

Feel the Power!

A Minnesota Laborers - Employers Cooperation & Education Trust Publication

BROADBAND INDUSTRY GETS SAFETY BOOST

Changes Will Improve Opportunities for Qualified Contractors

The 2024 Minnesota State Legislature approved important broadband safety measures proposed by LIUNA to better protect people and utility infrastructure from damage during installation. New requirements include a 40-hour training certification for underground telecommunications installers, which takes effect on July 1 in the Twin Cities Metro Area and January 1, 2026 statewide. Once the initial certification is complete, installers must complete a four-hour refresher every three years. The legislation also grants the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission new powers to address damage to energy utilities during broadband installation.

Liuna Hosts Broadband Forum

LIUNA recently hosted a broadband industry forum with key leaders and industry stakeholders at the Laborers Training Center (LTC) in Lino Lakes, MN. Attendees heard from the Commissioners of the Department of Labor and Industry and the Department of Employment and Economic Development, along with industry

leaders, about future investments to expand broadband construction and the new training requirements. In addition, attendees were given an opportunity to view live demonstrations facilitated by RDO Equipment and Digital-Control in one of the training bays, where the LTC is offering the new state-required **Safety-qualified Underground Telecommunications Installer Certification**.

Attendees ranged from contractors and Internet Service Providers and State and County government officials, all eager to learn the new certification standards. Many of these industry stakeholders had never visited the LTC before and were very appreciative of LIUNA taking charge and facilitating the discussion.

Liuna Announces Approved Training Certification for Members

LIUNA Minnesota is now an approved provider of the state-required



Chris Peltier (in Red) hosts attendees at the Broadband Installation demo in building 2 at the Laborers Training Center.

Safety-qualified Underground Telecommunications Installer Certification. The program consists of 40 hours of training, that is split between 20 hours of hands-on and 20 hours of classroom instruction. The topics of the course include:

- Regulations applicable to excavation near existing utilities
- Identification, location, and verification of utility lines using hand or hydro-excavation or other accepted methods
- Response to line strike incidents
- Traffic control procedures
- Use of a tracking device to safely guide directional drill equipment along a drill path
- Avoidance and mitigation of safety hazards posed by underground utility installation projects

Continued on next page...

“Union contractors have an opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities in underground utility construction in an industry that is growing and demanding more of contractors.”

– Kevin Pranis, LIUNA MN & ND

IN THIS ISSUE

3 Meet Lyra Health

5 Construction Outlook



BROADBAND INDUSTRY GETS SAFETY BOOST - *continued*

To gain the certification, trainees must pass a written competency test along with a hands-on proficiency demonstration.



The LTC has three classes set up in February-April to meet the first compliance date of July 1, 2025, in the metro. The classes are only being scheduled by contractor request to ensure those needing the certification for their current summer workload are prepared. Laborers doing daylight for telecoms installation or those doing the installation itself should talk to their contractor and have a class scheduled as soon as possible.

Nationwide Unprecedented Investment in Broadband

The Border-to-Border Broadband program started in Minnesota in 2014. Over the last 10 years, this program has invested nearly \$350 million to provide internet access to residents across the state, representing roughly

\$35 million per year. Through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Biden Administration has promised an additional \$652 million to Minnesota to support further development of broadband infrastructure. This money will begin supporting installation in 2026 and must be spent by 2030, meaning the state must spend slightly more than \$130 million per year over five years to expand high-speed internet access. Notably, that total only reflects federal investments and does not include any additional money that has been or may still be allocated by the state, nor does it include the larger private investment that is being made by new and existing service providers who are building out competing infrastructure in cities and suburbs.

Opportunities for Union Contractors

Contractors currently operating in the telecom installation market or interested in expanding should connect with Chris Peltier, LIUNA Local 563 Business Agent & Market Development Representative, to discuss the new Laborers Broadband and Fiber Optic agreement. The agreement matches many of

the other collective bargaining agreements, providing Laborers Union benefits and training to help contractors in attracting workers and bid competitively in the broadband market.



Matt Varilek, Commissioner, Minnesota DEED

“These new initiatives are all about safety and quality construction,” said Kevin Pranis, LIUNA Marketing Manager. “LIUNA has a proven reputation in having the most highly skilled and trained workers and the new training requirements are right in the wheelhouse of what Laborers Training Center does for both members and contractors. Union contractors have an opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities in underground utility construction in an industry that is growing and demanding more of contractors.”

WELCOME NEW CONTRACTORS!

- Always Clean Construction LLC
- Interstate Tree Land Clearing Co

- Joco Services
- Kirchoff Construction

- Patriot Masonry Co
- St Croix Restoration and Grading

LECET Mission

The Minnesota Laborers-Employers Cooperation & Education Trust (LECET) fund was created in 1992 as a non-profit joint Labor/Management cooperation effort affiliated with the Minnesota Laborers Union. LECET aims to promote the many benefits of Union construction while addressing a number of initiatives that are of mutual benefit to both signatory Union Contractors and LiUNA members.

MN LECET Board of Trustees

Shawn Braford, Chair
Laborers Local 1097

Dan Olson
Laborers Local 1091

Keith Petersen
Laborers Local 563

Kim Schrupp
Laborers Local 563

Lorne Lundeen
Laborers Local 405

Andy Ristrom, Co-chair
Carl Bolander & Sons Inc.

Rick Peper
Ryan Companies US Inc.

Paul Krienke
PCL Construction Services

Laura Ziegler
AGC of Minnesota

Koby Fechner
Bituminous Roadways Inc.

Dwight Engen
*LECET Construction
Marketing Director*

Contact Us



MNLECET.org

651.429.1600 | info@mnlecet.org

MinnesotaLECET



LIUNAMinnesota.org

651.653.9776 | Council@LiunaMinnesota.org

LIUNAMinnesota

INTRODUCING: LYRA HEALTH

The Minnesota Laborers Health and Welfare Fund's New Employee Assistance Provider (EAP)

Effective January 1, 2025, the Minnesota Laborers Health Fund selected Lyra Health as the EAP. Lyra Health replaces Sand Creek and TEAM as the previous providers. The Board of Trustees sought an EAP provider that combines best-in-class services and resources to quickly respond to needs of the Participants.

Lyra Health will meet you where you are with your mental health journey. For some, that may mean simply exploring their website and looking for anything that resonates with you. For others, it may be looking for a counselor to routinely talk to in-person. Lyra Health offers a wide variety of self-serve online resources, as well as in-person and virtual counseling visits.

Along with the transition to Lyra Health came an enhancement in the EAP benefit. Now, all participants, which include

the member and all eligible dependents, receive eight (8) annual visits. This is an increase of four (4) visits per person compared to the previous benefit. Lyra Health should serve as a first resource for the following reasons:

- Adoption/Elder Care
- Anxiety
- Divorce/Custody
- Depression
- Financial Issues
- Family Conflict
- Substance Use
- Mental Health Wellness



To access Lyra Health, members can go online to laborersfunds.lyrahealth.org or call 833-597-2306.



2025 LECET SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

The Minnesota Laborers – Employers Cooperation & Education Trust (LECET) Scholarship/Leadership Grant Program is available to eligible candidates looking to advance in the construction industry. Awards are in the amount of \$1,000 for eligible candidates covering two separate programs:

**FOR UNION
CONTRACTOR'S STAFF AND
LIUNA MEMBERS & FAMILIES**

Academic Scholarship Program: For candidates currently enrolled in a higher education program, preferably in their second year or greater with a declared major in a construction industry related program.

**FOR
LIUNA MEMBERS
ONLY**

Leadership Grant Program: Designed especially for current LIUNA MN & ND members who are seeking to advance in the construction industry through higher educational construction related programs or specialized training not currently offered through the Laborers Training Center*.

**FOR INFORMATION:
www.mnlecet.org
(651) 429-1600
info@mnlecet.org**

**Applications are due by
June 16, 2025.**

**The Laborers Training Center offers over 70 class offerings to members including supervisory courses. Members are encouraged to take as much training as they can to advance their skills. Please contact the LTC for more information.*

CONTRACTOR SAFETY SEMINARS PLANNED

Minnesota LECET is once again providing Safety Seminars to benefit Union Contractor representatives at four locations in Minnesota. These seminars are free with lunch included and a certificate for attending. Since 2014, LECET has sponsored 41 professionally-led seminars for contractors in the areas of health and safety.

Register
(651) 429-1600
kjohanson@liunaminnesota.org

January 23, 2025 • 10 AM-Noon
Delta Hotels by Marriott • Minneapolis, MN

Session 1: OSHA Heat Standard and Updates
Session 2: Addressing Mental Health Emergencies

February 5, 2025 • 10 AM-Noon
Rochester Eagles Club • Rochester, MN

Session 1: OSHA Heat Standard and Updates
Session 2: Addressing Mental Health Emergencies

February 11, 2025 • 10 AM-Noon
Iron Trails Event Center • Virginia, MN

Session 1: OSHA Heat Standard and Updates
Session 2: Addressing Mental Health Emergencies

March 14, 2025 • 9-10:15AM
Laborers Training Center • Lino Lakes, MN

Session 1: Meet Lyra Health, Inc., Minnesota Laborers new EAP
Session 2: New Hardhat PPE options with Ergodyne Inc.

Presentors



Rob Dahl, CSP, ARM
VP, Construction Risk & Safety
Holmes Murphy Construction



Scott Staffon, CSP, CM-LEAN
AVP, Construction Risk & Safety
Holmes Murphy Construction



Ben Weideman
Council Representative
(former Safety Mgr.)
LIUNA Minnesota & North Dakota

FEDERAL OSHA WORKING ON HEAT ILLNESS STANDARD

Oh, the weather outside is frightful... We know it is mid-winter in the upper Midwest and there are a number of winter safety concerns that members and contractors are prepared for and are dealing with such as: slippery/icy conditions on job sites, cold and frostbite exposure, winter defensive driving and much more. However, we do want to take a look ahead at another important issue which will be here before we know it.

With the country facing record temperatures year after year, there has been increased pressure to take action to protect workers. This has resulted in the US Department of Labor and federal OSHA officially releasing a proposed heat illness

prevention standard. There are steps to be completed before the standard is formally adopted, but it is no secret that there are growing concerns about the increases in heat illnesses facing the construction industry across North America.

Highlights of the standard include requiring contractors to provide a Heat Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (HIPP). The standard also sets trigger points at 80 degrees for initial heat trigger and a high-heat trigger at 90 degrees with certain actions needed for each of these. Finally, the standard address acclimatization, training for leaders and for contractors to have an emergency response plan.

“This new standard will help address the dangerous conditions facing LIUNA members and other construction workers who often work in high-heat conditions,” said Brent Booker, LIUNA General President and Labor Co-Chairman of the Laborers Health & Safety Fund of North America. “We need the clear, enforceable and uniform protections that a federal heat rule would provide.”

Minnesota LECET will be providing an update on the Heat Illness Standard through their Safety Seminar Series this winter. See the seminars information as shown in the above article.

Article source: The Laborers Health & Safety Fund of North America, Lifelines, Volume 26.

CONSTRUCTION LOOKING STRONGER IN 2025

The new year has brought optimism for Minnesota’s construction industry as interest rates trend down and contractors doing the work feeling more optimistic. In December, the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis released information from their construction outlook survey, suggesting a more optimistic view among responders even from the previous two years.

Spotlight: Roads & Bridges

The 2025 Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDot) construction program reflects another steady year with an estimated outlook spend of \$1.34 billion, which is in the range of the recent three years. The federal Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) program continues to support new construction activity in Minnesota and North Dakota this coming year and in 2026 will deliver a significant boost to the tune of \$1 billion to support the massive Duluth Blatnik Bridge replacement project. We should be reminded that the 2021 IIJA law is in the midst of bringing over \$4.8 billion to Minnesota and \$1.9 billion to North Dakota for roads and bridges, much of it being completed by the Union construction industry. The IIJA is set to last through 2027.

Spotlight: Clean Drinking Water

In 2023, Minnesota legislature and Governor Walz passed the Lead Pipe Replacement bill, which authorized \$240 million, while unlocking federal dollars to replace lead lines in public drinking water systems by 2033. The issue was a major initiative of LIUNA Minnesota & North Dakota, to help Minnesotan’s with clean drinking water systems while creating good Union jobs for members and contractors throughout the state.

Spotlight: Nonresidential Construction

National forecasts from Dodge Data and Analytics estimate an overall 6% increase in total nonresidential construction with manufacturing industry leading the way at a 9% rise. Commercial building is expected to be up 9% over the prior year. Forecasters continue to list higher material prices and shortages of labor as key concerns in their surveys.

Spotlight: Mayo Clinic Campus

In November, 2024, Mayo Clinic leaders announced a major \$5 billion plan to revitalize their downtown Rochester MN campus. The plan will better connect patients through the

creation of “neighborhoods” that allow patients to access continuous care without having to ping-pong around the campus between buildings. Union contractors have been in negotiations for this substantial project development.



Mayo Clinic’s \$5 billion expansion will transform the Rochester Mayo Clinic campus. Photo source: MayoClinic.org

Spotlight: Broadband Construction

In 2024, Governor Walz announced \$52 million to expand broadband access and in 2023 the Governor announced another \$100 million. To date Minnesota Department of Economic Development (DEED) has awarded over \$400 million in Border-to-Border grants and continues to administer nearly \$652 million in the federal funding as a result of the IIJA law. As described in the lead story in this issue of LECET News, Union Contractors and LIUNA members have real work opportunities before them in the broadband construction area sector.

LIUNA CAREER FAIR SCHEDULE ANNOUNCED

Minnesota LECET is sponsoring five LIUNA construction career fairs this year with Union contractors being a key part of each event. The career fairs are designed to introduce the construction industry to prospective candidates, uncover contractor’s hiring needs, get new people in the industry and provide a place where candidates can learn more about Apprenticeship

training and LIUNA Minnesota & North Dakota and benefits for union members and their families. While these career fairs are geared for new-to-the-industry candidates, current LIUNA members are encouraged to refer or even bring construction career candidates (friends and relatives) to any of these locations:

Location	Date
Lino Lakes	March 19
Mankato	March 25
Rochester	March 27
Duluth	April 1
Grand Rapids	April 2

All LIUNA Career Fairs are designed to introduce new people into potential careers as a future skilled construction laborer.

FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS

2025

MINNESOTA LABORERS FAMILY

BENEFITS DAY

"BUILDING WELLNESS TOGETHER"

SAVE THE DATE!

SATURDAY APRIL 26, 2025

8 AM - 1 PM

JOIN US AT THE LABORERS TRAINING CENTER
2350 MAIN STREET, LINO LAKES, MN 55038

THINGS TO DO!

- MN LABORERS CLINICS
- MINI HEALTH SCREENING
- BENE CARD
- ASK A PHARMACIST
- DELTA DENTAL
- PICK 3 ELIGIBLE
- HEARING SCREENING

- LYRA HEALTH - YOUR NEW EAP
- MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
- ZENITH AMERICAN SOLUTIONS
- BENEFIT QUESTIONS
- VISION SCREENING
- PODIATRY SERVICES
- BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION!

YOUR HEALTH MATTERS!

Available to all eligible MN Laborers Health and Welfare Fund Participants

Lyra

Your New EAP!

Effective January 1, 2025

Get 8

no-cost

coaching or therapy sessions each year.

Scan here to get started

Visit laborersfunds.lyrahealth.org

24/7 care, anywhere

Call us at **(833) 597-2306** for crisis support, day or night.

Get fast in-person or virtual care

High-quality care

Diverse providers

Lyra's network of certified coaches and licensed therapists represent varying races, genders, identities, faiths, and cultural backgrounds who understand your unique lived experience.

100% confidential

Minnesota Laborers Health and Welfare Fund is never made aware that you're using Lyra. Care is always confidential so you can trust that you're getting the support you deserve.

- Adoption/Elder Care
- Anxiety
- Bankruptcy
- Divorce/Custody
- Estate Planning
- Family Conflict
- Substance Abuse
- Wellness

988

SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

Call or **TEXT 988** if you are experiencing a mental health emergency.

SAFETY DRIVEN | THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

3rd Quarter 2024 Safety Driven Quarterly Award Winners

LABORER	CONTRACTOR	LABORER	CONTRACTOR
Dan Stach	Advantage Scaffold & Ladder	Joe Remer	Kiffmeyer Inc
Elijah Scott	Ames Construction Inc	Dave Garcia	Kraus Anderson Construction Company
Luke Wagner	Aptim Services	Todd Lakoskey	Lakehead Constructors Inc
Jake Shaw	Benike Construction	Jeremy Larson	Maverick Cutting & Breaking
Curt Suchy	C & L Excavating Inc	Clayton Morem	McGough Construction
Hunter Gubrud	CHARPS LLC	Kodi Gamble	Mortenson Construction
Michael Erickson	Davids Hydro Vac Inc	Tucker Maas	Northdale Construction Co. Inc.
Trevor Hoskins	DirtworX LLC	Juan Munoz	PCI Roads LLC
Seth Lombard	Fehn Companies	Jimmy Mulcahy	Pinnacle Wall Systems
Karl Posterick	Global Specialty Contractors Inc	Dallas Gainey	Restoration Systems Inc
Garrett Abernathy	Hammerlund Inc.	Allen Alley	Twin Cities Specialties

All winners receive their choice of a Quarterly Award prize and have been nominated by Union Contractors in accordance with the LECET Safety Driven Program rules.

APPRENTICE OF THE MONTH AWARDS

October
Sean Anderson

November
Hunter Wisocki

December
Abbigail Weideman

Note: Students are reminded that all day classes begin at 7:00 am at the LTC. Trainees must come to class dressed as if they were reporting to work at a construction site. This includes appropriate work boots, long pants and shirt. Failure to do so can result in being asked to leave and to reschedule the class at a later date.

CONSTRUCTION LABORERS TRAINING CENTER

2350 Main Street
Lino Lakes, MN 55038
(651) 653-6710
www.Ltcmn.org



February 03 2025

Asbestos Worker Initial Feb 03-06
Blueprint Reading Feb 03-13
General Construction/Flagging/Pro-10 Feb 03-07
Hazardous Waste Initial Feb 03-07
Line & Grade II Feb 03-07
Mason Tending Feb 03-07
Mine Safety & Health Admin/CPRFA Feb 03-05
Plaster Tending Feb 03-07
Safety Week/OSHA 30/CPR First Aid Feb 03-07
Safety Week/OSHA 30/CPR First Aid – @Mankato, MN – Mankato Labor Temple Feb 03-07
Suspended Scaffold Preparedness Feb 03-05
Lead Supervisor Refresher – Feb 06
@Moorhead, MN – Courtyard Marriott
Intro to Union & Apprenticeship Program – Feb 06
@Mankato, MN – Mankato Labor Temple
Asbestos Supervisor Refresher – Feb 07
@Moorhead, MN – Courtyard Marriott
Asbestos Worker Refresher Feb 07
Mine Safety & Health Admin – Feb 07
@Duluth, MN – 1091 Hall

February 10, 2025

Asbestos Supervisor Initial Feb 10-14
Concrete Practices/Insulated Forms Feb 10-14
Global Positioning System Feb 10-12
Heavy Highway Skills/MnDOT Flag Feb 10-14
Infection Control Risk Assessment (ICRA) Feb 10-11
Pipelaying 2 Feb 10-14
Remote Camera Inspection Feb 10-13
Safety Week/OSHA 30/CPR First Aid Feb 10-14
Torch Cutting Demo Safety Feb 10-11
Welding/Torch Cutting Air Arc Feb 10-11
CPR/First Aid – Feb 11
@Duluth, MN – 1091 Hall
Aerial Lift Training Feb 12
Excavation Confined Space – Feb 12
@Duluth, MN – 1091 Hall
Rigging & Signaling Qualified - 24 Hr Feb 12-14

Fall Protection Feb 13
Hazardous Waste Refresher – Feb 13
@Duluth, MN – 1091 Hall
Asbestos Supervisor Refresher WI/MN – Feb 14
@Duluth, MN – 1091 Hall
Vacuum Trailer Training Feb 14

February 17, 2025

Asbestos Worker Initial Feb 17-20
Asbestos Inspector Init Feb 17-19
Blueprint Reading Feb 17-21
General Construction/Flagging/Pro-10 Feb 17-21
Hazardous Waste Initial Feb 17-21
Mason Tending Feb 17-27
Pipelaying 1 Feb 17-21
Safety Week/OSHA 30/CPR First Aid Feb 17-21
Safety Week/OSHA 30/CPR First Aid – @St. Cloud, MN – 563SC Hall Feb 17-21
Scaffold Erecting Competent Person Feb 17-21
Intro to Union & Apprenticeship Program – Feb 20
@Online Training
Intro to Union & Apprenticeship Program Feb 20
Asbestos Inspector Ref Feb 21

February 24, 2025

Blueprint Reading – Feb 24-28
@Virginia, MN – 1097 Hall
CPR/First Aid Feb 24
General Construction/Flagging/Pro-10 Feb 24-28
General Construction/Flagging/Pro-10 Feb 24-28
Lead Supervisor Initial Feb 24-27
Line & Grade I Feb 24-28
Mason Tending Feb 24-28
Pipelaying 1 Feb 24-28
Pipeline Technology/MnDOT Flagging Feb 24-28
Safety Week/OSHA 30/CPR First Aid Feb 24-28
Hazardous Waste Refresher Feb 25
Excavation Confined Space Feb 26
Hazardous Waste Refresher Feb 27
Excavation Confined Space Feb 28
Lead Supervisor Refresher Feb 28

LTC ANNOUNCES STAFF ADDITIONS



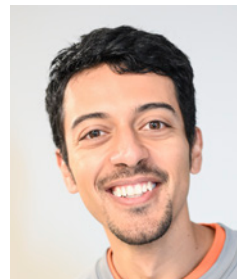
Tom Ramisch

Tom joined the Laborers Training Center as the Welding Instructor last fall. He was previously the welding instructor at St. Paul College. He grew up in the Midway area of St. Paul and resides in White Bear Lake with his wife Denise since 1984.



Eddie Carr

Eddie was hired at the LTC for additional Seasonal Maintenance. He is a member of Local 563, since 2013 and has worked the past 11 years with Bolander doing dirt work, demo, drilling, and sewer and water. He's also a professional chef and enjoys working with people and making them laugh.



Uriel Gonzalez

Uriel was hired on as a bilingual Seasonal Instructor, instructing the asbestos abatement classes, safety, and hazardous materials. He joined LIUNA 563 in 2019. He is passionate about being a Laborer and becoming an instructor is the perfect opportunity for him to learn from others and helping members be productive and safe on the jobsite.



Michael Cleland

Michael joined LIUNA in 2015, as a member of the New York City: Mason Tender Training Fund. He is a member of LIUNA 563 and is a bilingual Seasonal Instructor teaching scaffold, mason tending, general construction, torch and demo. He recently relocated to Minnesota with his family and to continue his career at the LTC.

Minnesota Laborers-Employers
Cooperation & Education Trust-LECET
81 East Little Canada Road
Little Canada, MN 55117



LABORERS HONOR SUPERVISOR TRAINING PROGRAM GRADUATES

The Laborers Training Center, Associated General Contractors of Minnesota and signatory Union contractors are pleased to announce their third group of Laborers Supervisor Development Program (LSDP) graduates since the program began in 2020. This unique 3-pronged training and leadership development program helps prepare LIUNA members into leadership roles with their Union employers in the construction industry.

Contractors interested in learning more and wanting to include aspiring future LIUNA member leaders into the program should contact the Laborers Training Center at (651) 653-6710. All members must be in good standing with their Local union and referred by the employer.

The following LIUNA Minnesota & North Dakota members were honored at a graduation ceremony last fall:

Tanner Anderson
McGough Construction

Michael Carlson
Bolander

Samuel Gilbert
Mortenson

Brian Olson
McGough Construction

Carolyn Wood
Knutson Construction

Josh Robinson
McGough Construction



The 2024 LSDP Graduates were honored with an event at Jax Café in Minneapolis: Left to Right Josh Robinson, Michael Carlson, Samuel Gilbert, Carolyn Wood and Brian Olson. Not pictured Tanner Anderson.