

## Lack of Skilled Workers

American Public Media's Marketplace reported, "We got a new report today from the employment agency Manpower that says skilled workers like carpenters, electricians and plumbers are in very short supply," despite the decline in construction. "It's actually a worldwide problem," and due in part to the fact that "the skilled trades have an image problem." The Manpower survey "found that a lack of skilled tradesman was the number one hiring challenge for the US and five other leading industrialized countries." Clark University business professor Gary Chaison "says construction firms and other businesses are also having a hard time finding skilled workers", and the "shortage will just get worse as the economy starts to recover and companies become more interested in hiring."

MLive.com reports that Manpower's 2010 Talent Shortage Survey named "the United States, Germany, France, Italy, Canada and Brazil" as some of the countries "where employers ranked skilled

*"the skilled trades have an image problem."*

trades as their number one or number two hiring challenge." Manpower CEO Jeff Joerres said, "Inadequate training and negative stereotypes relating to skilled trades are further fueling a dangerous shortage of skilled workers. ... Employers and governments need to bring honor back to the skilled trades." The report "recommends a 'strategic migration' policy as a short-term solution to ensure that enough workers are available to complete key projects. It also recommends promoting the skilled trades in order to 'plug the talent gap.'" Reuters quotes Joerres as saying that the skilled labor shortage will become "a real choke-point in future economic growth." The International Business Times reports, "The skilled labor shortage is not limited to developed countries, however. The apparent shortage in large developing countries like China, India, and Brazil may 'impede the progress of infrastructure projects and jeopardize national growth,' said Manpower."

## Member News

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The South Florida Chapter of the United States Green Building Council's (USGBC) held its GalaVerde and 2010 LEEDership and Green Awards Program on August 28, 2010 at the Hyatt Regency Pier Sixty-Six Resort in Fort Lauderdale. Davie based, **Pirtle Construction Company** was recognized as the "Most Outstanding Green Business" at the event.

"Pirtle is committed to sustainability and our impact on the environment. This commitment is embedded in every aspect of our corporation, beginning with our corporate headquarters in Davie, which was one of the first LEED Silver Certified buildings in Broward County," says Gary Pirtle, Vice President of Pirtle Construction.



It's finally official. FAU's football team will have a stadium to call its own.

On Sept. 16, FAU's proposed on-campus football stadium was unanimously approved by the Florida Board of Governors. The decision allows FAU to finance part of the construction for the 30,000-seat stadium and related improvements.

Construction of the open-air stadium was awarded to **Cummings-Balfour Beatty JV**, which is projected to cost around \$70 million and is set to begin in October. The stadium is expected to be completed and available for use during the fall 2011 semester.



FAU Football Stadium

# Helping Customers Solve Complex Challenges

Each month Construction FOCUS features a CASF member company, selected by drawing a business card from among those attending the monthly networking breakfast. The next breakfast, sponsored by Hensel Phelps will be held on Thursday, October 21, 7:30 a.m. at Shula's Hotel in Miami Lakes.

**S**unbelt Rentals serves the needs of a wide variety of customers - from commercial, residential, municipal and specialized service industries to weekend do-it-yourselfers. With a large network of locations they can deliver the equipment you need and provide a superior level of customer service.

Sunbelt Rentals offers a highly diversified product mix through with both general tool and specialty divisions. Specialty divisions serve distinct customer segments requiring a high level of technical expertise. Their trained experts and specific equipment lines help customers solve complex challenges. Their specialty divisions include: Pump & Power, Trench Shoring, Aerial Work Platforms, Scaffolding, Remediation & Restoration, Facility Maintenance, Golf

Course Grounds & Maintenance, Industrial Resources, and Pile-Driving.

Sunbelt provides more convenient locations, more available fleet, more service technicians, and more depth and range of products.

Sunbelt Rentals offers safety programs covering scaffolding, aerial work platforms and forklifts. Additionally, the manager of each Sunbelt location administers mandatory worker safety programs, as well as a safe driving program for all employees that operate company vehicles.

Sunbelt Rentals offers their customers valuable alternatives to buying construction equipment, which as we all know, can be very costly. Renting cuts costs by eliminating the need for storage, maintenance and repair parts, a service area, and maintenance staff. They provide 24/7 support when you have equipment-related needs after hours. Sunbelt's construction professionals

advise and train on general and specialized tools and equipment. Renting also allows you to perform seasonal, temporary, or specialized work. Renting equipment from Sunbelt comes with a worry-free guarantee assuring you that equipment will be serviced and properly maintained. They also help reduce both downtime from equipment maintenance and the cost of parts and labor. Finally, Sunbelt can help eliminate the hassles and costs of transporting equipment with delivery options, as well as provide you access to the most advanced, innovative equipment available.

Sunbelt's "No Sweat" 5 point service commitment offers a comprehensive performance guarantee including:

1. Satisfaction - You get your equipment on time and in peak operating condition, or your rental that day is free.

2. On-Time Delivery - If they don't deliver within 45 minutes of the quoted delivery time, that day's rental is free.

3. Service - When you call for service, they guarantee you'll be back up and running within four hours, or your rental that day is free.

4. Availability - If you visit a location and guaranteed stocked item is not available for rent, they'll get it from another location and deliver it directly to your job site for free.

5. After-Hours Response - Quick response for emergency after-hours delivery or service calls is important. A local operational representative will respond to your after-hours call within 1 hour, or 1 day's rental is free.

For more information visit [www.sunbeltrentals.com](http://www.sunbeltrentals.com) or call 1-800 NO SWEAT.



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Construction Focus is the official publication of the Construction Association of South Florida. Article suggestions and submissions for publication consideration should be forwarded to the Executive Vice President.

# SAFETY: Fall Prevention on the Job!

Purdue University's School of Health Sciences recently conducted a study to determine what elements of the safety programs of large construction companies were responsible for a reduced rate of falls in comparison to small construction companies. The study showed that the rate of falls decreased as the cost of construction projects increased.

## **Large Companies, Low Losses**

The companies that participated were large in terms of their construction contract size. The median contract amount was \$9 million. The median Experience Modification Ratio (EMR) of the companies interviewed was 0.73. An EMR of less than 1 indicates that a company is suffering fewer losses than other companies in the same industry. Additional evidence of safety performance is seen in the number of years the construction companies had been practicing their current safety program. All of the construction companies indicated that they were affiliated with external safety organizations. They listed the opportunity to network with other companies as the primary benefit of membership. The network forum allows the sharing of information gained through experience and provides an expert panel to explore new ideas.

## **Key Factors**

The construction companies listed key factors that influenced them to implement their current safety program. They were concerned for the reputation of

the company and compliance with OSHA regulations. Another common answer was insurance company pressure and a high EMR. They were also concerned for the well being of the employees and maintaining profitability. A common theme also found was money. The safety directors felt that a negative impact on a company's bottom line was critical to the development of a proactive attitude toward safety.

The construction companies listed what they considered to be the most important elements of their safety training programs with respect to making them successful at reducing falls from elevations. One important program involves daily crew meetings in which supervisors go over a daily work plan and job-specific safety training for those potentially exposed to falls. Another common element was the promotion of safety awareness and accountability as a fundamental value. In essence, the development of a safety culture in which safety was a habit rather than a chore was expressed. Regular onsite training from the construction site superintendent was also mentioned, as well as the training of line supervisors in the area of supervision. The safety directors felt that supervisors were too often chosen for their adeptness at their particular trade rather than their ability to exercise supervisory skills over workers.

The most common fall prevention element was upper management commitment to support and promote safety

as a top priority. The safety directors felt that financial support for the safety program and the presence of upper management at key meetings was how this was best demonstrated. By making safety the first item on the agenda at management meetings, upper management displayed its commitment to safety to lower-level managers.

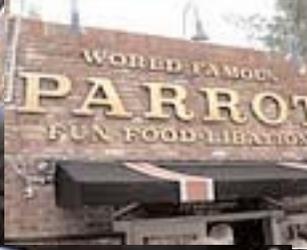
Periodically visiting jobsites and taking part in some onsite training was a way of displaying commitment to safety to line supervisors and workers.

## **Motivation, Training and Money**

The results can be summarized with three terms: Motivation, Training and Money. The primary reason for the success of large construction companies at reducing construction falls is that upper management has made a commitment to be safe. In making that commitment, they create momentum that motivates middle managers, construction supervisors and, finally, trade workers to be safe. Without the motivation from the top, there is little chance that a successful safety program will develop and almost no chance that a safety culture will develop. Research has shown that workers will perform their tasks in a manner that allows them to experience the least amount of inconvenience. Unfortunately, safety is often seen as an inconvenience.



# CASF Summer Social on Ft. Lauderdale Beach




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ROUTE TO:



Less than 30-days left to educate your friends, employees and vendors to why they should

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33309  
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CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH FLORIDA

