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KLICA News & Information March 2025

KLICA News & Information

Kansas Land Improvement Contractors Association

Lifetime Achievement Recognition

Jim Ebert, Ebert Construction



*Jim Ebert, Ebert Construction, was recognized with the
Kansas Land Improvement Contractors Association
Lifetime Achievement Award at our 2025 Convention & Business Meeting.
L-R: Dorothy Winterman, Jim, Steve Peter*



Presidents Message Steve Peter, Vice President

Greetings, Steve Peter here, a dirt contractor located in Central KS. Hope everyone is getting their winter maintenance done, warmer temperatures are finally starting to show back up! It feels like the longest winter coming to a close, with all the snow and extreme cold we've had! I've been used to mild winters for several years! With spring approaching the jobs are starting to line up. The Winter KLICA Convention in Wichita was great! I hope a fun time was had by all. We had members from all across the state gathered for informative meetings, sharing ideas and ways of doing things, and also great fellowship. One thing of concern is our membership numbers are slightly down. If you know of a contractor in your area that could benefit from joining KLICA be sure to mention us, let myself or Jon Ungerer our director know! We would love to reach

out! We are in the early planning stages of having a membership recruiting /equipment demo day some time this summer in Central Kansas and South East Kansas. It is a chance to come out and see what KLICA is all about and move a little dirt with different machines! With any luck, a little sunshine and dry weather I should be throwing dirt in a week. It will be nice to get back in the field! I hope everyone is doing well and staying safe! Until next time, keep pushing!

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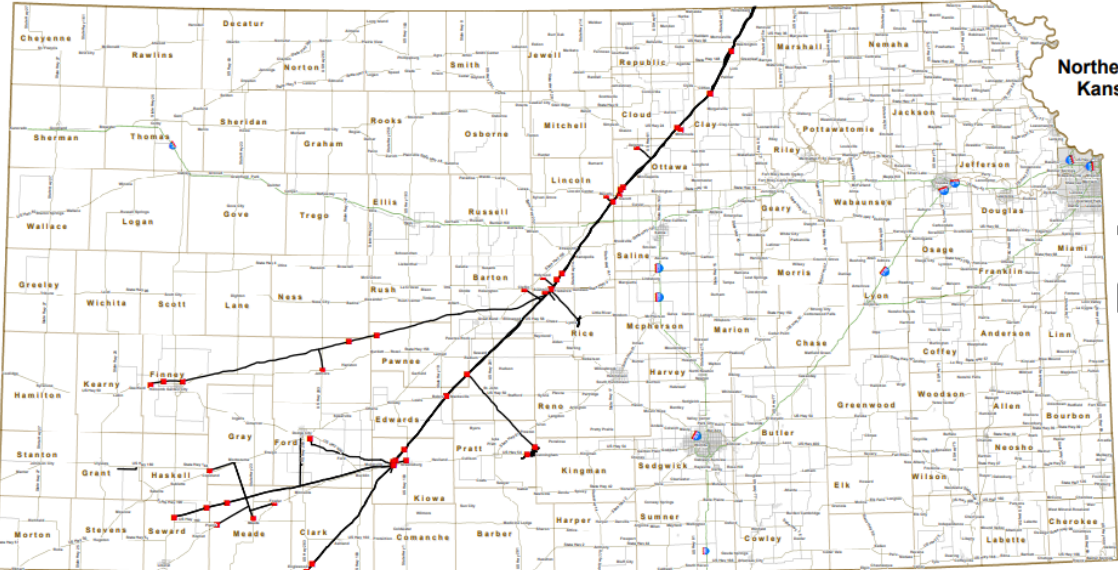
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Schell Inducted as National Land Improvement Contractors of America President

Kansas Land Improvement current Treasurer and owner/operator of Schell Farm & Construction, Inc., Marysville, Kansas was installed as the Land Improvement Contractors of America President at the National LICA Winter Convention in Jacksonville, Florida. The Schell family has a long history of service to both Kansas and National LICA. Jeff was elected Kansas District 3 Director in 2007 and to Vice President in 2013. Jeff served as KLICA President in 2014 and 2015, being recognized as KLICA Contractor of the Year in 2017. Jeff started service to National LICA as Region 6 Director in 2020, serving in that position prior to being elected Vice President for 2024. Jeff will serve as National LICA President in 2025 then move in to the Chairman of the Board position. Jeff's father, Lorane served as KLICA President in 1986, and was KLICA Contractor of the Year that same year. Schell Farm & Construction, Inc. has been a member of KLICA since 1962. We are proud to have one of our own as National President and know the Schell family tradition of moving LICA forward on both the state and national level will continue.



Jeff Schell receives the LICA President Pin from outgoing President, Tony Cain, Indiana.



St. Augustine, Florida tour.



*Kansas Attendees at National LICA
L-R: Jon Ungerer, Executive Director; Kathy Ungerer; Marsha Schell; Jeff Schell, KLICA Treasurer & National LICA President; Linda Dick; Steve Dick, KLICA District 6 Director.*



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73rd Annual Convention Coverage

The 73rd Annual KLICA Convention & Business Meeting was held January 26, 27 & 28, 2025 at the Drury Inn, Wichita, Kansas. Saturday evening started out with the 3rd Annual Cornhole Tournament and Sunday Night Social. But before we could kick off the tournament we had to watch a back and forth AFC Championship, which finally ended with the local favorite Kansas City Chiefs taking a close win over the Buffalo Bills. Once the hard hitting on the field ended the competition really started heating up in the Cornhole Tournament. Although the number of teams were down this year the teams were no less intent on taking the title and earning the privilege of adding their names to the back of the Championship Boards! National and State LICA teamed up to take the championship honors this year with Tony Cain, National President, and Gavin Lang, Lang Dirt Services winning the final match. Congratulations Tony & Gavin and Thank You for your generosity donating your winnings back to the KLICA Scholarship Fund.

Monday was a full day of informational speakers with the ladies touring a couple of local attractions, the Botanical Gardens and Frank Lloyd Wright House.

Mondays Memorial Luncheon we paid a final farewell and memorial to four of our KLICA family; Dirk Riniker, Betty Myers, Richard Mayes, and Bobbie Wallace.

Monday Night was Associates Night with a fun crowd paying recognition to our Awards winners and as always Purple Wave Auction providing a great auction to benefit our Association.

Tuesday Morning was the KLICA Members Business Meeting after which we were hosted by Berry Tractor & Equipment Co. for a good meal and informative tour of their local facility.

On the following pages you'll find sponsors and other convention coverage. Thank You to ALL who participated in some way with our convention! We look forward to seeing you again next year. We are currently working with the Hilton Garden Inn, Manhattan, Kansas to host our convention next year. See you there!

Murphy Tractor & Equipment Co., Inc. 2024 Associate of the Year



*Receiving the Associate of the Year Award for Murphy Tractor & Equipment, Company, Inc.
L-R: Aaron Couper, Customer Relations Specialist; Dylan Riniker, Rental Specialist; Steve Peter, KLICA President Elect; Lance Jone, Territory Sales Manager; Luke Fanshier, Territory Sales Manager; and Scott Bayless, Region Sales Manager.*



Cornhole Champions Tony Cain and Gavin Lang.

73rd Annual Convention Coverage

Lifetime Achievement Recognition

Jim Ebert, Ebert Construction

The Kansas Land Improvement Contractors Association recipient of this years Lifetime Achievement Award was typical of many in his era and grew up working on his family farm. Jim Ebert recognized early on that there were not a lot of people in the conservation contracting business. This knowledge pushed Jim to start a conservation construction business in 1958 with an old RD 7 Cat and an American 8 motor grader. The following year his brother, Pat, joined him in the business. Shortly after this, the business added another tractor to the company. The company grew steadily excavating farm ponds, clearing trees, and building terraces. Ebert Construction grew steadily surviving a ten month period when their National Guard Unit, the 110th Ordnance Company, was called to active duty. During their ten month service to their country they leased their equipment, but never received one payment from the leasing party.

On returning to work the company grew steadily completing soil and water conservation work, secondary road jobs, sewer lagoons, and a settling basin water project for the city of Manhattan. The company constructed a shop and office in 1965. During the 1970's and 1980's the company purchased more equipment and took advantage of the growing PL566 watershed work by adding watershed projects to its workload.

As the company grew family members became an

integral part of operations, and the business diversified into other areas of heavy equipment work including highway construction and concrete structures. Ebert Construction has successfully completed projects of all sizes for State Departments of Transportation, US Army Corps of Engineers, Natural Resources Conservation Service, watershed districts, local counties and municipalities, and private landowners.

Odds are you've driven a street in a housing development, state highway, or interstate highway constructed by Eberts. If you drive K-18 highway into Manhattan from the west you can thank them for the smooth traffic flow on your way to a Kansas State University event.

Jim was KLICA President in 1976 & 1977 and received recognition as Contractor of the Year in 1976.

Ebert Construction is still family owned and operated with 50 to 75 employees, some of which have been with the company for over 40 years. From conservation projects, protecting our soil and water for our state's agricultural producers, to ensuring safe travels on our highways and bridges Jim Ebert and Ebert Construction have built projects that have benefited the citizens of Kansas and beyond.

Congratulations Jim on receiving the 2025 Kansas Land Improvement Contractors Association Lifetime Achievement Award.



Jim, with his younger brother, on his first bulldozer, an RD7 Cat.



Pictured is Jim with family. Sitting L-R: Derek Riniker, James Ebert II, Dorothy Winterman, Lisa Diederich. Standing L-R: Dylan Riniker, Becky Riniker, Tim Diederich, Jenni Ebert, Amanda Riniker, Rhonda Trudo, Ron Trudo, Justin Ebert.



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73rd Annual Convention Coverage Associates Night & Auction

Associates Night was as always a great time with our Lifetime Achievement, Associate of the Year, and Length of Service recognitions. It is always great to recognize deserving individuals and our Associate Members. While our auction did not do quite as well as the last couple of years Purple Wave Auction did an incredible job involving the crowd and making sure every item brought what it should and more. We funded two additional scholarships for Heavy Equipment Operation school students at Fort Hays Tech North Central in Beloit, Kansas. The Irene Loflin traveling painting titled Sunset brought \$2300 this year and another of Irene's paintings which she wanted the proceeds to go to a scholarship brought \$650.

We cannot Thank Purple Wave Auction, all our bidders, and those who donated items enough for their support of our auction and convention.



*Our Purple Wave Auction Auctioneer -
Bob McBride takes a bid.*



A bid is placed!



*Beautiful quilt - Handmade and donated by Karen
White, White Construction.*



*Heavy duty KLICA pub table -
Donated by Thole Land Improvement.*

73rd Annual Convention Coverage

Length of Membership Awards Contractor Members

55 Years

Haile Dirt Construction
Marten Dozing & Excavating, LLC
Wilbur Jueneman Construction, Inc.

50 Years

Criqui Construction, Inc.

25 Years

Henderson Grading Inc.

15 Years

Bill Butrick Construction
Complete Excavating SY, Inc.
Lowe Construction, LLC
Matt Osterhaus
Servaes Excavating, LLC

10 Years

American Topsoil Inc.
Babcock Construction
Rutz Construction, LLC
Wells Built, LLC

5 Years

Shawn Kramer Construction, LLC
Lubbers Excavating, Inc.
M. Shay Construction, LLC
Ohlsen Right of Way & Maintenance, Inc.
Price Excavating, LLC



Length of Membership Awards Associate Members

35 Years

Roadbuilders Machine & Supply

15 Years

The Insurance Guys

10 Years

Modern Ag Inc.
SITECH-Central, LLC

Length of Membership Awards Special Members

55 Years

Fuzz Haile/Haile Dirt Construction



Accepting Length of Membership for SITECH-Central, LLC L-R: Ryan Richeson, Steve Peter (KLICA), Josh Ingold, & James Roberts.

73rd Annual Convention Coverage

Length of Membership Awards



*Mike Loflin accepting for
Henderson Grading Inc - 25 Years*



*Justin & Amy Rutz,
Rutz Construction, LLC - 10 Years*



*Scott Lowe,
Lowe Construction, LLC - 15 Years*



*Fuzz Haile & James Fenwick
Haile Dirt Construction - 55 Years*



*Alan Amewrshek & Nick Martin
Modern Ag Inc. - 10 Years*

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AUCTION

73rd Annual Convention Coverage

Tuesday Lunch & Tour

Berry Tractor & Equipment Co.

At the conclusion of our Business Meeting Tuesday morning our attendees traveled just a few miles west of our hotel to Berry Tractor & Equipment Co., at 930 S West St., Wichita, Kansas. There our hosts, Berry Tractor & Equipment Co., treated us to a delicious BBQ lunch and we heard the history of their company. We then had a door prize drawing where Steve Dick, Henry Dick Digging, Inc., won a Blackstone Griddle and Ion Tailgater Speaker. After lunch our members were treated to an informative and interesting tour of the local facility where we learned the history of Berry Tractor and found out we were actually at the original first location of Berry Tractor started back in 1958! Berry Tractor & Equipment Co. now has four locations: Wichita, Kansas; Garden City, Kansas; Topeka, Kansas; and Springfield, Missouri.

Thank You to Berry Tractor & Equipment Co. and their gracious staff, with a special Thank You to Kaitlyn Ray who worked with me on arrangements, for being our hosts and providing this perfect conclusion to our 73rd Annual



Our wonderful and gracious hosts: L-R: Gene Ogden, Branch Manager; Kaitlyn Ray, Marketing Coordinator; and Steve Sanders, Training Manager. And somehow that guy on the far left always photobombs himself into a picture!



Steve Dick with his door prizes!



Original Sign Letters from 1958 are still preserved on an inside wall.

73rd Annual Convention Coverage

Ladies Programs



The ladies at Botanica Wichita.

The KLICA ladies enjoyed a couple of different tours Monday starting with Botanica Wichita in the morning. Even though it was the middle of winter a mild day provided cool but comfortable temperatures for the ladies to enjoy the outside portions of the tour. Botanica Wichita is a beautiful mixture of living gardens, fountains, and statues providing pleasant scenes and information. During the season Botanica Wichita features traveling exhibitions and delightful events to enrich your experience and love for the gardens.

In the afternoon the ladies toured the Frank Lloyd Wright Allen House. The Allen House was the last of the architect's famous prairie houses and features a living room which is referred to as "one of the great rooms of the 20th century." Many visitors to the Allen House consider it "the house of choice to live in!"



Above & Below - Botanica Wichita.



Frank Lloyd Wright House.

73rd Annual Convention Coverage Sponsors & Exhibitors

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Convention Exhibitors

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HeavyQuip of Kansas
J&J Drainage Products Co.
Landoll Company, LLC
Modern Ag Inc.
Murphy Tractor & Equipment Co., Inc.
Precision Intakes, LTD
Prins Insurance/United Fire Group
Purple Wave Auction
Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers



Convention Sponsors

Sunday Night Reception

Advanced Drainage Systems Inc. (ADS)
Prins Insurance/United Fire Group

Monday Morning Break

Murphy Tractor & Equipment Co., Inc.

Monday Memorial Luncheon

Landoll Company, LLC

Associates Night Bar Sponsors

Murphy Tractor & Equipment Co., Inc.
Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers

Associates Night Sponsors

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Purple Wave Auction

Tuesday Lunch & Tour

Berry Tractor & Equipment Co.



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Rambling Thoughts of an Executive Director

Lots to talk about this time so I hope I don't bore you. First convention, we ended up with a good turnout and I want to give a big Thank You to the Drury Inn and their staff, especially, Allison N. Mikolajczyk, but also all of their staff. They were great to work with, and anytime we needed something they were quickly there to help. While we did have some issues with IT and the new sound system they tried hard to get it working for us. I also think the facilities/layout were excellent for our group. I also want to Thank all of our Sponsors and Exhibitors for supporting us another year. And Thank You to the Exhibitors for the great input at the Associates Meeting Monday afternoon. We had some great discussion about membership and ideas to help with recruiting. Thank You! Thank You also to all who donated auction items. We had some really nice items and I love to see the homemade items we are getting. It means a lot to have items like tables/quilts/paintings/honey items/etc. that have come from our own members and their efforts. Thank You! Next year we are working with the Hilton Garden Inn, Manhattan, Kansas, and it is looking like that is where we will be for our 74th Annual Convention on January 25, 26, & 27, 2026 - Mark your calendars!

I have been in touch with the golf course for this years golf tournament and it is looking like it will be June 20, 2025 at the Marysville Country Club. Last year we had enough teams we were able to flight the results allowing two teams to be winners. We have always had some really nice hole prizes making sure golfers are putting forth their best efforts to come out a winner or at least go home with a great hole prize.

We are also thinking about a trap shoot or other event to try to generate some interest from members who are not golfers and bring in some potential members as guests to meet our group and see what KLICA is all about. Membership this year has dropped below 100 so if you know any non member contractors out there reach out to them and invite them to come to an event and meet some of our members. Get me their contact information and I can send them information and correspond with them, but the best recruiting comes from another contractor member. The National meeting in Florida this year was full of good discussion and interest in the future of LICA. There is not a shortage of individuals dedicated to the success and improvement of LICA. While individuals and states have different opinions and ideas, positive discussion and planning for the future will serve to strengthen LICA moving forward. LICA has the leadership, staff, and members to ensure success and growth into the future.

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Happy Birthday Dale Faelber!

Dale turns 99 years old on April 9, 2025. I'm sure Dale would love it if you would drop him a card at:

Dale Faelber
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Dale receives his certificate for 50 years of KLICA Membership at the 2018 Convention.



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Dirk Riniker Inducted into National LICA Wall of Honor



Steve Gerten



At the Jacksonville National Awards Banquet Steve Gerten, Ohio, provided a tribute to Dirk Riniker. After this tribute a plaque from LICA National was presented to Jim Pruss, Nebraska, on behalf of Dirk's family inducting Dirk in to the LICA National Wall of Honor. Dirk served as President of National LICA from 2010-2011, and was Regional Director for many years. Steve talked about the time Dirk spent promoting LICA across many states and many years. About the hours and miles spent on the road with Gerald Biuso to recruit members and promote LICA. There is no question of how hard Dirk worked to make LICA the best it could be, how dedicated Dirk was to LICA and it's members, and how much he loved LICA and it's members.

Steve also talked about the fun Dirk had. Whether it was making the best of being on the road and staying in cheap hotels or having a nice dinner with Associates and the Board, Dirk always made sure there was laughter and smiles.

In his work life and his personal life Dirk was dedicated to working as hard as anyone while also making sure there was some fun involved for everyone.

LICA is a better organization because of Dirk Riniker and his inclusion in the LICA Wall of Honor is well deserved. Thank You to Dirks family, allowing LICA to have so much of Dirks time and energy. And finally, one last Thank You to Dirk for everything, you will be missed.



L-R: Tony Cain, Dave Gallahan, & Jim Pruss.

What is the National LICA Wall of Honor

Those who have been honored:

1975	Gerald Ryerson; Silver Springs, MD
1976	Marion W. Clark; Columbia, MO
1977	Jack Diamond; Peoria, IL
1978	James Kelly; Kansas City, MO
1979	Prof. Ralph C. Hay; Springfield, IL
1981	Robert Mo. Koch; Fairfax, VA
1984	Paul Bucha; Hinsdale, IL
1986	Robert Foss; Peoria, IL
1986	Paul E. Nyulander; Washington, DC
1987	Carl Marsee; Celina, OH
1987	Sid Johnson; Agency, MO
1990	Michael E. Strother; Washington, DC
1994	L.D. and Rosa Hunnings; Lumberton , NC
2000	Cy Schwieterman; St. Henry, OH
2001	L.D. Thousand; Rochester, IN
2025	Dirk Riniker, Wamego, KS

When the plaque was presented inducting Dirk Riniker into the National Wall of Honor I must admit I was not aware of this honor or anyone else who may have received this recognition. Upon an inquiry to Allison I now know where to find it, who has been honored, and the requirements for recognition. Since I don't think I'm the only one who was curious here are the specifics.

In the National Directory on the page with the listings of the National Presidents there is a section below called "Honorary Members".

Inclusion in this considers the following:

- Service on all levels of LICA Boards
State & National
- Dedicated service to LICA even when not serving as an officer
Promoting LICA with Associates,
potential members and other partners.
Counseling other members/officers.
Being there for LICA when asked

In the case of Dirk there is no question these considerations were met and exceeded. Looking at the list you can see Dirk is the first recipient since 2001. That might be too long between recognitions, do you know others worthy of this honor?





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On the Other Side of the Dozer Blade

by Margaret Smelser



A few days ago I was looking out at a green yard. The snow from the blizzard was nearly gone. Two "Spring" days, then more snow and zero degrees.

After the blizzard David cleaned out 8

driveways and a place for the neighbors cows to bed down. Our cows get good care, Lee and Jean help us when needed.

David and Lee's work continues to be varied. In December they were clearing trees and ran some through the wood chipper for disposal, a first. Quoting one customer, "I didn't know you dirt guys would do tree trimming." The bucket truck gets used frequently.

They took time out to go to the Topeka Farm Show, time out again to go to the Memorial Service for Richard Ogden, a good man and one of Lloyds early customers. They moved to this area in the 70's.

Work continues as weather permits, two waterways, clearing more "nasty" hedge with the track hoe, burying two cows. And sadly my beloved "Pippi" dog, my first dog after the fire. I still have "Mac" who was Lloyds buddy and is now mine.

Looking back over the past months, our world has been in a turmoil - fires, floods, mans cruelty, there seems to be no ending. The song "God Bless America Again" should be our prayer. Our president said "we must not forget our God" - our nation seems full of "slow learners"!

Another convention over, how I miss those times. Lloyd & I really enjoyed our "mini vacations" and the fellowship of "like minded people." Linda Orear sent a Memorial Program, so beautifully

done. Linda keeps me in touch and reminds me (I - we) are still an important part of KLICA.

Looking back at the last few months, the election, Thanksgiving, Christmas & football - I'm not a sports fan and it seems some are making sports their "god".

My refrigerator is decorated with a very special valentine from Cora, Lee & Rachels little "whirlwind". She loves chickens, cows, and all outdoors.

We are concerned for our long-time mechanic, Randy. He's helped keep machines running for years, and has been critically ill. Better now, yesterday. David has depended on him, as well as being a good friend.

My sympathy for you who have lost loved ones. Only as we "walk" that valley ourselves can we understand.

In spite of 9 degrees this morning we know Spring is coming and look forward to the Easter Season. Make someone's day with a smile. An old Bible School song came to mind, "Let the sunshine in, face it with a grin, smilers never lose, frowners never win." My "sermon" for this time.

Congratulations to Jeff Schell & to all who have made Kansas No. 1! Kansas is a good place to be!





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Risk Insights - Construction Industry Trends to Watch in 2025

Provided by Prins Insurance, Inc.

The construction industry has faced many ups and downs in recent years, largely brought on by fluctuating consumer behaviors, material procurement struggles, labor shortages, project delays and inflation issues. Yet, the sector has still managed to promote economic growth. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the construction sector recorded nearly \$2 trillion in spending during the first 11 months of 2024, representing a 6.5% increase from the same period in 2023. Nevertheless, there are still a number of potential risks that, left unmanaged, may threaten the sector's stability moving forward. As such, construction businesses should monitor several emerging developments that could impact the industry this year—including economic headwinds, legal challenges, insurance claim concerns and environmental exposures—and adjust their risk management programs accordingly. This article provides more information on construction sector trends to watch in 2025 and outlines strategies to help navigate them.

Economic Headwinds

Inflation concerns have impacted virtually every industry in the last few years, evidenced by increasing costs for various goods and services. While the overall inflation rate has cooled after reaching a 40-year high in 2022, it continues to influence a range of costs in the construction sector. In 2025, inflation will likely keep compounding the industry's already rising material costs and total project expenses, motivating some construction companies to increase the prices of their services to maintain profitability. Inflation is also placing additional financial pressures on construction subcontractors and vendors, ultimately diminishing their balance sheets and, in severe cases, causing bankruptcy or insolvency. This issue has highlighted the value of engaging in sufficient vetting procedures for potential vendors and routinely evaluating subcontractor viability.

In addition to inflation, ongoing labor shortages and supply chain struggles are creating economic headwinds in the construction industry. According to a recent report from the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), the sector will need to hire over 720,000 skilled workers in 2025 to keep up with project demand, which could prove difficult. To help combat labor shortages, a growing number of construction businesses are increasing workers' wages and investing more in their talent attraction and retention initiatives. In fact, the NAHB report revealed that hourly wages across the industry have risen by 4.3% in the past year. These efforts have, in turn, exacerbated operational expenses and project costs.

While the large-scale supply chain disruptions that occurred throughout the COVID-19 pandemic have since dwindled, certain construction product shortages and sourcing issues for building materials will likely press on for the foreseeable future. These supply chain difficulties are tied to a number of factors, namely global transportation delays stemming from widespread geopolitical tensions, cyberattacks and severe weather.

The economic impacts of these difficulties on the construction sector are twofold. First, the prices for building materials that have become more difficult to obtain are on the rise, making

construction projects more expensive to complete. Second, derailed deliveries for building materials may extend project timelines, further elevating total costs.

In light of these economic headwinds, it's imperative for construction businesses to reduce their risks by upholding responsible financial plans and practices. This may entail scaling back certain operations, promoting steady cash flow, ensuring proper debt management, fostering strong connections with stakeholders and leveraging effective marketing strategies. Regardless of economic hardships, it's essential to maintain ample insurance and secure financial protection against possible losses.

Legal Challenges

Over the past decade, several large-scale structural disasters, such as the Grenfell Tower fire and the Surfside condominium collapse, have prompted sweeping changes to the legal framework for building safety. Although this legislation continues to evolve and may vary between jurisdictions, key changes include mandatory occurrence reporting for safety incidents that happen in "high-risk" buildings (i.e., structures with more than seven stories and multiple residential units), routine updates to aging infrastructure, and the implementation of more resilient building materials that are better equipped to withstand potential disasters. Looking ahead, construction companies that neglect to uphold these requirements may face costly legal fines and penalties and lost business opportunities. Contract breakdowns and associated construction project problems have also contributed to considerable legal challenges in the last few years. In particular, the rise in business insolvencies, mainly among larger construction companies, has compounded existing project delays and supply chain disruptions across the sector, ultimately threatening the stability of companies that are still standing. As economic headwinds persist, construction businesses will need to improve their contract management protocols to minimize insolvency-related concerns.

To mitigate their legal risks in 2025, construction businesses should consult trusted legal counsel to help them monitor the latest legislative developments and adjust their operations as needed to maintain compliance, especially as it pertains to building safety standards. Construction companies should also review their contracts to ensure this documentation properly defines insolvencies and outlines steps to limit potential project problems when they occur.

Insurance Claim Concerns

As social inflation drives up the cost of insurance claims, nuclear verdicts have surged. These verdicts refer to particularly high jury awards, generally those eclipsing \$10 million. According to a recent report from public relations firm Marathon Strategies, nuclear verdicts reached a 15-year high in 2023, with the number of such verdicts rising by 27% in the previous 12 months alone. The report also found that 27 of these verdicts were "thermonuclear," indicating jury awards above \$100 million.

Article continues on next page

Construction Industry Trends to Watch in 2025 cont.

Provided by Prins Insurance, Inc.

Various factors have contributed to the increase of these verdicts and subsequent insurance claim expenses, including rising litigation funding, desensitization to large verdicts, changes in the legal environment and shifting public sentiment toward businesses. Amid growing corporate distrust, businesses have been expected to meet higher standards in their operations and held more accountable for their wrongdoings.

Additionally, businesses frequently encounter juries that are sympathetic to plaintiffs. There's also a rising perception that businesses can afford the cost of damages. This means juries are less likely to have reservations when awarding significant damages to plaintiffs, resulting in nuclear verdicts. In the construction sector, these verdicts typically arise from professional liability incidents, unsustainable building practices (i.e., those that emit high carbon emissions, cause pollution or otherwise harm the environment), auto accidents and worksite safety concerns.

Aside from nuclear verdicts, an increase in project disputes has exacerbated insurance claim costs in the construction industry. These disputes, which tend to rise during periods of economic hardship, have primarily stemmed from the remediation of defective operations and faulty work, building safety issues and insolvency-related failures. Since many of these concerns are projected to continue in 2025, project disputes will likely impact insurance claim expenses for months to come. Nuclear verdicts, project disputes and related insurance claims can carry serious consequences for construction businesses of all sizes, causing lasting reputational damage, posing underinsurance concerns and creating financial difficulties. That's why it's critical for companies to better understand how to prevent them. Some strategies to consider include promoting and adhering to eco-friendly building practices, conducting regular safety education and training, properly vetting potential employees, providing ongoing worksite supervision and utilizing technology such as telematics and dashcams to promote safe driving.

Environmental Exposures

Extreme weather events have skyrocketed in the last few decades, causing widespread damage and destruction. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the United States experienced 27 separate weather and climate disasters with losses exceeding \$1 billion throughout 2024, representing the fourth worst year on record. These events impact the construction industry in multiple ways.

In areas more susceptible to certain types of natural disasters (e.g. hurricanes, floods and wildfires), such events can swiftly destroy construction materials, tools, equipment and structures in the process of being built, making projects all the more costly and significantly

extending completion dates. Complicating matters, the increasing prevalence and rising costs of these events have motivated many insurers to limit their coverage offerings for businesses located in natural disaster-prone areas or, in some areas, exit the market altogether. This has left some construction companies with greater exposures and minimal coverage, paving the way for substantial out-of-pocket expenses.

As previously mentioned, extreme weather events can also lead to transportation delays for construction materials, heightening supply costs and limiting the availability of essential building products. Sometimes, these supply chain issues may even require construction companies to opt for alternative, lower-quality materials to stick to project timelines. In certain climates, extreme weather may also cause dangerously high temperatures. These temperatures could threaten the safety and well-being of construction employees who spend the majority of their time working outdoors and minimize overall project productivity.

Going forward, climate experts anticipate that extreme weather events will only worsen over time. With this in mind, construction companies should do what they can to enhance their natural disaster preparedness and reduce related risks, thus minimizing the potential fallout from such events. Key steps to implement include selecting safe storage areas for construction tools and equipment, leveraging weather-resistant building products, maintaining an adequate reserve of essential materials, building strong supplier relationships, diversifying supply chains by working with multiple trusted vendors located across different geographic locations, investing in tracking technology to better monitor material shipments, developing effective contingency plans, adopting occupational safety programs aimed at minimizing heat-related injuries and illnesses, and documenting natural disaster preparedness strategies for insurers.

Conclusion

Several trends are currently impacting the construction sector, emphasizing the importance of staying informed and adaptive. By tracking these developments and mitigating any associated exposures, construction businesses can effectively position themselves to promote long-term growth and boost operational success. Contact us today for additional industry-specific risk management guidance.

This risk Insights is not intended to be exhaustive nor should any discussion or opinions be construed as legal advice. Readers should contact legal counsel or an insurance professional for appropriate advice. ©2025 Zywave, Inc. All Rights Reserved

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Convention attendees taking advantage of the Drury Kickback Hospitality Room.

Scholarship Opportunity



KLICA has long offered scholarship opportunities for family members of our Contractor Members. The members recently expanded that opportunity to include the children of Contractor Members Employees. While this newsletter is a little later than hoped getting out you have till March 15 to get your application for these scholarships post-marked. Applicants do not need to be attending a four year college. Trade schools and all forms of continuing education are accepted.



Kansas Land Improvement Contractors Association Scholarship Application

Name: _____ Age: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Educational Institution Attending: _____

Present Year in School: _____ Major Course of Study: _____

Credit Hours Enrolling Next Year: Fall Semester _____ Spring Semester _____

Parent(s) or Guardian(s): _____

Contact Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Company Name/Employer Name

KLICA Contractor Member: _____

Applicant Relationship to Company Owner(s)/Employee: _____

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Application Requirements/Instructions:

Include this completed form and the following -

- 1) A single page essay which describes your academic, vocational, and personal goals and objectives explaining why you think you should receive this scholarship.
- 2) Your college transcripts which shows your year in school and major course of study. If a college freshman include high school transcripts.
- 3) Three (3) signed letters of recommendation. These can be from school staff/employers/community leaders who are familiar with you and your skills/abilities.
- 4) A wallet size picture (approximately 2"x3"). This picture will be included in the KLICA Newsletter and Directory.

All materials must be mailed to the KLICA office and postmarked no later than **March 15**. Incomplete, late, or ineligible applications will not be considered.

Family members of contractor members and children of contractor member employees are eligible to apply for the KLICA continuing education scholarship.

Jon L. Ungerer
KLICA
850 US Hwy 77
Marysville, KS 66508
jungerer@kansaslica.com
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Member Recruitment

Almost everyone reading this knows a contractor who is not a member of the Kansas Land Improvement Contractors Association. Do them and KLICA a favor and talk to them about the benefits of membership. Let them know about all the National Benefits of membership but even more importantly provide them the opportunity to get to know you and our members. Given the opportunity to meet our members and share knowledge of their business and the Heavy Equipment Construction Industry is the best way to learn how beneficial membership can be. KLICA Contractor Members are as willing and outgoing as anyone when it comes to sharing knowledge to improve and benefit other contractors. Invite nonmembers to events/meetings or any opportunity to get to know our members and I promise you our membership will grow!



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Kansas Land Improvement
Contractors Association
Membership Application

Date: _____
Company Name: _____
First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Spouse: _____
Street Address: _____
Mailing Address if different: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Business phone: _____ Cell phone: _____
Fax: _____ Home phone: _____ Email: _____
Sponsor: _____

Annual Dues:	Contractor	Associate	Special
Circle Applicable Member Type	\$325	\$250	\$40

Contractor Services Provided:

<input type="checkbox"/> CH – Concrete/Hardscaping	<input type="checkbox"/> OD – Open Ditch Work/Dredging
<input type="checkbox"/> CR – Crane Service	<input type="checkbox"/> PD – Ponds/Dams
<input type="checkbox"/> DB – Directional Boring	<input type="checkbox"/> RP – Roads/Paving
<input type="checkbox"/> DW – Drainage/Water Mgmt./Irrigation	<input type="checkbox"/> SP – Site Preparation/Demolition
<input type="checkbox"/> EM – Earth moving/Grading/Leveling	<input type="checkbox"/> SS – Septic Systems/Onsite Wastewater Treatment
<input type="checkbox"/> EX – Excavating/Land Clearing	<input type="checkbox"/> TH – Trucking/Hauling
<input type="checkbox"/> GR – Gravel/Rock Production	<input type="checkbox"/> TW – Terraces/Waterways
<input type="checkbox"/> LS – Landscaping/Seeding/Sod	<input type="checkbox"/> UU – Underground Utilities
<input type="checkbox"/> Dealer/Service Company/Consultant/Insurance/Other	

Annual dues are due and payable on a calendar year basis, prior to January 1 of each year.
KLICA dues for new contractor members joining after March 1 are paid up for the next full calendar year.

Return Application to: Jon L. Ungerer, Executive Director
Kansas Land Improvement Contractors Association
850 U.S. Hwy 77
Marysville, KS 66508

Contact Phone: 785-221-8697
Email: jungerer@kansaslica.com



Kansas Land Improvement
Contractors Association
850 U.S. Hwy 77
Marysville, KS 66508

Important Dates for your Calendar.....

- April 1, 2025
KLICA 2nd Quarter Board of Directors Mtg.
Fort Hays Tech North Central
Beloit, KS
- June 20, 2025
KLICA Golf Tournament
Marysville Country Club
Marysville, KS
- 2025 National LICA Summer Mtg.
July 8 - 12, 2025
Radisson Duluth Harborview
Duluth, MN
- January 25, 26, & 27, 2026
KLICA 74th Annual Convention & Mtg.
Hilton Garden Inn
Manhattan, KS

