

Regulatory Roundup Jan 2025

Insurance Claims

Conspiracy to Fake Injuries Claimed by New York Contractors and Insurer Lawsuit

In recent years, insurers have begun using racketeering laws to combat fraudulent claims. Richard Korman of Engineering News Record has details. <https://www.enr.com/articles/59936-conspiracy-to-fake-injuries-claimed-by-new-york-contractors-and-insurer-lawsuit>

Florida Engineers Combats Fraudulent Insurance Reports.

Edgewater, Florida engineer George Miles has filed more than a dozen complaints against other engineers for making false claims in insurance claims litigations. Insurance Journal takes a look at Miles's endeavors.

<https://www.insurancejournal.com/news/southeast/2024/09/03/791082.htm>

State of Rhode Island sues 13 Engineering, Construction, and Inspection Firms over Washington Bridge

On December 11, 2023, the 195 West span of the Washington Bridge linking East Providence and Providence was abruptly shut down over safety concerns. The State claims that multiple issues leading to the closure were not reported to the Department of Transportation going back to 1992. The Rhode Island Current has more.

<https://rhodeislandcurrent.com/2024/08/16/state-sues-13-firms-that-worked-on-washington-bridge-alleging-negligence-and-breach-of-contract/>

Glass in Sports Complex Soil Leads to Lawsuit

Lewandowski Engineers is currently being sued by the Village of Ottawa Hills, Ohio after finding glass in the soil of a newly completed sports complex. The Village alleges the engineering firm was negligent for not finding the debris on the new soccer and lacrosse fields. It is believed that the glass came from greenhouses that were located on the property since the 1900s.

<https://www.13abc.com/2024/03/21/ottawa-hills-files-lawsuit-against-engineering-company-after-glass-found-soil-under-sports-complex/>

Industry Trends

Renewable Energy Projects Still Moving Forward

Changes in Presidential Administrations often mean changes in policy priorities. Many developers have suspended renewable energy projects anticipating less support from the incoming Trump

Administration. However, there is still strong support for such projects in the Northeast, Engineering News Record reports.

<https://www.enr.com/articles/60068-us-renewable-energy-pushes-beyond-project-cancellations-and-trump>

Tornado Resilience Added to IBC

The 2024 International Building Code includes a section for tornado resilience for critical structures such as schools and hospitals, a first for the IBC. ASCE 7 Chapter 32 will require these structures to withstand a tornado with EF 2 windspeeds (111-135 mph). The NIST began the process of developing the new standard within days of a 2011 EF 5 tornado hitting Joplin, Mo. and killing 161. Furthermore, Scientific American in 2023 published an article finding Tornado Alley is moving eastward into Kentucky, Tennessee, and southern Illinois and Indiana. <https://www.enr.com/articles/59502-tornado-resilience-included-in-2024-international-building-code-for-first-time>

Economic Outlook

Engineering Firms See Growth for Quarter, Year

The U.S. Census Bureau released new data showing that A/E firm revenues grew 9.1 percent year-over-year and 1.2 percent from the second to third quarter. This is the highest year over year growth since 2022, but the second consecutive quarter of slowing growth reflecting an overall slower economy. ACEC has more.

<https://www.acec.org/news/last-word-blog/post/market-intelligence-update-december-2024/>

ACEC Shows Strong Optimism

ACEC's Research Institute found strong optimism across all fields of engineering earlier this year. Executives, however, were concerned about a lack of well-qualified applicants.

[Study Shows Continued Strong Optimism in the Engineering Industry - ACEC](#)

Strong Jobs Data Lessens Probability of Fed Rate Cut

December's 256,000 job gain far outpaced the expected 160,000 for the month leading to speculation that the Fed is unlikely to further cut interest rates. Early in 2024 the Federal Reserve had signaled that as many as six rate cuts may occur throughout the year, but the pace of the economy remained stronger than expected over the course of the year leading to fewer cuts.

<https://www.reuters.com/markets/us/fed-seen-cutting-policy-rate-just-once-2025-job-growth-surges-2025-01-10/>

AIA Sees improvement for Architecture Firms

October marked the first time in nearly two years that Architecture firms saw an uptick in billing according to AIA software provider Deltek. Furthermore, AIA announced in November that 41 percent of firms expect to see a year-over-year increase of net revenue in 2025. Falling interest rates, increased workload and an increase in requests for new projects are major factors contributing to the positive view. <https://www.enr.com/articles/59862-architecture-billings-index-turns-positive-after-20-months-of-decline>