

Safety/Risk

Willis A&E Technical Brief Track and Trace

Plaintiff's attorneys are using a California law to target businesses – including design firms – that use embedded tracking scripts or third-party analytics tools on their websites without user permission. Find out more [here](#).

OSHA Inspections Idled During Shutdown

Most OSHA oversight functions were halted with the government shutdown on Oct. 1. Approximately 1200 of the agency's 664 oversight personnel have been furloughed during the shutdown. Remaining staff members are focused on imminent danger complaints, workplace catastrophes and other high risk events. [Engineering News Record](#) has more details on what the government shutdown means for the industry.

NIST Report Helps Locals Prepare for Disaster

A new report from the National Institute for Standards and Technology is designed to help state and local governments build infrastructure projects better able to withstand natural disasters. The report, which can be [read here](#), is in response to the Trump Administration's shift to make states more responsible for disaster preparedness.

Potential Disruption to Weather Forecasting Models

The Trump Administration has proposed abolishing the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), an arm of the National Science Foundation. NCAR houses atmospheric modeling, climate and weather datasets, atmospheric and hydrologic models, research aircraft and computing systems used to track and predict weather trends in the United States and model weather events such as floods, wildfires, and aid in mitigation planning. [Engineering News Record](#) has more details.

Safety as an Investment

[Engineering News Record](#) recently reported on the return on investment construction firms receive when investing in safety training and equipment. The University of Colorado Boulder's Construction Safety Research Alliance provides a [deeper dive into the research](#).

Economy and Workforce

Tax Exempt Status for Municipal Bonds in Limbo Endangering Projects

A proposal to eliminate the federal tax-exempt status for municipal bonds could impact local infrastructure investments if it becomes law. Municipal advocates argue that loss of tax-exempt status would create higher borrowing costs by delaying or reducing the size of projects. [Engineering News Record has more.](#)

ABC Says Economy Slowing

Associated Builders and Contractors economist Anirban Basu said overall growth in 2025 is expected to remain positive, but that risks such as increased interest and higher prices due to tariffs and manufacturing declines are surfacing. Data centers continue to be a hot spot for the construction industry with 1 in 8 contractors reporting they're working on a data center project. [Construction Exec has the full webinar.](#)

Infrastructure Ripe for Private Investment

A September report from McKinsey finds that infrastructure projects are increasingly attractive assets to investors. The report finds that the ever-increasing scope and integration of infrastructure projects make them attractive to investors with an estimated \$106 trillion in investments by 2040. [Read the full report here.](#)

AIA Billings Index Drops in September

AIA's Architecture Billings Index dropped further in September to 43.3 showing a decline in billings for the year and month over month. This is down from 47.2 in August; scores above 50 indicate growth. The Midwest continues to be a strong point for architecture firms while the West is the weakest. [The Architect's Newspaper has the full story.](#)

ACEC Q3 Report on Economy

The American Council of Engineering Companies conducted a flash poll of engineering companies and found further concern about a slowing economy. Respondents were less optimistic about the U.S. Economy with inflations and Tariff concerns topping the list. [See the results here.](#) A more in-depth conversation about the state of the engineering industry can be found [here.](#)

Dodge: Uncertainty Remains into 2026

New construction research by Dodge shows construction firms are taking longer to plan out projects due to economic uncertainty. Despite this, multi-family construction rose 12% in November while office starts (including data centers) rose 41% in the same period. [ENR has more.](#)

Infrastructure

Natural Gas Pipeline Construction Reinstated

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission recently lifted a ban on construction of new natural gas pipelines implemented during the Biden Administration. The lift goes into effect November 10.

[Engineering News Record has details.](#)

Electricity Grid Facing Increasing Challenges

America's electricity grid is facing increased reliability challenges according to an October Federal Energy Regulatory Commission meeting on Tuesday. Extreme weather events, increased demands, long lead times for new powerplants, and physical and cyber threats are all serving to make reliable electric transmission more difficult to achieve. [Utility Dive has more.](#)