15 employees, including those who work at the Kenai Peninsula Solid Waste Transfer Stations. Typically, the company employed six to eight people, sometimes up to 40, depending on the project. Two large jobs, the Church Road project near Wasilla in 1998, and the Pedro Bay Bridge in 2001, required a larger number of employees. Pedro Bay is an area that may see more construction in the not too distant future.

D & L built the Pedro Bay Bridge for the State of Alaska, DOT&PF, in the village of Pedro Bay on the north shore of Lake Iliamna, near where Northern Dynasty will be setting up shop for the massive Pebble Copper Mine. “The village of Pedro Bay has white sandy beaches, and the village council was great to work with,” Larry said. “Interestingly, the bridge sections were barged to Whittier, railed to Portage, trucked to Homer, barged to Williamport, trucked to Pile Bay and barged to Pedro Bay.”

D & L built the Pedro Bay Bridge for the State of Alaska, DOT&PF, in the village of Pedro Bay on the north shore of Lake Iliamna, near where Northern Dynasty will be setting up shop for the massive Pebble Copper Mine. “The village of Pedro Bay has white sandy beaches, and the village council was great to work with,” Larry said. “Interestingly, the bridge sections were barged to Whittier, railed to Portage, trucked to Homer, barged to Williamport, trucked to Pile Bay and barged to Pedro Bay.”

The Smith brothers have extensive experience with chainsaws. Larry said they’ve been running chainsaws since they were knee-high, and clearing has represented year-round work that has always needed done.

“We’re hard workers – we were raised to work in the woods, that’s tough work,” Dan said. “Running chainsaws you learn to work hard. Our dad had a small sawmill when we were growing up, and we learned no matter what the weather conditions are, to get the job done. To be successful in the construction industry in Alaska you have to be diverse – and tough.”

Clearing is something they always do – the company was most recently bidding a clearing contract.
for the State of Alaska, DOT&PF, for the ANC South Airpark Taxiway at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport. In the early 1990s, the company contract-logged for Circle DE Pacific out of Homer, the Chugach Alaska sawmill in Seward, and for TamCo, a veneer mill out of Coos Bay, Oregon.

In 1988 the company began working with landfills for the Kenai Peninsula Borough, and now operates and hauls solid waste from four transfer stations with 10 trailers in Nikiski, Kenai, Sterling and Seward.

Like many well-rounded Alaskan contractors, they love to dig in the dirt, and have worked on road, street, water and sewer projects over the years. They have built boat ramps on the Kenai River at Cooper Landing and Deep Creek. This spring, they are about to finish up a project reconstructing 19 campsites and trailheads along the Swanson River/Swan Lake Road on the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

“We are always looking for work,” Larry said.

They will be bidding on the construction of a new snow removal equipment building at the Red Devil Airport on the Kuskokwim River. D & L has already done work at a couple of airports in rural Alaska, and knows the drill. “Bush work is a lot different because of the logistics of getting your men and materials out there,” Larry said.

D & L has belonged to the AGC of Alaska since 1983, almost as long as they have been in business. Larry says they have found membership in the organization beneficial. Dan says they use AGC to look at jobs and other construction-related matters.

“They try to get things straightened out for contractors,” Dan said.

The company also belongs to the Kenai Peninsula Builders Association and the Alaska State Home Building Association – Larry serves on the board of directors for both organizations. D & L contributes in other ways to the communities they belong to – they are a soft touch to any charity that asks for money. Annual charities supported include Special Olympics and Kenai Firefighters.

These days, Larry said the company mostly does public sector work with the state and boroughs – he hopes government keeps spending money in the construction sector.

Originally, the brothers decided they’d start their own company to get rich. “We didn’t get rich,” Larry said, “but we’re still in business. We built some houses – we haul trash, cut brush, drive pilings – we’re versatile.”

Brother and business partner Dan agrees.

“Working construction in Alaska, you have to be real diverse, because even if you bid on a job, once you get there the whole scope of the project can change,” he said. “Through our 20-some years we’ve seen a lot of big and small contractors come and go. Some last for years, and some only last for one job.”

D & L added another facet to the company recently, when it became an authorized dealer for WedgCor steel buildings. D & L has brokered, arranged shipping, and in some instances built, several steel buildings over the last couple of years from WedgCor, a company headquartered in North Dakota. Just one more facet that gives D & L staying power in the construction industry in Alaska.

“For the future? We’re looking for the gas line,” Dan said, “and developing some of our natural resources.”
State Offers First Look At Proposed Design-Build Procurement Regulations

The Alaska Departments of Administration and Transportation are promulgating new regulations to cover the procurement of design-build construction contracts. The proposed regulations were published on Feb. 3, and the comment period extended to Feb. 28, 2005. As of early March, it was not clear when the state will officially promulgate these new regulations, what form they will finally take, and when they will become effective.

The regulations do not limit how the “design-build team” is structured, but allow a construction contractor without in-house design resources to propose on a design-build contract provided that qualified and licensed design professionals are “assigned or sub-contracted” to the construction contractor.

The regulation refers to “the design-build team,” but does not define that term. The new regulation also makes clear that even though the design professional may not directly contract with the state, the designer’s professional duty of care will still run to the state.

Much of the new regulations contain what would be expected, though a few items are noteworthy. The regulations would permit the state to inquire into the proposer’s “present work load” to determine whether the proposer had the capacity to accomplish the work in the required time.

Also, the statutory Alaska bidder and offerer preferences will apply unless precluded by federal funding requirements. The RFP must include the “performance criteria,” which would include the capacity, durability, production standards, and ingress/egress requirements, and would be expressed in “performance oriented drawings and specifications.” The RFP will also include the criteria for evaluating the proposals and the relative weight of each of the evaluation factors.

The proposal will have to include drawings, specifications and other required submittals to describe the design submitted. The state may either specify a required completion date or may include contract time as one of the factors to be proposed upon. The state will also require the design-builder to “warrant the design,” similar to a designer’s professional obligation to a client-owner. But it will be a new undertaking for contractors who have been engaged in strictly construction activities.

The proposal will have to identify the individuals or firms that will be responsible for each design discipline. The design-builder will not be able to change those firms without approval of the agency. The agency may use “any basis” for making the award, though three are suggested: best value, two-step (requests for qualifications leading to a short list of qualified firms and then an RFP), and low bid.

The evaluation process will follow the procedure already set out in the procurement regulations for competitive sealed proposals, not the procedure for proposals for architect, engineer or land surveying services. The implication is that the evaluation will be based on more objective factors than those which are taken into account in procuring architect/engineer design services under existing procedures.

Finally, two provisions underscore the delicate balance between maintaining a level playing field for all participants in a fair competition and the inherent flexibility in a design-build arrangement between owner and contractor.

During the evaluation, the agency is permitted to “negotiate minor changes with the selected firm for the purpose of clarifying the design criteria and work to be done, provided that the negotiated changes do not affect the ranking of the proposals based on their adjusted scores.”

The regulations go on to provide that “a design-build contract may be conditional upon subsequent refinements in scope and price, and may permit the agency to make changes in the scope of the project without invalidating a design-build contract.” These clauses could easily be the source of disputes among disappointed proposers, the state, and the successful contractor.

Robert J. (Bob) Dickson is a partner of the Anchorage law firm Atkinson, Conway & Gagnon, Inc.
MARSH

There is a new word in the lexicon of risk:

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**Alleyd Building Products Corporation**

**Allied Building Products** Anchorage branch averaged more than $1 million in sales per employee last year. The Anchorage branch employs just eight people; yet did between $8 million and $9 million in business in 2004 – with a mix of 65 percent commercial and 35 percent residential. Its focus is on specialty subcontractors – roofing, siding, and insulation – with some exclusive lines of product.

Three of the larger projects the company supplied materials for recently were the Department of Transportation building in Fairbanks, installed by Interior Alaska Roofings; Concourse C at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, installed by Consolidated Enterprises; and the Southeast Anchorage High School, installed by Industrial Roofing.

“Allied is low profile,” Bruce Rogers, branch manager said. “We focus on those three groups of specialty subcontractors, and they know we’re here – but some of the generals don’t know what we carry. They need to know Allied specializes in roofing, siding, waterproofing and insulation. We also have a growing interior products division that specializes in gypsum, steel studs and track and accessories.”

Rogers has been in the business, and Alaska, since 1981. He started out in building materials sales after coming up from Michigan on vacation after finishing college. “I fell in love with Alaska,” Rogers said. “I went home, packed up, and moved here to stay.”

As branch manager, he is a company man and believes in Allied. “One thing great about this company, as big as it is, each branch can develop their own business plan for the market they are in,” he said.

The company is big. Allied Building Products Corporation, based in New Jersey, did $1.2 billion in sales in 2004. The company is heavily into distributing building materials, with a mission to supply specialty contractors.

The parent company, CRH plc, distributes cement, concrete, aggregates and road asphalt. It is the fifth largest such supplier in the world. In 1996, Allied was acquired by CRH, which is based in Dublin, Ireland, through Oldcastle Inc., CRH’s North American holding company. CRH did $16.1 billion in sales in 2004.

Allied expects excellence and gets involved at the specification level during the design process whenever possible. One side of the business works with architects to drive specifications.

“Then we bid on projects, and follow through with supplying the materials,” Rogers said. “There is a great effort made to maintain a close working relationship with the design community. Exposure and networking have proved successful in getting the word out about product lines. Also, manufacturer representatives, whose lines we distribute, promote products at the architectural level when they come to town.”

Allied participates in industry events through the Associated General Contractors of Alaska, the Construction Specification Institute, the American Institute of Architects, and like many AGC members, belongs to other professional trade organizations as well.

The company shares AGC’s dedication to improving construction industry professional standards. Membership in the AGC is important for Allied – AGC is valued as the voice of the construction industry in Alaska. The company looks to AGC when facing industry challenges.

The biggest challenge for this construction materials supplier is the same challenge contractors are up against. “Price increases like I’ve never seen,” Rogers said, “in metal and anything made with petroleum, including transportation costs. Freight costs and material costs are up significantly.”

The company does some wholesale distribution to lumberyards in the Bush, and in smaller Railbelt communities like Talkeetna. Allied also supplies certain products to Home Depot and Lowe’s.
Something Rogers sees as unique about the Anchorage branch is, even though Allied is part of a huge national company with its own in-house transportation department, the Anchorage branch negotiates its own freight and transportation costs from Seattle to Alaska.

Allied’s Anchorage branch employs a small number of people. They are expected to turn out a pretty big volume per person, which they have consistently done. There is just the operations manager, one warehousemen, one person in inside sales, two people in outside sales, an administrative manager, and an administrative assistant. “We are a fairly lean and efficient operation,” Rogers said.

There is one small truck for local deliveries. All full trailer deliveries are hired out or shipped from Seattle to the docks, then direct to the job sites.

“Being without a fleet of trucks is unique to the Anchorage branch,” Rogers said. “In the Lower 48, Allied has a huge fleet.”

That fleet numbers more than 2,000 cars, trucks, and tractor trailers for the more than 130 Allied branches from coast to coast. It wasn’t always so big. The company has grown over the years.

Allied’s roots go back to 1950, when it was a family-operated roofing and sheet metal fabrication business in New Jersey. Allied first came to Alaska in 1985 when it purchased Burkheimers, a company that had five branches – two each in Oregon and Washington state, and one in Alaska. Burkehimers was the first acquisition for the company on the West Coast.

Then in 1987, Allied purchased Building Products Supply and combined the two into one branch. Allied’s Anchorage branch grew from an old warehouse on Eighth Avenue behind Alaska Sales & Service to the present location on the south side of town in 1998, just down the road from the Longbranch Saloon.

Now there are 12 branches in the Northwest. The Anchorage store is still the only location in Alaska. Rogers expects to see Allied’s presence grow along with the Alaska economy. The company has done quite a bit of business in Fairbanks, and supplied Interior military projects at Fort Wainwright, Eielson Air Force Base and Fort Greely.

Usually, most of the company’s business is in Anchorage and Fairbanks, but Allied will supply material to any location in the state. Rogers says Allied also supplies materials to the Bush. Large projects in places such as Bethel, Barrow and King Cove get materials barged directly from Seattle.

For all those projects that are supplied out of the Anchorage branch, the company’s corporate goal of building commitment and quality are taken seriously by the folks in the Anchorage branch.

Anchorage Branch Manager Bruce Rogers has a crew of million-dollar employees who excel at supplying Alaska contractors with roofing, siding, waterproofing and insulation products.

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**Spring 2005**

**THE ALASKA CONTRACTOR | 21**
Current Update

At this point in the school year, here’s what we’ve accomplished and what we’ve been doing.

NCCER (As of Feb. 28)

NCCER Contren curriculum is in 41 classrooms across the state, all with certified teachers.

We have a total of 73 certified teachers with more coming.

We have 220 students on the NCCER National Registry to date, and more expected as the school year wraps up. There are 139 students who have earned a NCCER certificate.

We’ve proctored 54 NCCER Craft Skill Assessments since October of 2004, and that number will grow as we approach spring. We’ve proctored 21 NCCER pipeline assessments.

We’re recruiting some of the housing authorities to offer the craft skill assessments for their crews or for potential employees. We’re also talking to the Alaska Department of Labor on how craft skill assessments could be used for their clients.

In addition to these activities, we’ve hosted three groups of high school students through an Anchorage construction site. We hosted two different groups from Kuspuk School District through Unit Company’s Polaris School project. The Polaris project is a remodel and an addition for the Anchorage School District.

Then we hosted an Anchorage charter school, Highland Tech High, through Polaris School, also. Unit Company has been very gracious about hosting the school groups! Thanks to Trent Larson and Jim Miller for their willingness to work with the schools!
Events
We participated in the Ribbon-cutting Ceremony, via videoconference (thanks to AT&T Alascom), for the Delta Career Advancement Center in Delta Junction on Jan. 14.

The new center is a 9,600 square-foot facility that is home to the Construction Trades program, providing a 7,000 square-foot workshop. It will also house the Wells Fargo Library, a smart classroom, and a computer lab. Consortium classes are offered by the Tanana Valley Campus of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, Delta Mine Training Center, Alaska Works Partnership, and the Delta/Greely School District. The Delta Junction Jr./Sr. High School is using the NCCER Contren construction curriculum, and AGC has certified the instructor, Gary Hall.

We participated in the annual 2005 Career and Technology Professional Development Conference Feb. 4-5, held at the King Career Center in Anchorage. We conducted a workshop on Career Academies, using the AGC of America model.

We presented Build Up! to the Anchorage School District elementary counselors on Feb. 11. This was possible thanks to Roger Fiedler, assistant director communications, and Kevin Hoyer, principal, of Kincaid Elementary School. We’re hoping to re-energize Build Up! in the Anchorage School District for next school year.

Other
I’m serving as a board member on the Tech Prep Consortium. Construction is one of the two industries being researched first. Many of our members participated by reviewing parts of the career cluster knowledge and skills identification that was done nationally. The effort is to track or map what is going on in our state by industry and match that to what the schools are doing. Should be interesting.

Kuspuk School District students visited the Polaris School project.

Unit Company Quality Control Manager Trent Larson (left) and Project Superintendent James Miller.

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OUR BANKER: The keeper of your money. The person who can say yes or no to loaning money to you. Yes, your banker is pretty important to your business.

Your banker can also help you in more ways than you might realize. Bankers have access to loan programs that the general public doesn’t by partnering with organizations such as Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) and Evergreen Community Development.

These programs can sometimes offer more favorable terms than commercial banks, like longer payoff periods (term) and a lower installment payment structure. All you have to do is work with your local banker.

Here’s what the different organizations can offer you and your business.

**AIDEA**

AIDEA is a public corporation of the State of Alaska, created to encourage economic growth and diversification. It does this by providing loan programs that are only available through partnerships with financial institutions, and by helping to create jobs for Alaskans through these different programs.

**Loan Participation Program**

AIDEA isn’t a direct lender, but through the Loan Participation Program actually purchases part of a loan made by a bank for new or existing projects, or for refinancing of an existing loan.

The interest rate paid by the borrower for the portion of the loan that AIDEA purchases is often lower than the rate of the bank’s portion. That lower rate AIDEA portion also generally has a longer term, which means lower installment payments.

Borrowers can also choose between fixed and variable rates.

The financial institution that originally makes the loan services the entire loan, meaning the borrower continues to work with his or her local banker.

**Business & Export Loan Guarantee**

This guarantee applies to loans made to small businesses for real property, tangible personal property, working capital and export transactions. AIDEA can guarantee up to 80 percent of a loan originated by a financial institution, but not more than $1 million.

A bank may apply to AIDEA for this guarantee if there is some material weakness discovered during the credit underwriting process. This could apply, for instance, to a new business that is still establishing its credit record and reputation.

**Evergreen Community Development**

Evergreen is a nonprofit community development company that partners with private lenders to help small businesses get financing for commercial real estate and major equipment purchases. It was set up to administer the U.S. Small Business Administration’s 504 Loan Program, which can provide up to 90 percent financing for certain project costs.

Some banks partner with Evergreen because of the benefits it offers business customers, including:

- Up to 90 percent financing for land and/or building purchases, new building construction and/or renovation, machinery and equipment purchase, and leasehold improvements
- Long-term, fixed-rate funds that can help enhance a business’ cash flow
- 20-year term, which helps avoid large installment payments
- Lower down payment (usually 10 percent) saves money for future growth

Sometimes a bank will contact Evergreen to ask about possibilities of partnering on proposed financing. For example, if the gas pipeline construction begins, many small businesses in northern Alaska will have good reason to expand, but not necessarily the equity or cash to pay for that expansion. In this situation, a banker would initially contact Evergreen, and the borrower would then be put in contact with the loan experts from Evergreen.

**Other loan guarantee programs**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development was established to promote the economy and improve way of life in rural areas. Like AIDEA and Evergreen, it partners with financial institutions to support loans made to small rural businesses.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs also offers a loan guarantee program, provided the borrower is at least 51 percent Native, and has at least 51 percent ownership of the business.

There are many different ways to finance your new business, or improve or expand your existing business. It’s as simple as working with your local banker to see which program will benefit you the most.
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LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

Federal Environmental Regulators Face Increased Legal Scrutiny

I REMEMBER A GRADE SCHOOL history lesson about a group of colonists who objected to an oppressive central government that imposed its will on the people, leaving them few liberties. These colonists rebelled, committing to form a “more perfect union” where the people’s rights would be secure.

Even upon quick review it is obvious that our Constitution limits the federal government while reserving broad powers for the states and the people. According to this document, the federal role is, by and large, limited to issues that cross state lines or are beyond the ability of a single state to accomplish. Issues like national postal and monetary systems, international trade, or the rules of interstate commerce come to mind. Thanks to ambitious bureaucrats and the decisions of a few judges, the once clear lines between state and local jurisdiction have all but disappeared.

Federal laws, like the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act, were enacted with the best of intentions. After all, who wants dirty water or a planet devoid of plants and animals? Bureaucrats and special interests, however, have turned these protective acts into an excuse to regulate private property, pushing federal jurisdiction far beyond anything envisioned by our nation’s founders.

In 1967, the first list of species covered by the precursor to the ESA contained 77 species: 13 mammals, 36 birds, 6 reptiles and 22 fish, a number that has grown to 518 species as of the latest count. With the addition of plant species, not included in the original list, there are now 1,264 species that receive federal “protection” under the ESA. But are they protected?

Even the government’s own statistics fail to show success. In the 30-year history of the ESA just 41 species have been delisted. Sixteen were removed due to bureaucratic error – they should have never been there in the first place. Nine species have gone extinct – not a stirring endorsement for the ESA. Of the 16 species claimed to have “recovered,” most did so for reasons beyond ESA protection, such as insecticide bans or reduced demand for whale oil.

Each addition to the ESA lists broadened federal control over local land use decisions. To justify this, regulators claimed an interstate commerce connection. Without this tie there is no constitutional basis for federal jurisdiction. One of the most amazing claims occurred in southern California where the existence of a dozen flies forced San Bernardino County to spend millions of dollars to move a hospital that was under construction. Regulators argued that since insect collectors might come from other states to look at these flies, the required connection to interstate commerce was met – and the courts agreed. Amazing.

The Clean Water Act has an equally colorful history of jurisdictional claims. Some of the most burdensome aspects of the CWA are the wetlands permitting requirements administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Since the historical limits on Corps jurisdiction are navigable waterways, it has taken great imagination by this regulatory behemoth to achieve their current level of control.

Some may remember the days of the “glancing duck” theory of jurisdiction. Corps regulators claimed that if a migrating bird might see an isolated pond upon which to rest during its multi-state migration, that “inter-state” connection established federal jurisdiction. Furthermore, the Corps claimed that if there were any hydrological connection between a parcel of land and a navigable waterway, their regulatory jurisdiction was secured.

The net result from such federal regulation has been months or years of delay, and millions of dollars in mitigation costs heaped upon property owners seeking to improve their own land. Builders, farmers, and other property owners across the country have been threatened with financial ruin and even prison thanks to the aggressive actions of Corps regulators.

Thus, the great concepts of limited government and individual rights have been greatly compromised by overactive regulators and an accommodating judiciary. But all is not lost. Thanks to a few well-considered Supreme Court decisions and the tenacious actions of organizations like AGC and Pacific Legal Foundation, there is hope that the tide is turning when it comes to federal regulatory authority.

Several years ago the United States Supreme Court heard two pivotal cases, called Lopez and Morrison, that began to limit when federal law can be applied. Lopez dealt with whether Congress could enact noneconomic regulation on a national scale, even though the facts of the case only involved possession of a gun near a school. The High Court struck down this federal law, finding this type of
regulation to be beyond the Commerce Clause powers of the federal government. Morrison challenged the Violence Against Women Act. While no one doubts that violent acts against anyone should be a crime, the Supreme Court again found that such laws were the responsibility of the states, not the federal government. Neither of these rulings dealt with whether the substance of the federal law was a good idea; they considered only whether the Constitution granted the federal government the power to enact laws not related to interstate commerce.

Several other decisions have sprung from the jurisdictional standards set down in *Lopez* and *Morrison*, signaling an important shift in how the courts view federal powers. Although the legal system is often frustratingly slow, there seems to be a positive direction for those of us who support limits on government powers.

In the spring of 2002, two major decisions further restricted the power of federal regulators. In Arizona, regulators limited the use of hundreds of thousands of acres of grazing land to “protect” the pygmy owl and a fish called the razorback sucker. However, there was no evidence that these species were even present. When the Arizona Cattle Growers’ Association sued, the government’s defense amounted to a claim that since the owl and fish “might” be there, regulation was justified. The courts didn’t buy the argument. In fact, the judge hearing the case stated that he had never seen a “thinner case.”

At about the same time, the New Mexico Cattle Growers’ Association succeeded in having the critical habitat designation for the southwestern willow flycatcher thrown out. This habitat designation relied on inadequate scientific and economic studies, something the federal appeals court correctly found illegal.

A year later, Pacific Legal Foundation successfully challenged a California critical habitat designation that combined both of these legally fatal flaws. Regulators had designated more than 400,000 acres near San Francisco as critical habitat for the Alameda whipsnake. Their economic analysis was, to say the least, lacking and regulators didn’t know where the snake actually lived.

After losing at trial, the government chose not to appeal, leaving the environmentalist intervenors high and dry. The attempt by environmentalists to appeal to the Ninth Circuit was dismissed. With these legal precedents in hand, PLF recently notified federal regulators of our intent to challenge approximately 40 critical habitat designations across California that also fail to pass legal muster under this string of cases. This undertaking will not be easy, but if successful it will...
force the federal government to change how it uses the ESA to control private land use.

The Corps of Engineers has for years claimed Commerce Clause authority to regulate vast amounts of isolated wetlands under the Clean Water Act. The Corps justified its claim using a truly creative theory. The Corps argued that if a migrating bird might choose to land in an isolated pond, this created an interstate connection sufficient to justify their jurisdiction. Owners of a garbage dump near Chicago challenged this claim and took the case all the way to the United States Supreme Court. The Supreme Court rejected this “migratory bird rule” outright and limited Corps jurisdiction to wetlands “adjacent” to navigable waterways.

Not willing to give up its regulatory power, the Corps is currently interpreting the word “adjacent” in an unbelievably expansive manner, going so far as to argue that if dirt or other material placed in wetlands has some potential to eventually end up in a navigable waterway miles away, this meets the adjacency requirement. PLF is involved in nearly a dozen cases seeking to have the Supreme Court reject this erroneous contention.

If there is a single thread in the challenges to excessive federal regulation it is this question of jurisdiction, does the federal government have the legal authority to regulate an activity. In the area of environmental regulation, the Constitution generally limits federal control to activities directly impacting interstate commerce. It is this concept that PLF and other advocates of liberty are pressing as we ask the United States Supreme Court to take up a Texas ESA case, GDF Realty Investments v. Babbitt.

GDF Realty owns land near Austin, Texas, that is home to a species of cave bugs that are on the ESA list. These bugs have no commercial value and they exist only in this limited part of Texas. Why, then, should the federal government be able to control local land use decisions even remotely involving their habitat? We don’t think the federal government should and have asked the Supreme Court to accept this case for review. Let us all hope the Court accepts review because a favorable decision in GDF could have far-ranging implications not just for private property rights, but also for limiting other instances of illegal federal regulation.

So take heart; there is a movement to roll back the growth of federal regulators. Furthermore, it is making progress. The concept of limited government is not dead; it just needs a few strong advocates.

As Pacific Legal Foundation’s Director of Development, Peter Fusselman works with individual organizations that fund PLF’s important work through its charitable contributions.
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The biggest private sector player in Alaska construction is the oil and gas industry. In 2005 alone the oil industry is scheduled to spend over $3 billion with $1.83 billion allocated to construction and capital projects. Capital investment dollars spent by this big heavyweight equate directly to contracts for Alaskan contractors and jobs for Alaskan families.

Speaking at the recent Alaska Support Industry Alliance Meet Alaska energy conference, ConocoPhillips Alaska President Jim Bowles pointed out that significant investment by industry in North Slope fields is required to achieve the Alaska Department of Revenue forecast of a total Slope production of 945,000 barrels by 2008.

The department forecasts satellite fields will contribute more than an estimated 200,000 barrels of oil per day in 2008. In order to achieve this, satellite production will require continued investment – investments that are expected to generate nearly $3 billion in taxes and revenues to the state over the next decade, according to the department.

Jobs Threatened
Until most recently, we have had every reason to believe that the oil industry would continue with its capital programs that employ thousands of Alaskans. However, recently enacted changes by Gov. Frank Murkowski to ELF – the state’s non-linear and three-dimensional economic limit factor – increased taxes on the Prudhoe Bay satellites, and significantly destabilized the state’s fiscal regime, which has sent the chill of uncertainty throughout the industry.

“One project in particular, the Orion field development at Prudhoe Bay, has been shelved indefinitely, because of the impact of the tax increase,” Bowles said. “After careful evaluation of the tax increase, the project economics are no

The estimated $500 million West Sak development will generate more than 850 jobs in Alaska during pe...
longer able to compete with the other investment opportunities. The project represents a loss to Alaska of more than $500 million of capital investment for drilling and facilities work. This project would have also generated an additional 20,000 barrels per day of incremental oil.

Although Alaska contractors have lost the opportunity to participate in the four-year, half-a-billion dollar Orion project for now, there are four major capital projects that are well on their way. The ConocoPhillips/Anadarko Petroleum Alpine Capacity Expansion project and the ConocoPhillips/BP West Sak Heavy Oil Expansion projects were featured in the Fall 2004 issue of the Alaska Contractor. In this issue, the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company $250 million pipeline reconfiguration and electrification project, and the $500 million ConocoPhillips-Anadarko Petroleum Alpine satellite project are featured.

Pipeline Reconfiguration
On June 20, 1977, the very first barrel of oil flowed from Pump Station 1 on the trans-Alaska oil pipeline. Nine days
later that same barrel of oil arrived at the Marine Terminal in Valdez. Since that day, over 14 billion barrels of oil have been shipped through the 800-mile pipeline.

The trans-Alaska oil pipeline is a crude oil transportation system that begins at Pump Station 1 on Alaska’s North Slope, and terminates in the marine terminal storage and tanker facility in Valdez. This 48-inch-diameter line crosses three major mountain ranges and 34 major rivers, achieving a maximum elevation of 4,379 feet at Atigun Pass, which is located 166 miles south of Pump Station 1.

Alyeska Pipeline Service Company, incorporated in 1970, and owned by a consortium of owner companies, is the organization responsible for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the system. In March 2004, Alyeska received approval from the owners to invest over $250 million in a project to upgrade the pipeline’s pump stations. The pipeline reconfiguration project is one of the most significant investments since the construction of the trans-Alaska oil pipeline; and involves installing electrically driven crude oil pumps at four critical pump stations. It is combined with increased automation and an upgraded control system.

Pump Stations 1, 3, 4, 5 and 9 will be upgraded and standardized with state-of-art equipment and new electric-motor-driven pumps. Pump Station 5 will not require a new pump module, but will be upgraded to function as a pressure relief station on the lower side of Atigun Pass.

Alaskan contractors already successfully installed the new pump tie-ins at Pump Stations 1 and 3 during the August 16-17, 2004, maintenance shutdown of the pipeline.

Other Pump Station modifications
include the removal of 16,000-horsepower, turbine-driven pumps, and replacement with smaller 6,500-horsepower, electric-motor-driven pumps. Existing control rooms will be replaced with new unmanned control modules, and many of the existing utilities will be removed from service and replaced with modern, more efficient automated equipment.

**Hard Dollar Contracts**

On the contractor side, Alyeska competitively bid all of the module fabrication work and awarded the contracts to Alaska contractors. The work includes variable frequency drive modules, power distribution center modules, control modules, pump/motor modules, and pipe racks.

According to Mike Heatwole, corporate communications manager for Alyeska, there are over 130 Alaskans (non-Alyeska employees) working directly on the project. A number that will likely double during the summer construction season. Project completion is slated to occur by the end of 2005.

Alaskan vendors like Dowland-Bach Corporation, a locally owned fabrication shop in Anchorage, will directly realize nearly half of the Alyeska investment. Dowland-Bach specializes in UL Listed control panels, and was awarded the contract for the highly sophisticated programmable logic controllers used in the electrification upgrade.

VECO and ASRC Energy Services have been awarded the contract for the fabrication of the VFD (variable frequency drive) modules that adjust...
pump speeds, fabrication of pump modules that contain the electric motors that drive the actual oil pumps, and the power distribution modules for Pump Stations 1, 3, 4 and 9.

According to ASRC Energy Services Executive Vice President Jack Laasch, the company's Power and Communications Business Unit is performing work on the project associated with installation of pilings, and installation of a 69 KVA line from the Central Power Station to Pump Station 1, both located on the North Slope.

Lynden Logistics Vice President Jeanine St. John says several Lynden Companies have been involved in transportation movements; switch gear coming from ABB in Sweden and piling from Houston. Heavy-haul moves from Anchorage fabrication shops to the pump stations will be so large that both Lynden and Carlile Transportation company assets will be deployed for delivery.

This project is about bringing today's state-of-the-art technology to the 30-year-old pipeline infrastruc-

PHOTO: COURTESY OF ALYESKA PIPELINE SERVICE COMPANY

VFD (variable frequency drive) module fabrication work at the VECO fab shop. Workers are installing the roof of the module.

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ture. Scalable and modular to more efficiently handle increases and decreases in pipeline flow, it will improve the economics of all North Slope projects. The reconfiguration makes the system simpler and easier to maintain, and will reduce environmental emissions and risks from spills of liquid fuel transfers in the field. In short, it’s how a pipeline would be built if it were being built today.

**NPR-A Production**

In September 2004, the Bureau of Land Management – after almost a year of study – released the final Environmental Impact Statement for the future development of satellite fields on the western North Slope of Alaska. Currently, joint owners Anadarko Petroleum and ConocoPhillips Alaska are moving forward to develop the first two satellites: CD3 or Fiord, and CD4 or Nanuq. Production is scheduled to begin by 2008.

Alpine is located in the Colville River Delta on the eastern border of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. Alpine is about 35 miles west of Kuparuk, and 9 miles north of the village of Nuiqsut. It is the first North Slope development on Native-owned lands that pays royalties to Native corporations.

Alpine is also the westernmost development on the North Slope – literally beyond the end of the road that ends at Kuparuk. Except in winter, Alpine is accessible only by aircraft.

The Fiord and Nanuq permits were issued in December 2004, construction began in January 2005. ConocoPhillips
Western North Slope Development Manager Mark Ireland says the Alpine satellite development represents over 550 jobs at peak employment, a $500-million investment by the companies, and extraction of 35,000 barrels of oil per day by 2008. It is anticipated that over 40 new wells will be in production late in 2006. Impressive numbers, and an impressive project, by any standards.

**World-class Project**

So just how do world-class projects like this come together? Alaska is blessed with “good rocks” on the North Slope. We have the right geological structures. The main structure is referred to as the Barrow Arch, which tends to stretch between the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge on the eastern North Slope, to the community of Barrow on...
the western North Slope; all within 25 miles of the Beaufort Sea.

Once the companies have discovered oil using today’s advanced 3-dimensional seismic techniques, it is decided how best to recover it, and determined if it is economic to develop. The state’s fiscal climate is a significant component to the economic analysis, and weighs heavily on the decision to develop or not. Another part of the analysis is determining the best surface locations to place the minimal footprints that have become standard in today’s North Slope development process.

Using extended-reach drilling, companies can reach and produce reserves within a 15,000-foot radius of the gravel pad location. The companies avoid water bodies, use high ground for any roads, and minimize the length of pipelines. The typical surface area impacted by these Alpine satellites is less than 10 acres.

**Construction Work**

All of this equates to work for Alaska contractors. Facilities and pipeline engineering work for Fiord and Nanuq has been awarded to VECO Alaska. Civil engineering work was awarded to PN&D. Doyon Drilling has been awarded the drilling work. Road, pad and ice road construction went to Alaska Interstate Construction, LLC.

The Weld Shop in Fairbanks is constructing the vertical support members for pipelines. Arctic Structures has been award-
ed an emergency living quarters module. ASRC Energy Services has been awarded the horizontal support member fabrication.

The Future

Today's energy markets truly are global, facing worldwide competition for capital dollars. Assets, capital and investments by large multinational companies can move virtually overnight to areas of the globe – where investment risk is minimized, and the prospect of project success is high.

Something we have known all along, but recently validated in recent studies, is that Alaska is an extremely expensive oil and gas province to do business in. Unfortunately, there is a significant threat to future exploration and production in Alaska. The recent oil production tax change by the governor will serve as the poster child for industry – for the need of a clear and durable fiscal contract.

For sure, there will be unintended consequences to the state's willingness to suddenly and arbitrarily change its interpretations of tax law. Increased cost and risk will be considered when assessing future developments. State officials, and the public, need to remember companies must wisely invest shareholder money.

Corporate officers look for opportunities where they can make reasonable profits without undue risk.

Alaska has everything in place for 60 years of oil and gas development. High energy prices, growing demand, a highly skilled Alaskan workforce, and vast energy reserves are all factors in Alaska's favor. Investor confidence is all that is needed to make development continue, a responsibility that rests in the hands of our elected officials.

LARRY J. HOULE served as General Manager of the Alaska Support Industry Alliance for 5 years. He is taking a sabbatical and embarking on post-graduate study at Colorado State University in Ft. Collins in the fall. He will be pursuing a master's degree in construction management, and plans to return to Alaska and work in the construction industry.
Roads & Ports

North Slope Oilfield Roads
BULLEN POINT ROAD – A coast route to oil/gas leases on state lands to the Bullen Point area. The project will include right of way and design for pipelines and utilities as well. March 2005, reconnaissance engineering reports due, and baseline environmental and engineering studies EIS begin.

WEST FOOTHILLS ROADS – A 45-55 mile road west off Dalton Highway at Pump Station 3 to upper Kuparuk River area. All-season road access to oil and gas leases on state land in the Brooks Range Foothills. Feb. 2005 began review of alternative routes into the region to optimize access to high-value leases. Preliminary engineering/NEPA schedule development underway.

Mine Roads & Ports
DELONG MOUNTAIN TERMINAL PORT EXPANSION – Ship would come directly into port through a dredged channel and turning basin. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers draft EIS review to begin mid-2005.

POINT LAY DEADFALL SYNCLINE COAL MINE ACCESS – Reconnaissance engineering underway to determine if there is a practical road route between the coal mine and the Delong Mountain Terminal, to be completed in May 2005. Grades and terrain breaks appear to preclude rail; 90-mile road appears most practical for this mine that could export 1-2 million tons of high-quality coal per year to Asia for use in coal-blend formulas.


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5,000-foot, jet-capable runway at Noatak, and 20-35-mile road to Red Dog Mine. Project would improve air carrier operations for Red Dog Mine; benefit Noatak, including fuel deliveries by truck from port, and has potential for future daily transport of mine workers to and from Noatak.

**Nome Glacier Creek Road to Rock Creek Mine** – Two-season construction project is underway and will be complete by fall 2005. Realignment improves access to Rock Creek Gold Mine, removes traffic from Nome watershed, improves state maintenance and operation costs, and is funded through federal-aid highway program.

**Pebble Gold-Copper Port and Road** – Cook Inlet port and 80-mile road to mine site uses Williamsport-Pile Bay Road as part of route. Routed away from Pedro Bay and Lake Iliamna shoreline. Allows use of Iniskin Bay port site or Williamsport barge landing for ore. Complete reconnaissance engineering and permit data, 2005 field season. Reconnaissance engineering report review begins June 2005. Final reconnaissance engineering is to be complete late 2005.

**Project Closeouts**

**Colville River Road** – After consultation with industry, DOT&PF moves project to close-out status. Engineering and environmental data will be held for future use, if long range plans show value of road.

**Yukon-Kuskokwim Road** – Placer Dome decided in January 2005 to construct Kuskokwim River road as part of mine development, and determines Yukon River road not needed. Project reviewed by DOT&PF and goes to close-out status. Yukon River road can be restarted if major new mines open in Flat area.

Source: Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Industrial Ports and Roads Program Status Report, February 2005, Mike McKinnon
Fairbanks-based contractors are gearing up for another booming year in new construction, although some have worked throughout the winter months with little or none of the seasonal break that usually accompanies sub-zero winter temperatures in the Interior.

Crews working for Fairbanks-based Denali Mechanical Inc. typically spend between July 4 and Thanksgiving on the job, according to the company’s chief executive officer Bob Cummings. This year, his crews worked through the winter months, which are generally slow: “For us, it is unusual,” he said.

The level of work for Denali Mechanical hit record highs in 2003 and 2004, Cummings said, and he expects another banner year in 2005, based on information provided to Alaska’s construction sector from government agencies funding such work. Other Interior contractors echo that sentiment.

“It was huge – 2004 was a monster year for construction up here,” said Bert Bell, president of GHEMM Company, one of the major contractors in Fairbanks.

Record Year

Fairbanks city building statistics back that up, indicating that 2004 was a record year for new construction, significantly more than previous years, said Steve Shuttleworth, the city’s building officer. Building projects within the city boundaries totaled more than $141 million in 2004 – past yearly averages range from $42 million to $45 million.

Shuttleworth said construction values in 2003 were also higher than past averages, tallying about $70 million. Within the last 25 years, the largest annual value in new construction work in the city occurred in 1985, which was $80 million.

Of the $141 million in new construction initiated in 2004, roughly 80 percent came from the private sector, somewhat uncommon for Fairbanks. Historically, government and public sector spending has accounted for the majority of new construction in the city, Shuttleworth said. A majority of the new construction work within the city boundaries is commercial development.

For 2005, Shuttleworth expects another year with above average spending, ranging from $60 million to $80 million.
Retail Stores
Included in that 2005 estimate is a large-scale, private development planned for retail use. It is to be built on Bentley Trust land, and located just west of the recently opened Lowe’s store, which is on the rapidly expanding northeast side of Fairbanks. Those development plans call for construction of a 26,000-square-foot Barnes and Noble bookstore, a 45,000-square-foot Alaska Sportsman’s Warehouse, an 18,000-square-foot Old Navy, a 15,000-square-foot Petco, and two more shops, presently unnamed at the present time, Shuttleworth said.

That project is slated to start in April 2005, by an out-of-state contractor. Engineered Structures Inc., or ESI, is listed as the contractor that will construct the shell of the facility, according to the City of Fairbanks building department. ESI is a general contractor headquartered in Boise, Idaho, and has been active in Alaska before. ESI recently completed the new Fred Meyer store on the east side of Fairbanks, which opened in late February; and has built stores for Fred Meyer in Palmer and Anchorage, Sports Authority in Anchorage, and Vista Optical in Eagle River.

Office Buildings
Additionally, Alaska USA Federal Credit Union will build a four-story, 55,000-square-foot office building this year on land
just east of the Bentley Trust development, located between Seekins Ford Lincoln Mercury dealership and the Jehovah’s Witnesses Kingdom Hall on the Old Steese Highway. Shuttleworth said the building will be called the Fairbanks Financial Center.

Another new office building, with 8,000 square feet of space and a restaurant attached, is also in the works for construction within the city limits, although details were not available at press time.

“The phone is going non-stop, with a bunch of developers calling in with questions,” Shuttleworth said. “A half-dozen more substantial projects are going in, but they don’t want to tell us until the last minute.”

Military Spending

Area military spending should remain strong in 2005, and even though that work actually occurs outside of the city boundaries, Shuttleworth says it creates a continued ripple for economic development within the city.

Alaska contractors Cummings and Bell both tout substantial military spending as a key factor in the Fairbanks construction boom. “The Corps of Engineers said they will have the largest work load they have ever had [in Alaska],” Cummings said. “That’s not just the Air Force and Army, but all phases of the military.”

At Fort Wainwright, adjacent to the Fairbanks city boundary, Bell said GHEMM Co. worked on several projects in 2004, including construction of a hotel, continued work on the Bassett Army Community Hospital, and power plant renovations. “For us, the bulk of money is federal money, which was certainly the biggest impact up here last year,” he said.

Fire Station

The City of Fairbanks is among those government entities managing a large construction project, with construction of a new fire station headquarters at 1101 Cushman, one block from city hall and the city police station. Funded by bonds approved in October 2003, the $7.5 million project is scheduled for completion July
2005, according to Patrick Smith, project manager for the city.

“The project represents the City’s first experience in constructing a major public facility using the design-build technique,” Smith said. “The initial learning curve was steep, but exciting. One of the major advantages of this approach is speed.”

The city’s detailed Request for Proposal was issued in November 2003, with design submittals received from competing design-build teams by January 2004. General contractor Neeser Construction and architectural firm Koonce Pfeffer Bettis, both of Anchorage, won the bid – breaking ground in April 2004.

“The Neeser/KPB team has done an exemplary job of meeting strict City requirements and the expectations of Fire Chief Warren Cummings,” Smith said, “doing so under a painfully tight budget.”

Two Fairbanks-based subcontractors worked on the project: Graystar Mechanical and Industrial Electric. Smith said he was impressed with their ability to adapt in the design-build conditions. “It takes a pretty nimble contractor in the field to make adjustments,” he said. Work on the project is running “as smooth as a Swiss watch,” despite some work slow-down during minus-40- and minus-50-degree temperatures during winter months.

The new facility contains 27,578 square feet of gross building area, features a concrete tower for hose drying and training purposes and a split-faced dark gray concrete block exterior with red finishing on the upper stories of the building.

**UAF Museum**

Other large, multi-year construction projects in the Interior include several at the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus. Probably the most visible and most talked about is the UA Museum expansion, which exceeded the planned $32.75 million budget by $9.25 million – nearly 30 percent.

Nearly half of the extra money, $4.5 million, will go directly to increased construction costs for the 43,791-square-foot expansion project, accord-
ing to Kate Ripley, director of public affairs for the University of Alaska statewide. The increase covers a number of change orders with the project, she said. The remaining $4.75 million will cover associated costs for redesigning exhibits and renovations to the existing 40,280-square-foot facility, work that will continue through the spring, summer and fall months of 2005.

Originally scheduled to be complete in January, final finish work continues in the expansion, said Kerynn Fisher, communications coordinator at the museum. Crews working for contractor Alaska Mechanical, Inc., continue to put finishing touches on the new wing, and have started renovations to the existing facility. The gallery was shut down in late February, in order to allow renovations to be completed in time for the beginning of the summer tourism season in late May.

“We are expecting renovations to go much faster,” she said. “The new wing has a lot of curves and angles, while renovation (of existing space) has a lot more 90-degree angles.”

Renamed the University of Alaska Museum of the North, the uniquely shaped addition doubles the size of the existing building, to 81,000 square feet. Expanded areas will include 28,000 square feet in a research center, nearly doubling the current collections area.

According to a museum press release, “the new 10,000-square-foot Rose Berry Alaska Art Gallery will interpret art as an expression of the Alaska experience, and the centerpiece of the expanded museum will bring the museum’s art treasurers out of storage, into public view, and give visitors a deeper understanding of the nature of artistic creation, interpretation and history.”

Work to install exhibits in the new art gallery will continue through the summer and fall months, with an anticipated completion date in December. Fisher said. That work will be conducted by a mix of contractors and University staff.

Included in the museum addition are a 3,000-foot Learning Center, a Pre-College Education Center, a smart
classroom for UAF students and an art study room. Additionally, a multimedia auditorium and an expanded museum store are included in the expansion project, which will be open this summer. Plans currently call for a Sept. 10 ribbon cutting and open house.

Construction crews peaked at less than 90 workers, but averaged 55-65 per day at the UA Museum job site, according to Carol Adamczak, UAF’s project manager.

**R&D Facility**

Another major construction project at UAF includes construction of a 42,000-square-foot facility, named the BICS-BIRD Biological Research and Diagnostics Facility. It is scheduled to be completed in February 2006, at a cost of $19 million, and will incorporate program components and facilities for laboratory animal holding and care, procedure rooms, animal care administrative space, onsite biological waste handling, and building support space. Diagnostic labs, a surgical suite and a necropsy suite are included in

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**Fill stations will provide water and air to parked trains at the new Fairbanks train depot.**

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PHOTO: © PATRICIA LILES
the design, but will not be finished until additional funding is obtained, according to UAF public affairs.

Foundation work at the BICS-BIRD facility has been completed and construction, which subsided for the winter months, will resume this spring.

Another UAF construction project is a renovation project at the Tanana Valley Campus Allied Health Center located in the TVCC Center in downtown Fairbanks. It is scheduled to be completed in June 2005, at a cost of $1.5 million.

**Railroad Depot**

Crews working for Alaska Mechanical Inc. also spent winter months on the job at another Fairbanks project, the new timber-frame depot being built for the Alaska Railroad.

Located on a 32-acre site adjacent to the existing railroad operation yard, the new Fairbanks Intermodal Facility will feature a state-of-the-art train depot, additional bus parking, and safe movement of passengers making travel connections on trains, buses, taxis and automobiles. Access will be pro-
vided with a new intersection and road at the intersection of the Johansen Expressway and Danby Road.

The $23.7 million project has grown slightly, to a total of $24.5 million, according to Brett Flint, manager of facility construction for the Alaska Railroad. “We’ve added scope to the project, putting in additional track and some additional things that will help tour companies operate out of that facility.”

The project is funded by the Federal Transit Administration, the Federal Railroad Administration and the Alaska Railroad, and is scheduled to be complete in the summer of 2005. Flint said “substantial completion,” allowing occupancy and intended use is scheduled for mid-April. Just in time for the mid-May tourism season start. Contractors will continue with a punch list, exterior work and landscaping through mid-summer.

Once complete, the new depot site will allow for expanded passenger train lengths, eliminating road blockage at the current downtown depot experienced during loading and unloading. Passenger trains will remain intact and will be maintained at the depot site, which will reduce operations and maintenance costs.

Construction of up to 13,000 lineal feet of passenger main track will provide direct access to the depot and efficient turnaround of trains for morning departures. Flint says that compared to the three hours currently required to turn around a train, that same task will be achieved in 20 minutes with the new “balloon,” a looped track. Additionally, freight handling through the “trailer on flat car” will be improved using the new intersection.

Work began on the project several years ago, through design, site acquisition and prep work. AMI broke ground in April 2004 on the modified timber-frame and steel-frame construction project.

**Interior Construction**
That military impact stretches beyond the immediate Fairbanks
area, down the Richardson Highway. “You can’t ignore the importance of Fort Greeley and the missile defense system,” Cummings said. “It’s important to Delta Junction and to Fairbanks.” For Denali Mechanical, that translated to work on a new elementary school and a fire station in the Delta Junction area in 2004.

Other large Interior construction projects outside of Fairbanks include the Pogo Gold Mine, which kicked off construction in 2004 in the remote upper Goodpaster River drainage, which is 40 miles northeast of Delta Junction.

In North Pole, H.C. Price began initial work last fall at the new gas-fired power plant commissioned by Golden Valley Electric Association, a project that will ramp up this spring.

“Contractors should be able to get into the ground earlier, as much as two weeks, this year.”

**Early Start**

According to Shuttleworth, construction work may start a little earlier this spring, despite heavy snowfall in the Interior this winter. “The frost depth is not as deep because we had the big insulating factor from the snow,” he said. “Contractors should be able to get into the ground earlier, as much as two weeks, this year.”

That jump-start on new construction may well be needed, as several large projects started in 2004 will continue into the 2005 construction season. The elevated level of activity has drained local personnel resources, Bell said, from top management down to apprentices.

“I think everybody was busy last year,” he said. “The union halls were pretty well tapped out, and it’s been a busy winter. I do think it is a good, positive impact for the community. It’s a good time to be involved in the construction industry.”
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All awards will be announced and presented at the barbecue after
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Mail to: AGC of Alaska, 8005 Schoon St., Anchorage, AK 99518  Fax to: (907) 562-6118
SAFETY REPORT (Continued)

• Recognition by holding a nationally recognized and accredited credential

Recently an agreement was reached between OSHA, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and CCHEST recognizing the STS, Safety Trained Supervisor in Construction certification.

The agreement recognizes the STS as verifying the safety and health knowledge of individual supervisors on sites. Those who employ STS-certified supervisors indicate to compliance officers that a site is being operated by individuals with demonstrated knowledge and ability and may contribute to a project’s qualification for a “Focused OSHA Inspection.” STS certification also helps employers to meet their responsibility of instructing employees in hazard recognition and control.

“This agreement enables OSHA to recognize a certification that verifies the safety and health knowledge of individual supervisors on construction sites,” said John L. Henshaw, Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA. “We are delighted to encourage the promotion of safety and health at construction worksites through such programs as this certification program of CCHEST.

Safe work practices add to productivity and profit.

The STS program began in 1995 for first-line construction supervisors, foremen, crew chiefs and craftsmen who have responsibility to maintain safe conditions and practices on construction job sites. The STS holds national accreditation from the Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (CESB) and is based on training, experience and demonstrated knowledge by examination.

CHRIS ROSS, CSP, is AGC/NANA Training Systems General Manager. For class dates and more information, call (907) 565-3300, visit www.agcsafetyinc.com, www.nana-nts.com, or follow the safety links at www.agcak.org.

Much of the information for this article comes from the CCHST Web site, where you can find more information about the certification process, download a candidate handbook and obtain application forms. CCHEST is a joint venture of the American Board of Industrial Hygiene (ABIH) and the Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP). Other CCHEST certifications include the Occupational Health and Safety Technologist (OHST) and the Construction Health and Safety Technician (CHST) certifications.

Contact Information

Council on Certification of Health, Environmental and Safety Technologists
208 Burwash Avenue
Savoy, Illinois 61874-9571
(217) 359-9263 ext. 145
E-mail: alicia@bcsp.org
Web Site: www.cchest.org

Testing Locations

Anchorage - 5210 Prometric Testing Center
3401 Minnesota Drive
University of Alaska
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
United States Of America
(907) 276-6007

Fairbanks - 7734 University of Alaska - Fairbanks
207 B - Gruening Bldg.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99775
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Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
www.ahfc.state.ak.us

More than you ever realized
Construction in the Bush is all about logistics. Building anything in communities off the rail and road system means meeting logistical challenges and dealing with adverse conditions, which can be extreme.

Much of the funding for construction in rural Alaska is funneled through the Denali Commission, a federal-state partnership.

In 2005, the Denali Commission has a $133-$153 million federal budget for construction and infrastructure projects throughout rural Alaska, with additional funds expected from the State of Alaska.

Read about construction in the Bush in the next issue of the Alaska Contractor.

Next Time

A bulk fuel storage project was recently completed in Gambell and final design is complete for wind generation, power plant, heat recovery and electrical distribution projects. Conceptual planning and design for a clinic is underway.
Just A Minute

Bystanders may identify stroke in 60 seconds

A bystander may be able to spot someone having a stroke by giving the person a simple, quick test to see if they can smile, raise both arms and keep them up, and speak a simple sentence coherently.

The test, which takes less than one minute, has helped healthcare professionals accurately identify stroke patients. If bystanders can relay results of this test to an emergency dispatcher, it could speed treatment to stroke patients. Time is crucial in treating stroke.

Remember these three simple questions:
• Can you raise your arms and keep them up?
• Can you repeat a simple sentence?
• Can you smile?

Call 911 immediately if the person has difficulty with any of the three items, such symptoms should be evaluated by medical professionals immediately.

Medical researcher Amy Hurwitz says call for help if a person’s speech unexpectedly becomes slurred or incomprehensible, if one side of someone’s body goes numb, or if one side of the face droops down.

If stroke victims are given proper help within three hours of the stroke, the ability to recover is greatly increased.

Information from Stroke Journal Report, Feb. 2003, was used, with special thanks to Debi McGill, Editor in Chief, Stroke Connection Magazine.

Save Yourself

Survive a heart attack when alone by coughing

Let’s say you’re driving home alone after an unusually hard day on the job. You’re really tired, upset and frustrated. Suddenly, you start experiencing severe pain in your chest that starts to radiate out into your arm and up into your jaw.

You are only about five miles from the hospital nearest your home. Unfortunately, you don’t know if you will be able to make it that far. You have been trained in CPR, but the guy that taught the course did not tell you how to perform it on yourself.

Many people are alone when they suffer a heart attack, and without help, the person whose heart is beating improperly and who begins to feel faint has only about 10 seconds left before becoming unconscious.

However, these victims can help themselves by coughing repeatedly and very vigorously.

A deep breath should be taken before each cough, and the cough must be deep and prolonged, as when producing sputum from deep inside the chest.

A breath and a cough must be repeated about every two seconds – without let-up – until help arrives, or until the heart is felt to be beating normally again.

Deep breaths get oxygen into the lungs and coughing movements squeeze the heart and keep the blood circulating. The squeezing pressure on the heart also helps it regain normal rhythm.

Heart attack self help may enable heart attack victims to get to get to a phone, and between breaths, call for help – or to get to a hospital, even if alone and driving. You could save your own life.

Information from Health Cares, Rochester General Hospital, was used, with special thanks to Bennie Hutson.

Editor’s Note: Not all on the job injuries/illnesses are the result of work-related accidents. As Alaska’s construction industry workforce ages, the possibility of strokes and heart attacks occurring among workers is very real. Knowing how to recognize symptoms, and how to take action, could save lives.
QUALITY FABRICATION
BY QUALIFIED ALASKANS

Complex units to service the oil and gas and mining industries could now be manufactured in Alaska, creating good-paying jobs for Alaskans and good value for those who do business in the state. It was a bold, risky venture for VECO, but today the company operates a state-of-the-art fabrication facility where it builds projects great and small.

Contact Matt Schipper our Anchorage Fabrication Manager.

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