

# Electrical Marketing<sup>®</sup>

THE ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY NEWSLETTER

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## Around the Industry

### Eaton wins \$16-million contract at University of Michigan hospital

Eaton won a contract to help design and construct the electrical system for the University of Michigan's new hospital in Ann Arbor, MI. The company is providing a wide range of intelligent electrical equipment and turnkey engineering services to establish a foundation of safe, resilient and sustainable power at the D. Dan and Betty Kahn Health Care Pavilion at University of Michigan Health.

Eaton is providing advanced power distribution equipment, back-up power protection solutions, turnkey project support and training for facility operations and maintenance staff. The project includes an Eaton-engineered utility substation, more than 100 factory-assembled Integrated Facility Systems switchboards to minimize valuable footprint and installation time, and Eaton Arc Quenching Switchgear that reduces incident energy to preserve critical uptime and advance safety.

The new 264-bed adult inpatient facility is scheduled to open in the fall of 2025 and will help alleviate growing patient demand at the organization's primary medical facility in Ann Arbor. According to the university, the 12-story, 690,000-sq-ft facility is also on track in its pursuit to achieve the LEED Platinum certification for sustainable health care design and includes flexible energy systems ready for the future transition to renewable energy sources.

### AD sets Q1 member sales record

Affiliated Distributors (AD), Wayne,  
*Continued on page 3*

## Inside

- 50 industrial markets to watch..... p. 2
  - Graybar's latest acquisition..... p. 3
  - NEMA's EBCI sinks again ..... p. 4
  - Lester Sales forms ESOP..... p. 6
- An Endeavor Business Media Inc. publication.  
Publishers of *Electrical Wholesaling* and  
*EC&M* magazines.

## 50 Small MSAs Where Industrial Business Rules — And Accounts for \$2.5 Billion in Potential

When you dig into local market data, it's amazing how often you find that a fairly small number of market areas often account for a surprisingly large amount of total U.S. market electrical potential. Let's use the 50 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) in the chart on page 2 as an example. In these markets, manufacturing accounts for a disproportionately high percentage of private employment and local GMP (Gross Metropolitan Product). None of these market areas are huge in terms of individual industrial sales potential, but last year *EM* estimates that together they accounted for \$2.5 billion in industrial sales.

*EM's* editors found that 22 of these markets are in the Industrial Midwest, and that one of them — the Elkhart-Goshen, MSA — relies on manufacturing businesses for more than half of all its private employment. Industrial employment in this market, an area known for the manufacture of recreational trailers, accounted for 53.1% of jobs in private

industry, far surpassing the national average of 10%. And when you measure this market by the industrial market's contributions to private industry GMP, the story was similar at 57.9%. The similarities also run true when you measure this local market by its industrial location quotient, which according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov), "compares the concentration of an industry within a specific area to the concentration of that industry nationwide." The Elkhart-Goshen MSA, which accounts for the majority of the nation's RV manufacturing, has an industrial location quotient that's six times the national average.

One application for this data in the electrical market is to find out which local markets may have more potential customers for a specific product. Let's say you are an electrical manufacturer launching a new product specifically designed for the oil &

*Continued on page 3*

## Copper Prices Haven't Hit Their Lows Yet, According to *The Copper Journal* Report

If you ever want to get an informed take on the copper market, your first read should be *The Copper Journal* ([www.copperjournal.com](http://www.copperjournal.com)) published by John Gross. Gross, a veteran of the metals markets for decades, is quoted all over the financial press and earlier this year appeared on CNBC to discuss copper pricing.

His most recent newsletter provided a succinct summary of the confusing series of swings in copper pricing. Gross said in his report that, "Fundamentals tell us prices should be higher, but the charts indicate lower values ahead. Earlier this year, sentiment was relatively upbeat, as were prices.

"And why not? Inventories were low and falling, and China, the linchpin of global industrial materials and base metals in particular, was expected to fuel more robust demand as the zero covid policy was finally being lifted. Just as important, the global copper market was in a deficit position, and

the unanimous view of the world was that the 'Green Energy' transition would require more metal than could possibly be produced for years to come.

"Of course, the price had to continue moving higher — based not only on the fundamentals, but also because what the most brilliant guys in the room were telling us. For example, we are on the verge of another super cycle in commodities driven by China, said one. Copper is the new crude oil, said another, and problems in the banking sector will spark a flight of capital into commodities."

What a difference a few months make. Gross says copper saw its last surge from \$3.82 in December to \$4.12 in January, and that at this time many industry observers expected copper prices to march higher.

COMEX copper prices are currently sitting at \$3.87, it seems like a long time ago

*Continued on page 4*

## Industrial Heavyweights: The 50 Local Markets with the Highest Concentration of Industrial Business Potential

Rank	Location	4Q 2022 Industrial \$ Estimate (Millions)	2022 Industrial Employment (Thousands)	Industrial Employment % of Private Employment	Industrial % of Private GDP	Industrial Location Quotient
	<b>UNITED STATES</b>	<b>12,972</b>	<b>12,354</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>1.00</b>
1	Elkhart-Goshen, IN	196	75.9	53.1%	57.9%	6.06
2	Columbus, IN	51	19.1	42.1%	56.9%	4.52
3	Sheboygan, WI	58	21.9	39.0%	40.2%	4.13
4	Kokomo, IN	23	9	31.6%	50.9%	3.32
5	Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton, NC	111	41.7	31.4%	30.1%	3.07
6	Morristown, TN	33	12.2	29.4%	36.2%	3.04
7	Wausau, WI	50	18.9	28.2%	24.3%	3.03
8	Decatur, AL	37	13.8	27.2%	36.9%	2.80
9	Fond du Lac, WI	31	11.7	26.5%	27.2%	2.50
10	Racine, WI	49	18.4	26.1%	34.4%	2.76
11	Spartanburg, SC	102	37.9	26.1%	29.8%	2.75
12	Oshkosh-Neenah, WI	56	21.3	26.1%	32.3%	2.77
13	Logan, UT-ID	38	14.5	25.5%	26.9%	2.49
14	Gettysburg, PA	20	7.6	24.9%	25.9%	2.61
15	Battle Creek, MI	27	10.2	24.1%	31.0%	2.36
16	Niles-Benton Harbor, MI	34	12.7	24.0%	27.9%	2.45
17	Muskegon, MI	36	13.6	23.8%	28.7%	2.46
18	Michigan City-La Porte, IN	22	8.3	22.9%	30.1%	2.29
19	Rocky Mount, NC	29	10.4	22.9%	38.6%	2.17
20	Rockford, IL	69	26.2	22.6%	26.6%	2.46
21	Grand Rapids-Wyoming, MI	303	113.4	22.5%	26.1%	2.41
22	Mansfield, OH	25	9.4	22.1%	24.6%	2.24
23	Napa, CA	39	14.4	21.8%	25.5%	2.08
24	Cleveland, TN	24	9	21.5%	33.3%	2.28
25	Tuscaloosa, AL	50	18.3	21.4%	32.9%	2.09
26	Appleton, WI	67	25	21.4%	22.9%	2.33
27	Albany, OR	22	8.1	20.6%	24.7%	1.87
28	Danville, IL	11	4.3	20.5%	27.3%	2.09
29	Bowling Green, KY	38	13.9	20.2%	11.8%	2.09
30	Jackson, TN	34	12.6	20.1%	31.8%	1.99
31	Kingsport-Bristol-Bristol, TN-VA	56	20.8	19.9%	36.3%	2.04
32	Reading, PA	83	30.8	19.8%	21.1%	2.09
33	Green Bay, WI	84	31.8	19.8%	18.8%	2.11
34	Owensboro, KY	27	10.1	19.8%	33.9%	2.13
35	Wichita, KS	138	50.6	19.6%	30.7%	1.82
36	Longview, WA	19	7	19.4%	26.7%	1.1
37	Elizabethtown-Fort Knox, KY	22	8.1	19.4%	23.0%	1.72
38	Merced, CA	27	9.8	19.3%	15.8%	1.32
39	Anniston-Oxford-Jacksonville, AL	18	6.7	19.2%	28.3%	1.73
40	Jackson, MI	25	9.4	19.2%	22.8%	0.88
41	Walla Walla, WA	13	4.5	19.1%	14.7%	1.6
42	York-Hanover, PA	88	32.7	19.0%	21.0%	2.09
43	Lima, OH	22	8.4	19.0%	53.7%	2
44	Florence-Muscle Shoals, AL	23	8.5	18.8%	26.1%	1.77
45	Bloomington, IN	33	12.6	18.8%	24.6%	1.73
46	Hanford-Corcoran, CA	13	4.8	18.6%	15.9%	1.09
47	Fort Smith, AR-OK	49	18.4	18.5%	20.5%	1.9
48	Vineland-Bridgeton, NJ	24	8.8	18.2%	19.4%	1.66
49	Kankakee, IL	18	7	18.2%	42.1%	1.98
50	Kalamazoo-Portage, MI	66	24.3	18.1%	30.5%	1.91

*Sources of data.* Industrial Employment - U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), 2022 annual data; GDP - U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2021 data); Industrial location quotient - BLS; Industrial sales potential - Electrical Marketing sales estimates using sales-per-employee multipliers from Electrical Wholesaling's 2023 Market Planning Guide. Industrial multiplier - \$2,650 per industrial employee.

## Small But Mighty: The Metros Where Industrial Biz Rules

*Continued from page 1*

gas industry. You can visit the BLS website and download the oil & gas industry employment data and location quotients to see which counties, MSAs and states have a high proportion of oil & gas sales employment or companies compared to the national average. This data might help you concentrate your sales force's selling time in

the market areas with the highest LQs for the oil & gas market.

While local salespeople often know exactly where end-use markets are most concentrated, it's nice to have data to back up that intuition when you are working with regional managers who many not be familiar with your local market.

— Jim Lucy

## Amazon Sets 100% Renewable Energy Goal for Oregon Data Center Expansion

A recent post in at [www.datacenterfrontier.com](http://www.datacenterfrontier.com) highlighted just how much Amazon has invested in its data centers in Oregon and its commitment to working with the local community to build new facilities with an eye toward sustainability.

According to the post, "Amazon Web Services (AWS) says it has invested \$15 billion in its cloud cluster in Oregon, which has become the primary West Coast deployment zone for the AWS cloud platform. The company is continuing to expand in Oregon, with plans to build more data centers in Morrow County and billions of dollars of additional investment. As it grows, the huge cloud platform is pursuing new strategies to procure power with the necessary scale and sustainability.

A post on Amazon's website said the company recently partnered with Umatilla Electric Cooperative (UEC) — the electric cooperative serving AWS in Oregon's Umatilla and Morrow Counties — to create a solution that safely and reliably powers its data centers in the region and keeps Amazon on a path to achieving 100% renewable energy by 2025.

"The agreement allows Amazon to take on the responsibility of selecting the energy supply that powers its data center operations, including from renewable energy resources," the post said. "UEC continues to be an essential partner and provider of reliable utility service to AWS data centers in UEC's service territory. Amazon's energy supply from our utilities, combined with our renewable energy procurement across the United States, has enabled several AWS data center Regions — including its U.S. West (Oregon) Region—to be powered with at least 95% renewable energy.

"In addition to AWS investing over \$15 billion in the state economy since 2011 and recycling up to 96% of AWS cooling water to provide millions of gallons of water to local farmers each year, we're now able to directly invest in renewable energy across the Pacific Northwest to help power AWS operations in Oregon. We're grateful for the collaboration with UEC, which will help us stay on a path to meeting 100% renewable energy by 2025," said Charley Daitch, director of Energy and Water at AWS.

## Graybar to Buy Valin, Extending Reach into Mix of Automation & Industrial Businesses

Graybar Electric Co., St. Louis, has entered into an agreement to acquire Valin Corp., a distributor of automation, filtration, fluid handling, heating and process control products and systems..

Headquartered in San Jose, CA, Valin provides technical solutions for the technology, energy, life sciences, natural resources and transportation industries. The company was founded in 1974 and operates 12 locations in the western and southwestern United States. As a subsidiary of Graybar, the company will continue to operate under the Valin name with the same leadership team, employees and suppliers. The company is ranked #49

on *Industrial Distribution's* most recent Top 50 list with \$125 million in 2021 sales and 161 employees. Over the years, the company has made numerous acquisitions in various industrial markets, according to information on its website.

Over the past year, Graybar has been busy with acquisitions. It also purchased Walker Industrial Products, an automation distributor based in Newtown, CT; New England Drives & Controls, an automation distributor based in Southington, CT (through its Shingle & Gibb business); and CX Connexion, Buffalo Grove, IL, a full-line electrical distributor serving the Chicago metropolitan area.

## Around the Industry

*Continued from page 1*

PA, said member sales in the first three months of 2023 reached a new Q1 record of \$18.3 billion, an increase of +6% across 14 divisions and three countries. Purchases by member companies from AD suppliers reached \$4.63 billion. Net distributions to members grew +11% in the quarter to \$386.3 million. Same-store member sales increased +12%, led by +19% growth in AD's U.S. Electrical Division and its Bearings & Power Transmission Division. Same store sales were positive for every AD Division when measured in their own currency.

AD CEO Bill Weisberg said in the press release, "Just like other periods where there's been elevated consolidation activity, independents flourish. Plus, we welcomed 16 new independents to the AD community in the quarter, while existing AD members purchased an additional 14 companies."

### Codale opens Idaho branch

Codale Electric/Sonepar opened a new branch in Nampa, ID. "Idaho continues to be one of the fastest-growing markets in the United States," said Todd Saunders, president of Codale, in the press release. "We see a lot of commercial industry coming into the Boise market, which gives Codale a solid platform for growth."

"Codale is going through a digital transformation," said John Bennett, branch manager of the new Nampa store, in the release. "Along with the products and solutions our new physical branch brings in service to customers, we also aim to provide an omnichannel experience creating a seamless interaction with Codale," he added. "We can do business with them how, when and where they want — physical or digital."

The new Nampa, ID branch is located at 2619 Sundance Rd., Nampa, ID 83651.

Founded in 1975, Codale serves contractors, solar installers, industrial facilities and OEMs through 16 branches across Utah, Nevada, Wyoming and now Idaho.

### Construction job openings decline in March by 63,000

The construction industry had 341,000 job openings in March, according to an Associated Builders and Contractors analysis of data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS). JOLTS defines

*Continued on page 5*

## Industry Events

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)

Jan. 29- Feb. 1, 2024

**NEMRA Annual Conference**  
Dallas, National Electrical Manufacturers  
Representatives Association  
[www.nemra.org](http://www.nemra.org)

## Copper Market Continues to Perplex Industry Analyst with Pricing Momentum Running Counter to Demand

*Continued from page 1*

when copper seemed headed for \$5, peaking at \$4.94 on March 4, shortly after Russia invaded Ukraine. But since that time, China's economy has slowed down, and declines in U.S. building and real estate activity, troubled regional banks, rising interest rates and high vacancies in the commercial real estate sector pose additional threats.

Copper watchers have reigned in their growth forecasts, and Gross said the World Bank now expects copper to average \$3.86 in 2023 and fall to \$3.63 in 2024. "This outlook concurs with our Long-Term Copper

Study — not the price itself specifically, but rather in market direction," he said in his most recent report. "Considering the 2023 year-to-date average price through April is \$4.06, we may have already seen the highs, but the lows are nowhere in sight yet."

Along with publishing *The Copper Journal*, Gross also consults on price risk assessment, hedging strategies, assessing scrap metal value, as well as auditing and contract compliance. To purchase a \$295 annual subscription to *The Copper Journal*, or learn more about his other services, contact Gross at [johngross360@gmail.com](mailto:johngross360@gmail.com).

## NEMA's EBCI Index Sees Sizeable Drop in Current and Future Economic Outlook

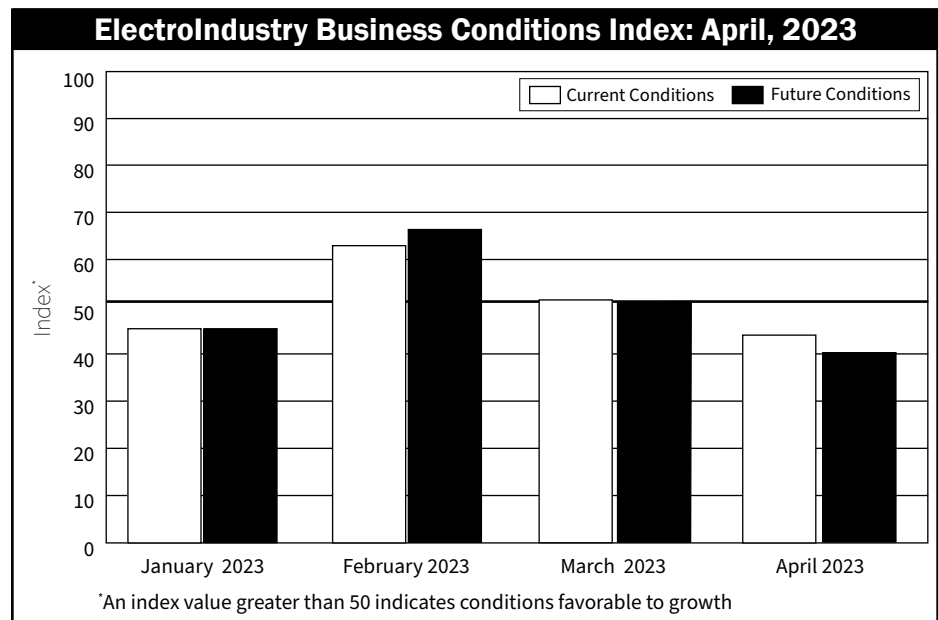
After a momentary bump into expansionary territory in February, followed by a brief hold at "unchanged" last month, the current conditions component signaled cooling in April with a nearly seven-point retreat to 43.3 points.

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 share of participants reporting "unchanged" conditions declined precipitously this month, and although several respondents noted "better" conditions, many more

indicated that conditions were "worse" in April. Comments displayed evidence of this dichotomy as one described "slowing demand across most segments," even as another declared "records and more records."

Following a similar path — from solidly expansionary two months ago, then remaining "unchanged" in March — the future conditions component also slid into the range suggesting a slowdown ahead. This change is marked by a 10-point drop, resulting in an April reading of 40 points. Although the data suggest a turbulent future, the comments received were, at worst mixed. They highlighted headwinds to an otherwise positive outlook, while also noting strong backlogs and an expected boost from infrastructure and efficiency spending.



# March Construction Spending Maintains Steady YTD Pace, Increasing +4.3%

Total construction spending during March 2023 was estimated at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$1,834.7 billion, +0.3% above the revised February estimate of \$1,829.6 billion. The U.S. Census Dept. said the March figure is +3.8% above the March 2022 estimate of \$1,768.2 billion. During the first three months of this year, construction spending amounted to \$403.3 billion, +4.3% above the \$386.7 billion for the same period in 2022.

**Private construction.** Spending on private construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$1,435.1 billion, +0.3% above the revised February estimate of \$1,430.8 billion and +1% above the March 2022 rate.

Residential construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$827.7 billion in March, -0.2% below the revised

February estimate of \$829.1 billion. Non-residential construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$607.4 billion in March, +1% above the revised February estimate of \$601.6 billion.

The Computer/electronic/electrical category continued its torrid pace, increasing +10.8% for the month to more than \$70 billion. That's up an amazing+179.2% over March 2022.

**Public construction.** In March, the estimated seasonally adjusted annual rate of public construction spending was \$399.6 billion, +0.2% above the revised February estimate of \$398.8 billion and +15% above the March 2022 rate. Educational construction was at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$86.9 billion, +0.7% above the revised February estimate of \$86.3 billion.

# Around the Industry

*Continued from page 1*

a job opening as any unfilled position for which an employer is actively recruiting. Industry job openings decreased by 63,000 last month and are down by 72,000 from the same time last year.

“The March JOLTS data indicate a significant decline in open positions in the construction industry,” said ABC Chief Economist Anirban Basu in the press release. “Job openings fell to their second-lowest level since mid-2021. The 3.7% of construction workers who were laid off or discharged in March is the highest rate since the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. The 9.6 million jobs openings in March across all industries was the lowest number since April 2021.

“Only 9.4% of ABC members expect their staffing levels to decrease over the next six months, according to ABC’s Construction Confidence Index,” said Basu. “Given this relatively upbeat outlook from ABC contractors and the fact that the residential segment lost jobs in March, weakness in the single-family homebuilding sector likely accounts for much of the decrease in job openings. With interest rates elevated and set to rise again at the Federal Reserve’s May meeting, these dynamics should remain firmly in place over the next few months.”

## City Electric Supply opens branch in fast-growing Spring Hill, TN

Thirty minutes outside of Nashville, Spring Hill, TN, is recognized as the fourth fastest-growing city in Tennessee, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. To help keep up with the development the area is seeing, City Electric Supply (CES) has opened a location in Spring Hill. The branch is open and ready to serve the community after a two-year long build out process.

The 9,800-sq-ft facility is complete, open and ready to serve the Spring Hill area. This electrical supply house is one of the first in the city and can be found off the Saturn Parkway. Anyone who drives by can see the building lit up on the hill.

Branch Manager Korey Harris said in the press release, “We’re here, we’re open and we’re in an amazing location. The parkway is right outside of our windows. At night, people can see our building lit up. We’re like a light on top of a hill, and the building does its own advertising that way.”

## Value Of New Construction Put In Place — March 2023

Value of Construction Put-in-Place (\$ billions, seasonally adjusted annual rate)					
	Mar. '23 <sub>1</sub>	Feb. '23 <sub>2</sub>	Mo. % Change	Mar. '22	YTY % Change
<b>Total Construction</b>	<b>1,834.7</b>	<b>1,829.6</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>1,768.2</b>	<b>3.8</b>
<b>Total Private Construction:</b>	<b>1,435.1</b>	<b>1,430.8</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>1,420.6</b>	<b>1.0</b>
Residential	827.7	829.1	-0.2	920.0	-10
New single family	366.3	369.2	-0.8	474.9	-22.9
New multifamily	123.2	122.8	0.4	100.2	23
Nonresidential	607.4	601.6	1	500.6	21.3
Lodging	22.0	22.0	0.3	15.9	38.9
Office	84.3	84.1	0.3	72.3	16.6
Commercial	121.0	122.0	-0.8	100.8	20.1
Health care	44.8	44.6	0.6	40.3	11.2
Educational	21.3	21.0	1.5	18.1	17.9
Religious	2.9	3.1	-4.1	2.9	2.4
Amusement and recreation	14.9	14.8	0.4	13.0	14.9
Transportation	19.2	19.4	-1.1	14.4	33.8
Communication	24.7	24.8	-0.5	23.5	4.8
Power	102.1	102.4	-0.3	107.1	-4.7
Electric	78.4	78.6	-0.2	82.9	-5.4
Manufacturing	147.0	140.6	4.6	90.4	62.5
<b>Total Public Construction</b>	<b>399.6</b>	<b>398.8</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>347.5</b>	<b>15</b>
Residential	9.9	9.8	0.8	9.0	9.7
Nonresidential	389.8	389.1	0.2	338.6	15.1
Office	12.9	13.1	-1.4	12.0	7.4
Commercial	4.4	4.4	0.7	3.5	25.7
Health care	11.8	12.0	-2.3	10.7	9.8
Educational	86.9	86.3	0.7	79.7	9.1
Public safety	11.2	11.6	-3.3	10.9	2.9
Amusement and recreation	14.4	14.4	-0.1	13.0	10.3
Transportation	42.0	42.7	-1.6	40.1	4.8
Power	11.6	11.7	-0.8	9.9	16.8
Highway and street	121.7	121.8	-0.1	100.2	21.4
Sewage and waste disposal	36.6	36.3	0.7	29.4	24.2
Water supply	23.8	23.5	1.1	19.0	25.5
Conservation and development	11.7	10.4	12.4	9.3	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>.

# People

*Gross Electric (Toledo, OH):* The American Lighting Association's Women in Lighting Committee has announced that **Laurie Gross**, president of Gross Electric and current chair of the ALA Board of Governors, will be the 2023 recipient of the Women in Lighting Leadership Award.

Known as a champion for the independent showroom channel, Gross has advocated for equitable business practices to enable brick-and-mortar retailers to compete in the industry's changing landscape. She has also exhibited leadership on behalf of women in the industry, appointing women to head up both Gross Electric's lighting showroom division and electrical supply division.

*Sonepar USA (North Charleston, SC):* **Reina Ohol** has been promoted from VP of Human Resources, Sonepar Canada, to Senior VP of Human Resources, Sonepar North America. She has more than over 20 years of HR experience and worked for companies in Australia, India and Canada in the hospitality, steel trading, healthcare and food industries. Ohol graduated from Griffith University in Australia with a bachelor's in business and a master's in business administration. She joined Sonepar Canada in Jan. 2019.

Gillian Gurney has been named Ohol's successor as VP of Human Resources, Sonepar Canada. Gillian previously worked for Canadian Tire, CGI, Sofina Foods and most recently Wild Fork Canada.

*American Lighting (Denver):* **Jennifer Kirkpatrick** was appointed director of sales and will be responsible for planning, implementing, managing and overseeing the company's overall sales strategy for lighting showrooms, Proluxe and Prizm Lighting.

She has spent the last 10 years working at American Lighting developing multiple sales channels throughout the organization and has been involved in project management, product development, marketing, rep management and developing strategies for ongoing sales growth.

*EiKO Global (Olathe, KS):* The company appointed two senior executives. **Matt Johnson** has been named CEO and **Rick Laird** is now president of North American operations. Prior to joining EiKO Global, Johnson was the COO of Pep Boys, where he led operations, supply chain, merchandising and project management. Prior to Pep Boys, he served as COO and executive VP for Parts Authority, a distributor of automotive replacement parts, tools/equipment and transmissions.

Laird has over three decades of lighting experience, including a prior senior executive stint at EiKO. He began his lighting career at Philips Lighting in 1990, moved to Osram Sylvania in 1995, and joined EiKO in 2007. He also led the EiKO business in 2017, taking the helm from Gary Withers, EiKO's founder and then CEO. After a short time away from the company, Laird is now working with Johnson and the executive leadership team to continue to grow the business and take the company to the next level.

*Motion Industries, (Birmingham, AL):* **Patrick Cummings** was promoted to senior VP and CFO. He joined Motion in 2012 as VP of Corporate Compliance. Since then, he held the position of U.S. controller before becoming VP of Financial Planning & Analysis. Cummings graduated from the University of Alabama at Birmingham with a bachelor's of science in accounting. He began his career with Ernst & Young.

## Rep News

**Lester Sales Co.**, Indianapolis, has converted to an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) as of April 14. Throughout the formation process, the company worked in tandem with ESOP Advisory firm, Lazear Capital Partners.

Lester Sales was founded in 1958 by Ernie Lester and was purchased by John Scott in 2012. Under his leadership, the company has continued to carry on Lester's legacy by building a foundation of strong relationships with employees, manufacturers and customers. In a recent address to the Lester team, Scott said, "Our goal has always been to reward the dedicated employees that built Lester Sales and to provide a sustainable, professional sales organization for our vendor and distributor partners. The conversion to an ESOP accomplishes both of those missions as well as offering a significant benefit to attract and retain talent."

Lester Sales Co. will continue operations as usual with no changes to its services or leadership team. John Scott will continue as CEO and Rick Gill is president.

Craig Schell has assumed the day-to-day sales leadership and management responsibility for **JD Martin's** Beaumont/Port Arthur/Orange Texas market in the Houston Territory, according to a Linke-

dIn post. He is a senior member of the JD Martin leadership team.

**Donald J. Hickey & Associates** now represents Penn Aluminum Conduit & EMT in Michigan, according to a LinkedIn post.

**Electra Sales**, Dallas, has expanded its existing relationship with Delta-Therm to now include Oklahoma. Electra Sales has been representing Delta-Therm in north Texas since 2017 and is excited to bring Delta-Therm's electric heat tracing solutions to customers in Oklahoma as well. The company began representing Delta-Therm in Oklahoma on May 1.

Electra Sales is a manufacturers' representative serving the electrical industry in northern Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, northern Mississippi and northwest Louisiana. The company has served its customers for 45 years.

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