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MARK DESCHEPPER
CSDA President



As 2025 comes to a close, I want to take a moment to thank each of you for being part of the CSDA community, and to share my excitement about what's ahead in 2026.

Every year brings new challenges, shifts in client expectations, and the need to stay one step ahead. But that's exactly where CSDA shines, we're helping members lead from the front.

Standing Out in a Competitive Market

In today's construction environment, differentiation matters more than ever. Whether you're cutting concrete, operating robotic demolition equipment, or performing precision GPR scanning, what sets you apart is your people, your training, and your professionalism.

Our association is committed to supporting you in that effort. CSDA will continue investing in the tools that help you improve those aspects of your business. That includes expanding our training programs and certifications, offering hybrid learning formats, and increasing access to best practices across the sawing, drilling, and subsurface industries.

Training, Networking & Member Support

If there's one thing I've learned as a proud member of this association, it is that the strength of CSDA lies in our member community. The connections and shared knowledge between members are what truly drive value.

Looking into 2026, we're planning networking opportunities, peer-to-peer discussions, and ways to help you build stronger relationships. CSDA is an organization that shares value between seasoned contractors, equipment manufacturers, and most importantly our members that are newer to the industry or association.

Mark Your Calendars

We've got two cornerstone events I strongly encourage you to attend:

- **World of Concrete – Las Vegas, January 20–22, 2026**
CSDA will once again be exhibiting and actively participating at World of Concrete (WOC), the concrete industry's largest international event. Visit us in the Central Hall at **Booth C4211** to connect with the CSDA team and learn about the latest initiatives and resources. Bring your team, explore the show floor, and take advantage of the valuable training and networking opportunities available. If you're attending WOC, please use CSDA's registration code **A26** to show your support for CSDA as a co-sponsor of the event.

We are again offering our ever-popular Estimating Class **"Prepare Estimates That Win Jobs"** on Monday 1/19 and Tuesday 1/20.

New to this year's event we are launching our new CSDA Project Management class **"Cutting Through Complexity: Managing Sawing & Drilling Projects"** held on Thursday 1/22.

- **CSDA Annual Conference – Omni Amelia Island Resort, April 7–9, 2026**
This is our annual flagship event, part business summit, part reunion. Beautiful venue, engaging content, and unmatched camaraderie. If you've never been to a CSDA conference before, make 2026 the year you join us.

Let's Move Forward Together

In the coming months, I'll continue listening to your feedback and working with the Board and staff to deliver value where it matters most. CSDA is here to support your growth, amplify your voice, and help you stay sharp in a changing industry.

Warm regards,
Mark DeSchepper

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CONCRETE OPENINGS MAGAZINE

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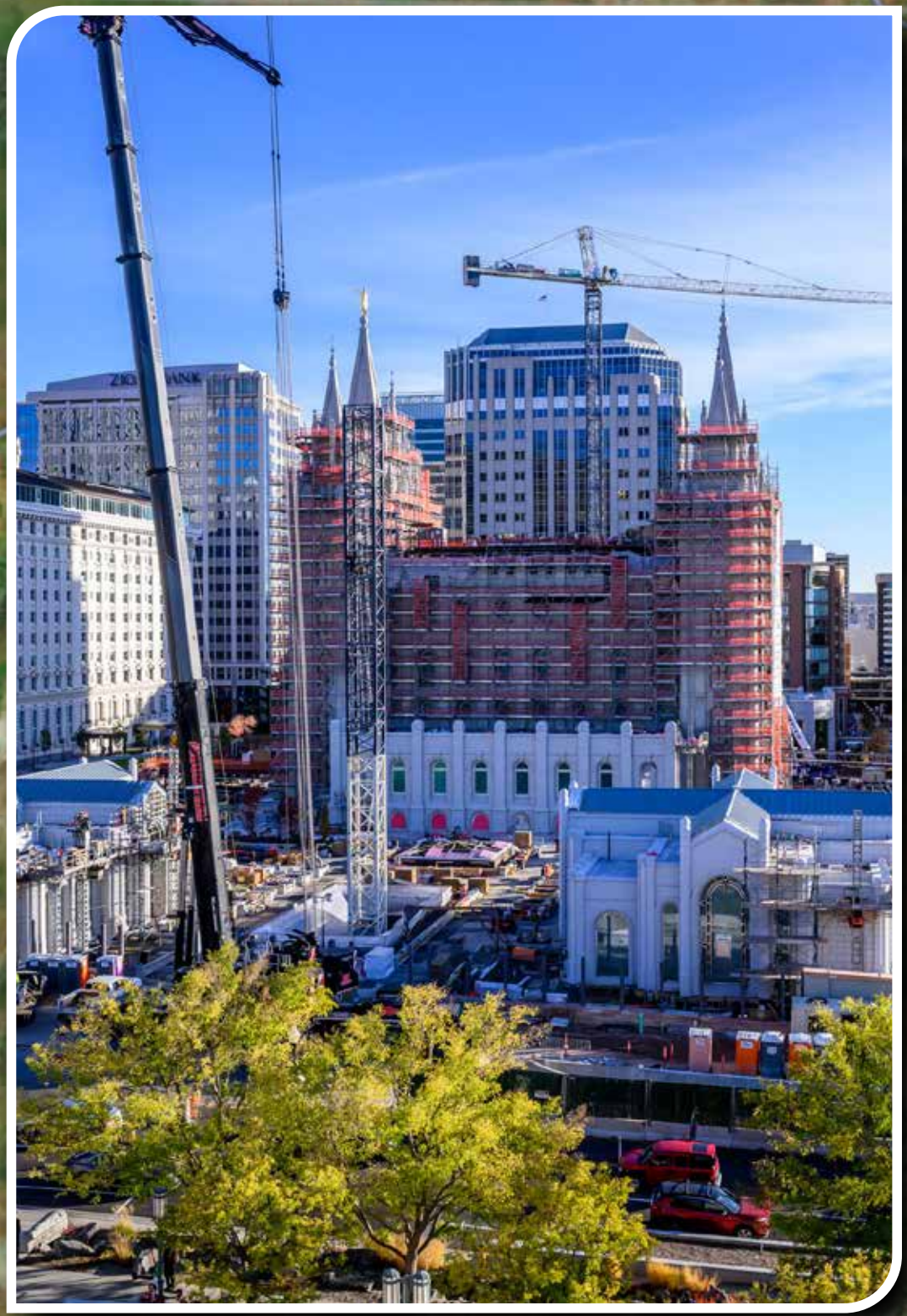


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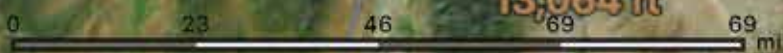
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ANCHORING HISTORY:



 Wheeler Peak
13,064 ft



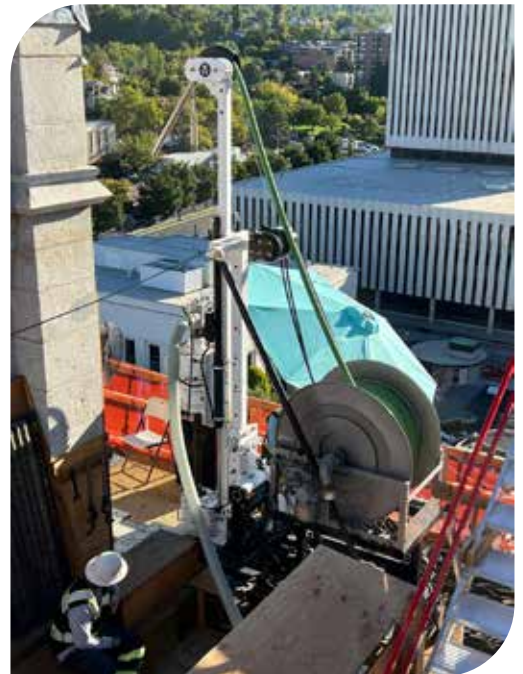


Salt Lake City

Kings Peak
13,533 ft

INSIDE THE SALT LAKE TEMPLE SEISMIC UPGRADE AND THE PRECISION DRILLING THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE

UTAH



"Diamond core drilling was the only method capable of creating deep, precise holes without compromising structural integrity."

In the heart of the Wasatch Front, Salt Lake City stands tall, its skyline framed by mountains and its streets filled with history, innovation, and the energy of a growing population. Yet beneath this vibrant landscape lies an ever-present threat: the Wasatch Fault. Scientists have long cautioned that the region is overdue for a significant earthquake. With the last major seismic event occurring more than a century ago, and with the most recent 5.7 Magnitude Earthquake occurring on March 18th 2020. Many of the city's oldest structures, built long before modern earthquake codes remain vulnerable.

One such building is the Salt Lake Temple, a landmark that has embodied faith, craftsmanship, and perseverance for more than 150 years. Completed in 1893, its granite spires rise above Temple Square as a spiritual centerpiece for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Pioneer builders carved, hauled, and placed each stone with unwavering devotion, creating a sanctuary meant to stand for generations. But time, geology, and advances in structural engineering brought a sobering truth: even sacred structures must be prepared for the natural forces that surround them.

By 2019, the temple faced a challenge as monumental as its original 40-year construction—the need to prepare the massive stone building for the possibility of a future earthquake. This marked the beginning of the Salt Lake Temple Seismic Upgrade Project, one of the most ambitious preservation and engineering efforts in U.S. history. The project represented a blend of reverence and science, heritage and innovation, and

devotion and forward-thinking engineering.

Engineers proposed using base isolation technology to safeguard the temple during seismic events. This method required a complex load transfer process of the building from its original foundations and placing it on flexible isolators designed to allow the earth to move independently of the temple during a seismic event. The process resembled performing open-heart surgery on a living monument. Workers carefully deconstructed portions of the temple grounds as cranes towered above Temple Square. Crews excavated beneath the massive granite foundation with extraordinary care, installing steel-and-rubber base isolators calibrated specifically for the temple's unique weight and geometry.

Simultaneously, major work took place on the upper portions of the temple. Crews drilled precise holes through the granite stone walls and from the tops of the towers down through the existing foundation level. These holes would house new post-tension cables essential to securing the temple's six towers and walls, completing the seismic design. Interior renovations also began, incorporating modern heating, ventilation, and electrical systems while preserving the ornate, 19th-century craftsmanship that makes the temple historically significant. Art, woodwork, and stained glass were carefully documented and preserved.

The project bridged generations. While pioneer workers once hauled massive Granite like Quartz Monzonite blocks from Little Cottonwood Canyon by oxcart, modern teams used

drones, 3D scanners, and advanced modeling to record and plan every detail of the structure. To many church members and observers, the seismic upgrade became symbolic, a commitment to honor the past while protecting the future.

Throughout the construction, Temple Square transformed into a place of curiosity and education. Visitors observed cranes, scaffolding, and excavation, witnessing an interplay between history and innovation. Online weekly updates, renderings, and virtual tours offered unprecedented transparency. When the project reaches completion, the Salt Lake Temple will emerge safer and more accessible, supported by new visitor centers and walkways that will serve millions. What the pioneers began will be preserved for pioneers of a new era.

The seismic upgrade is more than a structural overhaul; it is a preservation of legacy. It reminds us that the most important things, both materially and spiritually, must be maintained and adapted to endure. As the temple's spires rise again in renewed strength, they symbolize the enduring belief that structures built on firm foundations can withstand any storm.

The most technically demanding phase of the project was the precision drilling through the temple's granite towers and wall columns. The post-tension cables installed in the cored holes were essential to connecting the towers and walls to new foundation footings so that the base isolators could function effectively. Accomplishing this required drilling through 156 feet of granite-like quartz monzonite with less than 1/2" of clearance between existing steel jack-and-bore piles. The level

of precision required was extraordinary, pushing the limits of what is considered achievable in construction.

Jacobsen Construction and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints searched extensively across North America for a contractor capable of performing this work. When no viable partner could meet the tolerances required, the search expanded Internationally. Even highly skilled heritage stone specialists from Italy were unable to execute the drilling with the required accuracy. Eventually, the team connected with West Coast Cutting & Coring Group Ltd. (WCC Group), a company recognized for taking on uniquely complex cutting and coring challenges. In 2020 WCC was awarded a contract to begin R&D to develop systems and procedures for this complex project. Work on the Temple site began in 2021 marking the beginning of a monumental three-year undertaking that became the most technically challenging portion of the entire seismic upgrade.

WCC's scope involved drilling forty-six vertical holes, each 4-5/8" in diameter and extending up to 156 feet through solid granite, with sections of unconsolidated material from the tops of the towers through the existing foundations and to the bottom of the jack-and-bore. Each hole had to remain within a 3/8" alignment tolerance from start to finish. This work became the structural backbone of the temple's seismic resilience, ensuring the building's preservation for generations.

Given the temple's historical value and the brittle nature of the stone, diamond core drilling was the only method

“In total, WCC drilled forty-six holes through the historic temple structure, equating to more than a mile and a half of drilling.”



capable of creating deep, precise holes without compromising structural integrity.

The complexities of the job were numerous. One of the greatest challenges was the extreme hardness of the quartz monzonite stone. Because the material lacked abrasive properties, it was a challenge to develop diamond cutting segments to effectively drill while maintaining an acceptable bit life. Working closely with diamond manufacturers, WCC developed a custom diamond segment tailored specifically to the temple's stone.

The tight working space atop the temple towers created additional challenges. The limited deck area made positioning equipment difficult, especially since certain items—like power units, water tanks, and rod racks—had to rest directly over structural beams due to their weight. In many cases, WCC created detailed CAD deck plans to determine the most efficient and structurally safe layout. Moving equipment between hole locations required extreme coordination, as crane operators often worked blind, due to the tower structures blocking visibility, relying on the total accuracy of the ground crews' communication. Weather added another layer of complexity, with winter shelters, strong winds, and thunderstorms frequently affecting crane operations. Clear communication with the crane team was essential, along with careful load control from crew members.

Maintaining semi-dry drilling conditions was another challenge. Protecting the temple's interior, including ornate plasterwork, was a top priority for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Because traditional wet drilling methods risked water infiltration, WCC designed a custom vacuum extraction system to remove cuttings with a very small amount of water. Engineering the system required substantial testing to achieve the correct clearances for adequate airflow, allowing the team to maintain a semi-dry hole environment. Even then, maintaining dryness over such deep drilling distances was difficult, especially given Salt Lake City's elevation of 4,200 feet, which reduces vacuum efficiency. WCC conducted daily inspections along the drilling paths inside the building to ensure water had not entered the interior.

Alignment accuracy was equally demanding. Because the post-tensioning cables needed to pass between the steel jack-and-bore piles beneath the temple, drilling alignment tolerances could not exceed 1/2" over the entire length of each cored hole. The stone composition along the drill paths varied, with sections containing grouted infill or vertical grout seams that created uneven resistance and potential deflection. Maintaining accuracy ultimately depended on custom tooling designed for precision aligned coring. The team conducted constant surveying, using specialized instruments to measure hole location and deflection. Although time-consuming, this approach ensured the most accurate hole paths possible over the full drilling depth.

Working atop the temple's six towers also required heightened safety measures. Salt Lake City is prone to lightning strikes, making weather monitoring essential. WCC

evacuated crews anytime lightning approached within ten miles. Over the nearly three-year drilling process, WCC logged the most work hours of any contractor on-site and completed the entire scope with zero injuries, demonstrating a strong safety culture.

To meet the project's demands, WCC used entirely custom-built equipment. Conventional drilling equipment could not achieve the accuracy, tolerance, or depth required. WCC engineered custom drill rigs, vacuum systems, slurry recyclers, monitoring devices, and down-the-hole tooling, all designed specifically for this project's unique challenges.

In total, WCC drilled forty-six holes through the historic temple structure, equating to more than a mile and a half of drilling. Every hole hit its target through the foundation and between the jack and bore.

The vertical drilling phase finished ahead of schedule and is widely regarded as a major success. From WCC's perspective, contributing to such an important historical project was a profound honor. The company accomplished work many believed impossible, and the teamwork, creativity, and engineering required made the project an unforgettable experience. WCC believes they were selected due to their reputation for completing highly complex projects and their proven expertise in precision drilling and coring.

“WCC engineered custom drill rigs, vacuum systems, slurry recyclers, monitoring devices, and down-the-hole tooling, all designed specifically for this project's unique challenges.”

COMPANY PROFILE

Established in 1976, West Coast Cutting & Coring Group Ltd. (WCC Group) is headquartered in New Westminster, BC, with branch offices in Vancouver Island, Edmonton, and Calgary. WCC Group provides specialty concrete sawing, drilling, and robotic demolition services across Western Canada and abroad. Over 50 trucks and a CSDA member since 2006.

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AERIAL ADVANTAGE: How Drones Are Changing Construction Marketing

| Haley Long, Interstate Sawing & Demolition



From the sidelines of the basketball court to the edge of a bridge demolition, my career path has been anything but ordinary. Before entering the construction industry, I spent years as an NBA cheerleader, performing under bright arena lights and learning how energy, teamwork, and storytelling can captivate an audience. Today, I bring that same creative spirit and drive for connection to a completely different kind of stage: the construction site. I also hold my FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot Certificate, which allows me to fly drones commercially and capture our projects safely and professionally from above.

In the construction industry, innovation isn't just about the tools we use to cut, core, or demo concrete. It's also about how we tell our story. Over the past few years, drones have transformed not only how we view our jobsites, but how we showcase the precision and professionalism behind every project.

At Interstate Sawing & Demolition, we've embraced drone technology as one of our most powerful marketing tools. What started as a way to capture progress shots has evolved into a key part of how we connect with clients, promote safety, and highlight the skill of our team. Aerial footage gives people a perspective they've never seen before, one that reveals both the scale of our work and the detail that goes into every cut.

From bridge demolitions to robotic concrete cutting in downtown settings, drone imagery captures the intensity and precision of our operations. These visuals tell a story that words alone can't convey. They show the coordination between our crews, the choreography of machinery, and the efficiency that defines modern construction. When clients see this, they understand not just what we do, but the expertise and planning it takes to do it safely and effectively.

Drones have also made our internal communication stronger. Before or during a major project, aerial footage gives us the ability to see the jobsite from a completely different perspective.



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We use it to inspect rooftops, smokestacks, and elevated areas that would otherwise be difficult or unsafe to access. This helps us evaluate what needs to be done, identify potential hazards, and ensure nothing on the site is compromised from above. It's a quick and efficient way to enhance safety and awareness, and the same footage often becomes part of our marketing library, used in presentations, safety meetings, or recruitment campaigns.

From a marketing standpoint, drone footage has become an incredible bridge between the field and the audience. It helps us attract the right clients, recruit the next generation of skilled workers, and demonstrate that concrete cutting and demolition are industries driven by innovation and technology. Each video we post, whether it's a "job of the week" highlight or a behind-the-scenes reel, reinforces our reputation as forward-thinking and professional.

As a marketer in a traditionally rugged industry, my goal has always been to show the beauty in the work. There's power in showcasing the precision of a core drill, the symmetry of a wall saw, or the teamwork on a bridge deck, especially from above. Drones allow us to elevate those moments, both literally and figuratively. They turn heavy construction into visual storytelling, and that's what truly connects people to our brand.

The future of construction marketing is visual, transparent, and technology-driven. At Interstate Sawing, drone technology has become another step in that evolution, helping us document our work, strengthen communication, and share the craftsmanship that defines our projects. Drones are simply the latest tool in that evolution, giving us a new lens to capture both our projects and our purpose from a higher perspective.





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Building the Future Workforce: How the Construction Industry Can Attract Youth to the Trades

| Jake Zwaagstra from *TriCelta Development*, October 24th, 2025

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As the skilled labor shortage worsens, construction leaders are rethinking how to recruit and retain young workers. Early exposure, apprenticeships, mentorship and technology-driven training can help rebuild the future workforce.

As the school year gets underway, high school juniors and seniors are weighing their next steps after graduation. Some may already have a clear direction, but many are staring down a future clouded by uncertainty. Universities are contending with budget cuts, student debt looms large and white-collar career paths are increasingly saturated and competitive. One pathway that has long been undervalued, however, is trade school, which offers stability, growth and a direct pipeline into industries eager for fresh talent. One particular industry in great need of fresh talent is construction.

THE GROWING GAP IN SKILLED LABOR

The shortage of skilled tradespeople is not a future problem. It is a crisis happening right now. Today, the average age of laborers is in the early 40s, and in some skilled trades, this number is in the mid-50s. Retirements are accelerating, while fewer young people are entering the field, creating a widening gap that impacts projects across the country. ABC predicts that the industry will need to bring in nearly 500,000 new construction workers in 2026 to keep up with rising project demand.

This imbalance shows up across projects in tangible ways. Fewer workers mean stretched crews and slower schedules, which in turn drive up costs and put quality at risk when deadlines remain fixed but teams are under pressure. While project managers can plan for these challenges by building contingencies into timelines and budgets, the long-term solution lies in attracting, training and retaining the next generation of skilled tradespeople.

WHY TRADES SHOULD BE A FIRST CHOICE

Too often, skilled trades are seen as a fallback option for students who do not pursue a four-year degree. This perception is outdated and damaging, both for the individuals making career decisions and for the industries that depend on their work. In reality, trades offer compelling advantages. Many allow workers to earn while they learn, combining paid apprenticeships with hands-on training rather than burdening students with tens of thousands of dollars in tuition debt. Skilled craftwork also provides long-term job security, as these roles cannot be outsourced or automated and remain essential to communities.

For those who show dedication and initiative, clear pathways exist for growth, with opportunities to advance into supervisory, entrepreneurial or project leadership roles. Trades also offer the

unique satisfaction of seeing one's work endure – buildings, bridges, and infrastructure stand for generations, carrying the pride of the people who built them. Changing the perception of trades from a “last resort” to a “first choice” is one of the most important steps the industry can take in addressing the workforce gap.

HOW TO ATTRACT THE NEXT GENERATION

Closing the labor gap will require creativity and commitment from across the industry. Owner's representatives, contractors, educators and policymakers all have a role to play. The most effective strategies include:

- **Early Exposure:** Getting students on jobsites early makes a major difference. When young people can work with their hands, experience the scale of a project, and see the impact of their contribution, career possibilities come into focus. Reintroducing woodshop, auto shop and other hands-on classes into high schools would also help an entire generation discover skills and passions beyond traditional classroom learning.
- **Earn-and-Learn Pathways:** Apprenticeships tied to real projects remain one of the most powerful tools for workforce development. Students earn a paycheck while developing expertise, creating both financial stability and confidence. Apprenticeships also build loyalty: when young workers are invested in a project, they are more likely to stay with a firm or transition into a long-term facilities role after completion.
- **Mentorship and Knowledge Transfer:** Pairing apprentices with seasoned professionals ensures that technical skills are taught alongside values, work ethic and pride in craftsmanship. Mentorship bridges generational divides and helps pass down intangible lessons that no classroom can replicate.
- **Modernizing the Work:** Younger generations are drawn to environments that leverage technology and forward-thinking methods to make work efficient. This includes tools like digital modeling, robotics, and data-driven project management, along with modular construction and prefabrication, which streamline processes and enhance collaboration.
- **Long-Term Opportunities:** Finally, connecting apprenticeships to permanent roles is key. Firms that link project training to ongoing facilities or maintenance work ensure not only continuity for the client but also career stability for young workers. This strategy turns short-term labor solutions into lasting workforce pipelines.



A SUCCESS STORY IN ACTION

One clear example of these strategies at work comes from a recent hospitality project our team worked on. From the very start of construction, TriCelta Development partnered with a local high school to recruit apprentices. These students were paired with mechanical, electrical and plumbing subcontractors, with the long-term goal of transitioning into the property's facilities team after completion.

Over the multi-year project, the apprentices not only gained technical expertise but also developed deep pride in their contributions. When the property opened, several were hired full-time as subject-matter experts for the systems they had helped build and operate.

BUILDING THE WORKFORCE THAT BUILDS THE FUTURE

For the construction industry, the truth is simple: success depends on the craft workforce. Without skilled tradespeople, even the best plans and designs remain just drawings on paper. Investing in the next generation of trades is not only about filling a labor shortage — it is about protecting quality, controlling costs and ensuring that projects can serve communities for decades to come.

Each of us in the industry has a critical role to play. By supporting workforce development, embedding apprenticeship and local hiring commitments into project plans, and fostering partnerships between schools and subcontractors, construction leaders can ensure that every project builds not only structures but also careers. The call to action is clear: the trades must be reframed as essential, rewarding, and forward-looking careers. The future of construction, and the strength of the communities it serves, depends on it.

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Surgical Demolition Paves the Way for Grant Medical Center's \$400 Million Expansion





When Grant Hospital opened its doors in 1900 as the first hospital built in the new century, it represented the beginning of a new era in healthcare for Columbus, Ohio. Founded by Dr. James F. Baldwin, the hospital started as a 50-bed facility staffed by 30 physicians, surgeons, and specialists. Within just a few years, its rapid growth signaled the community's increasing medical needs. In 1904, the hospital added a 100-bed annex and soon became the largest private hospital in the world.

Next door stood Lawrence Hospital, established in 1899 as one of central Ohio's early medical institutions. After closing in 1919, its building became part of the growing Grant Medical Center campus, serving over the years as a medical office building, a parking garage, and the LifeFlight heliport.

Today, Grant Medical Center has evolved into Columbus's only Level 1 adult trauma center, and the busiest in the state. In 2023, the healthcare provider announced a transformational \$400 million Trauma and Critical Care Center expansion. The new facility will encompass 270,000 square feet and increase the hospital's total capacity to approximately 650 beds. The project is scheduled for completion in 2028 and represents one of the most significant healthcare construction undertakings in the region's history.

To make room for the expansion, the older medical office building and adjacent parking garage needed to be demolished. Messer Construction Company, the project's construction manager, selected Sehlhorst Equipment Services to dismantle the 185,000-square-foot, six-story post-tension concrete structure. Due to the extremely confined site that was bounded by a busy downtown street, the active medical center, and an occupied office building with a parking lot located no more than five feet from the garage footprint, traditional demolition from the outset was impossible. Instead, the first bay of the structure required surgical, piece-by-piece removal before large equipment could safely access the interior.

To accomplish this precision work, Sehlhorst brought in Donley Concrete Cutting Co., whose experience with complex structural dismantling made them an ideal partner for the project.

Donley Concrete Cutting Co. collaborated closely with the demolition team to carefully deconstruct the structure from the top down. The selective demolition began on the roof level and continued methodically to the ground. The process required the combination of flat sawing, wire sawing, shoring, rigging, and crane operations, all executed within a tight urban footprint.

The existing four-inch-thick post-tensioned slabs needed to be separated cleanly from the beams, columns, and parapet walls before any mechanical demolition could take place. Each level was fully shored and decked to support the slab while crews performed the cutting. Once isolated, the deteriorated slab sections were hammered apart by the demolition contractor and removed from the structure. After the slab and shoring were cleared, the remaining structural elements, primarily beams and columns, were rigged to a 250-ton crane. These components were wire sawed and lowered intact to the ground, where they were later processed into manageable pieces and hauled off-site. The entire sequence was repeated floor by floor until the first bay was completely removed.

This phased approach allowed sufficient working room for larger machinery to safely enter the site and carry out traditional mechanical demolition for the remainder of the parking garage.

Concrete cutting was not just one option on this project—it was the only viable solution for safely removing the first bay of the structure. With occupied buildings positioned within five feet



of the garage, there was no room to maneuver large demolition equipment that would be necessary to take down this structure. Jackhammering the initial sections of the structure would have created excessive vibration and the potential for premature structural failure. Additionally, uncontrolled debris could have endangered nearby facilities, pedestrians, and vehicle traffic.

To combat these issues, Donley's crew utilized both flat and wire sawing. Flat sawing provided controlled separation of slabs from structural components and prevented unintended transfer of loads to weakened areas of the garage. Wire sawing offered the only safe method for cutting larger beams, columns, and parapet walls because access was limited to one side of each component. Exterior saw access by manlift was not feasible due to the location and operating radius of the crane, which occupied most of the available exterior space. Wire sawing also allowed for better control of runoff and prevented water and slurry from spraying onto adjacent buildings and parked cars—an important concern in such a high-traffic medical campus.

Before any cutting could begin, Sehlhorst's crews installed shoring on every level to stabilize the post-tension slabs. Once the slab on a given floor was fully supported, a flat saw was used to cleanly separate the slab from all connecting beams, columns, and parapet walls. With the slab isolated, demolition crews broke it into sections with a track hoe equipped with a hammer attachment. Skid steers then pushed the debris across the shoring and dropped it to a designated area below for removal.

After the slab and shoring were cleared from a floor, each beam was carefully rigged to the 250-ton crane. Crews wire sawed through the beams and columns, ensuring the pieces remained stable and fully supported during the cuts. Each section was then lifted away and lowered to the ground for further processing. This technique eliminated the risk of pieces swinging or striking the neighboring structure, which remained active throughout the project.

The process was repeated on each level until all structural components in the first bay were safely removed and space was created for full-scale demolition.

The extremely tight site conditions required constant coordination and situational awareness. With another building located less than five feet away, every beam and slab section had to be precisely cut and carefully pulled away to prevent accidental contact. Spring weather in Ohio contributed additional hurdles. Cold, windy, and rainy days made slurry management more difficult and occasionally limited crane operations due to high wind speeds. Flat sawing to the edge of slabs with no protective barriers demanded highly skilled operators and flawless communication.

Crews also had to work under the constant presence of overhead loads as large concrete elements were removed by crane. This required strict adherence to all safety protocols, including PPE, fall protection, and continuous monitoring of rigging points and cut sequences. Weight calculations had to be exact to ensure the crane could safely support each piece while avoiding movement that could bind or snap the wire.

To protect the surrounding area, a full mesh containment system was draped from the top level to the ground, capturing slurry, water, and debris generated during cutting.

Donley Concrete Cutting Co. utilized a Pentrunder 3P8 high-frequency wire saw paired with Diamond Products wire for all beam and column removal. Flat sawing operations were performed with a Husqvarna 7000 saw equipped with Diamond Products blades.

Over the course of the project, 28,525 square feet of four-and-a-half-inch slab—totaling approximately 1,605,000 pounds—was cut and removed. Additionally, 460 square feet of wire sawing was required to segment roughly 100,000 pounds of beams and columns.

Despite the complexity of the structure, the confined surroundings, and the challenging weather, Donley Concrete Cutting Co. completed its portion of the project on schedule. Their precision demolition work allowed the general contractor to maintain momentum on the larger structural teardown, keeping the hospital's expansion project on track.



According to Donley Concrete Cutting Co., their selection for the project stemmed from both competitive pricing and a long-standing reputation for completing highly complex sawing and drilling assignments throughout the region. Their partnership with Sehlhorst Equipment Services ensured that the initial phase of demolition was executed safely, efficiently, and with the highest level of precision.



COMPANY BIO

Donley Concrete Cutting Co. has been serving the Central Ohio area since 1997 and a CSDA member since 2004. With headquarters in Canal Winchester Ohio, they have support location in Cincinnati Ohio as well as a Toledo Ohio location which operates under Duffey Concrete Cutting.

Donley Concrete Cutting Co offers a full service of core drilling, flat sawing, wall sawing, wire sawing, curb sawing, diamond grooving & grinding, ground penetrating radar, profilograph services, selective demolition, and vacuum truck operations.

RESOURCES

General Contractor

Messer Construction Company

CSDA Contractor

Donley Concrete Cutting and Drilling Co.

Website

donleyconcrete.com

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Precision Sawing Keeps Pittsburgh's



Mt. Washington Transit Tunnel Project on Track

The Mt. Washington Transit Tunnel in Pittsburgh stands as the only tunnel in the United States that accommodates both buses and light rail service, making it one of the region's most essential transportation corridors. Every day, thousands of commuters rely on this 3,500-foot tunnel to travel between neighborhoods and into the core of downtown. Because of its critical role, any closure requires careful planning, strategic coordination, and a fixed construction schedule. In

early 2025, Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) initiated a major eight-month infrastructure upgrade, part of a broader \$150 million investment in the city's light rail system. The \$28 million tunnel component involves replacing overhead electrical lines, the paved roadway, and the embedded light-rail track. Mascaro Construction Co. was awarded the general contract and immediately sought specialized cutting expertise to prepare the tunnel for the next phases of construction.

Mascaro selected Matcon Diamond Inc., a trusted Pittsburgh-based concrete cutting contractor with 40 years of experience, to perform the extensive slab sawing required to remove the existing tunnel roadway. Because the tunnel is narrow, confined, and reinforced with steel rails, every cut had to be precise and planned in advance. Mascaro emphasized that staying ahead of schedule was essential, since the tunnel's closure directly affects the entire public transportation network.

Matcon Diamond's work began with segmenting the existing roadway into removable panels. The team performed transverse cuts every five feet across the entire width of the tunnel while also completing two continuous longitudinal cuts spanning the full 3,500-foot length. These cuts were necessary to separate the slab into manageable five-foot squares. Each transverse cut penetrated four embedded steel rails, requiring both deep plunge capability and custom-engineered diamond blades. Once the slabs were separated, Mascaro used telehandlers to lift and stage the panels at the southern tunnel entrance for removal. This method ensured that even in narrow working conditions, slab removal could proceed smoothly.

The scope of sawing was extensive. Matcon cut more than 105,000 square feet of heavily reinforced concrete and performed thousands of eight-inch-deep plunge cuts through the railway steel at each transverse location. Cutting the slabs into smaller, uniform sections was the only practical method available. Any alternative form of demolition would have generated excess debris, slowed the removal process, and increased hazards within the confined tunnel environment.

Flat sawing was the only feasible option due to the tunnel geometry and reinforcement conditions. Diesel-powered saws equipped with specialized blades were necessary to penetrate the 15-inch-thick slab and embedded rails. Mechanical demolition would have been too disruptive and unsafe, as debris removal would have become unmanageable within the tight interior space. By cutting the slab into consistent five-foot squares, Matcon enabled Mascaro to remove the panels both cleanly and efficiently, keeping the project moving without delays.

Because this was Matcon Diamond's first large, multi-week assignment after the winter season, the company had already performed extensive off-season maintenance on its equipment. Six flat-sawing crews were assigned to the job and split into three working groups. Two crews handled the transverse cuts, beginning at opposite ends of the tunnel and working toward the center. A third crew, which included a walk-behind saw and a ride-along saw, began the longitudinal cuts from one end and progressed continuously to the other side. The transverse-cutting workflow was carefully sequenced so that the first saw created a ten-inch pre-cut and the second followed with the full 15-inch depth and the eight-inch rail plunge cuts. After the longitudinal cuts were completed, the ride-along saw was removed from the tunnel so that the transverse crews could continue operating until they met in the middle.

Working in the tunnel introduced unique environmental and logistical challenges. The space offered little room for staging removed slabs, meaning each cut section needed to be lifted and transported immediately. The weather outside was cold, but temperatures inside the tunnel remained stable, allowing crews to work consistently. As the cutting progressed deeper inside the structure, air quality became a growing concern because diesel exhaust accumulated more quickly. Large ventilation fans were positioned at the tunnel's southern entrance to clear the air, and they were effective enough to refresh the tunnel atmosphere within minutes. This allowed sawing operations to continue without interruption.

Matcon Diamond relied on Husqvarna walk-behind and ride-along flat saws paired with specially designed K2 and Diamond Products blades. These tools performed reliably through the project's heavy reinforcement and full-depth cutting requirements. The equipment combination provided durability and cutting accuracy needed to maintain production rates and meet the aggressive schedule.

The project schedule allotted 15 calendar days for all sawing activities, but Matcon completed the work in only 12. From February 24 through March 7, the crews logged 11 working days and produced an impressive amount of cutting. In total,





they completed 16,458 linear feet of 15-inch-deep transverse cuts, 6,016 linear feet of 15-inch-deep longitudinal cuts, and 2,899 plunge cuts through eight-inch-deep rails. This level of production ranks as one of the highest-volume tunnel sawing efforts Matcon Diamond has ever completed in such a condensed timeframe.

The combination of confined working conditions, limited staging areas, slab handling challenges, and air quality issues required constant communication and detailed coordination between Matcon Diamond and Mascaro Construction. Because the tunnel's geometry restricts equipment movement and visibility, each slab needed to be sized to fit the telehandlers' lifting capacity and maneuvering space. Despite these constraints, crews maintained steady progress and upheld strict safety standards throughout the operation.

Matcon Diamond's successful completion of its initial scope positioned the larger project to remain on schedule. Mascaro continued its reconstruction work immediately after slab removal, and Matcon is expected to return later in the year to perform saw-and-seal operations on the newly installed pavement. For Matcon, the project served not only as an opportunity to deliver high-volume cutting under difficult conditions but also as a training platform for new laborers and a chance to test a new Husqvarna ride-along saw in a demanding environment.

With four decades of service in the greater Pittsburgh area, Matcon Diamond Inc. has established itself as a reliable partner for complex, mobilized concrete cutting projects. The Mt. Washington Transit Tunnel upgrade reinforced that reputation, demonstrating the company's ability to meet aggressive timelines while maintaining safety, precision, and efficiency on one of the region's most important transportation structures.

COMPANY PROFILE

Matcon Diamond Inc. is the tri-state area's essential provider of specialty concrete sawing and core drilling services to the local construction industry and CSDA member since 2023. Team safety, job site determination, ethical business decisions, and a quality-trained workforce are the fundamentals we adhere to. Our three main service divisions are Heavy Highway, General Contracting, and Vertical Trades. Founded in 1985 by current CEO/President David Matesic, Matcon Diamond Inc. is fully licensed, bonded, insured, and ready to work.

RESOURCES

General Contractor

Mascaro Construction Co

CSDA Contractor

Matcon Diamond Inc.

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Reflections on the AEDED Forum 2025 in Madrid



RODERICH BRAUN
IACDS President

Last September 24th, I had the pleasure of being invited to the AEDED Forum 2025, that took place in Madrid on September 24th. As President of the International Association of Concrete Drillers and Sawers (IACDS), it was an honor to represent our international community at the Spanish meeting, to have the opportunity to explain who we are and what we do, and to embrace their perspectives and points of view about their country.

From the moment I arrived, I was impressed by the professionalism and warm hospitality shown by the members. The Forum brought together industry experts, business leaders, and technicians from across Spain, providing a valuable platform to exchange ideas, discuss challenges, and explore the future, not only of cutting, but also of demolition, decontamination, and recycling, with such a complex conference program and networking sessions. From my side, I seized the opportunity to share some of the projects that IACDS has developed throughout this year and those planned for the future, and I encouraged the Spanish attendees to join our IACDS Annual Meeting 2026 by

setting up a delegation and continuing these conversations on an international stage.

A particularly meaningful moment for me was receiving a commemorative plaque from AEDED President José Fernández, which represented the strong partnership between our associations and our international purpose to build a better industry together. My sincere thanks to AEDED for the invitation and for including me in the AEDED Forum 2025.

Since becoming President, I have always expressed my desire to visit as many of the national associations that are part of IACDS, to strengthen the bonds that connect us. After the Spanish visit, it is now time to prepare my suitcase for the NADECO Annual Meeting in November.

I am looking forward to learning from the National Associations and to sharing some meaningful time together in the IACDS Annual Meeting 2026.

Best regards,
Roderich M. Braun

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Diamond Products is the manufacturer of the Core product line—an industry-leading range of cutting and coring equipment and tools. Built on decades of innovation and craftsmanship, the Core line includes high-performance saws, drills, core bits, and diamond blades designed for professional contractors who demand precision, reliability, and durability on every job. Diamond Products ensures consistent quality from design to production, delivering the trusted tools that keep the concrete cutting and construction industries moving forward.

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Marketing **Challenges** and **Opportunities**

| Joey Cammerota

The concrete construction industry has always been built on strength — strength of material, strength of workforce, and strength of reputation. Yet when it comes to marketing, many companies in the sawing, drilling, and cutting sectors find themselves navigating a unique and rugged landscape, one that presents distinct challenges — but also tremendous opportunities for growth.

THE HARD REALITIES OF MARKETING IN CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION

Marketing in the concrete world is different from other industries. Unlike consumer goods or tech services, our audience is often working on active jobsites, far from the buzz of social media trends or flashy digital campaigns. They're hands-on, task-driven professionals who rely on proven products and trusted relationships — not sales gimmicks or "clickbait."

Many concrete contractors and service providers also operate lean organizations, where sales and marketing are often secondary to operations and project deadlines. When every day is filled with tight schedules, regulatory requirements, and rising material costs, investing time and money into marketing can easily fall down the priority list.

Additionally, product education presents a major hurdle. Most customers won't risk productivity or safety to "try something new" unless they understand the technical advantages clearly and trust the source completely. That means marketers must work harder to communicate real-world benefits — not just features — through every channel, whether it's a trade show booth, a product flyer, or a social media post.

WHY MODERN MARKETING MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

Despite these challenges, the future of marketing in the concrete construction industry is incredibly bright — for those willing to embrace it.

Modern marketing isn't about flashy ads or gimmicks. It's about connecting with the right customers at the right time with the right message.

in the **Concrete Construction Industry**

At its core, the concrete cutting, drilling, and sawing industry is about reliability and relationships. Modern marketing, when done authentically and strategically, strengthens both.

It's about building trust before the first handshake. And in today's world, the companies that leverage modern marketing tools will not only grow their businesses — they will elevate the entire industry.

Here's how:

- **Digital Presence Builds Credibility**
A professional website, a strong LinkedIn page, and an updated Google listing are no longer optional. Contractors, engineers, and project managers are researching companies before they make calls. First impressions happen online.
- **Educational Content Creates Authority**
Blogs, webinars, case studies, and how-to videos showcasing cutting techniques, safety practices, or equipment innovations help establish companies as experts in the field. Content marketing isn't just for tech companies — it's a powerful tool in construction, too.
- **Targeted Advertising Reaches New Customers**
LinkedIn, Facebook, and even Instagram offer hyper-specific ad targeting that can help concrete service providers reach general contractors, project managers, and purchasing agents directly — with a fraction of the budget needed for traditional advertising.
- **CRM and Follow-up Systems Close More Jobs**
Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software helps track leads, proposals, follow-ups, and customer satisfaction. In a busy industry, these tools can turn a lost business card into a signed contract.

- **Showcasing Innovation Drives the Industry Forward**

As new cutting technologies, slurry management systems, and safety practices evolve, companies that effectively market these innovations can help set new industry standards — attracting younger talent and opening doors to new project types.

GROWING TOGETHER

At its core, the concrete cutting, drilling, and sawing industry is about reliability and relationships. Modern marketing, when done authentically and strategically, strengthens both.

As more companies embrace these tools, we'll not only see individual businesses grow — we'll help move the entire industry into a new era: one where we are seen not just as essential subcontractors, but as innovative partners shaping the future of construction.

It's time for our marketing to match the strength, precision, and professionalism that define our work.



Joey Cammerota has spent the past decade serving as a Sales and Marketing Representative for K2Sanders, a leading diamond tools manufacturer. With a Marketing degree from Purdue University, he continually drives innovation and implements new technologies to support the company's growth and customer success. Joey is a proud member of CSDA and can be reached at 679-641-9678 or joey.cammerota@k2sanders.com



The Need for Electrical Panel Maintenance

| Don Smith

When building the PM schedule for a cutting rig, the lowly electrical panel is easy to overlook. It's a deceptively simple, static enclosure, mounted in the corner or on a wall with no moving parts and few apparent failure points. Yet despite their simplicity, electrical panels do require regular inspection and maintenance. With the threat of component failure, arc, or worse looming, the value of a few quick checks and adjustments can't be overstated.

The source of the danger is simple enough: heat and vibration. Every time an electrical load passes through the panel, the conductors and terminals experience a small thermal expansion, and every time the work is done, they contract again. Then once the truck is moving down a road, mechanical vibrations take over, traveling through to create minute pushes and pulls on each connection. Over time, these small, repeated movements cause fasteners to back out and electrical connections to degrade. As that happens, extra heat is generated in each connection, resulting in a compounding feedback loop of more resistance causing more heating, causing more resistance. Ultimately, something has to give.

All this means routine electrical maintenance is not just a good practice, but a critical step to prevent breakdowns and failures.

THERMAL CYCLING AND THE MECHANICS OF LOOSENING

Copper and aluminum, the two most common conductor materials, both have relatively high coefficients of thermal expansion. When energized, they warm and lengthen slightly; when de-energized, they cool and contract. Each cycle imposes

stress on the joint between the conductor and its terminal lug. In new equipment, properly torqued connections maintain uniform clamping pressure and accommodate this expansion elastically. But as time and temperature cycles accumulate, two things occur:

- 1. Relaxation of mechanical fasteners** — metals “cold flow” under constant pressure, especially aluminum, and screw threads lose tension.
- 2. Surface oxidation** — increased temperature and micro-movement promote oxide layer growth at the contact interface, raising resistance further.

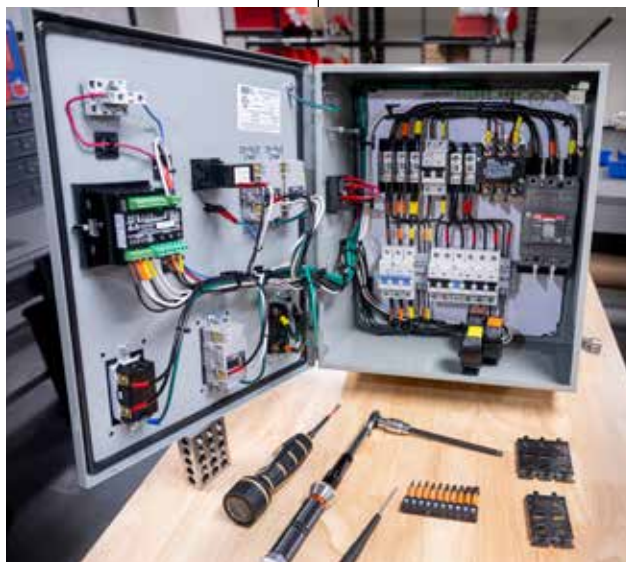
Once resistance begins to rise, the affected connection heats faster than its neighbors. This accelerates the degradation process, leading to insulation damage, nuisance trips, arcs, and fires.

What makes this type of failure mode most insidious is that from the outside, the enclosure will look perfectly fine, and the equipment will run without issues, right up until the day something pops.

INSPECTION FUNDAMENTALS

Effective maintenance begins with regular, careful visual inspections. With the panel completely deenergized, and generator or truck engine locked out, open the door to the panel and begin checking each connection one by one. Look for:

- **Evidence of overheating**
Discoloration, melting, or carbonization around breaker poles, lugs, and terminal strips.
- **Signs of arcing**
Pitting or soot near connection points.



Tech Talk is a regular feature of *Concrete Openings* magazine, focusing on equipment, maintenance and technical issues of interest to concrete cutting, polishing, and imaging contractors. Readers wishing to have a particular subject addressed can send their suggestions to editor@concreteopenings.com.

- **Insulation condition**
Hardened, cracked, or receded insulation at terminations.
- **Mechanical integrity**
Loose wire ends, corrosion, or missing fasteners.
- **Environmental factors**
Accumulation of dust, signs of moisture intrusion, and rust

Wherever damage is observed, those wires or components should be replaced. These inspections should be documented with photographs or notes identifying any abnormal findings and component serial numbers if applicable.

PROPER TORQUEING: PRECISION MATTERS

Tightening electrical connections “until they feel snug” is one of the most persistent field errors. Every terminal and circuit breaker manufacturer publishes torque specifications for their products, determined by conductor size, material, and terminal design.

Over-torquing can deform the conductor or the lug, creating point contact and increasing resistance rather than reducing it. Under-torquing allows vibration and thermal cycling to loosen the joint prematurely. The only reliable method is to use a torque wrench or torque screwdriver calibrated to the correct range.

Mechanics should track panel maintenance along with the rest of their mechanical records for each tuck, noting especially if any connections were found to be loose. This not only ensures consistency but provides a chance to catch a progressive component failure before it becomes a problem.

It is also good practice to verify torque after the first few weeks of operation for new installations, as initial settling of conductors and terminations can slightly alter clamping pressure.

Example Torque Specs (For Reference)

Molded Case Breakers		Ground/Neutral Bar	
XT1 Frame	62 in-lbs	14-10 AWG	20 in-lb
XT3 Frame	50 in-lb	8 AWG	25 in-lb
Mini Breakers		6-4 AWG	35 in-lb
WEG	18 in-lb	3 AWG - 2/0	50 in-lb
IMO	22 in-lb	Ground / Neutral Lugs	
Distribution Blocks		2 Tab	
Marathon (Line Side)		Mounting Screws	35 in-lb
6 AWG - 2/0	120 in-lb	12 AWG - 2/0	45 in-lb
8 AWG	40 in-lb	3 Tab	
10-14 AWG	35 in-lb	Mounting Screws	45 in-lb
Marathon (Load Side)		6 AWG - 250 MCM	250 in-lb
4-6 AWG	35 in-lb		
8-14 AWG	30 in-lb		

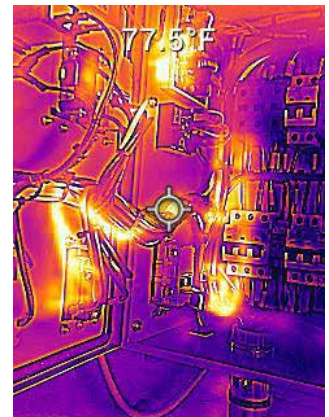
THERMOGRAPHY: SEEING WHAT THE EYE CANNOT

Visual and mechanical inspections are important, but they cannot always identify emerging electrical faults hidden beneath insulation or behind dust covers. Thermal imaging provides a powerful supplemental diagnostic tool.

A handheld infrared camera or thermal imager can detect small temperature variations between adjacent phases or connections under load. Even a 10 °F differential can indicate a problem such as a loose lug, undersized conductor, or deteriorated contact surface.

When performing thermographic inspections:

- Hook up some representative saw or hand tool and power it up to ensure the panel is under a representative current load.
- Compare similar components (e.g., breaker to breaker, phase to phase) rather than absolute temperatures alone.
- Record any hot spots and track over time to identify developing patterns rather than one-off anomalies.



Thermal scanning should always be performed by qualified personnel using appropriate personal protective equipment, since the enclosure must remain energized during measurement.

DUST OFF THE INSIDE

Electrical panels used in construction environments are subjected to conditions far harsher than those in typical industrial settings. Fine dust and concrete residue can accumulate inside panels, retaining heat and wicking moisture. Temperature swings cause condensation cycles that accelerate corrosion.

Periodic cleaning with dry compressed air or vacuum (never with solvents or moisture) is recommended. Gaskets and door seals should also be inspected to maintain the enclosure’s environmental rating. For high-humidity locations, consider desiccant packs or small enclosure heaters to minimize condensation.

PREVENTIVE ATTENTION PAYS

Given all of the vibration, moisture, and temperature swings that the equipment in our industry has to deal with, the recommendation is that these periodic checks and cleaning should happen at least quarterly.

While it costs a bit of time to fully inspect, torque, and scan a panel, the investment is small compared to the cost of breakdown and minuscule against the possibility of a fire or a shock. Murphy's law dictates that if there can be an electrical problem, there will be, and it'll happen when the truck is farthest from the shop on a job that is the most time sensitive.

Routine maintenance not only prevents failures but also extends the service life of connected equipment by ensuring stable voltage and current delivery. Operators will notice more consistent performance, fewer nuisance trips, and improved overall system reliability.

Electrical panels may lack moving parts, but they live dynamic lives. Treat them as precision components that require care, not as static boxes that can be ignored.

CONCLUSION

Breaker panels are the backbone of every electric cutting rig. While their operation appears passive, the physical realities of heat, vibration, and corrosion make maintenance essential. By implementing a structured inspection routine, adhering to manufacturer torque specifications, and incorporating periodic thermographic surveys, companies can identify developing issues early — before they become safety hazards or costly downtime events.

In the end, the best electrical system is one you never have to think about — because it's been maintained with the same diligence as every other engine, generator, and tool.



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Navigating Tariffs and Rising Costs: Legal Tools for the Construction Industry

| Christian Dewhurst and Jackson Moore

The American construction industry continues to be shaped by the fluctuating cost and availability of materials. Early data from 2025 indicates a steady rise in material prices, driven in part by tariffs on foreign imports—some reaching as high as 50%. These increases raise concerns about potential payment disputes across the sector. This article explores legal strategies, including contract drafting and lien rights, that can help industry participants manage these challenges effectively.

THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY: PRICING INCREASES AND FUTURE PRODUCTION OUTLOOK

Recent figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics show a 2.6% year-over-year increase in non-residential construction material costs. Steel mill products have surged by 13.1%, while lumber and concrete products have risen by 1.8% and 1.7%, respectively. The chart below offers a detailed breakdown of commodity-specific impacts.

See chart below for a more detailed analysis of the overall impact on various commodities:

Despite efforts to reduce reliance on imported materials like cement, lumber, and steel, domestic production still falls short of demand. According to the American Cement Association (ACA), formerly the Portland Cement Association, the U.S. imports approximately 20% of its cement annually, with Canada and Mexico supplying over a quarter of that volume. This reliance on imports means tariffs could further inflate prices.

Even domestically produced materials are not immune. Tariffs reduce foreign competition, which can lead to longer lead times and diminished pressure on domestic suppliers to maintain quality and delivery standards. The result: increased costs and reduced efficiency across construction projects.

BROADER CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IMPLICATIONS

Rising material costs have ripple effects throughout the industry. Contractors may pass these costs to developers, who might respond by delaying or repricing projects. Public infrastructure initiatives—often bound by fixed budgets—could face funding gaps or require legislative action to stay on track. In the residential sector, higher costs may exacerbate affordability issues in already strained housing markets.

Compounding these pressures are high interest rates and inflation. President Trump has urged the Federal Reserve to cut rates to stimulate spending, and recent labor market data may prompt action. Lower borrowing costs could offer temporary relief, enabling stakeholders to move forward with projects despite

Producer Price Index, August 2025

	1-Month % Change	12-Month % Change	Change Since Feb 2020
Inputs To Industries			
Inputs to construction	0.2%	2.3%	43.0%
Inputs to multifamily construction	0.2%	2.5%	43.2%
Inputs to nonresidential construction	0.2%	2.6%	43.9%
Inputs to commercial construction	0.3%	3.6%	45.8%
Inputs to healthcare construction	0.3%	3.4%	45.3%
Inputs to industrial construction	0.3%	3.2%	41.3%
Inputs to other nonresidential construction	0.2%	2.4%	43.4%
Inputs to maintenance and repair construction	0.1%	2.0%	40.9%
Commodities			
Adhesives and sealants	0.0%	3.0%	39.4%
Brick and structural clay tile	0.1%	1.4%	32.8%
Concrete products	0.0%	1.7%	41.7%
Construction machinery and equipment	0.5%	4.0%	35.3%
Construction sand, gravel, and crushed stone	0.1%	6.1%	47.5%
Copper wire and cable	-3.8%	13.8%	60.2%
Crude petroleum	-2.8%	-13.5%	36.1%
Fabricated structural metal products	0.8%	5.9%	60.8%
Gypsum products	0.0%	0.9%	48.7%
Hot rolled steel bars, plates, and structural shapes	4.8%	6.5%	51.0%
Insulation materials	-0.1%	0.1%	46.1%
Iron and steel	1.1%	9.2%	54.3%
Lumber and wood products	0.2%	1.8%	26.4%
Natural gas	-2.8%	42.3%	43.3%
Plumbing fixtures and fittings	0.3%	8.2%	29.5%
Prepared asphalt, tar roofing and siding products	2.2%	6.1%	49.6%
Softwood lumber	0.6%	5.2%	14.4%
Steel mill products	1.5%	13.1%	66.1%
Switchgear, switchboard, industrial controls equipment	0.1%	10.5%	63.2%
Unprocessed energy materials	-2.5%	-4.8%	52.2%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Associated Builders and Contractors



Christian Dewhurst is a construction law partner in Gray Reed's Houston office. His practice is primarily focused on resolving the entire spectrum of claims and litigation that arise during commercial and residential construction projects, including delay in performance claims, design and construction defects, payment disputes, productivity claims, lien claims, work injury claims, plus many more. His client list includes all the various players involved in the construction process, ranging from project owners, developers and general contractors to subcontractors, suppliers and distributors. Christian can be reached at cdewhurst@grayreed.com.



Jackson Moore joined Gray Reed in 2024 after serving as a Summer Associate in 2023. During that time, he worked closely with the firm's litigators on commercial, construction and insurance matters. Jackson is based in the firm's Houston office and can be reached at jmoore@grayreed.com.

elevated material prices.

However, tariffs remain a significant counterforce. By limiting supply and increasing uncertainty, they undermine the stability that the construction industry depends on. Whether rate cuts will sufficiently offset these pressures remains to be seen.

THE ROLE OF CONTRACTS IN REDUCING EXPOSURE TO MATERIAL PRICING UNCERTAINTY

Tariffs, inflation, and interest rate fluctuations introduce complexity and risk into construction projects. Thoughtful contract drafting can help mitigate these challenges from the outset.

Price Escalation Clauses

A concrete supplier anticipating tariff-driven cement price hikes might negotiate a price escalation clause. These clauses link pricing to external benchmarks—such as indices or published averages—protecting contractors from absorbing unexpected cost increases between bid submission and material procurement. They also promote transparency with owners by clarifying how future price changes may affect budgets.

Materials Availability Clauses

Similar to force majeure provisions, these clauses outline procedures and remedies when uncontrollable events—like tariff surges or global supply chain disruptions—make material procurement commercially impracticable. Addressing these risks upfront reduces the likelihood of disputes and provides a roadmap for resolution.

Excusable Delay Provisions

These clauses shield contractors from liability for delays caused by unforeseen events, such as global shortages or tariff-related disruptions. They typically grant additional time to complete work without penalty. Clearly defining what constitutes an excusable delay helps avoid costly legal battles. During COVID, such provisions proved invaluable in protecting contractors and suppliers from delays caused by labor shortages and supply chain breakdowns.

Ultimately, there's no universal clause that fits every project. Each presents unique risks, and stakeholders should

tailor contracts to address specific challenges. Even minor adjustments can mean the difference between a manageable issue and a costly dispute.

PROTECTING PAYMENT THROUGH LIEN RIGHTS

As material prices climb and project costs escalate, the risk of nonpayment grows. In addition to contractual protections, Texas law offers robust remedies through its mechanics and materialmen's lien statutes.

Anyone in the construction industry knows the frustration of watching accounts receivable balloon on a project where payment seems out of reach. Fortunately, Texas lien law provides a safety net.

A mechanic's lien allows contractors and suppliers to assert a legal claim against the property where work was performed or materials delivered—dramatically improving the odds of getting paid.

To perfect a lien in Texas, specific procedural steps must be followed:

- 1. Pre-lien notice** to the property owner and general contractor.
- 2. Filing a lien affidavit** in the county's real property records.
- 3. Sending notice** of the recorded lien to relevant parties.

Each step is subject to strict deadlines based on when work was completed or materials delivered. Missing these deadlines can result in an unperfected lien, weakening the ability to enforce payment.

Lien laws vary by jurisdiction, so contractors and suppliers—especially those operating across state lines—must understand the specific requirements in each location. While Texas's lien statutes can be complex, those who comply are far better positioned to recover payment from delinquent parties.

CONCLUSION:

Tariffs, inflation, and rising material costs pose real challenges to the construction industry. But with strategic contract drafting and a firm grasp of lien rights, contractors, suppliers, and developers can protect their interests and continue building with confidence in a volatile market.



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Exciting News: K2 Diamond and Sanders Saws Unite as K2Sanders

We're proud to announce the merger of **K2 Diamond** and **Sanders Saws & Blades**, combining our strengths into one powerful brand — **K2Sanders**. Together, we bring **over 100 years of combined experience** in diamond tool manufacturing and innovation.

This union represents more than just a name change — it's the blending of two legacies built on quality, performance, and trust. Under K2Sanders, we'll continue to deliver the same dedication to craftsmanship and service our customers have relied on for decades, while driving forward with new energy and innovation for the future.

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For More Information

Tel: 610-273-3733 (East Coast)
or 800-539-6116 (West Coast)

Email: sales@sanderssaws.com
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or info@k2diamond.com (West Coast)

Website: www.k2sanders.com



OSHA's Letters of Interpretation (LOIs)

OSHA has letters of interpretation to explain how to comply with OSHA regulations in specific workplace situations. Our subject matter experts write responses to questions from employers, employees, or other parties who want clarification about OSHA standards. Then they are posted to our website so that others can stay in compliance and keep workers safe. Recent letters of interpretation issued by OSHA addressed topics such as, preventing trips and falls on steps, exposure to hazardous chemicals, and forklift injuries. These letters are part of OSHA's longstanding commitment to expand our compliance assistance outreach to America's employers and workers.

For More Information

Website: www.osha.gov/laws-regs/interpretations



Aquajet Launches Aquajet Calculator 3.0 App to Help Contractors Simplify Calculations, Streamline Planning

HOLSBYBRUNN, Sweden (Sept. 17, 2025) — Aquajet, a global leader in the design and manufacture of innovative Hydrodemolition technology, introduces the Aquajet Calculator 3.0 app. The revitalized app includes a suite of tools to help contractors plan projects and improve equipment efficiency. It allows them to calculate various values, such as pressure, flow, nozzle size, hose pressure drop, removal capacity, pump configuration and more. Users can also save and share robot configurations for future reference and make easy metric/U.S. conversions. Along with streamlining project planning, the app tools help validate numbers for creating estimates.

“We're committed to empowering contractors with Hydrodemolition equipment that enhances precision, productivity and profitability,” said Roger Simonsson, managing director of Aquajet. “The Aquajet Calculator 3.0 app strengthens that commitment by helping users simplify complex calculations, streamline project planning and deliver the highest-quality results with our state-of-the-art technology.”

The Aquajet Calculator 3.0 is designed to help contractors simplify the Hydrodemolition process by automating calculations to remove guesswork. The easy-to-navigate app allows users to calculate a vast range of Hydrodemolition aspects — nozzle metrics, pressure, flow, hose pressure drop and removal capacity in U.S. and metric values. It can be difficult to remember data like pressure and flow of high-pressure pumps, so users can easily save and access that information. The app also displays water consumption and even recommended minimum pressure metrics. Additionally, it offers pump configuration and a robot simulator that shows the same calculations as the Aqua Cutter's display. Operators can easily share equipment parameters as a PDF export from the app, allowing the whole team to have the information on hand.

Aquajet equipment owners can use the app to validate their production values for estimates. For example, the app helps on jobs that have certain areas requiring different flows. Users can set the maximum RPM the pump operates at, allowing them to get an estimation of what the RPM can be for their project. This is a solid reference tool through the app's calculator that helps contractors estimate some projects. The app also contains metrics for reaction force, power rating, power usage, power loss and exit velocity, which are important to ensure optimal planning.

The app will also feature news and contact information so customers can stay up to date with company announcements and easily connect with Aquajet representatives and global dealers.

The Aquajet Calculator 3.0 app is available to download for both Apple and Android users through the App Store and Google Play store, respectively. Users who currently have the app will need to update it to access the new functionalities.

For More Information

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Email: roger.simonsson@aquajet.se / john@ironcladmktg.com

www.aquajet.se & www.ironcladmktg.com



D-Drill & Sawing Were Able to Signal the Go-ahead for a 5G Mast Upgrade

D-Drill & Sawing were able to signal the go-ahead for a 5G mast upgrade in Yorkshire, after successfully load testing a pre-installed concrete base that required new anchor bolts.

D-Drill's client had been tasked with replacing and upgrading a cell phone mast to 5G for a telecommunications provider, but did not have details of the existing concrete base which required new anchor bolts to be fitted to accommodate the new footprint of the larger mast.

With no details of the existing base available to use, they contacted D-Drill's special services division to conduct some survey works and install and load test the new anchor bolts for the new and upgraded 5G mast.

D-Drill's special services manager, Lionel Whittemore, arranged permits to visit the site to conduct testing using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) to check for buried cables within the slab, before marking out anything that was detected with spray paint so that it was clearly visible to the mast riggers when they attended the site.

Lionel and his team then carried out a Schmidt hammer test to determine the strength of the base slab's concrete, ensuring the design team could be confident the base would be suitable for the new mast.

This was followed up with scans of the concrete base to locate and determine the position and content of reinforcing steel, again, so that the design team had clear details of the mast base make up so they could make accurate calculations for the new mast.

This enabled Lionel and his colleagues to attend site during the mast swap to ensure any issues could be swiftly addressed, before installing the anchors using the supplied template, while load testing them to the required 100 kilonewtons.

Lionel said: "This project perfectly highlights how D-Drill's specialist testing and surveying expertise can support major infrastructure upgrades like the installation of new 5G masts.

"By accurately assessing the integrity and strength of the existing concrete base, we were able to give the design team full confidence that the structure was suitable for the upgrade - helping to keep the project on schedule and compliant with all safety standards."

For More Information

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Email: lionelwhittemore@d-drill.co.uk / juliewhite@d-drill.co.uk

Website: www.d-drill.co.uk



Why DSM Software Is a Game Changer for Concrete Cutting Companies

For years, concrete cutting companies relied on desktop software that kept critical job, billing, and blade-tracking information locked to an office computer. DSM has changed that. Now fully web-based, DSM Software gives owners, dispatchers, and crews the ability to access schedules, job details, equipment logs, and financial data from anywhere with an internet connection. Whether you're in the office, in a truck, or on a jobsite, the entire system is available through dsmjobs.com, putting your business in the palm of your hand.

Using the most modern interface tools available, DSM brings efficiency to new levels, helping teams dispatch faster, update jobs in real time, and monitor profitability without being tied to the office. Backed by best-in-class training and customer support, DSM ensures concrete cutting companies operate with more speed, clarity, and control than ever before.

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Coring Technologies Inc. Announces Launch of CorePro™ Extractor — A Game-Changing Innovation in Concrete Core Drilling

Coring Technologies Inc., an emerging leader in drilling innovation, announces the official launch of the CorePro™ Extractor, a double patented device engineered to dramatically improve safety, efficiency, and reliability in the concrete core drilling industry.

The CorePro Extractor solves a long-standing problem in core drilling: preventing heavy concrete core “slugs” from falling uncontrollably once cut. With its advanced retention mechanism, the device allows drill operators to secure, control, and remove cores safely, reducing workplace hazards, project delays, and costly damages.

“The CorePro Extractor represents a significant leap forward for drilling professionals,” said Marc Vento, CEngO Coring Technologies Inc. “Our mission from the beginning was to design a simple, durable, and effective solution that protects workers, saves contractors money, and keeps job sites running smoothly. We believe the CorePro Extractor will quickly become an essential tool in every driller’s kit.”

Key Benefits of the CorePro™ Extractor:

- **Enhanced Safety** – Eliminates the risk of falling core slugs striking workers or damaging property.
- **Improved Efficiency** – Allows for faster, cleaner removal of cores, minimizing downtime.
- **Cost Savings** – Reduces equipment damage and liability exposure associated with uncontrolled core drops.
- **Durability** – Built for tough job site conditions with industrial-grade materials.

The CorePro Extractor is available immediately through Coring Technologies Inc. distribution channels. Early adopters will have access to product demonstrations, on-site training, and introductory purchasing programs.

“From day one, the feedback from drilling professionals has been overwhelmingly positive,” added Eric Rauscher, CEO. “The CorePro Extractor isn’t just an incremental improvement — it’s a breakthrough that changes how contractors think about safety and productivity in core drilling.”

About Coring Technologies Inc.

Coring Technologies Inc. is a U.S.-based innovation company dedicated to advancing safety and efficiency in drilling operations. With a focus on simple, practical solutions for real-world job site challenges, Coring Technologies delivers tools that empower contractors to work smarter, safer, and more profitably.

For More Information

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Tel: 720-677-2440

Email: marcvento@coringtechinc.com

Website: www.coringtechinc.com



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Hilti North America Expands the All-On-One Nuron Battery Platform

PLANO, TEXAS (Jan. 16, 2025)

Hilti North America, a global leader providing innovative tools, technology, software, and services to the commercial construction industry, further delivers on its promise to expand the all-on-one Nuron battery platform with innovation that meets the needs of contractors including the launch of its DD 150-U-22 Cordless diamond core rig, two DSH 600/700 cut-off saws and PR 4/40/40G-22 Rotating Lasers

The new DD 150-U-22 is a universal solution for both hand-held and rig-mounted coring. Powered by Nuron, it is the first core rig on the same battery platform as handheld cordless tools—meaning that it offers contractors the flexibility to use the same set of interchangeable batteries for all Hilti tools, whether for light or heavy-duty applications, without compromising on performance.

Along with the DD 150-U-22, Hilti is adding to its Diamond innovations by unveiling the second generation of two new cut-off saws, the DSH 600-22 ATC and DSH 700-22 ATC, which showcase power, safety and comfort-enhancing features stemming from direct customer feedback.

Hilti is also launching three new Rotating lasers all on the Nuron cordless platform. The PR 4 for horizontal levelling. The PR 40, a red laser universal tool, for horizontal, vertical and slope applications and the PR 40G, a universal tool, that offers increased visibility with a green beam. All lasers offer intuitive one-button control, automatic functions within 300 m, and easier alignment for formwork, slope grading, and squaring — ideal for one-person operation. These rotators are backed by Hilti's rugged design, calibration, and repair service. Plus, smart asset tracking and battery monitoring on the Nuron platform help boost efficiency and simplify tool management.

The company's development of equipment like the DD 150-U-22 showcases its continued intent to dominate other spaces in construction, beyond concrete and fastening for which it is most well-known.

For More Information
Tel: 1-800-879-8000
Website: www.hilti.com



K2 Sanders Welcomes Back Industry Veteran Greg Kern

K2 Sanders is proud to welcome Greg Kern back to our team! Greg brings over 25 years of experience in diamond blade sales and management, along with a deep understanding of the concrete cutting and drilling industry.

After 14 years away, Greg returns home to K2 Sanders to assist with sales and marketing, serving our valued customers across the Midwest and Southwest regions.

Currently based in the Houston, Texas area, Greg is eager to reconnect with the many friends, colleagues, and customers he's met throughout his career.

Please join us in welcoming Greg back to the K2 Sanders family — we're excited for what the future holds!

For More Information
Contact: Julie White
Tel: 1-855-625-4639
Email: sales@makinex.com
Website: www.k2sanders.com



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CSDA certified operators are recognized industry-wide for their proficiency in the full range of sawing and drilling applications.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- Successful completion of CSDA's 201 Training or equivalent training
- Three years field experience (4,500 hours)
- Successful completion of 10-hour OSHA Construction Safety course
- No more than one lost-time injury within the last three years
- Unrestricted driver's license
- Negative drug test within 30 days of taking the course

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The CSDA Accredited Company Program is the first of its kind in the industry. This program has been created for cutting contractors to provide owners, architects, engineers, general contractors and government officials with a valuable pre-qualification tool that acknowledges sound business practices. It is available to all sawing and drilling contractors.

A COMPANY MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA TO ACHIEVE ACCREDITATION :

- Meet the basic safety and insurance requirements of the industry
- Undertake sound operational and financial best practices
- Provide evidence it has taken part in training or certification programs to better its employees with a minimum of one CSDA Certified Operator or equivalent training
- Successfully pass a written application review

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GPR Certification is for experienced GPR operators who have expanded their knowledge of the methods, theory and practical application of GPR imaging. Certified operators receive classroom and hands-on time with experienced instructors and representatives from leading GPR manufacturers.

A GPR CERTIFIED OPERATOR:

- Has shown proficiency in performing scans and reading and interpreting results
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- Passed a written and practical test
- Was issued a certification card upon completion of the class

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Mike Orzechowski
Diteq

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OVER 4,000 INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN CSDA'S HANDS-ON TRAINING COURSES, CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS, ONLINE COURSE OPPORTUNITIES, LUNCH & LEARNS, AND CONFERENCE EDUCATION SESSIONS. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS KEY TO EMPLOYEE GROWTH AND SATISFACTION. UPSKILL YOUR STAFF ON A VARIETY OF TOPICS SUCH AS CUTTING DISCIPLINES, GPR TECHNIQUES, ESTIMATING, POLISHING, SAFETY AND MORE.

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Accelerate your business success through member support and networking, online and in-person training opportunities, company recognition through awards and accreditation, and business tools to create efficiencies and success. New members can take advantage of our mentorship opportunity and receive complimentary registration to our annual golf outing each Fall.

WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU WHILE PROPELLING THE SAWING AND DRILLING INDUSTRY FORWARD. BE A PART OF CSDA TODAY.

DUES SCHEDULE

Pricing: Contractors

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\$0 – 1M	\$795	\$795	\$500
\$1 – 2M	\$1,295	\$795	\$500
\$2 – 3M	\$1,995	\$1,595	\$500
\$3 – 5M	\$2,595	\$1,595	\$500
\$5 – 10M	\$3,295	\$1,595	\$500
> \$10M	\$4,150	\$1,595	\$500

ADDITIONAL BRANCH LOCATIONS

- 1-5 Branches \$160 per location
- 6-10 Branches \$110 per location
- 11-15 Branches \$55 per location

Pricing: Manufacturers, Distributors & Affiliates

GROSS SALES	MANUFACTURER	DISTRIBUTOR	AFFILIATE*
\$0 – 1M	\$1,650	\$1,250	\$995
\$1 – 2M	\$2,050	\$1,550	\$995
\$2 – 3M	\$3,050	\$2,295	\$995
\$3 – 5M	\$4,900	\$3,625	\$995
\$5 – 10M	\$6,600	\$3,625	\$995
> \$10M	\$8,250	\$3,625	\$995

*Affiliate is a person, firm, corporation, society, government agency or other providing services to the concrete cutting, polishing and imaging industry

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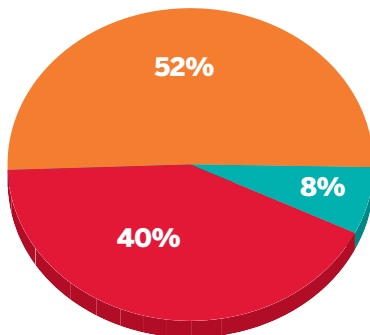


CSDA members automatically receive three print copies to their main location.

Who Reads the Magazine?

Concrete Openings reaches cutting, polishing and imaging contractors as well as specifiers of these services, including engineers, architects, general contractors and governmental agencies. Why waste your message on unnecessary circulation? Advertising in Concrete Openings guarantees a targeted audience of industry professionals.

READERSHIP BY PROFESSION



- Specifiers
- Contractors
- Manufacturers, Distributors

Target the Specialized Industry of Concrete Cutting, Polishing and Imaging

Advertising in Concrete Openings magazine is the only way to reach the specialty market of cutting, polishing and imaging contractors who work with concrete, asphalt or masonry because it is specifically targeted to this segment of the industry.

Circulation

Circulation 15,000+ minimum, per issue reaching both member and prospective member companies made up of contractors, manufacturers, distributors and affiliates + general contractors, engineers, architects and government officials who specify cutting, polishing and imaging.



How Do You Reach 15,000+ Concrete Industry Professionals?

Each issue of Concrete Openings is seen by more than 10,000 operators, equipment manufacturers and suppliers in the concrete cutting, polishing and imaging industry, and more than 5,000 specifiers of these services around the world.

Readership Per Issue

A poll of Concrete Openings subscribers revealed that 66% pass on their copy of the magazine to at least one other person, with almost 25% stating that the magazine is passed on to four or more people each issue. And now with our digital versions, we can reach even more people!



Concrete Openings Website

Visitors to the Concrete Openings website can access our advertisers at the touch of a button!

As a compliment to your ad placement, we include a direct link to your website under each downloadable issue.

CSDA Social Media

CSDA's social media pages are packed with all the latest news, updates, photos and videos from the association and Concrete Openings magazine. Look for exclusive content and become "friends" with others who are looking to network and promote the sawing and drilling industry. Join our fan base and stay in touch with the association through your PC, laptop or mobile device. Find direct links to these pages at www.csda.org



Advertisers

To receive additional information about products advertised in this issue, contact the vendors below.

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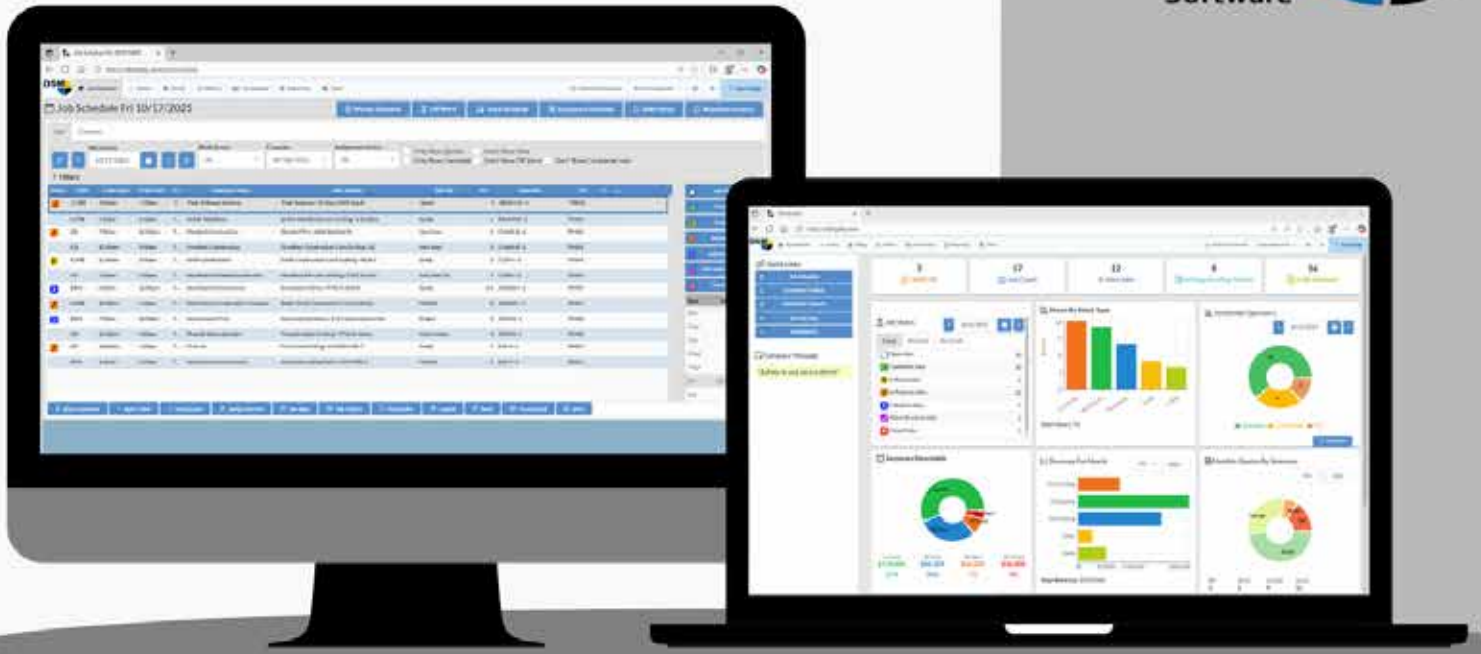


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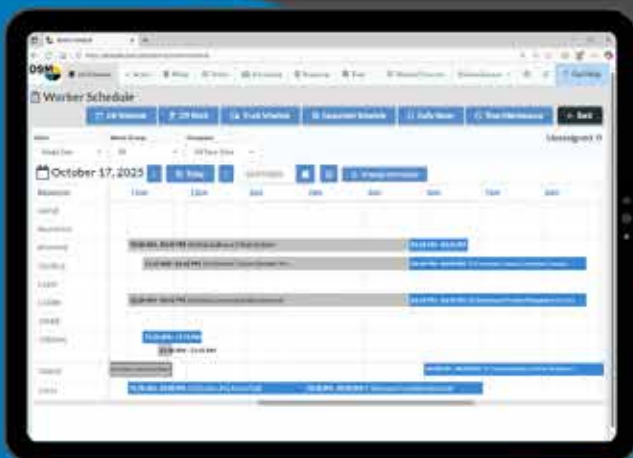
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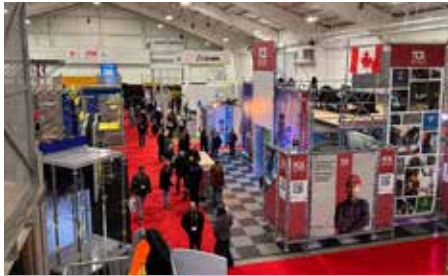
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How to Prepare Estimates that Win You Jobs
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January 22, 2026

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February 11-12, 2026

Canadian Concrete Expo
Toronto, Canada
Website:
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April 6-9, 2026

CSDA Annual Conference
Omni Amelia Island Resort & Spa
Amelia Island, Florida
Tel: 217-528-3275
Email: info@csda.org



May 14-15, 2026

IACDS Annual Meeting
Edinburgh, Scotland
Website: www.iacds.org

concrete openings

Editorial Calendar 2026

Spring 2026
The Business Toolbox

Summer 2026
365 Safety

Fall 2026
People Who Power the Industry

Winter 2026
Innovation in Action



Economic Forecasts & Projections for 2026* Signals from the U.S. and Global Markets

- **Real GDP Growth - US**
 - 1.7%–2.2%
- **Inflation (CPI/PCE)**
 - 2.5%–3.0%.
- **Federal Funds Rate**
 - 3.25%–3.5% by mid 2026
- **Unemployment Rate**
 - 4.4%
- **10-Year Treasury Yield**
 - 4.1%
- **Consumer Confidence**
 - 53–55%
- **Manufacturing PMI**
 - 50-52%
- **Global GDP Growth**
 - 2.5% - 3.1% in 2026
- **Oil**
 - \$60/barrel
- **Commodity Prices**
 - 7% drop



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