



MONTHLY BULLETIN

South Jersey Mechanical Contractors Association

October 2010

WORK

The economic downturn continues to impact building construction in South Jersey and this winter will be **difficult**. However, news on the street has some **Optimism** that projects in healthcare, education, refinery and gaming may start this spring and summer.

OSHA Gives Employers 90 Days to Have Signalperson, Riggers Qualified

While OSHA allows for a four-year implementation period for crane operators to be certified under its new rule published in August, the requirements for signalpersons and riggers to be qualified take effect on November 8, 2010, just 90 days after the new rule (29 CFR 1926, Subpart CC) was made final.

<http://www.nccco.org/news/OperatorstoBeCertifiedUnderOSHArule.html>.

OSHA TO RAISE PENALTY AMOUNTS; CONTEST RATE MIGHT INCREASE AS WELL (9/29)

OSHA will formally launch a new policy that increases proposed penalties said agency boss Dr. David Michaels at the Occupational Safety & Health Review Commission Annual Judicial Conference in Charleston, SC on September 14. "Enforcement remains a priority for us because it is a proven, useful deterrent, even for the best employers who may be tempted to defer maintenance or cut corners on worker training and safety procedures. The threat of enforcement and penalties reminds all employers to do the right thing for their workers," said Michaels. "What we really need to get employers' attention is the threat of criminal penalties to respond to criminal negligence. Few things focus the mind like the possibility of doing time behind bars," said Michaels.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS BOARD

Proposals and discussions are taking place that would require signatory contractors to disclose on their financial statements the unfunded liability on multiemployer pension plans. This standard if adopted would have significant unintended consequences for all signatory contractors regarding financial and bonding capabilities. SJMCA has contacted our Actuarial professional and will be meeting with Congressman Andrews to discuss the impact of any change.

PROPANE GAS CUSTOMER PROTECTION ACT

The Department of Community Affairs will not take enforcement action against any NJ Master Plumber's License who performs propane service work for the first twelve months following the effective date of the regulation.

2010 BARGAINING RATES REVIEWED

The average first-year wage increase for all collective bargaining rates reported as of September 6, 2010, was 1.6%, nearly a full percentage point below the same period in 2009 and two points below 2008. The median first-year increase was also down significantly, 1.5% compared to 2.8% in 2009 and 3.3% in 2008. However, just as they did from 2008 to 2009, construction settlements showed a much greater decrease from a year ago. The average first-year increase for construction collective bargaining agreements was only 0.2%, compared to 1.9% in 2009 and 5% in 2008, and the median increase was only 0.8%, down from 1% in 2009 and 4.5% in 2008.

NJ CLEAN ENERGY PROGRAM

REPOSTED FROM AUGUST

Members of SJMCA have a better way to be informed with all events, programs and RFP opportunities from the Board of Public Utility (BPU). Contact lwetzel@appliedenergygroup.com and ask to be added to the energy efficiency list serv. Provide all of your company information. You will be given updates and notices of relevant issues pertaining to HVAC contractors. Visit their web site: [HTTP://WWW.NJCLEANENERGY.COM](http://www.njcleanenergy.com)

Oct 13 - Lunch meeting CFMA – Scotland Run

Oct 13 - Kehoe Award Dinner

Oct 20 – SJMCA Annual “Can We Talk” Meeting with BCASJ and SJNECA – Scotland Run