

# Electrical Marketing<sup>®</sup>

THE ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY NEWSLETTER

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## Around the Industry

### nVent adds to brand portfolio with purchase of ECM Industries

ECM Investors llc, the parent company of ECM Industries, signed an agreement to be acquired by nVent Electric plc. nVent's stable of electrical brands includes Caddy, Erico, Hoffman, Raychem, Schroff and Tracer. The company is based in St. Louis Park, MN.

Brands in ECM Industries' portfolio include ILSCO, Utilco, Gardner Bender, Sperry Instruments, Bergen Industries and King Innovation. These brands have been supplying electricians, do-it-yourselfers, contractors and maintenance technicians with a wide variety of innovative products for over 125 years. According the press release, the ECM brands are stocked and distributed through wholesalers, retailers, catalogs and e-commerce distributors.

Mike Masino, CEO, ECM Industries, said in the press release, "This is an exciting time in ECM's evolution. This next step with a successful, fast-growing and globally recognized electrical industry leader will be beneficial for our employees, customers and partners."

### ABB to build \$40-million factory in Albuquerque, NM

ABB is reinforcing its commitment to the U.S. market and utility industry with the addition of a new manufacturing facility in Albuquerque, NM, for its Installation Products Division, formerly Thomas & Betts. Planning and construction of the new 90,000 sq-ft facility is underway and represents an investment of \$40 million.

*Continued on page 3*

## Inside

- 1Q 2023 electrical stock chart... p. 2
- Small metro growth stars..... p. 3
- NEMA's EBCI slides in March .... p. 4
- Construction stays steady..... p. 5

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## Distributors Lead Electrical Stocks for 1Q 2023 with +17.6% YTD Group Return

Electrical stock prices showed some nice progress in 1Q 2023, after a very forgettable 2022. When looking at the average 1Q 2023 growth for share prices of publicly held electrical manufacturers, distributors and contractors, all three groups comfortably outpaced the S&P 500 average's +6.6% growth for the first quarter. Very few of the electrical companies that *Electrical Marketing's* editors track didn't match this growth mark. The electrical manufacturers with slower growth for the quarter for the included Generac (+5.2%); Hubbell (+2.4%); Signify (-4.3%); Emerson Electric (-9.8%); and Dialight (-35%). Let's look at the top performers in each of these groups.

**Electrical manufacturers.** As group, electrical manufacturers' share were up +10.7% for the quarter. Shares for 24 of the 35 manufacturers that *Electrical Marketing* tracks topped the S&P average

for 1Q 2023, and 18 companies enjoyed double-digit gains in their share prices for the quarter. Top performers include Encore Wire (+33.4%); Atkore (+22.1%); Littelfuse (+20.3%); Schneider Electric (+16.2%); Siemens (+15.8%); Rockwell Automation (+13%); Legrand (+11.5%); and ABB (+11.4%). Of the manufacturers mentioned here, ABB's stock is the only one currently near a 52-week high. It closed that quarter at \$34.30 per share.

**Electrical distributors.** The shares of the publicly held distributors had an even stronger quarter, with the group average up +17.6% for 1Q 2023. W.W. Grainger led the pack with a YTD gain of +35%. Rexel's stock also checked in with some super gains, registering an increase of +20.9% YTD, and WESCO also came in strong with a quarterly gain of +17.6%. Surprisingly, Fastenal, normally one of the

*Continued on page 6*

## Osterman Fox & Associates' New England Operations Merges with Apogee Solutions

Two reps recently announced a merger. Osterman Fox and Associates' New England operations and Apogee Solutions Group, Winchester, MA, have permanently merged their sales and marketing teams for better synergies, improved territory coverage and increased sales opportunities.

The combined company will be the New England Division of Osterman Fox and Associates and will operate under the name Osterman Fox – Apogee LLC. The new company will have four owner/partners: Frank Kaduc, Chris Fox, Dan Murphy and V.J. Ladd.

Based in Syracuse, NY, Osterman Fox has served the industrial, commercial residential and OEM electrical markets in upstate New York for more than 80 years and in New England for five years.

Apogee Solutions Group serves New England's electrical and electronic markets. The company's staff serves these market niches with more than 75 years of local, national

and international experience. Along with the electrical market, Apogee focuses on the military/aerospace, medical, transportation, contract manufacturing, cable assembly, panel building, industrial and industrial automation businesses.

Dan Murphy, Frank Kaduc and V.J. Ladd will run the division as managing partners. The headquarters for the combined company will be in Syracuse. Murphy said in the press release, "The merger of both companies in New England allows us to remain customer-centric while providing the highest level of service to our distributor partners and the manufacturers we represent."

Also on the company's New England field sales team will be three outside sales reps: Jim Crudele, John Deluca and Jeff Tryon; Lou Tessier, commercial contractor specialist. Scott Koziak and Patrick Mitchell are working in the inside sales department.

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## 1Q 2023 Electrical Stock Price Performance

Company	Symbol	Recent price	Jan. 3, 2023 Opening	YTD % Change
<b>MANUFACTURERS</b>				
ABB Ltd.	ABB	34.3	30.78	11.4
AMETEK	AME	145.33	140.18	3.7
Atkore Inc.	ATKR	140.48	115.01	22.1
Acuity Brands	AYI	182.73	168.09	8.7
Belden Inc.	BDC	86.77	72.92	19.0
Dialight**	DIA.L	200	307.6	-35.0
Energy Focus	EFOI	0.56	0.33	69.7
Emerson Electric Co.	EMR	87.14	96.6	-9.8
EnerSys	ENS	86.88	74.74	16.2
Eaton Corporation plc	ETN	171.34	158.08	8.4
Freeport-McMoRan	FCX	40.91	37.95	7.8
Federal Signal Corp.	FSS	54.21	46.83	15.8
General Electric Co.	GE	95.6	84.05	13.7
Generac Holdings	GNRC	108.01	102.69	5.2
Hubbell Inc.	HUBB	243.31	237.53	2.4
Littelfuse	LFUS	268.09	222.92	20.3
Signify NV*	LIGHT.AS	30.64	32.01	-4.3
Legrand SA*	LR.PA	84.08	75.4	11.5
LSI Industries	LYTS	13.93	12.38	12.5
3M Company	MMM	105.11	121.52	-13.5
Mersen SA*	MRN.PA	41.05	38.3	7.2
Nexans SA*	NEX.PA	91.5	85.1	7.5
Nucor Corp.	NUE	154.47	131.81	17.2
nVent Electric plc	NVT	42.94	38.55	11.4
Orion Energy Systems	OESX	2.03	1.86	9.1
OSRAM Licht AG*	OSR.HM	48.9	49.4	-1.0
Pentair	PNR	55.27	45.66	21.0
Rockwell Automation	ROK	293.45	259.75	13.0
SMART Global Holdings	SGH	17.24	15.04	14.6
Siemens AG*	SIE.HA	149.38	129	15.8
Schneider Electric*	SU.PA	153.68	132.24	16.2
Zumtobel Group AG*	T9Z.F	7	6.88	1.7
Encore Wire	WIRE	185.33	138.97	33.4
<b>DISTRIBUTORS</b>				
Arrow Electronics	ARW	124.87	106.14	17.6
Avnet	AVT	45.2	41.1	10.0
Fastenal Co.	FAST	53.94	61.98	-13.0
Ferguson	FERG	133.75	127.86	4.6
Genuine Parts Co.	GPC	167.31	168.86	-0.9
W.W. Grainger	GWV	688.81	510.2	35.0
MSC Industrial Direct Co.	MSM	84	83.95	0.1
Rexel SA*	RXL.PA	21.95	18.15	20.9
WESCO International	WCC	154.54	131.42	17.6
<b>CONTRACTORS</b>				
EMCOR Group	EME	162.59	148.86	9.2
IES Holdings	IESC	43.09	35.3	22.1
MDU Resources Group	MDU	30.48	30.49	0.0
MasTec, Inc.	MTZ	94.44	85.82	10.0
Quanta Services	PWR	166.64	142.86	16.6
<b>ONLINE MERCHANTS &amp; BIG BOXES</b>				
Amazon.com.	AMZN	103.29	170.4	-39.4
Alibaba Group Holding Ltd.	BABA	102.18	120.38	-15.1
Home Depot	HD	295.12	408.64	-27.8
Lowe's	LOW	199.97	255.51	-21.7
Shopify	SHOP	47.94	35.68	34.4
<b>MARKET INDICES</b>				
Dow Jones Industrial Average	^DJI	33,274.15	33,148.90	0.4
S&P 500	^GSPC	4,109.31	3,853.29	6.6
NASDAQ Composite	^IXIC	12,221.91	10,562.10	15.7

Notes. All data from Yahoo Finance; Recent price: Mar. 31, 2023 opening price. \*Euros & \*\*Pence

# Around the Industry

*Continued from page 1*

The greenfield facility will create 55 new jobs in the area and produce cable products used by electric utility providers in grid hardening and resiliency initiatives.

With more than 75,000 miles of underground cabling estimated to be in place by 2040 across the United States, ABB's new facility will meet what the company expects to be increased demand for its Elastimold solutions essential to wildfire mitigation, as well as underground and grid hardening projects that power homes, businesses and communities in a safe and reliable way. When completed in 2024, the Albuquerque facility will include ABB Robotics technology and digital automation

to produce more than 1 million additional units annually — the vast majority will be supplied to U.S. customers.

“As the focus on strengthening the U.S. infrastructure and electric grid intensifies, ABB's latest investment in Albuquerque will advance our production capabilities and significantly boost capacity to meet the needs of utilities for safe, reliable and innovative solutions that are easier to install and maintain,” said Matthias Heilmann, president of ABB Electrification's Installation Products division. “Continuing to grow our U.S. manufacturing operations and distribution network accelerates our ability to deliver high-demand electrical products our partners rely on to manage

today's needs and prepare for tomorrow's energy demands.”

## Rexel buys Teche Electric Supply

Teche Electric Supply, Lafayette, LA, a well-known Gulf Coast distributor, was acquired by Rexel USA, according to a report by David Gordon's Electrical Trends ([www.electricaltrends.com](http://www.electricaltrends.com)). The company was ranked #132 in *Electrical Wholesaling's* 2022 Top 150 ranking with 64 employees and four locations.

## Southwire signs on to sponsor EV race in Portland, OR, on June 24

Southwire, Carrollton, GA, will be the title sponsor of the 2023 Southwire Portland E-Prix in the ABB FIA Formula E World Championship on June 24 in Portland, OR.

The 2023 Southwire Portland E-Prix will mark the United States debut of the GEN3, promoted as the fastest, lightest, most powerful and efficient electric race car ever built — and the last of four new race locations in Season 9's 16-race calendar following debuts in Hyderabad, India; Cape Town, South Africa; and São Paulo, Brazil.

Southwire was recently named as the official wire and cable provider for the ABB FIA Formula E World Championship, the world's first all-electric FIA World Championship and the first sport in the world to be certified net zero carbon since its inception. As a part of Southwire's ongoing collaboration with Formula E, the company is committed to developing innovative systems and solutions closely aligned to Formula E's purpose of accelerating change towards an electric and more sustainable future.

Richard Oglesby, Southwire's senior VP of OEM and Industrial, Southwire, said in the press release, “Formula E represents innovation and sustainability, which are principles mirrored at Southwire. We're very proud and excited to be the title sponsor of the 2023 Southwire Portland E-Prix and to support this evolution to electrification.”

The ABB FIA Formula E World Championship brings motor racing to the heart of some of the world's most iconic cities, providing an motorsport platform for

*Continued on page 5*

## EM's Listing of the Fastest-Growing Small Markets Offers Some Surprises

EM's editors regularly list the largest local market areas offering the most electrical sales potential and analyze how a relatively small handful of big metros account for a surprisingly large share of the nation's total market potential.

To change things up a bit, the chart below lists some smaller but still fast-growing cities — the 10 local markets with \$250 million or less in estimated electrical sales potential that added the most potential sales dollars over the past year. While many of the fastest growing large MSAs are located in the Sunbelt or Intermountain states, half of the metros listed below are in the Midwest: Lansing-East Lansing, MI; St. Cloud,

MN; Appleton, WI; Bloomington, IL; and Kalamazoo-Portage, MI.

Topping this listing with \$206 million in total sales potential and a year-over-year gain in electrical sales potential of \$15.8 million is Port St. Lucie, FL. Savannah, GA, was ranked second with a sales potential gain of \$14.8 million and total estimated sales of \$184.4 million. Longview, TX, had \$205.4 million in estimated sales potential and a one-year gain of \$14.5 million.

*Electrical Marketing* subscribers can download electrical sales estimates for more than 300 MSAs and all 50 states as well as national estimates at [www.electricalmarketing.com](http://www.electricalmarketing.com).

### 10 Smaller Local Markets Adding the Most Electrical Sales Potential (\$250 Million in Sales or Less)

Rank	Metropolitan Statistical Area	4Q 2022 Total Estimate	4Q 2022 Total YOY % Change	4Q 2022 Total # Change	4Q 2022 Total QTQ % Change	4Q 2022 Total QTQ # Change
1	Port St. Lucie, FL	205.96	8.3	15.8	1.3	2.6
2	Savannah, GA	184.40	8.8	14.8	2.0	3.6
3	Longview, TX	205.37	7.6	14.5	1.0	2.0
4	Lansing-East Lansing, MI	192.10	7.8	14.0	-0.2	-0.3
5	St. Cloud, MN	152.87	9.4	13.1	-4.3	-6.8
6	Appleton, WI	215.77	6.0	12.3	0.2	0.5
7	Bloomington, IL	71.29	20.6	12.2	0.4	0.3
8	Philadelphia City, PA	167.27	7.4	11.5	1.3	2.1
9	Abilene, TX	79.67	16.3	11.1	2.2	1.7
10	Kalamazoo-Portage, MI	176.13	6.5	10.8	-1.2	-2.2

*Notes: Data from Electrical Marketing's 4Q 2022 Electrical Sales Potential Forecasts. Data available for more than 300 local markets and all 50 states at [www.electricalmarketing.com](http://www.electricalmarketing.com).*

## Industry Events

April 19-20, 2023

**Upper Midwest Electrical Expo**  
Minneapolis; North Central  
Electrical League  
[www.ncel.org](http://www.ncel.org)

May 21-23, 2023

**LightFair Trade Show & Conference**  
New York; [www.lightfair.com](http://www.lightfair.com)

May 23-25, 2023

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

June 12-14, 2023

**NAED Women in Industry Forum**  
Salt Lake City, UT  
[www.naed.org](http://www.naed.org)

June 14-16, 2023

**NAED Adventure**  
Salt Lake City, UT  
[www.naed.org](http://www.naed.org)

August 23-24, 2023

**Electrical Board of Missouri  
& Illinois Electrical Expo**  
St. Charles, MO  
[www.electricalboard.org](http://www.electricalboard.org)

September 18-20, 2023

**IDEA eBiz**  
Nashville, TN; IDEA  
[www.idea4industry.com](http://www.idea4industry.com)

September 30-October 2, 2023

**NECA Show**  
Philadelphia; National Electrical  
Contractor Association (NECA)  
[www.necashow.org](http://www.necashow.org)

October 18-20, 2023

**AD Electrical North American Meeting**  
Dallas; Affiliated Distributors  
[www.adhq.org](http://www.adhq.org)

November 6-8, 2023

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

November 8-9, 2023

**NEMA Annual Meeting**  
Manalapan, FL; [www.nema.org](http://www.nema.org)

January 15-17, 2024

**NAED Western Conference**  
Austin, TX; [www.naed.org](http://www.naed.org)

## North Coast Expects New CDC to Support March to \$1-Billion in Sales by 2026

North Coast Electric recently opened a 285,000-sq-ft electrical products distribution CDC facility in Auburn, WA.

The company said in the press release that the facility will support its ambitious growth plans and marks the most recent illustration of the \$2-billion worldwide investment by Sonepar in supply chain automation.

Cory McCulloch, president of North Coast Electric said in the release, "Our vision at North Coast is to be the most customer-centric electrical distributor in the geographies we serve. We plan on adding three to

five new density locations per year over the next couple of years, increasing our footprint from 42 to 80 locations. The new CDC is the key component to growth, productivity and efficiency along with our strong digital platform."

"This is Sonepar's transformation in action," said Rob Taylor, president of Sonepar North America, in the release. "CDC investment will be continuous, with three new CDCs opening across the Sonepar U.S. network this year and many more opening in the following years."

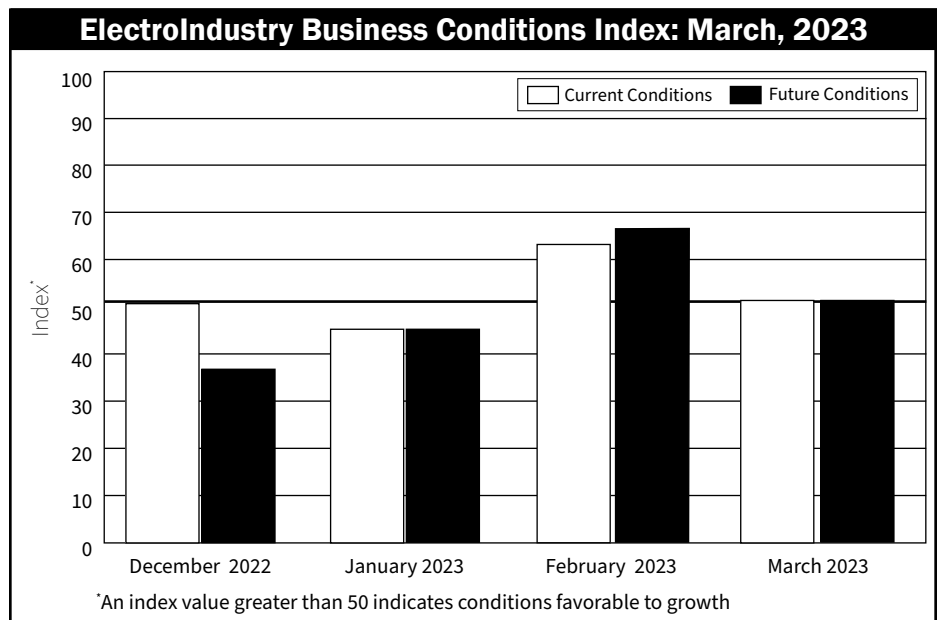
## NEMA's EBCI Index Slides in March, Settling Near Growth Conditions Indicator

The current conditions component's move into expansionary territory was unambiguous last month for the first time in almost a year as it hit 63.3 points. That surge of confidence was short-lived, with March's reading falling back to 50 points, suggesting that conditions were unchanged from the prior month. Much of the commentary supported the numerical result, with many noting mixed conditions to include overall strong business activity but softening in certain end markets becoming noticeable and concern about supply chain issues still in play.

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.

Expectations for future conditions also pulled back from a solid expansionary reading in February to unchanged in this month's survey. Last month's future component score of 66.7 points marked the highest level reached in more than a year but concerns about the fallout from higher interest rates and a slowing global economy, including reduced consumer spending and higher capital acquisition costs, contributed to a less sanguine outlook this time. Panel members' responses were evenly split between "better" and "worse" expectations, causing the March future component to match its current conditions counterpart at 50 points.



# Construction Stays Steady in February at \$1,844.1 Billion, But Posts +5.2% YOY Growth

Construction spending during Feb. 2023 was estimated at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$1,844.1 billion, -0.1% below the revised January estimate of \$1,845.4 billion. The February figure is +5.2% above the Feb. 2022 estimate of \$1,753.1 billion. During the first two months of this year, construction spending amounted to \$260.8 billion, +5.9% above the \$246.1 billion for the same period in 2022.

**Private construction.** Spending on private construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$1,453.2 billion, virtually unchanged from the revised January estimate of \$1,453.6 billion, according to the latest data from the U.S. Census Bureau. Residential construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$852.1 billion in February, -0.6% below the revised January estimate of \$857 billion. Nonresidential construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$601

billion in February, +0.7% percent above the revised January estimate of \$596.7 billion.

The year-over-year data stood out in two categories — private office construction and throughout the private manufacturing segment. Office construction was up +0.5% for the month to \$83.7 billion and a solid +15.3% year-over-year (YOY). As has been the recent trend, the private manufacturing category again registered double-digit YOY growth in most categories, with the Computer/electronic/electrical up +146% YOY.

**Public construction.** In February, the estimated seasonally adjusted annual rate of public construction spending was \$391 billion, -0.2% below the revised January estimate of \$391.8 billion. Educational construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$84.6 billion, -0.9% below the revised January estimate of \$85.4 billion.

## Around the Industry

*Continued from page 3*

some of the world's leading automotive manufacturers such as Jaguar, McLaren, Nissan, Porsche and Maserati to accelerate electric vehicle innovation.

### Minneapolis gearing up for nation's largest electrical expo on April 19-20

Minneapolis will be home to the nation's largest regional electrical trade show on April 19-20. Sponsored by the North Central Electrical League ([www.ncel.org](http://www.ncel.org)), the Upper Midwest Electrical Expo typically draws over 9,000 attendees. Although attendance was off at the 2021 show because of COVID-19 concerns, it still had 320 booths with 335 electrical manufacturers and drew attendees from 44 U.S. states and 5 Canadian provinces.

The 2021 NCEL breakfast was a big hit, too, drawing 400 hungry attendees and exhibitors and will be held again this year. Along with the busy booths loaded with new products, this year's show will also offer a robust training curriculum with more than 20 classes on the National Electrical Code.

### Private-equity firm acquires Iowa-based Republic Electric

Graycliff Partners, New York, made an investment in Republic Electric Co., Davenport, IA, a distributor of HVAC and electrical equipment and related components for use in residential, commercial and industrial applications. It serves over 1,000 customers from five locations across Iowa and Illinois.

According to the press release, Republic was founded in 1916 and has over a century of experience providing products and support to a broad base of customers, primarily HVAC and electrical contractors as well as industrial and OEM customers. The company supplies over 40,000 different products, including residential and commercial HVAC systems, switchgear, controls and lighting solutions, as well as related parts and tools.

"As a third-generation family-owned company, it was of utmost importance to find a financial partner that understood our vision and valued our legacy," said Mark Kilmer, Republic's CEO of 25 years, in the press release. "Graycliff's approach of providing strategic support and

*Continued on page 6*

## Value Of New Construction Put In Place — February, 2023

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

	Feb. '23 <sub>1</sub>	Jan. '23 <sub>2</sub>	Mo. % Change	Feb. '22	YTY % Change
<b>Total Construction</b>	<b>1,844.1</b>	<b>1,845.4</b>	<b>-0.1</b>	<b>1,753.1</b>	<b>5.2</b>
<b>Total Private Construction:</b>	<b>1,453.2</b>	<b>1,453.6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,406.6</b>	<b>3.3</b>
Residential	852.1	857.0	-0.6	903.4	-5.7
New single-family	368.4	375.0	-1.8	468.6	-21.4
New multi-family	122.8	121.1	1.4	100.5	22.2
Nonresidential	601.0	596.7	0.7	503.2	19.4
Lodging	21.9	21.9	0.2	16.2	35
Office	83.7	83.3	0.5	72.5	15.4
Commercial	122.8	123.6	-0.6	101.1	21.5
Health care	44.8	44.9	-0.3	40.2	11.4
Educational	20.7	21.0	-1.1	18.1	14.7
Religious	3.0	3.1	-1.2	2.9	6.1
Amusement and recreation	14.7	14.7	-0.4	13.0	12.6
Transportation	19.4	19.4	0.2	14.5	34.5
Communication	24.9	24.9	-0.1	23.7	4.7
Power	101.6	100.2	1.5	107.6	-5.6
Electric	77.8	77.1	0.9	83.6	-7
Manufacturing	140.3	136.7	2.7	91.3	53.8
<b>Total Public Construction:</b>	<b>391.0</b>	<b>391.8</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>346.5</b>	<b>12.8</b>
Residential	9.8	9.8	0.1	8.6	13.4
Nonresidential	381.1	382.0	-0.2	337.9	12.8
Office	13.0	13.1	-0.6	12.1	7.7
Commercial	4.1	4.2	-1.8	3.4	21.7
Health care	11.9	11.9	0.2	10.4	14.9
Educational	84.6	85.4	-0.9	80.5	5.2
Public safety	11.4	11.1	2.6	10.2	11.3
Amusement and recreation	14.2	14.3	-0.4	13.2	7.6
Transportation	42.4	42.7	-0.7	40.4	4.8
Power	11.6	11.7	-0.5	9.7	19.3
Highway and street	120.6	120.3	0.3	101.5	18.8
Sewage and waste disposal	34.2	34.0	0.5	28.6	19.5
Water supply	22.0	22.2	-1.1	18.9	16.7
Conservation and development	10.2	10.3	-0.9	8.1	25.8

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

*Continued from page 5*

guidance while still maintaining Republic's culture made them the right fit for us. They have deep experience in working with and growing companies like ours, and we couldn't be more excited about our partnership."

### City Electric Supply opens 19th branch in Houston metro

City Electric Supply says its new branch in the southern part of the Houston metropolitan area can save customers an hour of driving time. The branch is just south of Interstate 610 and the press release says it's convenient for customers working on either side of the city. The CES Houston South team worked for five months on the renovations.

Matthew Dunn, CES Houston South's branch manager, has been with CES for over a decade, starting as a driver with the company.

## Electrical Stocks Turn in Solid Opening Quarter

*Continued from page 1*

best-performing stocks that *EM* tracks, lagged the group with a -13% decline in its share price since Jan. 3.

**Electrical contractors.** It was another strong quarter in the stock market for Quanta Services. Its shares are up +16.6% since the beginning of the year, and led EMCOR Group's shares, which increased +9.2% for the quarter.

There were some surprising share price declines in a category that in the past has often shown the most growth — online merchants and home centers. Shares of Amazon saw the biggest drop and were down -39.4% for the quarter. The stocks of Home Depot and Lowe's, which generally are among the top performers amongst the companies that *EM* tracks, were both down more than -20%.

**Summary.** With concerns over the health of regional banks and their balance sheets and the lingering forecasts for a possible recession in the not-too-distant future, the overall climate on Wall St. remains volatile. However, if electrical stocks continue to outperform the market indices as they did in the first quarter, share price returns should weather the storm reasonably well.

— *Jim Lucy*

## Local Construction Employment Increases

Construction employment increased in 283, or 79%, of 358 metro areas between Feb. 2022 and Feb. 2023, according to an analysis by the Associated General Contractors of America of new government employment data. Meanwhile, new government data shows there were more job openings in the industry than the number of people hired last month. Association officials said the industry continues to struggle to find enough workers and urged public leaders to boost investments in construction training and education.

"Although construction employment rose in nearly four-fifths of all metros in the past 12 months, contractors are still struggling fill jobs," said Ken Simonson, the association's chief economist, in the press release. "There were more far job openings in construction at the end of February than construction employees hired in the entire month."

Dallas-Plano-Irving, TX, added the most construction jobs (15,000 jobs or +10%), followed by Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise, NV (9,100 jobs, +13%); Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA (8,900 jobs, +7%); and Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ (7,300 jobs, +5%). The largest percentage gains were in Hanford-Corcoran, CA (+27%, 300 jobs); Wausau, WI (+23%, 500 jobs); Danville, IL (+20%, 100 jobs); and Watertown-Fort Drum, NY (+20%, 300 jobs).

Construction jobs declined over the year in 41 metro areas and were unchanged in 34 areas. The largest loss occurred in Sacramento-Roseville-Arden-Arcade, CA. (-4,200 jobs, -6%), followed by Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale, CA (-3,200 jobs, -2%); Pittsburgh, PA (-3,100 jobs, -6%); Miami-Miami Beach-Kendall, FL (-2,900 jobs, -6%); and Lake Charles, LA (-1,700 jobs, -12%). Lawton, OK, experienced the largest percentage job loss (-18%, -300 jobs), followed by Monroe, MI. (-17%, -400 jobs); Lake Charles; and Gulfport-Biloxi-Pascagoula, MS (-10%, -900 jobs).

Government data released on April 4 showed there were 384,000 job openings in construction at the end of February, topping the 315,000 workers hired during the entire month. The disparity implied that contractors wanted to hire more than twice as many employees as they were able to find, Simonson said.

## People

*Legrand North America (West Hartford, CT):* **Sarah Levine** is now the company's director of Circular Economy. She comes to Legrand with experience in sustainable business practices working for Apple, Mattel and Boeing. At Legrand, she will be responsible for developing and implementing strategies that will help Legrand to reduce waste and maximize the lifespan of products.

## Rep News

*JF Kilfoil (Cincinnati):* **Earl Martin** joined the company as account manager for Illinois and Wisconsin markets. He has worked in landline, mobile electronics, cellular, two-way communications and RF.

Established in 1953, JF Kilfoil focuses on the automotive, industrial, military, appliance and medical markets.

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