

## NEMRA Conference To Go Virtual Next Year

The NEMRA21 annual conference will be a virtual event held Feb. 2-5, 2021. It had been scheduled for Orlando, FL.

The National Electrical Manufacturers Representatives Association (NEMRA), Indianapolis, said in an announcement to its members that it will use the latest technology to “deliver a conference that will bring the entire industry together in one (virtual) place.” Along with online manufacturers’ sales meetings and business review sessions, NEMRA President Jim Johnson said NEMRA21 will deliver training, insights from industry leaders and interactive workshops throughout the three-day conference. In addition to a motivational keynote presentation by Tim Tebow, the former NFL quarterback, Florida Gators legend, current member of the New York Mets and author, the program will include:

\*“Mastering Sales: A Toolkit for Success,” by Kellogg Sales Institute’s Craig Wortman

\*“Working with NECA Contractors – What You Need to Know,” by David Long, CEO of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA)

\*“Market Update,” by John Selldorf, CEO of Legrand, North and Central America

\*“Powering Difference in Distribution,” by Tammy Livers, senior VP of Sonepar

\*“Working with IEC Contractors - What You Need to Know,” by Spencer Villwock, CEO of Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC)

\*“Market Outlook and Insights,” by Christian Sokoll, president, DISC Corp.

Visit [www.nemra.org](http://www.nemra.org) for more conference information.

## Federal Reserve Bank’s Beige Book Sees Sluggish Conditions in Several Regions

*As we head into the final weeks of 2020, many industry executives are recalibrating their 2021 business forecasts and are searching for any and all economic data that may offer additional insight into where the electrical market may be headed.*

*Electrical Marketing’s editors thought that Federal Reserve’s Beige Book report released earlier this week might provide an interesting macroeconomic perspective on the regional business climates in the Federal Reserve Bank’s 12 districts. The Beige Book is published eight times annually and was released on Dec. 2. Following is an excerpt from this report.*

Most Federal Reserve Districts have characterized economic expansion as modest or moderate since the prior Beige Book period. However, four Districts described little or no growth, and five narratives noted that activity remained below pre-pandemic levels for at least some sec-

tors. Moreover, Philadelphia and three of the four Midwestern Districts observed that activity began to slow in early November as COVID-19 cases surged.

Reports tended to indicate higher-than-average growth of manufacturing, distribution and logistics, homebuilding, and existing home sales, although not without disruptions. Banking contacts in numerous Districts reported some deterioration of loan portfolios, particularly for commercial lending into the retail and leisure and hospitality sectors. An increase in delinquencies in 2021 is more widely anticipated. Most districts reported that firms’ outlooks remained positive. However, optimism has waned — many contacts cited concerns over the recent pandemic wave, mandated restrictions (recent and prospective), and the looming expiration dates for unemployment

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## IHS Markit Says Global Economic Conditions Have Worsened Because of New COVID Wave

*In the Nov. 2020 IHS Markit World Flash, Nariman Behravesh, chief economist, IHS Markit, and Sara Johnson, executive director, global economics, IHS Markit, say the renewed rise in infection rates threatens growth and increases the urgency of additional stimulus. Here is their report, available exclusively to Electrical Marketing subscribers as part of an annual subscription.*

The dreaded second and third waves of COVID-19 are here, and any illusion the world can easily control the spread of the virus has largely vanished. The resurgence is especially pronounced in Europe and parts of the United States, where pandemic fatigue has become a formidable challenge for governments. Even countries with early successes in combating the disease, such as Germany, have had to reimpose restrictions on restaurants, bars and other gathering places. Some countries (Czechia, France, Ireland, Israel and the United

Kingdom) have reinstated partial national lockdowns. Successful preliminary trial results for messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines are encouraging, but the widespread distribution of vaccines is unlikely before mid-2021.

Even before the recent surge in infections, we were predicting growth would fade in the closing months of 2020 and the beginning of 2021. That fade is morphing into something worse. In the case of the Eurozone and the United Kingdom, real GDP will contract in the fourth quarter of 2020, and recovery will be limited in the first quarter of 2021.

Prospects are a little less dire for the U.S. economy. After the United States grows an expected +3.7% in the fourth quarter of 2020, average growth in the four quarters of 2021 should be a mere +1.9%. The outlook is brighter in much of Asia,

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## IHS Markit Report Points to Growth in 2021 Global GDP Rates & COVID-19 Concerns

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where the infection rates have remained low. After a -4.2% decline in 2020, global real GDP growth should reach -4.2% in 2021, 0.2 percentage point below last month's forecast.

Mainstream economists and multi-lateral organizations such as the International Monetary Fund are calling for more fiscal stimulus (beyond the approximate \$12 trillion already enacted). The need to bolster struggling economies has swamped notions of austerity. Unfortunately, institutional and

political constraints in Europe, the possibility of a divided government in the United States, and limitations on further budgetary expansion in the emerging world mean hopes for big fiscal stimulus are fading.

Central banks will continue to shoulder the burden of stimulus. Despite repeated pronouncements to the contrary, monetary authorities around the world are not "running out of ammunition," as was amply demonstrated during the 2008–2009 global financial crisis and the current pandemic. That said, there are limits to

the effectiveness of massive asset purchases and other unorthodox monetary policies, not least because they create considerable distortions in financial markets. Moreover, uncoordinated monetary easing runs the risk of more financial volatility.

The bottom line is that once again the near-term global economic outlook has worsened, and the most likely policy mix looks to be suboptimal.

— *By Nariman Behraves, chief economist, IHS Markit, and Sara Johnson, executive director, global economics, IHS Markit*

### IHS Markit: Forecasts for Global Growth

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>REAL GDP GROWTH (% CHANGE)</b>									
World	2.8	3.5	3.2	2.6	-4.2	4.2	3.6	3.2	3.2
United States	1.7	2.3	3	2.2	-3.6	3.1	2.5	2.5	2.9
Eurozone	1.8	2.8	1.9	1.3	-7.4	3.7	3.6	1.9	1.6
Japan	0.5	2.2	0.3	0.7	-5.4	2.2	1.3	1.1	1
China	6.8	6.9	6.7	6.1	2	7.4	5.4	5.4	5.3
<b>EXCHANGE RATES (YEAR-END)</b>									
Dollar/euro	1.05	1.2	1.15	1.12	1.16	1.16	1.18	1.24	1.26
Yen/dollar	116.8	112.9	110.8	109.1	104.9	104.1	99.9	95.8	94

## Electric Vehicles: Still a Long Road Ahead Before They Dominate

Electric vehicles (EVs) will make up as many as eight out of 10 new cars sold in 2050. But it will still be a long road before they dislodge gasoline as the predominant fuel in transportation, IHS Markit Vice Chairman Daniel Yergin writes in his new book, *The New Map: Energy, Climate and the Clash of Nations*.

Yergin says in his book that two thirds of global automotive fleet will remain gasoline-powered in 2050. "Oil is no longer the unchallenged king in automotive transportation. But for some time to come its writ will still extend quite widely across the realm of transportation," Yergin writes.

IHS Markit projects that EVs (including battery, plug-in hybrid and fuel cell electric) will comprise 60% to 80% of all new car sales in 2050. That increased market share (from 2.2% of new car sales in 2020, according to IHS Markit data) will be driven by greater scale in manufacturing, as well as the continued improvement of batteries. IHS Markit now projects that the average cost of lithium-ion cell cost will fall below \$100 per kilowatt hour by 2023.

Nevertheless, gasoline-powered vehicles

will still comprise two-thirds of the 1.9 billion cars on the road in 2050 owing to the time it takes for the fleet to turn over. The average age of vehicles on the road in the United States is nearly 12 years old. "At least for now, the demand for electric vehicles is largely coming not from consumers, but from governments whose evolving policies are shaped by climate concerns as well as by urban pollution and congestion," Yergin observes in *The New Map*.

Electric vehicles also bring their own set of challenges, particularly in the supply chain of some battery materials, Yergin observes. Electric vehicle demand for lithium could rise +1,800% by 2030 and would represent about 85% of total world demand. Demand for cobalt, another essential element in batteries, could rise +1,400%. And more than 50% of global cobalt supply comes from one place — the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Nevertheless, Yergin writes that the possible emergence of what he calls a "New Triad" (the convergence of the electric car, ride-hailing and car-sharing services, and self-driving autonomous vehicles) could

disrupt oil's century-long dominance in transportation. This would give rise instead to a new trillion-dollar industry, what he dubs "Auto-Tech." The advent of Tesla broke "the logjam" that had held since the failure of Thomas Edison's electric car to gain traction a century earlier, Yergin writes, and major automakers are hastening to catch up and deploy their own electric vehicles.

"The world of autos and their fuel suppliers has become the arena for a new kind of competition," he concludes. "It's no longer just about selling cars to consumers for personal use. No longer just automakers versus automakers, no longer gasoline brands versus gasoline brands. It has become multi-dimensional. Gasoline-powered cars versus electric cars. Personal ownership cars versus mobility services. And people-operated cars versus robotic driverless cars."

Yergin says the shift to electric vehicles will not happen overnight. "At this point, there is still no global tipping point where the benefits of new technology and business models prove so overwhelming that they obliterate the oil-fueled personal car model that has reigned for so long," he says.

## Fed's Beige Book Says Latest COVID-19 Wave Tamping Down Economic Growth

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benefits and for moratoriums on evictions and foreclosures.

**Boston.** Manufacturers reported increased revenues from a year ago, including some strong gains. Retailers and staffing firms continued recovering toward pre-pandemic levels, while the hospitality and tourism sectors remained hard-hit. Uncertainty about the course of the pandemic, vaccines and possible relief measures added caution to positive outlooks.

**New York.** The regional economy has been flat, and the labor market has remained weak. Manufacturing growth slowed, consumer spending and tourism were little changed, and a number of service industries saw declines in activity. Commercial real estate softened further, but most residential sales markets continued to show strength. Wages and other business input costs picked up modestly, while selling prices were little changed.

**Philadelphia.** Business activity held steady during the current Beige Book period and remained below levels attained

prior to the onset of COVID-19. However, sharply rising COVID-19 cases triggered a downward trend in early November and heightened concerns over anticipated layoffs, foreclosures, evictions and bankruptcies. Meanwhile, modest job growth, slight wage growth and modest inflation continued.

**Cleveland.** Economic activity increased moderately, and staff levels increased slightly. Firms connected to IT, housing and consumer durables fared better than those connected to travel, energy and hospitality. Supply chain constraints boosted transportation costs and prices for certain construction and manufacturing inputs. Contacts expected a modest improvement in activity, but hiring plans were restrained because of the pandemic's uncertain path.

**Richmond.** The regional economy grew moderately in recent weeks. Employment rose and demand for some professional business occupations was strong. Wage and price growth were modest. The housing market remained robust, and

commercial real estate leasing improved somewhat. Port and trucking volumes reached robust levels and manufacturing activity picked up.

**Atlanta.** District economic activity modestly expanded. Labor markets continued to improve. Contacts noted some non-labor costs rose. Retail activity and auto sales were mixed. Activity in tourism and hospitality picked up slightly. Residential real estate demand was strong and home prices rose. Commercial real estate conditions remained challenged. Manufacturing activity increased. Conditions at financial institutions stabilized.

**Chicago.** Economic activity increased moderately but remained below its pre-pandemic level. Employment, consumer spending and manufacturing increased moderately. Business spending increased modestly while construction and real estate were flat. Wages rose slightly, as did prices. Financial conditions improved modestly. Strong harvests, government support and higher prices boosted expectations for farm income.

**St. Louis.** Reports from district contacts suggest economic activity has continued to increase slightly since the previous report. However, conditions deteriorated toward the end of the reporting period. The overall outlook for business conditions over the next 12 months has improved but remains slightly pessimistic.

**Minneapolis.** District economic activity grew moderately. Employment rose modestly, but obstacles such as child-care availability and virtual schooling for households with children impacted labor participation, particularly among women. Consumer spending grew slightly, with softening demand in some segments due to rising COVID-19 infections. Manufacturers generally saw brisk growth. Agricultural conditions improved slightly.

**Kansas City.** Economic activity continued to expand slightly. After rising in October, consumer spending fell slightly in November but was expected to bounce back in the coming months. Contacts in the manufacturing, residential real estate, wholesale trade, transportation and professional and high-tech services sectors all reported increased levels of activity. In addition, the energy sector held steady, and the agriculture sector improved moderately.

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## Eaton to Add Manufacturing Capacity with Facility Expansion and New Construction

Eaton recently announced plans to invest more than \$100 million to expand North American electrical manufacturing for its residential and commercial electrical solutions. The company is expanding manufacturing capacity, modernizing production and adding a new plant and distribution center. Other facility expansions and modernizations are taking place through 2022.

"Our customers and teams have experienced significant challenges in the last year, which have given us the opportunity to evaluate our approach and make significant improvements to increase manufacturing flexibility, diversity and redundancy," said Mike Yelton, president of Eaton's Commercial and Residential Distribution Solutions Division, in the press release. "These investments focus on our customers and employees while bolstering our regional manufacturing and distribution capabilities for essential infrastructure powering homes and businesses."

Eaton's manufacturing and supply chain investments specifically target what it says is "surging demand" for intelligent solutions including circuit breakers, load centers,

switchboards, residential solutions and more. The company has rapidly scaled up production capacity in its newest facility in El Paso, TX, and will soon do the same in Greenwood, SC, while investing in its existing manufacturing plants in Sumter, SC; Lincoln, IL; Cleveland, TN; and four major facilities in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. Eaton also opened a new distribution center in Dallas earlier this year to optimize service levels for customers across the country.

An additional manufacturing plant is planned that will provide incremental and geographically diverse manufacturing capacity for Eaton's high-volume miniature circuit breakers. The new facility will include on-site molding and stamping to provide vertically integrated production.

"Our distributors and customers have needed even more of our technologies during this difficult time. These investments will diversify our production and supply chain, enabling us to provide industry-leading lead times and deliver the solutions our customers need to build the infrastructure of tomorrow – even in extraordinary times," said Yelton in the release.

## Industry Events

Jan. 27-28, 2021

### **NAW Digital Summit**

Washington, DC; National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors (NAW)  
[www.naw.org](http://www.naw.org)

Feb. 3-5, 2021

### **NEMRA Annual Conference**

National Electrical Manufacturers Representatives Association (NEMRA)  
[www.nemra.org](http://www.nemra.org)  
Status: Virtual event

Feb. 22-26, 2021

### **NAED Virtual Regional Conference**

Combined conferences for NAED's South-Central, Western & Eastern Regions;  
[www.naed.org](http://www.naed.org)

April 28-30, 2021

### **NAED Adventure**

Baltimore; [www.naed.org](http://www.naed.org)

May 24-26, 2021

### **NAED National Meeting**

Marco Island, FL; [www.naed.org](http://www.naed.org)

June 22-25, 2021

### **NAED Women in Industry Forum**

San Antonio; [www.naed.org](http://www.naed.org)

Aug. 17-18, 2021

### **LEDucation Trade Show & Conference**

New York; [www.leducation.org](http://www.leducation.org)

Sept. 13-15, 2021

### **IDEA E-Biz**

Dulles, VA;  
[www.idea4industry.org](http://www.idea4industry.org)

Oct. 9-12, 2021

### **NECA Trade Show & Conference**

Nashville, TN; National Electrical Contractors Association,  
[www.necashow.org](http://www.necashow.org)

Oct. 25-29, 2021

### **Lightfair Trade Show & Conference**

New York; [www.lightfair.com](http://www.lightfair.com)  
Status: Rescheduled from May 2021

Dec. 8-9, 2021

### **Upper Midwest Electrical Expo**

Minneapolis; [www.ncel.org](http://www.ncel.org)  
Status: Rescheduled from Dec. 2020

## Purchasing Managers Index Stays Strong

The Institute for Supply Management's November Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) registered 57.5%, down 1.8 percentage points from the October reading of 59.3%. This figure indicates expansion in the overall economy for the seventh month in a row after a contraction in April, which ended a period of 131 consecutive months of growth. The New Orders Index registered 65.1%, down 2.8 percentage points from the October reading of 67.9%.

The PMI is a monthly survey of industrial purchasing managers by the Institute for Supply Management (ISM). Any reading above 50% indicates that purchasing managers are optimistic about the industrial

market's future business conditions.

Timothy Fiore, chair of ISM's Manufacturing Business Survey Committee, said in the November report, "Manufacturing performed well for the sixth straight month, with demand, consumption and inputs registering growth, but at slower rates compared to October. Labor market difficulties, both current and anticipated, at panelists' companies and their suppliers will continue to dampen the manufacturing economy until the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis ends."

Fiore also said that some survey respondents mentioned staffing is a problem, as more workers have had to quarantine due to COVID exposure.

## NEMA's EBCI Index for November Reflects Broad Optimism Amongst Industry Execs

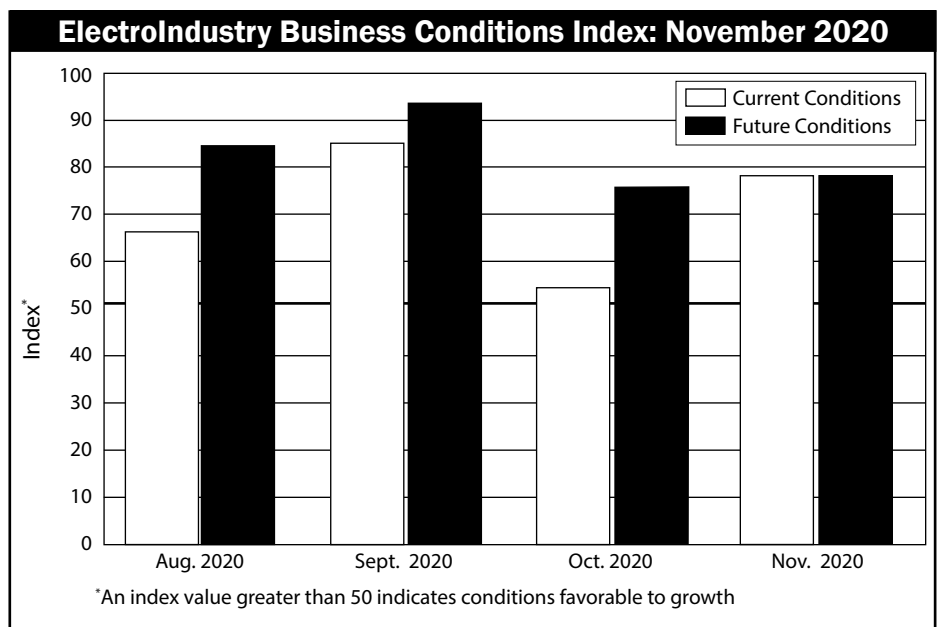
Following a modest stumble in October, confidence in electroindustry business conditions surged once again, reaching 78.1 points in November. Comments were generally reflective of the improved index number, although a cautionary observation indicated that a greater share of year-end work was delayed than has been the case in recent years.

The ElectroIndustry Business Conditions Index (EBCI) is a monthly survey of senior executives at electrical manufacturers published by the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA), Rosslyn, VA. Any score over the 50-point level indicates a greater number of panelists see conditions improving than see them

deteriorating.

The future conditions component also landed at 78.1 points in November but traveled a much shorter distance to get there from the October reading of 77.8 points. The share of NEMA executive respondents expecting better conditions edged up somewhat in November, but expectations for "worse" conditions ticked up slightly as well.

The greatest shift in responses from October's to November's survey was seen in a sharp drop in the proportion of panelists indicating "unchanged" conditions in six months. Comments were uniformly positive, with one going so far as to foresee that "things will be back to normal."



# Housing Market Posts Double-Digit YOY Increases in October Construction Spending

Construction spending during Oct. 2020 was estimated at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$1,438.5 billion, +1.3% above the revised September estimate of \$1,420.4 billion. According to the latest U.S. Census Bureau data, the October figure is +3.7% above the Oct. 2019 estimate of \$1,386.8 billion. During the first 10 months of this year, construction spending amounted to \$1,189.6 billion, +4.3% percent above the \$1,140.4 billion for the same period in 2019.

**Private construction.** Spending on private construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$1,093.7 billion, +1.4% above the revised September estimate of \$1,078.9 billion. Nonresidential construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$456.6 billion in October, -0.7% below the revised September esti-

mate of \$459.9 billion.

Residential construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$637.1 billion in October, +2.9% above the revised September estimate of \$619.1 billion. Single-family housing starts were up a robust +5.6% in October to \$324 billion, an impressive +13.3% increase over Oct. 2019. Multi-family construction was up +1.2% in October to \$90.2 billion — an +18.4% increase over Oct. 2019.

**Public construction.** In October, the estimated seasonally adjusted annual rate of public construction spending was \$344.8 billion, +1% above the revised September estimate of \$341.4 billion. Educational construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$86.4 billion, +1.1% above the revised September estimate of \$85.4 billion, but -1.9% below Oct. 2019.

## Fed Sees Slower Growth

*Continued from page 3*

**Dallas.** Economic activity expanded modestly. Growth moderated in the manufacturing, retail and services sectors. The housing market continued to outperform expectations, but office leasing remained weak. Energy activity remained depressed though it showed further signs of improvement. Outlooks were positive, though highly uncertain due to looming concerns surrounding political uncertainty and the unknown course of the pandemic.

**San Francisco.** Economic activity in the district expanded modestly. Employment levels increased slightly, while price inflation showed little change. Sales of retail goods rose appreciably, but conditions in the services sector were unchanged. Manufacturing expanded moderately, and the agriculture sector improved slightly. Residential real estate activity continued to grow, while commercial markets changed little. Lending activity increased mildly.

### Value Of New Construction Put In Place — October 2020

Value of Construction Put-in-Place (\$ billions, seasonally adjusted annual rate)

	Oct. '20 <sub>1</sub>	Sept. '20 <sub>2</sub>	Mo. % Change	Oct. '19	YTY % Change
<b>Total Construction</b>	<b>1,438.5</b>	<b>1,420.4</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1,386.8</b>	<b>3.7</b>
<b>Total Private Construction<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>1,093.7</b>	<b>1,078.9</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1,054.2</b>	<b>3.7</b>
Residential	637.1	619.1	2.9	556.7	14.5
New single family	324.0	306.9	5.6	286.0	13.3
New multifamily	90.2	89.1	1.2	76.1	18.4
Nonresidential	456.6	459.9	-0.7	497.6	-8.2
Lodging	25.0	25.8	-3.1	32.6	-23.3
Office	69.6	69.7	-0.2	75.4	-7.7
Commercial	77.9	78.7	-1	78.5	-0.7
Health care	37.7	37.7	-0.1	37.6	0.4
Educational	17.1	17.1	-0.2	20.2	-15.5
Religious	3.0	3.1	-2	3.5	-13.4
Amusement and recreation	11.8	11.8	-0.2	15.4	-23.2
Transportation	14.8	14.7	0.8	16.4	-9.6
Communication	22.4	22.3	0.4	21.9	2.6
Power	106.5	107.4	-0.8	115.8	-8
Electric	74.3	75.5	-1.7	80.7	-8
Manufacturing	69.4	70.0	-0.8	78.7	-11.8
<b>Total Public Construction<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>344.8</b>	<b>341.4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>332.6</b>	<b>3.7</b>
Residential	9.0	9.1	-1.1	7.2	24.9
Nonresidential	335.8	332.3	1	325.4	3.2
Office	10.5	10.9	-3.7	11.1	-5.7
Commercial	4.1	4.0	1.8	4.0	3.4
Health care	10.1	9.8	2.6	9.4	7.8
Educational	86.4	85.4	1.1	88.1	-1.9
Public safety	16.1	14.8	9	11.5	40.5
Amusement and recreation	14.4	14.7	-1.7	13.6	6.3
Transportation	42.0	41.6	1	40.1	4.7
Power	6.5	6.4	2.6	7.3	-10.6
Highway and street	92.6	91.2	1.6	87.8	5.6
Sewage and waste disposal	25.4	26.2	-3.1	24.9	2.1
Water supply	18.3	18.3	0.1	16.9	8.2
Conservation and development	7.8	7.6	2.9	9.0	-13

1—Preliminary; 2—Revised

Note: The U.S. Census department changed its construction categories beginning with its May 2003 statistics.

With the changes in the project classifications, data now presented are not directly comparable with those data previously published in the regular-format press releases and tables. Direct comparisons can only be made at the total, total private, total state and local, total federal, and total public levels for annual and not seasonally adjusted monthly data. For more information, check out <http://www.census.gov/const/www/c30index.html>.

## Around the Industry

### Houston Wire & Cable to sell Southern Wire business

Houston Wire & Cable Co. (HWCC), Houston, has entered into a definitive asset purchase agreement for the sale of its Southern Wire business, a distributor of wire rope and rigging products, for a purchase price of \$20 million. The press release said HWCC expects to use the net sales proceeds to reduce debt. The transaction is subject to customary closing conditions and is expected to close at year end.

### GE to supply turbines for utility-scale U.S. offshore wind farm

Vineyard Wind, a joint venture between Avangrid Renewables and Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP), announced in a press release earlier this week that it had selected GE as its preferred supplier of wind turbine generators for its Vineyard Wind 1 project, the first utility-scale offshore wind installation in the United States. Vineyard Wind 1 will use GE Renewable Energy's Haliade-X wind turbine generators. Vineyard Wind 1 is an 800-megawatt (MW) project located 15 miles off the coast of Martha's Vineyard. The project will generate electricity for more than 400,000 Massachusetts homes and businesses.

# People

*Eaton (Pittsburgh):* **Raja Ramana Macha** has joined the company as executive VP and chief technology officer. In this role, Macha will report to Craig Arnold, chairman and CEO. Prior to joining Eaton, Macha served as senior VP and chief technology officer for Schneider Electric's Industrial Automation business and as vice president, research and development and chief technology officer for the company's Process Automation business.

*Jo-Kell Inc. (Chesapeake, VA):* **John Kelly** has been promoted to chief corporate officer and **Kristin Parkinson** was promoted to chief operating officer. Kelly has been with Jo-Kell for more than 18 years and has worked at positions including channel manager, business process manager and executive VP of sales and marketing. He also created new departments in the company and led teams in times of emergency. Moving forward, he will continue to oversee all of Jo-Kell's sales and marketing efforts and provide leadership in establishing the direction of the company in both the short and long term.

Initially hired as the head of the company's Jacksonville branch, Kristin Parkinson led the Jacksonville team to more than +500% revenue growth over her tenure. She was promoted to executive VP of operations in 2019.

Founded in 1977, Jo-Kell is a woman-owned small business that focuses on the military, commercial, marine and industrial marketplaces. Headquartered in Chesapeake, VA, Jo-Kell serves customers nationwide, with locations in South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and California. The company was ranked #93 on *Electrical Wholesaling's* 2020 Top 200 listing with 75 employees and three locations.

*Redline Communications Group (Toronto):* This provider of industrial wireless broadband network connectivity solutions for mission-critical applications recently appointed **Jim Slinowsky** as VP of product line management. Prior to joining Redline, Slinowsky led product management for Siemens RUGGEDCOM, a portfolio of rugged networking products focused on mission-critical applications in harsh environments. He has also held executive posts with Powerwave Technologies and Nortel Networks. Slinowsky has a degree in engineering from the University of Manitoba.

*IEWC (Milwaukee):* **Pat Rislov** was promoted to chief supply chain officer. This new title is a reflection of his broadening leader-

ship position within IEWC as the quality, business intelligence and marketing teams have now become a part of the supply chain organization, joining sourcing, materials management and logistics under his direction. Rislov joined IEWC in July 2018 as VP of supply chain. He started his career 25-plus years ago in the retail space.

## Rep News

Legrand, North and Central America, made two rep appointments for its Wattstopper product line — **Specification Lighting Sales (SLS)**, New York, for the New York and New Jersey markets, and **Hossley Lighting and Power Solutions (HLPS)**, Dallas, for Oklahoma and southern Louisiana. Both appointments were effective Dec. 1.

SLS works with architects, interior designers, engineers and lighting designers on lighting projects in the New York and New Jersey design markets. HLPS is now the agency of record for Wattstopper products in Texas across the Austin, Dallas and San Antonio markets, as well as Arkansas and northern Louisiana. The expanded partnership with Legrand's Wattstopper product line comes after the merger of Hossley Lighting Associates with Lighting & Power Solutions in July of this year.

"I'm excited to announce our expanded relationship with HLPS, across the Oklahoma and Louisiana markets," said Jeff Jervah, regional vice president for Legrand, North and Central America, in the press release. "The level of experience and resources resulting from the merger of Hossley Lighting Associates and Lighting & Power Solutions will facilitate our growth across Oklahoma and Louisiana. HLPS has a proven track record with us in Arkansas and Texas already, and we're eager to work with their sales team at contractors, specifiers and distribution partners in these markets."

**Casey Bergquist Inc.**, Northglenn, CO, now represents Milbank Manufacturing in Colorado and Wyoming. This addition to Milbank's team of independent manufacturers' representatives marks a new partnership between the two groups. Casey Bergquist serves electrical contractors, end users and the MRO and OEM markets for electrical and telecommunications equipment. The agreement was

effective Dec. 1.

"The Western Region is a fast-growing market for the electrical industry, and working with a dedicated team in the area will support sales growth, particularly when it comes to looking for new opportunities and innovative solutions," said Stacey Lager, Milbank's director of sales—West & International, in the press release. "I am excited for the future possibilities with Casey Bergquist. This is a growing market for us, and they outlined very detailed plans to achieve our growth goals in the future."

"We had a lot of great agencies to select from in this market, but Casey Bergquist aligned the best with our culture at Milbank," said Chris Buelow, Milbank's senior vice president for sales and marketing. "They have a lot of passion for the electrical distribution channel, evident by the positive feedback from our customer base in the Denver market. We are excited to have them a part of the Milbank Manufacturing family."

## Electrical Marketing

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