

Standing Policy Statements

In accordance with Policy 1, all Standing Policies are reviewed by the Board of Governors in alternate years (ending with an odd number). Adoption dates and the dates of any revisions are noted at the end of each policy. Reaffirmation dates are not listed.

POLICY 1 Review of Policies

All standing policies of the Association are established for a period not exceeding two years, and are subject to review and reaffirmation at the end of that period.
(Adopted Jan. 4, 1955)

POLICY 2 National Legislation, Federal Regulation and Political Action

The National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) affirms its belief in the growth of the American system of free enterprise and the United States economy and the advancement of the electrical construction industry.

The Government Affairs Committee is responsible for reviewing legislative and regulatory positions at its annual meeting and throughout the year; the Committee reports any new positions or recommended changes on legislative positions to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee affirms, rejects, or revises the Government Affairs Committee recommendation and includes these positions along with the other existing position in the annual report to the Board of Governors for review at the annual convention. While the Board of Governors and Executive Committee will exercise oversight over all policy and legislative matters, the Government Affairs Committee will advise staff on the tactics and response strategies employed to support, defeat, or amend legislation and regulatory policy.

To the extent that legislative or regulatory action could impact the industry, NECA will:

- (a) bring such matters to the attention of the membership for it to take action for the protection of its rights and interests;
- (b) take an active part by informing the respective branches of the government as to the views and interests of the industry;
- (c) assess collaborating with other elements of the construction industry and business community;
- (d) keep the industry and the public informed of the effect of the actions and attitudes of the legislators and executive officials with respect to such legislation or the administration thereof; and,
- (e) encourage membership involvement in developing and supporting qualified candidates for federal elective office in order to maintain a favorable legislative and regulatory environment.
(Adopted Jan. 4, 1955)

(Revised Oct. 23, 1965; Oct. 6, 1979; Sept. 30, 1989; Oct. 7, 1995; Oct. 23, 1999; Oct. 2, 2010, Oct. 3, 2015)

POLICY 3 Local and State Legislation

The National Electrical Contractors Association is a National Association devoted to the interests of the electrical contracting industry in the nation as a whole. The determination of the desirability of any State or local legislation or the form thereof is left for the decision of the electrical contractors in each locality or State acting individually or through their autonomous Chapters.

NECA believes that it is in the public interest and the interest of the electrical contracting industry throughout the United States as a whole that local codes based on national codes be adopted to provide safety standards for all electrical installations. The association also believes that the requirements of the most recently published edition of the National Electrical Code® together with provisions for proper inspection represents the minimum necessary in the interests of the public and the industry. NECA also recognizes, however, that any political subdivision may adopt higher standards where local conditions warrant and a greater degree of public safety from hazards is deemed desirable.

*(Adopted Jan. 4, 1955)
(Revised Nov. 6, 1959, Oct. 6, 1979, Oct. 3, 2015, Sept. 14, 2019, Oct. 9, 2021)*

POLICY 4 Contract Procedure

(a) **INSTALLATION ONLY.** The best and most economical installation policy is when the electrical contractor provides labor and materials for complete installation.

NECA believes that the practice of-owners or prime contractors-purchasing material and equipment direct from manufacturers or other suppliers, and then soliciting bids from electrical contractors for the labor necessary to accomplish the work undermines the electrical contractors responsibility, lessens his efficiency, increases the cost of the project, and is not in the best interests of the owner.

(b) **BID SHOPPING.** NECA opposes the unethical practice of bid-shopping by general contractors and bid-peddling by electrical contractors.

(c) **AWARDING METHODS.** NECA supports continuation and extension of the policy of separate bidding or letting of electrical contracts by public and private owners wherever its chapters favor this system.

NECA recognizes that there are substantial differences between electrical and mechanical work and work which may be subcontracted by the general contractor or performed by his own forces. Therefore, it is advocated that prime contractors or bids be segregated into only major divisions of related portions of normal construction projects; namely, the electrical contract, incorporating lighting, wiring, electrical heating, energy efficient electrical and electronic controls, renewable energy technologies, including wind, hydrokinetic, photovoltaic, biomass, geothermal, energy storage cells; other types of electronic systems, communications systems, security systems, data lines, wireless systems, and preparatory work connected with such electrical work, as well as work related to smart grid construction and power line transmission and distribution; the mechanical contracts, including plumbing, non-electric heating, ventilating, air-conditioning, sprinkling systems, drainage systems, and pneumatic systems; the elevator contract if appropriate; and the structural and architectural contract, including all remaining phases of construction to the completion of the building or facility. NECA disapproves of breaking down the work into many small separate contracts involving functions that are often performed by various crafts employed by a single general structural contractor.

(d) **PROMPT PAYMENT.** When payment to the prime contractor is withheld due to his own default or that of any person other than the electrical contractor, the electrical contractor should be paid for his work promptly by the prime contractor and not penalized, by delayed payment, for the defaults of others, and the prime contractor should be willing so to provide in the subcontract documents.

(e) **RETAINAGE.** When a percentage is retained under terms of the prime contract to assure proper completion of the work, the retention applied to the subcontract should be in just proportion to subcontractors and supplies and any changes in retained percentage likewise should be passed along to the electrical subcontractor in proper proportion and promptly.
(Adopted Jan. 4, 1955)
(Revised Nov. 12, 1957; Nov. 17, 1958; Nov. 6, 1959, Oct. 8, 1963, Sept. 12, 2009, Oct. 3, 2015)

POLICY 5 Honoring the Specifications

National Electrical Contractors Association has historically supported a policy of honoring the specifications of awarding authorities in proposals submitted by members. This policy has earned the respect of customers and suppliers alike.

NECA members recognize that in some situations only one particular product will properly serve the buyer's purpose. In such cases the naming of one product to the exclusion of other manufacturers is proper.

NECA members also recognize that in essentially all materials used in electrical installations, there are many highly competent manufacturers of quality products of equal serviceability and utility.

Therefore, the Association recommends that in the specifications for private construction, designers use descriptive and performance specifications as is required by law, in public work; or name a minimum of three products which may be used at the contractor's option.

The Association firmly believes that the recommended policy above stated is in the best interest of the purchasers of construction services, the public generally, competent designers, and of Qualified Electrical Contractors.

The Association reaffirms the principles of Honoring the Specifications and free competition between products of proven quality.

(Adopted Oct. 9, 1961)

(Revised Oct. 3, 2015)

POLICY 6 Governmental Agencies Government Contracts

(a) **ORGANIZATION, PROCEDURE AND REVIEW.** The National Electrical Contractors Association believes that the grants of authority to Government agencies should be clearly defined and should be subject to safeguards with regard to organization and procedure adequate to protect individuals against arbitrary administrative action and to insure that administrative procedures (including contracting procedures) are in the public interest. NECA further believes persons adversely affected by the action of such agencies should be permitted the widest possible court review and that such court review should be supplemented by the restraining and beneficial influence of fair-minded Congressional (legislative) investigation where appropriate.

(b) **COMPETITION WITH PRIVATE INDUSTRY.** NECA believes that the Government should not compete with private enterprise. Where it is necessary for the Government to undertake business activities which cannot effectively be handled by private enterprise, the cost of Government activities that compete with private business should be determined according to standard business accounting practices and so that the public may have accurate information by which it may test the efficiency of such activities

NECA believes that it is in the best interest of both the public and the Government contracting authorities to utilize prequalification of bidders on Government construction projects. Such prequalification of bidders would help insure that Government construction would be performed by those contracting firms with the necessary experience and responsibility.

(c) **CONTRACTING PROCEDURES.** NECA believes that Federal Government and all State and local governments should adopt those contracting procedures which afford the widest possible qualified competition and which NECA believes prudent private owners should adopt in their own self-interest as expressed in Standing Policy Statement 4.

(d) OPEN COMPETITION. The Government should always leave open opportunity to all citizens for the development of all legitimate forms of business enterprise. It should not cut off opportunity of any qualified contractor to serve the Government in open competition, provided the Government is entitled as any owner to take into consideration the qualifications of potential contractors and should do so especially in those few cases where cost-plus-fixed-fee contracts are necessary.

(Adopted Jan. 4, 1955)

(Revised Nov. 6, 1959; Oct. 8, 1963, Oct. 3, 2015)

POLICY 7 Diversity and Inclusion

As the nation's leading specialty contractor organization, the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) is committed to facilitating growth in the electrical construction industry. In doing so, NECA encourages an environment that embraces diversity as an integral factor for ensuring our industry's viability. NECA believes that by supporting business development, capacity building, career advancement, and involvement opportunities for people from all backgrounds, races, nationalities, genders, sexual orientations and disabilities, we make our industry more dynamic and better prepared to tackle the challenges of the future.

(Adopted Sept 29, 2018)

POLICY 8 Fair Trade Policy

The economic process of distribution of electrical products requires that the functions of each branch of the industry be recognized and that each shall receive a fair remuneration for its service, to the end that equity and fair dealing prevail and the public be well served.

The electrical contractor can perform a vital and important function in this chain of distribution. The electrical contractor should create consumer markets

and should promote the products of all manufacturers to meet the consumer's needs. He assembles the diverse products of particular manufacturers and through his engineering experience, trained organization and skilled labor processes them into complete units--an installation which he can guarantee and service.

These functions of the electrical contractor are essential to the economic distribution of electrical products to the public and require that an adequate margin for the cost of such functions be provided in the sales prices of all electrical products. Failure to understand and recognize the importance of the electrical contractor's function in the industry as a distributor or salesman of electrical products is extremely detrimental to the ultimate consumers of electrical products as well as to the industry as a whole.

It is important then, that each manufacturer and distributor recognize the distributive function of the electrical contractor and make provision for a contractor's differential which will permit the contractor to sell electrical products at a fair profit commensurate
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with his function. Such recognition of the electrical contractor's function would promote the most effective and efficient system of distribution on a competitive basis in accordance with law.

(Adopted Nov. 12, 1957)

(Revised Sept. 30, 1989)

POLICY 9 Electrical Inspections

NECA supports the inspection of electrical installations by qualified inspectors. Inspection services provided by qualified inspectors protect the public, both owners and users, from harm to life and property, by reducing the possibility of hazards resulting from incorrectly installed electrical products and systems. In addition to decreasing hazards, properly installed electrical systems are more reliable and efficient, which adds to their long-term value. The association believes that electrical inspection jurisdictions should provide consistent and fair application of codes and standards to electrical installations and systems. To that end, NECA believes electrical inspection jurisdictions should reference and perform their responsibilities in a manner consistent with the practices outlined in NFPA 78 Guide on Electrical Inspections. NECA endorses the following principles with respect to electrical inspections:

1. In order to protect public safety, most states and localities require electrical installations to comply with the National Electrical Code®, and electrical products to be certified (listed) by qualified electrical testing laboratories. Electrical inspections help confirm that electrical wiring and systems are installed "according to Code," using only properly evaluated listed products meeting applicable U.S. safety standards.

2. The benefits of electrical inspections are not limited to power or line-voltage wiring systems, including alternative energy systems and energy storage systems. In order to ensure safety, all installations of wiring and equipment covered by the National Electrical Code® should be required to secure applicable jurisdictional permits and required inspections. This includes, but is not limited to, low-voltage and limited-energy systems as telecommunications, security, nurse call, computer networks, audio and video distribution, optical fiber, power over ethernet (PEO), emergency voice/alarm signaling systems, digital electricity (pulse power) systems, and cable television.

3. In addition to their public safety benefits, electrical inspections confirm that qualified electrical contractors are on the job and help protect the public against untrained or unprofessional contractors and electricians.

Too often, unqualified installers perform improper electrical installations out of ignorance, cut corners in order to reduce costs, and use products that don't meet national safety requirements or local laws and codes. The result can be unsafe installations that pose shock and fire hazards to users, and which also

damages the public's confidence in the safety of, and therefore the value of, properly constructed electrical installations.

4. The cost of electrical inspection services should be supported by permit and inspection fees paid directly by builders and electrical contractors. The cost of this vital public safety function should not be paid indirectly out of general funds, because this makes it vulnerable to fiscal cycles experienced by state and local governments. By the same token, revenues from electrical permit and inspection fees should be used only to provide and maintain a strong, professional electrical inspection function that protects public safety. They should not be regarded as a source of general public revenue.

5. NECA believes that electrical inspectors should be trained electricians with at least five years practical field experience in electrical construction, and that they should be licensed or certified by a nationally recognized organization such as the International Association of Electrical Inspectors (IAEI) and the International Code Council (ICC). NECA also believes that such certification or equivalent credentials should include mandatory continuing education for renewal processes as new NEC editions are published. Only persons with substantial National Electrical Code® knowledge and experience, which has been verified by an independent agency, should be entrusted with performing this important public safety function. NECA also believes that electrical inspection jurisdictions should follow all practices and requirements outlined in NFPA 1078 Standard for Electrical Inspector Professional Qualifications.

6. NECA members are progressive and are continuously implementing effective improvements to their operations to promote safety, productivity, and profitability. To that end, the association encourages inspection jurisdictions to recognize prefabrication processes and to coordinate off-site inspection and approval processes in a cooperative fashion that reduces delays and downtime on projects. The association also recognizes that remote inspections are becoming common in the industry and encourages inspection jurisdictions to foster continuous coordination between inspectors and contractors as these newer technologies are deployed. Inspection jurisdictions should utilize the latest technologies to enhance the services they provide their customers.
(Adopted Oct. 25, 1997)
(Revised Oct. 3, 2015, Oct. 7, 2017, Sept. 14, 2019, Oct. 9, 2021)

POLICY 10 Free Enterprise

National Electrical Contractors Association believes that independent businessmen should always strive to solve their own problems by voluntary action within the limits of our free competitive system and avoid invitation for Government intervention in business or bureaucratic control.
(Adopted Jan. 4, 1955)
(Revised Oct. 3, 2015)

POLICY 11 Chapter Membership Temporary Membership

In order to better serve the public and to promote the welfare of the whole electrical contracting industry, the National Electrical Contractors Association encourages its members in each locality (and all electrical contractors in any locality) to form local trade associations which should be responsible corporate bodies permanently established and adequately financed through the dues of their own members, and NECA invites such local trade associations to affiliate themselves with NECA as Chapters.

NECA conducts all of its activities in accordance with the law and in such manner as to serve, promote and protect the interests of the electrical contracting industry as a whole. Under the law each contractor has the right to do business wherever he sees fit and any buyer has the right to purchase from whomever he sees fit. NECA therefore will not be a party to or condone an attempt to shield its members in one area from the fair competition of members in another area. To this end, NECA's Bylaws make provision that Chapters shall provide for temporary membership for, and grant facilities to, members of the Chapter and requires NECA members to apply for such temporary membership when they undertake electrical work in the area of such Chapter.

Traveling members of the Association who may desire in any case to form a "Joint Venture" should be cognizant that NECA membership is evidence that a concern is dependable and "qualified" to execute any electrical work which it undertakes and that it will not object to the payment of the local Chapter's service charge.

As dues and service charge-paying members of a Chapter, temporary and permanent members alike are entitled to receive equal, non-discriminatory service from the Chapter. This includes, but is not limited to, appropriate representation in labor negotiations, apprenticeship distribution, if available, and equal access to other chapter services and functions.

(Adopted Jan. 4, 1955)
(Revised Oct. 21, 1960; Oct. 19, 1991)

POLICY 12 Ethical Contracting Practices

NECA supports the highest legal and ethical standards in construction for the benefit of its members, the industry and the consuming public. Illegal and unethical practices distort the fair and level playing field needed for entrepreneurial competition. Attempts to gain unfair competitive advantage are ethically abhorrent.

NECA supports full and fair enforcement of Federal antitrust statutes.

While it is not the role of the Association to act in place of duly constituted authorities at federal, state and local levels in policing and enforcing the law, it is a policy of NECA and its chapters to develop and promote programs which educate the electrical construction industry in the highest standards of legal and ethical business practice and in the value of maintaining those standards. NECA also encourages each of its member firms to adopt, promote and enforce its own code of ethical conduct.

(Adopted Oct. 20, 1990)

(Revised Oct. 3, 2015)

POLICY 13 Labor Relations

NECA values highly the long record of constructive and responsible labor relations as it has been practiced throughout the years by the National Association, its chapters, and its members. Much credit and immeasurable savings have been brought to the industry and to the general public by diligent efforts to promote and maintain full and uninterrupted productivity while striving for economically-realistic terms of employment. NECA believes that every effort should be made on the part of all parties concerned, including the National Association, its chapters, its members, supervisory personnel, the IBEW, and local unions to provide the maximum possible productivity per manhour of labor in order to meet competition and also to promote consumer use of the services of trained and skilled electrical workers employed by qualified electrical contractors.

In order to implement this basic policy, NECA endorses and seeks to develop, on the local and national level, programs and procedures for rational and peaceful approaches to the settlement of disputes and the avoidance of strikes, work stoppages, and jurisdictional disputes, and programs and procedures for improving safety, training of apprentices and journeymen, employment and benefit programs, and other programs for the benefit of the industry and the general public.

Among existing programs which NECA has sponsored and participated in and which NECA endorses are the Council on Industrial Relations, the Electrical Training Alliance, the Employees Benefit Agreement (NEBF), the National Labor-Management Cooperation Committee, the Plan for the Settlement of Jurisdictional Disputes in the Construction Industry, and the many national agreements between and among NECA, the IBEW, and the Building Trade Unions. NECA will continue, in cooperation with the constituent chapters, to study and develop programs in the interests of the industry and the public.

NECA's Labor Relations policy provides for a coordinated and cooperative effort between constituent chapters and the National Association. This policy features a high degree of local responsibility, while at the same time providing for methods by which the National Association can promote and safeguard the labor relations and business interests and goals of the industry.

Basic labor relations policies which NECA has subscribed to and will continue to endorse are:

NECA supports and endorses the continued development of union responsibility at the local and national levels toward minimizing and eliminating wildcat strikes, jurisdictional strikes, and work stoppages over contract and other disputes. Accordingly, NECA subscribes to the continuation of the Council on Industrial Relations and its establishment in all areas to avoid work stoppages which are detrimental to employer, employee and the Public. NECA subscribes to and recognizes the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively.

NECA will continue to develop harmonious relationships with the International Union and its constituent locals to promote labor stability and improve the economic and financial interests of the industry.

NECA endorses legislation which advances the legitimate interests of the employer or his employee and opposes legislation which seeks to impose unfair restrictions upon the employer or his employees, or which seeks to impose undue and harmful burdens on the industry.

NECA supports and endorses the continued organization and strengthening of employer groups through local chapters in the interest greater industry solidarity and responsibility in creating responsible labor relations.

NECA subscribes to and endorses the principle of non-discrimination in employment, and subscribes to a policy of employment without regard to any status protected by federal law. NECA subscribes to and endorses a continuing policy to have its Chapters and the IBEW, both locally and nationally, undertake programs to provide all qualified individuals with an opportunity to become qualified craft workers within the Industry.

NECA subscribes to and endorses the continued development of safety programs in the interest of the individual workers and the employer.

NECA subscribes to and endorses the continued development of programs to ensure an adequate supply of qualified workers in all areas of the country. This includes the continued development and orderly expansion of these apprenticeship and journeymen training programs by the maximum utilization by NECA members of the indentured apprentices available and by cooperating with the area Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee in providing adequate, continuing, and diverse training for technological requirements and the expanding needs of the Industry. This does not include a requirement for employers to employ apprentices when there is no need for their services. This also includes the adoption and full implementation of the Construction Wireman/Construction Electrician and Construction Lineman classifications in all appropriate areas and construction agreements.

NECA subscribes to and endorses the principle of managerial responsibility and freedom to manage and oppose any restrictions which hamper and impede the exercise of managerial judgment and increase the cost

of doing business. This includes the right to select qualified workers and to maintain fair and reasonable work rules in the interest of economy and sound business practice.

(Adopted Sept. 30, 1967)

(Revised Oct. 17, 1970; Sept. 24, 1977; Oct. 6, 1979, Oct. 12, 2013, Oct. 3, 2015)

POLICY 14 Product Guarantees

The electrical industry is justly proud of the high degree of reliability and superior performance of its products and services. Contractors, manufacturers, distributors, and energy suppliers have all contributed careful quality control, tested design, strict compliance with codes and testing laboratory standards, and prompt performance of needed service or repair under the terms of guarantees to assure the satisfaction of customers

NECA always has assumed that any qualified electrical contractor will guarantee all installations for a reasonable period, preferably in writing. However, in the performance of such guarantees, contractors at times are faced with expenses for correcting design or manufacturing errors over which they have had no control and for which they have no responsibility except to uphold the entire industry's reputation. NECA feels it is imperative for each company in the electrical industry to stand fully behind the products or services it markets by paying all direct and contingent costs incurred by anyone in replacing, repairing, or adjusting defects or malfunctions which are under the control primarily of that company.

NECA believes the following standards on guarantees will prevent unfair shifting of liability to innocent victims of design or manufacturing faults and attendant ill will, controversy, and duplication of costs:

(1) The manufacturer should reimburse the contractor for all labor costs incurred during the guarantee period in adjusting, detecting, replacing, or repairing parts or equipment which were properly installed but which malfunction because of errors in design or manufacture.

(2) The manufacturer should reimburse the contractor or owner for other costs incurred as a result of malfunction of such defective parts or equipment during the guarantee period or during the period of the contractor's legal or contractual liability.

(3) The distributor or manufacturer should indemnify the contractor from losses resulting from damage of goods in shipment or damages which freight carriers claim were concealed damages already existing at time of shipment. The burden of settling claims with carriers should lie with those in the industry who ship and distribute rather than with those whose primary function is to install.

(4) All guarantee and warranty periods should start tolling on the date the customer accepts the installation. Manufacturers' warranties which are good for a year from date of factory shipment or contractor receipt are wholly inadequate when the contractor's guarantee liability starts at a much later date, and opportunities

generally do not exist to detect hidden defects until equipment has been operated or energized for some period of time.

(5) No public or private owner should expect the industry to absorb the added liability and cost of guarantees starting upon the owner's final acceptance of the project if the owner has previously energized, operated and had the use of guaranteed products. All guarantee and warranty periods should toll from the date of first use by the owner or at his direction.

(6) Contractors should use good judgment and restraint in requesting indemnification under this policy to avoid nuisance claims which cost more to process than to absorb and to minimize costs at all levels of distribution. Contractors should not incur labor costs beyond those incurred in receipt and examination if defects can be discovered on a pre-installation examination of any product which could reasonably be expected to have defects.

(Adopted Oct. 17, 1970)

(Revised Oct. 6, 1979)

POLICY 15 Electrical Industry Contractor Utility Relations

Throughout most of the twentieth century, the electrical contractor and the utility company were viewed as individual parts of the total, integrated electrical industry. Each performed a unique role. The electric utility company generated, transmitted, and distributed electrical power to its customers, while the electrical contractor supplied the materials, equipment, labor, and expertise to build and maintain electrical facilities that allowed customers to convert electrical power into a wide variety of beneficial uses. Those distinct roles have changed dramatically in recent times. Lines of separation of responsibility and domain have blurred as deregulation, mergers, acquisitions, consolidations, and divestitures have altered the industry. Rapid changes in corporate structure and high turnover at utility companies have interrupted communication channels between utility firms and contractors. The good will that existed between the industry partners has practically evaporated.

Utilities are now engaged in activities traditionally performed by electrical contractors, either through acquisition of contracting firms or by independent development of capabilities. These actions raise concerns among electrical contractors that utilities are unfairly competing: first, by using resources subsidized by regulated electricity rates to lower direct costs; and second, by ignoring codes and standards that electrical contractors must observe.

On the first point, NECA opposes the practice of cross-subsidization, whereby electrical utility companies, or the holding companies that own them, use resources obtained through regulated utility rates to enable their contracting subsidiaries to gain competitive advantage in the marketplace over electrical contractors. As a matter of principle and policy, NECA will endeavor to thwart this abusive

practice whenever and wherever it occurs. NECA recognizes the legitimate right of businesses to compete in the electrical contracting market through legal and ethical practices, but will not hesitate to use its resources to oppose those practices it sees as illegal or unethical.

On the second point, NECA recognizes that both electrical contractors and utility companies must adapt to meet challenges in the business and regulatory environments where they operate. NECA maintains, however, that all firms engaged in the business of electrical contracting should operate under uniform industry standards that insure fair and open competition. Electrical utilities and contractors alike have a responsibility to their customers and the public-at-large to maintain a high level of quality, ensure effective electrical safety, and provide a high degree of electrical system reliability in the installations they provide. NECA believes that uniform standards like the National Electrical Code® and the National Electrical Installation Standards™ should be adopted for their appropriate applications by all firms engaged in electrical contracting. NECA will oppose efforts to lower the standards that protect the public and that demand a high level of quality and reliability.

Even prior to the deregulation of the electric utility industry, the communications industry experienced perhaps a greater transformation through industry deregulation and the dismantling and restructuring of the corporate giants that comprised the Bell Telephone System. An industry that was almost exclusively voice communications over telephones and text messages sent over telegraph wires has exploded into a world of voice, data, and visual information delivered through vast networks of copper and aluminum conductors, fiber optic cables, microwaves and other wireless transmission. These networks have spawned a much more diverse set of communications utilities with widely varying business models, reaching across the traditional boundary at the service point. With the transformation of the voice-data-video industry have come broad opportunities for electrical contractors for specialty contracting work. As with electric power utilities, the communications utilities have become both customers and competitors for electrical contractors. NECA has responded to the market transformation by developing National Electrical Installation Standards for the emerging communication technologies, and works along with industry associates to develop appropriate codes and safety standards. NECA will continue to use its resources to expand opportunities for electrical contractors and insure that fair and open competition exists among contractors and communications utilities.

NECA advocates positive relations between utilities and electrical contractors, and encourages effective channels of communications at all levels. Electrical contractors and utility companies are most productive, and customers are best served, when the industry partners cooperate to deliver the goods. Disputes will arise and the parties will have to “agree to disagree” on some issues, but the industry and the end-users of

electrical power and communications technology will benefit from electric and communication utilities and contractors working together on common interest and competing fairly when interests diverge.

(Adopted Oct. 20, 2001)

(Revised Sept. 17, 2005)

(Revised Oct. 21, 2011)

POLICY 16 Public Relations

NECA maintains a comprehensive public relations program to address the strategic goal of enhancing the image of NECA and the electrical contracting industry. Electrical contractors provide a vital service, but the impact of their work is often undervalued by the public. Effective public relations creates a marketplace environment where NECA contractors are recognized by customer audiences and members of their communities as business professionals, leaders, problem-solvers and technical experts; and NECA is recognized as the voice of the electrical industry.

NECA’s approach to public relations is both proactive and responsive; it positions NECA as the leading authority on the electrical industry and the primary advocate for member contractors. The Association actively seeks opportunities to speak out on issues important to NECA members through the media and other forums. NECA also develops public relations initiatives that address emerging concerns and unfolding events. The Association provides resources, training, and support to advance and expand the public relations and marketing efforts of individual members and chapters, as well as ensure a consistent message in all of NECA’s media and outreach initiatives.

Active communication with NECA members, the media and key decision-makers is essential to maintaining a positive appreciation for the electrical contracting industry and the Association. Therefore, ongoing efforts should be made at the chapter, district and national levels of NECA to identify and communicate newsworthy Association activities and feature outstanding examples of members’ work. Communications methods include distributing press releases and developing articles for the trade and public media. Public relations also include community outreach, strategic partnership and philanthropic activities. These activities should have a strategic and meaningful connection to NECA’s role in the industry. When publicized, these activities will enhance the image of qualified electrical contractors. It is also recommended that special commemorative events that occur within the Association be shared with the business community.

A higher profile makes it possible for NECA to assume industry leadership and be a key player in policies, legislation and partnerships. For NECA members, this growing visibility will translate into increased market opportunities, improved access to important decision-makers, and a broader talent pool from which the next generation of skilled craftsmen

and managers will come. As NECA's brand recognition grows, qualified electrical contractors will benefit from their alignment with NECA as their customers will associate professional excellence with NECA membership.

Regular efforts should be made by NECA staff and officers to stay informed of the developments and best practices in public relations and marketing communications. NECA will use these skills and knowledge to remain effective and efficient. Funding for such public relations activities should be an integral part of the Association budgeting process, at the local chapter and national levels of NECA. Finally, systematic studies to measure the public opinion of NECA and its members should be conducted in order to refocus the public relations program as local, regional, and national issues may warrant.

(Adopted Sept. 30, 1989)

(Revised Sept. 17, 2005)

POLICY 17 Substance Abuse

The National Electrical Contractors Association does not condone the improper use of any drugs or alcohol and will work for the legal means to ensure a workplace free from the adverse affects of such substance abuse.

Historically, NECA has stood for maintaining the safest and most productive workplace possible. NECA members appreciate the benefits of a workplace free from injuries, the advantage of a productive work force, and the responsibility of offering a safe working environment. NECA members are firmly committed to achieving these goals and recognize that one of the most serious challenges facing them in this regard is substance abuse.

Substance abuse on or off the job has a negative impact on employees, their families, and their work. While NECA members have no intention of intruding into the private lives of their employees, they do expect employees to report for work in condition to perform their duties.

Statistics relating to substance abuse clearly show a serious threat to our society. NECA members recognize that substance abuse - its causes, effects and solutions - presents complex problems and they are dedicated to solving these problems and maintaining a drug-free workplace.

Solutions to substance abuse can best be addressed through awareness, education and action. Employees are identified with their employer and should be assisted in representing him in a responsible and creditable manner. Through NECA Chapters, and within the law, NECA members will encourage and support local substance abuse programs, which should contain an emphasis on restoring the affected employee's health and productivity as well as preserving a safe working environment for all employees. This support includes the distribution of educational material, the formulation of reasonable and legal local policies and bargaining agreement language, and open discussion on the development of employee assistance programs.

The goal of NECA members is to maintain a safe and healthy workplace for all employees and to foster efficient operations, thereby offering the best possible product to the construction customer. Substance abuse can prevent NECA members from achieving this goal. The issues of substance abuse must be addressed so that the users and purchasers of electrical construction can be assured that they will receive a product of the highest quality and economy.
(Adopted Oct. 20, 1990)

POLICY 18 Energy Independence

The National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) supports a multi-faceted approach to making the United States energy independent and commits its active participation in helping implement an energy policy premised on independence. Our association's efforts include working within the legislative and regulatory arenas and with other relevant entities to help improve electric reliability and infrastructure investment, maintain the diversity of all available fuel resources including, but not limited to, nuclear energy, coal, clean coal, oil, natural gas, solar, wind, bioenergy, renewables, geothermal, hydropower, and energy efficiency. NECA also encourages traditional producers of energy to embrace new methods that would create jobs, increase resource yield, and promote environmental and economic sustainability.

Electrical contractors who construct and maintain the infrastructure to generate, transmit, and distribute electrical power play a key role in the move towards domestic energy independence.

(Adopted Oct. 4, 2008)

(Revised Oct. 3, 2015)

POLICY 19 Safety and Health

NECA considers that cultivating safety and health are core values. They are an integral part of achieving excellence in the electrical contracting industry, by maintaining the highest standards of health, safety, quality, and productivity, in a proactive, practical, and cost-effective approach to manage organizational loss control. NECA believes that implementation of effective safety management systems and risk management processes mitigate potential injury and health incidences. NECA's commitment to jobsite safety is reinforced by placing special emphasis in quality safety training programs and specific policies that integrate safety into project pre-planning and project management. NECA members demonstrate safety professionalism and responsibility with a minimum of disruption to customers.

NECA's policy is to support the highest safety and health standards in construction for the benefit of its members, the industry, and the consuming public. NECA actively advocates maintaining the safest and most productive workplace possible through compliance with all OSHA and other safety standards directly related to the electrical industry. NECA members appreciate the benefits of a workplace free

from injuries, the advantage of a productive work force, and the responsibility to provide a safe working environment. To that end, NECA concludes that to achieve zero injuries in the workplace, contractors must strive for elimination of the hazards (establishing zero energized work environments) as the first priority and normal and best practice, whenever achievable.

NECA members understand jobsite safety is an important responsibility shared between employers and employees and affirms that implementing safe work practices is not optional. The association believes that a trained and qualified workforce has responsibility to recognize and avoid workplace hazards and, where necessary, employers provide the required personal protective equipment for workers exposed to workplace hazards.

NECA is active in government rulemaking processes related to worker safety and health. The association actively participates in electrical safety regulation and standard development, such as NFPA 70 the National Electrical Code, and NFPA 70E Standard for Electrical Safety in the Workplace and other safety legislation that directly affects and applies to the industry. NECA is committed to supporting collaborative effective efforts through industry alliances and partnerships sharing common safety objectives through meaningful contributions to safety rules that are practical, easy to understand, and enforceable.

The goal of NECA members is to maintain a safe and healthy workplace for all employees and to foster efficient operations, thereby offering the best possible product and services to the customer. Effective safety-related work practices and principles must be integrated into the design, planning, and installation of electrical work.

NECA members recognize that implementing effective safety programs, policies and safe work practices is often challenging. NECA members are dedicated to addressing these challenges while establishing and maintaining safety in the workplace. The use of smart technologies and resources that simplify and streamline processes related to achieving optimal results are encouraged and supported. Safety Excellence is no accident and results from safe work practices that continuously strive for Zero Injuries. NECA's commitment to safety excellence and safe work environments remains active, focused and constant.
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