



RIICA NEWS

“UNDERGROUND & IN THE TRENCHES”

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U.S., R.I. ECONOMY IN FREE FALL, RI GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN RECESSION WHERE WILL IT END? IS OPTIMISM RISING ?

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Providence, RI— As the nation’s and Rhode Island economies continue in their free fall, and the Rhode Island General Assembly on recess now until October, Some are questioning, when will this end? Earlier this year, our President Obama, Congress and the agencies of the federal government pledged to get this economy going again. Well, months have gone by. Rhode Island unemployment reaching 13%, second only to Michigan and a little more than 10% of the \$ 780 billion Stimulus bill having been released, Rhode Island continues to fall deeper into the recession. RIDOT “shovel ready” projects are slowly making their way through the bureaucratic levels

while nearly \$ 58 million in Clean Water SRF and Drinking Water funding have stalled at RI’s Department of Environmental Management. The cause- permitting. However, recent discussions with EPA officials have clearly pushed Rhode Island’s department to relieve some of the permitting process to allow for faster release of funds. RI Clean Water Finance Agency officials recently indicated that in addition to the \$ 58 million in Stimulus funds but their agency has pushed that number up with an additional \$ 90 million in SRF funds to help create more jobs, begun the long process of repairing and replacing our utility underground infrastructure. “ We have some of the oldest under-

ground infrastructure in the United States,” Executive Director Bob Lafleur stressed. “ The impetus of nearly \$ 150 million in underground infrastructure alone will help facilitate getting our state back on track,” he said. Lafleur went on to caution that while there might be some light at the end of the tunnel, Rhode Island historically is the first one into the recession and usually the last one out of a recession. If only the General Assembly can resolve the state and local municipal financial problems, can the residents feel good about coming out of this recession, Lafleur said. *Call your legislators today and let them know how you feel.*

UNEMPLOYMENT REMAINS HIGH IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Washington, DC- It’s no secret that construction markets have gone from bad to worse in recent years. In addition to the cuts in federal funding to water infrastructure financing programs over the past five years, state budgets have been hit hard because of the downturn in the housing market, which in turn has lowered revenues from property taxes. While funding provided in the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)* is intended to help the industry get back on its feet, the slow rate at which ARRA money is hitting the street, coupled with certain requirements that accompany ARRA funding, have delayed a quick resurgence in construction markets. The most recent job-loss numbers released by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reflect a construction economy that has not yet turned the corner. The July 2009 BLS report indicates that last month alone 76,000 construction jobs were lost (marking the 25th consecutive month with significant job loss in the construction

industry), and that 1.68 million construction workers are out of work. On top of that, while the rate of national (non-construction) job loss was reduced in July, the current unemployment rate for the construction industry remains right around 18 percent. Because the ARRA gives the bulk of water infrastructure (SRF) projects funded with ARRA money until Feb. 17, 2010 to be under contract, the vast majority of those projects has yet to be identified. In addition to the time it is taking to get the ARRA money out, the “Buy American” requirements are taking their toll. For example, a shortage of American-made water filters has made it more difficult to complete water and sewer projects funded by ARRA. Because General Electric manufactures their water filters in Canada, many water infrastructure projects are reported to be on hold as officials wait for EPA waivers that would allow them to buy the filters and proceed with construction.

EPA SAYS "DE MINIMIS" COMPONENTS NOT SUBJECT TO "BUY AMERICAN" RULE ON ARRA-FUNDED PROJECTS

Washington, DC- The EPA lifted the "Buy American" requirement in the waiver given for "de minimis incidental components" used in projects funded by the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* (ARRA). (These are miscellaneous, generally low-cost components that "cumulatively comprise no more than a total of 5 percent of the total cost of the materials used in and incorporated into a project.") The summary of the EPA's notice in the August 10 *Federal Register* reads as follows: "The EPA is hereby granting a nationwide waiver of the Buy American requirements of ARRA Section 1605 under the authority of Section 1605(b)(1) (public interest waiver) for de minimis incidental components of eligible water infrastructure projects funded by ARRA. This action revises the terms under which incidental components qualify for coverage under the public interest de minimis waiver signed and effective on May 22, 2009, and permits the use of non-domestic iron, steel, and manufactured goods when they occur in de minimis incidental components of such projects funded by ARRA that may otherwise be prohibited under section 1605(a)." The EPA action was effective as of July 24 .

“ As RIICA moves forward into a new era, we look to the support of our members and potential new members to help chart that new course”

Bob Lafleur

Executive Director

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS....

- **Tire Doctor, LLC**
Woonsocket, RI
- **Kahn Tractor & Equipment**
No. Franklin, CT
- **Christopher Benn**
No. Kingstown, RI

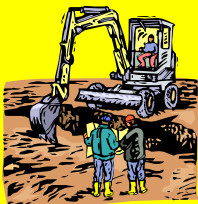
Help Us Build RIICA....Bring a new member on board to help our industry...**REMEMBER...There is power in numbers!**

**RIICA LEGISLATIVE
and
NEWS ALERTS**

....If you would like to receive up to date legislative and news alerts by email, all you have to do is email RIICA at riica1980@aol.com

and authorize your agreement to accept email from the RIICA Office.

**RIICA PAC FUND "CIGAR NITE"
ANOTHER SMOKIN' SUCCESS**



West Warwick, RI- RIICA's PAC Fund got another shot in the arm this past June with another successful Cigar Steak Nite in support of RIICA's PAC Fund. Dave Skurka and RIICA President Steve Gianlorenzo again spearheaded the event at Nino's on Lake Tiogue which raised more than \$ 2500.00 to add to the growing coffers of the PAC Fund. “

This is the first time in a very, very long time that RIICA has begun to create a fund necessary to help our causes for RIICA at the State House!” exclaimed Skurka. Over 70 people contributed to and/or attended the event where guests feasted on a great buffet dinner by Nino's and a great array of cigars handed out to guests. “This has been a long

time coming for RIICA,” said Gianlorenzo who like Skurka has pushed for the re-creation of the PAC Fund. “ It is our goal to continue to make RIICA's PAC Fund a pillar of our organization in support of the independent contractors in all industries across this state,” said Skurka and Gianlorenzo. Many thanks to all who supported this event.



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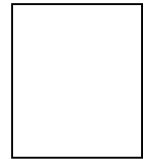
**BRENNAN, AUBURN
WIN
2009 NEIL F. SULLIVAN
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS**

Warwick, RI- Kelly Brennan of Portsmouth, RI and Kelly Auburn of Charlestown, RI were named recipients of the first Neil F. Sullivan Memorial Scholarship Awards, it was announced by David Benn and Peter Brennan, Co-Chairs of the Scholarship Committee.

Ms. Brennan is a graduate of Portsmouth High School, who will be attending the University Rhode Island in North Kingston, R.I. to pursue a degree in early education. Ms. Auburn, of Charlestown, R.I., who is attending the Miami University Hamilton in Ohio to pursue a Bachelor of Integrative Studies degree.

The *Neil F. Sullivan Memorial Scholarship Fund* was established in 2008 with the assistance of the association and Mr. Sullivan's family to assist children, grandchildren, members and spouses of members of RIICA. Two scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 are awarded annually based on the student's Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores, personal qualities and academic achievements. The awards were established in memory of the association's longtime board member and public servant, Neil F. Sullivan, of Newport, R.I.

Neil Sullivan passed away in 2008 after a sudden illness leaving his wife of 43 years, Margaret "Twinkie" of Newport; his daughter, Margaret Carr, and his beloved grandson, William Carr, both of Westwood, Mass. He devoted his business life and volunteer time to promoting tourism and industry in Greater Newport. He and his family were the owners of the former Newport Motor Inn in Middletown, R.I. He ran Sullbro Trucking and the Francis X. Sullivan Realty Corporation with his brother, Peter Sullivan of Newport. In addition to serving on the board of the RIICA, he was involved with the National Tour Broker's Association, the Newport Chamber of Commerce, and the Middletown Lion's Club. Donations to the Neil F. Sullivan Memorial Scholarship can be made payable to the **Neil F. Sullivan Memorial Scholarship Fund** and mailed to: **RIICA, PO Box 7254, Warwick, RI, 02887.**



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SAFETY NEWS...EXPOSURE TO SEWAGE BIOHAZARDS

Employees involved in sewer inspection and maintenance work, including construction workers who repair or replace sewer structures, are at risk of contracting serious illnesses if they do not practice basic hygiene and wear the proper personal protective equipment.

Here are some things you can use to help your employees understand the risks, the ways in which infections are contracted and how they can protect themselves: Wear the appropriate personal protective equipment—i.e., waterproof/abrasion-resistant gloves, footwear and eye/face and respirator protection—and don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth with dirty hands or gloves. You must also prevent cuts and broken skin from coming into contact with contaminated surfaces or fluids. The single most important way to prevent exposure is by frequently washing your hands with clean water and soap, anti-bacterial handy wipes or waterless hand cleaners. Also, be sure to shower at the end of your work day.