

ARDOT Newsletter

May 2024



SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

- Construction Management Program
- Business Development Program
- Capability Statement Design
- Business Plan Development
- Technical Assistance

NORTH LITTLE ROCK PROPERTY PURCHASED FOR FUTURE CRIME LAB CONSTRUCTION

On Thursday, April 25, 2024, the Arkansas Department of Public Safety (DPS) announced that it has successfully purchased land in North Little Rock to construct a new state-of-the-art Arkansas State Crime Laboratory (ASCL). DPS has been actively working for months to identify a suitable property to build a new crime lab, and this purchase is a historic step toward reaching this goal. ASCL purchased the near 19-acre property between 5301 Northshore Drive and 5300 Northshore Cove for \$4.095 million. In January 2024, the Arkansas Legislative Council approved ASCL's request to fund the land purchase.

"Once completed, the new State Crime Lab will be equipped with the latest technology and facilities. This will allow the lab to continue conducting scientific analyses and investigations to help solve crimes across the state," said Department of Public Safety Secretary Col. Mike Hagar. "The enhanced capabilities of the lab will help law enforcement agencies expedite the process of solving criminal cases."

DPS and ASCL staff will work with architects, engineers, and contractors to finalize the design for a new 180,000-square-foot building on the newly purchased property. In 2023, The Arkansas General Assembly set aside \$200 million to construct the new Crime Lab.

"The current Arkansas State Crime Laboratory has allowed our team to deliver meaningful forensic science services to our Arkansas stakeholders for more than forty years, since its establishment in 1981. Today, our team has outgrown our current building capacity. We are incredibly grateful to receive the support to build a new Arkansas State Crime Laboratory that will best position our team to continue to provide the forensic science services Arkansans entrust us to deliver, maintain and develop new partnerships with our stakeholders to best serve our state, and recruit and retain the very best forensic science team," stated Arkansas State Crime Lab Director Dr. Theodore (Ted) Brown. "Our new facility will not only enhance our current services but will allow us growth for decades."



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Five Steps for Reducing Stress on and off the Jobsite

Workplace stress is a reality in any industry, and construction is no different. However, there are ways both for individuals to reduce their stress and for leaders to create a less stressful work environment.

Stress is a completely natural human experience. It is the body's way of responding to short-term challenges and threats in daily life. Millennia ago, it equipped humans to properly react to dangers such as predators, competitors and life-threatening situations. Without stress, it's very possible our species would not have survived as long as it has.

And while stress is still a necessary part of survival today, most of us are (hopefully) not facing regular attacks from bears or wondering if there are enough provisions to survive the winter months. Those are short-term stresses—the difference between life and death. The problem comes when our minds today make us feel like we're constantly facing life-threatening situations or are experiencing stress for long periods of time, leading to acute or chronic stress. The stresses many of us experience today are vastly different from what our ancient ancestors were forced to deal with, but still our bodies react the same. On the construction site, there are certainly potentially hazardous situations, and stress helps workers in those situations stay safe. Seeing a colleague at risk for a slip-and-fall may cause stress and help others quicken their reactions to assist them. Experiencing stress when in a hazardous area ensures workers are alert and mindful of every step and maneuver.

However, too much stress or unnecessary stress can actually distract workers and put both their physical health and mental health at greater risk.

STRESS ONSITE

On a jobsite, the most common causes of stress are being overworked, having unrealistic deadlines, performing physically dangerous or demanding tasks, lack of communication, poor work culture or environment and improper training. Additionally, there are often other stressors that workers bring to the construction site from home or from their personal lives that seep into work life. Dealing with chronic stress on the construction site is not only harmful to a worker's mental health but it can be dangerous for both the individual experiencing the stress and those around them. If a worker is distracted and not performing their job at a satisfactory level, their mistake can quickly put their coworkers' wellbeing at risk. So, how can workers on construction sites reduce their stress? Here are five strategies to employ to help workers reduce chronic stress and improve their mental health as well as the overall safety of the worksite.

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About The ARDOT

The goal of the DBE Supportive Services Program is to increase the number of DBEs participating on ARDOT contracts and facilitate the opportunity for DBEs to obtain contracts. The services are designed to:

- Assist established construction firms to move them from bidding as a subcontractor to bidding as a Prime Contractor to produce sound bids.
- Provide access to training increases DBE expertise in handling of daily business operations.



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