Electrical Marketing®

THE ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 20, 2024 · Volume 49, Number 24

Around the Industry

Irby buys Irish provider of broadband software solutions

Irby Utilities/Sonepar, Jackson, MS, acquired the software capabilities of Azotel Technologies Ltd. Sonepar said in an Instagram post that the platform of the Cork, Ireland-based Azotel was built specifically for broadband providers and allows them to manage back-office operations like customer support, billing and invoicing and network monitoring all in one place. By bringing this technology in-house, Irby wants to stand out as a one-stop-shop from design all the way through active end user service and support.

According to the Azotel website, the company was founded as an Internet Service Provider (Amocom) in 2002. "When setting up our network, we found that while there was excellent radio equipment available from a number of vendors, a comprehensive management system didn't exist," the post said. "So, we started developing our own software internally, to help us run our own network."

CES opens sixth fulfillment center in North America, first in Canada

City Electric Supply (CES), Dallas, opened its sixth fulfillment center in North America and its first fulfillment facility in Canada. Located in Toronto, Ontario, the new fulfillment center will help optimize logistics processes and enhance the company's ability to deliver products to branches and customers, according to the CES press release.

"Toronto was an important addition to the CES network," Director of CES Online North America Rich Antonaros said in the

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Inside

An Endeavor Business Media publication. Publishers of *Electrical Wholesaling* and *EC&M* magazines.

Pace of Distributor M&As Picks Up in 2024 as 11 *EW* Top 100 Companies are Acquired

During 2024, no less than 20 distributors of electrical supplies were acquired. At least 11 of these distributors are on *EW's* 2024 Top 100 distributors listing.

The chart on page 2 lists the largest distributor M&As in 2024. The five largest distributors in the United States and Canada — WESCO, Sonepar, Graybar, Rexel and Consolidated Electrical Distributors — were active acquirers in 2024, with Sonepar leading the pack with seven acquisitions. Its largest purchase was Summit Electric Supply, Albuquerque, NM, and its 23 locations throughout the New Mexico, Arizona, Texas and Louisiana.

The *EW* Top 100 electrical distributors acquired during 2024 included Summit Electric Supply; Dominion Electric Supply, Arlington, VA (Border States Electric, Fargo, NC); Parrish-Hare Electrical Supply (Consolidated Electrical Distributors, Irving, TX); Electrical Supplies Inc., Miami (Mayer Electric Supply/Rexel), Birmingham, AL; and Blazer Electric Supply, Colorado Springs, CO (Graybar Electric Co, St. Louis, MO).

Sonepar's other Top 100 purchases included Echo Electric Supply, Council Bluffs, IA; Madison Electric Co., Warren, MI; Standard Electric Supply, Saginaw, MI; and Electric Supply Center, Burlington, MA.

U.S. Electric Services (owned by CED), Middletown, CT, was also an active acquirer, buying Askco Electric Supply, Glens Falls, NY; and Desert Electric Supply, Palm Springs, CA, and Pomona Electric Supply, Pomona, CA, through its Walters Wholesale Electric business located in Brea, CA.

United Electric Supply, Wilmington, DE, also bought a Top 100 distributor with its acquisition of Kovalsky-Carr Electric, Rochester, NY. Several other acquisitions of interest included the sale of Indepen-

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S&P Global Commodity Insight's Outlook on the 2025 Global Energy Market

Analysts at S&P Global Commodity Insights, a provider of information, data, analysis, benchmark prices and workflow solutions for the commodities and energy transition markets,recently released their 2025 energy outlook. Energy is a key market for the electrical wholesaling industry, providing electrical manufacturers, distributors, independent manufacturers' reps, electrical contractors and other electrical professionals with revenue opportunities in the construction of resources and support facilities for oil and gas, renewables and the national electrical grid.

We are delighted to be able to provide the following excerpt of the Outlook to Electrical Marketing subscribers.

Dave Ernsberger, co-president, S&P Global Commodity Insights, said in the Outlook that there is more uncertainty in energy markets heading into a new year than any year since the pandemic. "There are emerging technological and fundamental trends that will clearly have an impact on markets over the coming year, although how significant their impact will be is uncertain," he said.

Added Mark Eramo, co-president, S&P Global Commodity Insights, in the release, "Fossil fuel prices in 2025 will be shaped by how markets adjust to growing supply and generally soft demand growth."

S&P analysts wrote in the report, "Conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza remain unresolved and have the potential to significantly alter energy markets. Polarization and geopolitical rivalry between China and the West are becoming more pronounced. China is leveraging its leading position in clean technology for greater global influence, while the United States and Europe enhance tariffs to protect domestic industry. The election of Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency adds further uncertainty to geopolitics and raises question about U.S. participation in the already

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Electrical Distributor Acquisitions: 2023 & 2024				
Company	**Location**	**Acquirer**	**City/Town**	**Year**
Midland Electric Supply	Indianapolis, IN	Allied Wholesale	Indianapolis, IN	2024
Carolina Electric Supply Co. (CESCO)	Rock Hill, SC	Atlantic Coast Electric Supply	Summerville, SC	2024
Dominion Electric Supply*	Arlington, VA	Border States Electric	Fargo, ND	2024
Winston Engineering	West Hollywood, CA	Border States Electric	Fargo, ND	2024
Power Supply Co.	Chattanooga, TN	Cape Electrical Supply/Graybar	Cape Girardeau/ St. Louis, MO	2024
ATI Electrical Supply*	Pompano Beach, FL	Connecticut Electric	Anderson, IN	2024
Bayou Electric	New Iberia, LA	Consolidated Electrical Distributors (CED)	Irving. TX	2024
Parrish-Hare Electrical Supply*	Irving, TX	Consolidated Electrical Distributors (CED)	Irving, TX	2024
Independent Electric Supply	Toronto, ON	EECOL Electric Corp./WESCO	Calgary, AB	2024
Greenleaf Energy Systems	Oxford, CT	Facility Solutions Group	Austin, TX	2024
Barre Electric & Lighting Supply	Barre, VT	Granite City Electric Supply Co.	Quincy, MA	2024
Blazer Electric Supply*	Colorado Springs, CO	Graybar Electric Co.	St. Louis, MO	2024
Walsh Electric Supply Co.	Colchester, VT	Green Mountain Electric Supply	Colchester, VT	2024
CIM System Robotics	Noblesville, IN	Kirby Risk	Lafayette, IN	2024
Electrical Supplies Inc.*	Miami, FL	Mayer Electric Supply/Rexel	Dallas, TX	2024
Allied Circuits	Buffalo, NY	Motion Industries	Birmingham, AL	2024
Grove Electric & Lighting Supply	Rove, OK	Raven Resources	Dallas, TX	2024
Talley Inc.	Los Angeles, CA	Rexel USA	Dallas, TX	2024
Summit Electric Supply*	Albuquerque, NM	Sonepar North America	North Charleston, SC	2024
Echo Electric Supply*	Council Bluffs, IA	Sonepar North America	North Charleston, SC	2024
Robertson Electric Wholesale Supply	Vaughan, ON	Sonepar North America	North Charleston, SC	2024
Electrozad	Windsor, ON	Sonepar North America	North Charleston, SC	2024
Madison Electric Co.*	Warren, MI	Sonepar North America	North Charleston, SC	2024
Standard Electric Co.*	Saginaw, MI	Sonepar North America	North Charleston, SC	2024
Electric Supply Center (ESC)	Burlington, MA	Sonepar North America	North Charleston, SC	2024
Askco Electric Supply	Glens Falls, NY	U.S. Electrical Services	Middletown, CT	2024
Kovalsky-Carr Electric Co.	Rochester, NY	United Electric Supply	Wilmington, DE	2024
WESCO's Integrated Supply Business (WIS)	Pittsburgh, PA	Vallen Distribution	Belmont, NC	2024
Desert Electric Supply*	Palm Springs, CA	Walters Wholesale Electric/ U.S. Electrical Services	Brea, CA	2024
Pomona Electric Supply	Pomona, CA	Walters Wholesale Electric/ U.S. Electrical Services	Brea, CA	2024
Ascent	St. Louis, MO	WESCO International Inc.	Pittsburgh, PA	2024
entroCIM	Port Huron, MI	WESCO International Inc.	Pittsburgh, PA	2024
Company	**Location**	**Acquirer**	**City/Town**	**Year**
Crush Bearings & Drives	Lexington, KY	CBT	Cincinnati, OH	2023
Warshaw Supply	Queens, NY	Dunes Point Capital	Rye, NY	2023
Automated Controls & Electrical Supply	Richmond, IN	Eckart Supply	Corydon, IN	2023
Electrical Supplies Unlimited	Buford, GA	Eckart Supply	Corydon, IN	2023
Frontier Lighting	Clearwater, FL	Electric Supply Inc.	Tampa, FL	2023
Lighting Maintenance Inc.	Valley Cottage, NY	Facility Solutions Group (FSG)	Austin, TX	2023
Valin Corp.	San Jose, CA	Graybar Electric Co.	St. Louis, MO	2023
Shepherd Electric Supply*	Baltimore, MD	Graybar Electric Co.	St. Louis, MO	2023
Atlantic Electric Supply	Shrewsbury, MA	Green Mountain Electric Supply	Colchester, VT	2023
Republic	Peoria, IL	Greycliff Partners	New York, NY	2023
Morrell Group	Indianapolis, IN	Platte River Equity/ Womack Machine Supply Co.	Dallas, TX	2023
Wasco	Amsterdam, Netherlands	Rexel	Paris, France	2023
Buckles-Smith*	Santa Clara, CA	Rexel	Dallas, TX	2023
Teche Electric*	Lafayette, LA	Rexel	Dallas, TX	2023
Clarion Electric Supply	Clarion, PA	Schaedler/YESCO	Harrisburg, PA	2023
Butler's Electric Supply	Wilmington, NC	Sonepar North America/ Capital Electric	Charleston, SC	2023
Billows Supply*	Philadelphia, PA	Sonepar North America/ Cooper Electric Supply	Cranbury, NJ	2023
Sunrise Electric Supply*	Addison, IL	Sonepar North America/ Viking Electric Supply	St. Paul, MN	2023
Electric Supply of Tampa (ESI)*	Tampa, FL	Sonepar North America/ World Electric Supply	North Charleston, SC	2023
Alliantz	Narbonne, France	Sonepar SA	Paris, France	2023
Stearns Supply	North Vernon, IN	Wiseway Supply	Florence, KY	2023

Notes. * = EW Top 150 distributor. Most acquisition information comes directly from one or both of the companies involved, Linkedin posts, or responses to Electrical Wholesaling's most recent Top 150 listing of the largest distributors. www.electricaltrends.com and www.insidelighting.com are also excellent sources of information for the latest acquisitions. Electrical Marketing subscribers can download a database of more than 600 electrical distributor acquisitions going back to the 1990s at www.electricalmarketing.com.

Distributors Buy a Mix of Full-Line Wholesalers & Specialists in Adjacent Industries

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dent Electric Supply, Toronto, Ontario, one of Canada's larger independents by EECO Electric Co./WESCO; and the Austin, TX-based Facility Solution Group's acquisition of an ESCO, Greenleaf Energy Systems, Oxford, CT. Another active acquirer over the past few years, Green Mountain Electric Supply, Colchester, VT, bought Walsh Electric Supply Co., also based in Colchester.

This year WESCO made some purchases outside the core electrical market to bolster its position in data center supply services, with its acquisition of the St. Louis, MO-based Ascent, a provider of data center facility management services and entroCIM, Port Huron, MI, a developer of data center and building intelligence software. The company bought another data center service provider in 2022, Rahi Systems, Fremont, CA.

— Jim Lucy

Google Plans to Co-Invest $20 Billion in Data Centers with On-Site Renewable Power

In what may be the largest example of the trend toward co-locating power-hungry data centers right next to their power sources, on Dec. 10 Google announced a strategic partnership with Intersect Power and TPG Rise Climate to develop industrial parks with gigawatts of data center capacity co-located with new clean energy plants to power them.

The first phase of the project is expected to be operational by 2026 and fully complete in 2027. Additionally, Google, TPG Rise Climate and other investors are making a capital investment in Intersect Power. A post on a Google internal blog said:

"America's electricity grid planning and investment have not kept pace with the country's economic growth opportunity. Many regional grids face generation capacity and transmission bottlenecks, leaving them unable to accommodate load increases. As a result, for U.S. power projects, the typical time from proposal to construction has more than doubled, from less than two years for projects built in 2000-2007 to more than four years for those built in 2018-2023.

"To address these grid constraints, Google's partnership with Intersect Power and TPG Rise Climate will deliver new clean energy that is purpose-built and right-sized for the data center. When Intersect Power builds new clean energy assets in regions and projects of interest, Google will be able to provide power offtake as an anchor tenant in the co-located industrial park that would support data center development. Once built, this means the Google data center would come online alongside its own clean power, bringing new generation capacity to the grid to meet our load, reduce time to operation and improve grid reliability."

A post at *www.carboncredits.com* said in part, "The core idea behind Google and Intersect Power's collaboration is the development of energy parks. They are large-scale, co-located renewable energy facilities designed to serve the dual purpose of powering data centers and contributing to the broader power grid.

"These energy parks will combine solar power generation with storage solutions, enabling Google's data centers to operate on clean energy. More importantly, the energy parks can also feed excess electricity into the grid, helping to stabilize the energy supply and provide power for other needs."

An Intersect Power press statement said the strategic partnership between it, TPG Rise Climate and Google will provide lower cost power for Google data centers by generating it on-site. "By co-locating data center load with large amounts of high capacity factor, low-cost, clean electricity and added battery storage, data centers can achieve high percentages of renewable energy while reducing the transmission required to connect generation to load over longer distances."

"To realize AI's potential, the growth in electricity demand must be met with new, clean power sources. The scale of AI presents an opportunity to completely rethink data center development — by co-locating them where possible with the grid-connected carbon-free energy that keeps them up and running," added Amanda Peterson Corio, global head of Data Center Energy at Google, in the release. "We're bringing this opportunity to life by combining pioneers at the intersection of data centers and clean energy development to synchronize load growth with new power generation in a novel way. We hope to replicate this model in multiple markets across the U.S. and around the world."

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press release. "After evaluating factors like branch density and logistics, it became clear that this new center would improve the company's ability to service its northern branches quickly."

The Toronto fulfillment center joins the CES network of strategically placed facilities, including those in Jacksonville, FL; Charlotte, NC; Fort Worth, TX; Las Vegas, NV; and Indianapolis, IN. These fulfillment centers ensure CES can consistently fulfill orders within a single day, reinforcing the company promise that "same day is better than next day."

Spanning 157,000 sq ft, the Toronto facility is the largest CES fulfillment center to date. Fulfillment centers have proven to be pivotal in the growth of CES, with branches using the first center seeing 47% faster growth within the first year.

The plan is not solely to continue building fulfillment centers across North America, but to also continue innovation with each additional location. The new facility in Toronto is equipped with cutting-edge automation designed to streamline operations, reduce errors and accelerate order processing.

"These centers are hubs of innovation and we're working on even more enhancements, including an automated wire machine that will be introduced by early 2025," Antonaros said in the release. "This will significantly increase production capacity and ensure that CES can maintain our commitment to quick turnaround times."

In addition to automation, CES has consolidated its vendor base for key products, bringing much of the supply chain for items like boxes, covers and fittings in-house through TAMCO Group — the company that houses the in-house brands of CES. This strategic move enables CES to respond more rapidly to the needs of its branches and customers.

"Our goal is to make sure no branch is more than a day away from the product it needs," said Antonaros. "We're working to continuously improve our product and service to the customer. That is something we preach and live by. We always listen to feedback and apply it to identify new value-added services.

"Local branches are the reason we do what we do. They're why our business is as successful as it is, and that it continues to grow at the pace it does."

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S&P Global Insights Forecasts Growth in LNG Plants, Data Centers & AI

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weakened Paris Agreement and the UN Conference of Parties (COP) process, as well as question about U.S. foreign policy and energy objectives.

Rapid growth of artificial intelligence is accelerating power demand for data centers, although the timing, tenor and location of the resulting incremental demand is somewhat difficult to predict. The potential boom in electricity demand has already revived interest in nuclear power, but despite the backing from big technology firms, it is uncertain whether a nuclear renaissance will occur.

For oil, OPEC+ has stated ambitions to bring supply back to the market, although after delaying its plan to unwind production cuts three times, it is uncertain if it will be able to bring any supply back in 2025 without pushing crude prices below $70 per barrel (/b).

Similarly, another wave of North American liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply will begin to hit the market in earnest in 2025, weakening global LNG prices, but boosting U.S. gas prices, although the timing of project completion and the degree of producer foresight to ramp up supply ahead of the surge will ultimately determine the relative impact. Some important energy commodities are at or approaching global demand peaks resulting in difficult choices for certain industries, like refining, as they adjust to changing market dynamics.

Back to the future: Trump's second term could have large impacts on policy and markets. With the election of Donald Trump to a second presidency of the United States, expect a scene shift to a very different path for energy and climate policy than the four-year Biden presidency. Based on actions from the prior Trump administration, statements made during the election campaign trail, and recommendations of the Project 2025 report, the second Trump administration will likely look to pull the United States out of the Paris Agreement, rescind and redraft existing vehicle emission regulations, weaken methane regulations and reduce support for electric vehicle (EV) adoption.

We expect the Trump administration to grant export approvals to all pending LNG export projects which could support final investment decisions (FIDs) in the second half of 2025. While a complete repeal of the Biden administration's signature Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) is unlikely given Senate filibuster rules, the Republican Congressional majority can and likely will leverage the budget reconciliation process to at least repeal parts of the IRA.

The change in U.S. administration also raises questions regarding US foreign policy that may impact energy markets, specifically the ongoing conflicts in Russia/Ukraine and the Middle East, as well as the implementation of sanctions on Iranian oil exports. Also, President-elect Trump has pledged to implement and raise tariffs on imports from several countries, but China in particular, which, if implemented, would have outsized influence on the United States, Chinese, and global economy. The first Trump administration proved to be unpredictable, and market players will need to be nimble when the second Trump administration begins in January.

Total energy demand growth will outstrip clean energy supply growth, pushing emissions higher. Aside from the pandemic and other significant economic recessions, there has never been a year in which clean energy supply (wind, solar, hydro, other renewables and nuclear) growth exceeded total demand growth, resulting in a reduction in fossil fuel use. Making matters even more challenging is that total primary energy demand has been growing above trend since the pandemic and growth will remain robust in 2025.

Between 2000-2019, primary energy demand increased on average by 5.4 million barrels of oil equivalent per day (BOE/D). S&P Global Commodity Insights projects that primary energy demand will increase by approximately nine million BOE/D in 2024 and will grow by more than eight million BOE/D in 2025. While the supply of clean energy is growing faster than it ever has in history (over five million BOE/D), it is not yet fast enough to curtail the growth in fossil fuel demand, let alone displace existing fossil fuel consumption.

As a result, demand for fossil fuels is expected to increase by more than three million BOE/D in 2025, and CO_2 emissions associated with fossil fuel combustion will reach a new record high, although it will be the smallest increase since the pandemic.

AI and data centers will spark a new era for electricity consumption. While a widening adoption of AI and an expanding fleet of data centers are not new, an expected acceleration of both will fundamentally alter the trajectory of global power demand. S&P Global Commodity Insights expects that power demand for data centers will grow between +10% to +15% per year between now and 2030, and that data centers could account for up to +5% of total global power demand by 2030.

In the developed economies of North America, Europe and Asia, where power demand has been flat or has even fallen in recent years, data centers represent a shift to +2% to +3% growth. In developing economies, incremental datacenter demand will add to already robust electricity demand growth.

In both cases, this enhanced level of growth offers challenges to electricity grids as new data center projects take, on average, two to three years from inception to commercial launch, while new power supply can take four to five years or more and transmission projects even longer.

While large technology companies have led the way in terms of clean energy procurement to feed their data centers, oftentimes this syphons clean power away from the grid at large. This may require additional gas-fired generation capacity to be built, or to keep aging coal-fired generation capacity online longer than originally planned.

Nuclear energy may make a comeback. Nuclear energy has been showing signs of gaining traction in energy markets, especially in North America. The technology has a proven track-record as being a reliable, stable, and carbon free source of electricity for decades and is increasingly being looked at as an option for growing electricity demand as companies try to decarbonize their portfolio. Microsoft, Google and Amazon all signed power purchase agreements in 2024 totaling more than three gigawatts (GW) tied to nuclear capacity to help feed growing demand from data centers.

Restarting previously-retired large-scale reactors has gained traction with Holtec International aiming to restart the Palisades nuclear plant (Michigan) sometime in 2025. Constellation is working to restart their Three Mile Island plant (Pennsylvania) to help meet growing demand, supported by Microsoft in the PPA. This year also marked the first new large-scale nuclear plant commissioned in North America since the mid-1990s with the startup of the Vogtle plant in Georgia.

Although the new plant marks a milestone in nuclear capacity additions, many point to the cost of more than $36 billion for the two new units (more than double the projected cost) as an indication that nuclear power remains an outsider for significant consid-

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eration in terms of new capacity additions to support the energy transition in North America, although China continues to grow nuclear capacity significantly.

Some interest from big technology companies in securing nuclear energy has been geared toward the development of small modular reactors (SMRs). While this technology is still fairly nascent and will not impact energy balances over the next year, the level of interest and development of SMRs in 2025 will be a key indicator of the likelihood and potential magnitude of a nuclear renaissance.

Key projects to monitor in 2025 are the Linglong-1 power plant in Hainan China, which would be the first commercial onshore SMR to go online (schedule for 2026) and the X-energy SMR project at Dow Chemical's petrochemical manufacturing site in Seadrift, TX, which would provide both power and heat for the facility. Success at this facility which would represent a significant milestone in the efforts to decarbonize downstream chemical operations.

The clean technology race - China accelerates while the West taps the brakes. China's position as the preeminent superpower in the clean technology space is not new, as it already is the largest producer and consumer of electric vehicles, batteries, solar panels, wind turbines and green hydrogen electrolyzers.

However, while deployment of clean energy technology continues to accelerate in China, the deployment of clean technologies is facing considerable headwinds in the West, not least due to pledges from U.S. President-elect Trump to roll back subsidy provisions in the IRA, and already-reduced subsidies in parts of Europe.

China is leveraging its cleantech industry to reduce its fossil fuel demand (particularly of imported fossil fuels). As China's EV sales penetration is pushing above 50% of all light-duty vehicles sold, S&P projects that China's oil demand for passenger vehicles will begin to decline in 2025. At the same time, China's EV exports are helping countries electrify transport, particularly countries that are net oil importers, have no sizeable domestic vehicle brands, and have a general favorable public opinion of China.

Outside of Southeast Asia, Brazil has already become one of the top importers of Chinese EVs, and two major Chinese EV producers BYD and Great Wall have made very public significant investments in EV manufacturing in Brazil. Additionally, China's rapid growth of renewables generation is limiting growth of domestic coal and natural gas demand, and its 200-plus GW per year of solar panel exports is having a similar deflationary impact on fossil fuel demand elsewhere and is an influence in the rest of the world. 2025 likely will be highlighted by an even greater degree of polarization of clean technology between China and the West.

OPEC+ is caught between a rock and a hard place. OPEC+ has been in a difficult position for several years to achieve its objectives of moderately high prices and increased production volumes. Due to strong oil production growth in the Americas (primarily the United States, but also Canada, Guyana, and Brazil) and decelerating oil demand growth, OPEC+ (or a subset of its membership) has cut oil supply four times since 2022, only to see prices continue to generally weaken.

In early June, OPEC+ decided to begin a year-long process of gradually raising production that would start in Oct. 2024, attempting to bring back supply without overly deflating prices — a theme we call "thread the needle." However, the group has consistently stated that these plans are subject to change, particularly if market conditions are not supportive of such a move.

In S&P's view, OPEC+ will find it difficult to increase supply at all in 2025 without notably weighing on prices since non-OPEC production growth is expected to be greater than total global oil demand growth.

The next wave of LNG exports could rock the US domestic gas market boat. The global LNG market is poised for significant change in 2025 after two years of relatively limited growth, as total trade grew only 10 million metric tons (3%) relative to 2022 levels by 2024. The next major wave of supply starts in 2025 and will be kicked off from new liquefaction capacity coming online in North America. Of the 27 million metric tons of new supply expected in 2025, nearly 90% is expected from North America.

According to public statements, facilities such as Corpus Christi Stage 3, Plaquemines LNG, LNG Canada and Costa Azul LNG are all expected to ramp up throughout 2025. The uptick in exports will put significant strain on the domestic US natural gas market as feedgas demand picks up faster than production can respond.

This is likely to pull inventories back into a relative deficit compared to five-year average levels throughout most of the year and put upward pressure on cash prices across the country, although higher prices are expected especially along the Gulf Coast.

Uncertainty about whether coal consumption will start to decline in 2025. Despite renewables installations consistently hitting new record levels, global coal demand has continued to grow, hitting new records in both 2023 and 2024. Even in China, where wind and solar installations have been approximately 300GW in both 2023 and 2024, coal-fired generation has hit new record highs in both years.

Strong electricity load growth, aided by rapidly expanding power demand for data centers and EV charging have surpassed the tremendous growth in renewables, increasing the call on fossil fuels. In 2025, S&P Global Commodity Insights expects that Chinese renewable installations will slow slightly, but remain well above 250GW, and coal-fired generation in China will once again be higher year on year and hit a new record.

In several other developing economies, coal demand will continue to move higher in 2025, but most notably in India, where the growth in renewables supply is dwarfed by growth in electricity demand. Despite over a decade of consistent declines, coal demand in the United States is expected to rebound significantly in 2025. Heightened U.S. LNG exports will pull on domestic natural gas supply, and push prices higher, which should spur some gas-to-coal switching.

As China represents nearly 60% of global coal consumption, if coal demand in China indeed grows again, demand in developing nations remains on its upward trajectory, and demand in the United States temporarily rebounds, it is highly likely that global coal demand will once again paint a new record higher, even if demand in Europe and other developed economies contracts in 2025.

Dan Klein, head of Future Energy Pathways, S&P Global Commodity Insights, said in the S&P Outlook, "How governments, companies, and consumers react to uncertainty and emerging trends will be crucial for 2025 outcomes and will also serve as a key signpost for the success of the energy transition and meeting decarbonization goals."

For more information on S&P Global Insights' data for credit ratings, benchmarks, analytics and workflow solutions visit www.spglobal.com/commodityinsights.com

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Industry Events

January 13-15, 2025
NAED Western Conference
Palm Desert, CA; National Association of Electrical Distributors (NAED); *www.naed.org*

January 27-29, 2025
2025 NAW Annual Conference
Washington, DC; National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors (NAW); *www.nemra.org*

February 2-5, 2025
2025 NEMRA Conference
Orlando; NEMRA; *www.nemra.org*

February 17-19, 2025
NAED Eastern Conference
Tampa, FL; NAED; *www.naed.org*

March 18-19, 2025
LEDucation 2025
New York; www.leducation.org

May 4-8, 2025
Lightfair 2025 Conference
Las Vegas; lightfair.us.messefrankfurt.com/us/en.html

June 2-4, 2025
Women in Industry Forum
Orlando, FL; NAED; www.naed.org

June 19-22, 2025
Lake Michigan Club
Lake Geneva, WI; NAED; www.naed.org

July 19-22, 2025
EASA Convention & Solutions Expo
Nashville, TN; www.easa.com/convention

Sept. 12-15, 2025
NECA Convention & Trade Show
Chicago, IL; www.necanet.org

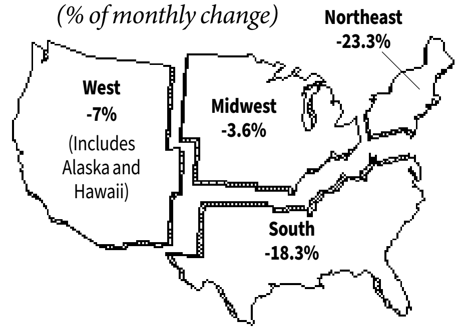
Oct.19-22, 2025
NALMCO 2025 Annual Convention & Trade Show
Des Moines, IA; ww.nalmco.org

Single-Family Housing Starts Surge in November But Multi-Family Starts Drop -24.1% MTM

Privately-owned housing starts in November were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,289,000, -1.8% below the revised October estimate of 1,312,000, and -14.6% below the November 2023 rate of 1,510,000. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, single-family housing starts in November were at a rate of 1,011,000, +6.4% above the revised October figure of 950,000.

"NAHB is forecasting single-family starts to post a slight increase in 2025 as the financing conditions for builders improve modestly," said Robert Dietz, chief economist for the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) in the press release. "The significant decline for apartment construction is forecasted to end, with that market stabilizing during the second half of next year."

Housing Starts by Region
(% of monthly change)



New Privately Owned Housing Units Started

(Thousands of units, seasonally adjusted annual rate)

Period	Total	1 Unit	5 Units or more	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Nov. 2024[1]	1,289	1,011	264	46	132	621	212
Oct. 2024[2]	1,312	950	348	60	137	525	228
Sept. 2024[2]	1,355	1,045	295	94	131	594	226
Aug. 2024	1,379	1,006	339	85	137	564	220
July 2024	1,262	861	376	57	128	465	211
June 2024	1,329	983	329	71	112	598	202
Nov. 2023	1,510	1,126	371	72	168	631	255

1-Preliminary; 2-Revised; Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

November EPI Data Shows Prices Cooling

EM's Electrical Price Index (EPI) cooled in November, with the Total Index rate-of-change declining on both a month-to-month (MTM) and year-over-year (YOY) basis.

Prices as measured by *EM's* Total Index dropped -0.2% MTM and -2.4% YOY. Industrial fixtures bucked these declines with a +1.4% increase MTM and +4.2% increase YOY. Building Wire & Cable (+7.2% YOY) and Transformers (+5.6% YOY) were up the most YOY.

Note: All EPI series represent IHS Markit aggregates of Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) producer price indices (PPIs). The revised data partly reflect redefinitions of specific PPIs by the BLS, but mostly reflect the rebenchmarking of all EPI price series to a 2012 base year. The four following EPI series have been affected by BLS redefinitions: boxes, conduit (fittings), nonmetallic conduit, and generators. Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; S&P Global

Electrical Price Index — November 2024

2012=100	Nov. 2024	Oct. 2024	Nov. 2023	% Change 1 Mo.	% Change 1 Yr.
Building Wire & Cable	276.8	279.1	258.3	-0.9	7.2
Power Wire & Cable	487.7	489.6	488.4	-0.4	-0.1
Telephone	248.9	251.4	232.9	-1	6.9
Hand & Power Tools	167.4	167.4	167.4	0	0
Elec. Heating Equip.	194.4	194.4	187.4	0	3.8
Residential Lighting	181	181	178.4	0	1.5
Industrial Fixtures	180.9	178.4	173.6	1.4	4.2
Fans & Blowers	210.8	211.1	208.3	-0.1	1.2
Wiring Devices & Connectors	201.5	201.2	201.4	0.1	0
Pole Line Hardware	238.2	240.3	255.2	-0.9	-6.7
Boxes	250.5	251.3	268.7	-0.3	-6.8
Conduit Fittings	242.5	242.5	242.5	0	0
Metal Conduit	270.3	270.6	274.8	-0.1	-1.6
Nonmetallic Conduit	249.6	249.6	249.6	0	0
Motors	212.6	212.6	209.1	0	1.7
Generators	208.8	204.9	201.3	1.9	3.8
Ballasts	231.7	231.7	224.5	0	3.2
Elect. Meas. & Integ. Inst.	148	147.7	144.4	0.2	2.5
Transformers	184.9	183.3	175.1	0.9	5.6
Panelboards & Switches	238.2	237.6	230	0.2	3.6
Circuit Breakers	248.9	249	237.4	0	4.9
Switchgear	264.5	263.9	254.2	0.2	4.1
Fuses	238.3	238.3	226.2	0	5.3
Industrial Controls	227.3	227.3	216.5	0	5
Lamps	203.2	203.2	203.1	0	0
Appliances	139.2	139.7	140.8	-0.3	-1.1
Air Conditioners	212.7	215.5	211.6	-1.3	0.5
Fasteners	219.9	218	217.8	0.9	1
Total Index	**210.4**	**210.7**	**205.3**	**-0.2**	**2.5**

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Electrical Marketing's Leading Economic Indicators

Building permits see nice bump in November. Privately-owned housing units authorized by building permits in November were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,505,000, + 6.1% above the revised October rate of 1,419,000, but -0.2% below the November 2023 rate of 1,508,000.

The latest housing data from the U.S. Census Bureau showed that single-family authorizations in November were at a rate of 972,000, +0.1% above the revised October figure of 971,000. Authorizations of units in buildings with five units or more were at a rate of 481,000 in November.

Conference Board believes the 2025 U.S. economy will grow despite some challenges. The association said in a recent post, "The U.S. economy is set to end 2024 on strong footing after a year of surprisingly robust growth. However, myriad uncertainties loom over 2025, suggesting somewhat slower economic activity next year and material two-sided risks. The economy should expand at an upwardly revised pace of +2.7% year-over-year in 2024 (from +2.6%) and +2% in 2025 (from +1.7%). "

AIA Billings Index remains steady in November. The AIA/Deltek Architecture Billings Index (ABI) dipped slightly below 50 points for November. The index score of 49.6 points changed little from October's score of 50.3 points, meaning bearish architects reported declining billings at about the same rate as bullish architects reporting increasing billings. Any score below 50 points indicates decreasing business conditions, but encouraging signs exist in the pipeline.

The American Institute of Architects said the return of billings to a stable level after nearly two years of decline signals potential improvement across the industry. Additionally, inquiries into new projects are steadily increasing, demonstrating sustained interest in future work opportunities. However, newly signed design contracts have experienced an eighth consecutive month of decline, suggesting an upturn in design activity is still distant.

"Given the extended weakness in business conditions at architecture firms, increasing firm profitability remains the top concern for 2025, with one-third of firm leaders selecting it as a major issue — the highest since 2017," said Kermit Baker, AIA chief economist, in the press release.

The Marketplace : Key Figures

	Month	Latest month	Previous month	Month-over-month % change	Year ago	Year-over-year % change	2023 annual
CONSTRUCTION							
New Construction Put in Place (billions of dollars, SAAR)[2]							
Total	SEPT	2148.8	2146.0	0.1	2055.2	4.6	2021.7
Offices	SEPT	83.9	84.1	-0.3	83.8	0.1	84.3
Industrial	SEPT	234.3	234.8	-0.2	194.9	20.2	192.7
Housing Starts (Thousands of units, SAAR)[2]							
Total	OCT	1311.0	1353.0	-3.1	1365.0	-4.0	1421.4
Single-unit	OCT	970.0	1042.0	-6.9	975.0	-0.5	948.5
Mobile Home Shipments[3] (thousands of units, SAAR)	SEPT	107.0	104.0	2.9	97.0	10.3	89.3
Employment, Construction Workers (thousands)[4]	OCT	8470.0	8445.0	0.3	8249.0	2.7	8017.8
Employment, Electrical Contractors (thousands)[4]	SEPT	1111.9	1111.5	0.0	1076.0	3.3	1068.1
Hourly Wage, Electrical Contractors[4]	SEPT	38.2	38.1	0.4	36.6	4.3	36.4
PRODUCTION							
Industrial Production Index (1967=100)[5]	OCT	102.3	102.5	-0.3	102.6	-0.3	102.9
Construction Supplies Production Index[5] (1977=100-SA)	OCT	99.9	99.9	0.1	100.8	-0.8	101.1
Employment in Electrical Equipment & Supplies Mfg.	SEPT	147.4	147.2	0.1	146.7	0.5	147.0
Production workers (Thousands)[4]							
Weekly hours	SEPT	42.7	43.7	-2.3	40.9	4.4	41.5
Hourly wage	SEPT	26.4	26.3	0.5	27.3	-3.5	26.8
Electric Power Output Index (1967=100)[5]	OCT	107.4	106.1	1.2	105.3	2.0	103.5
Machine Tool Orders* (millions of dollars)[6]	SEPT	442.4	357.0	23.9	379.0	16.7	402.0
Industrial Capacity Utilization (percent, SA)[1]	OCT	76.2	76.7	-0.6	77.4	-1.6	78.2
TRADE							
Electrical Mfrs' Shipments	SEPT	4551.0	4553.0	0.0	4705.0	-3.3	4638.7
Electrical Mfrs' Inventories (millions of dollars, SA)[2]	SEPT	9949.0	9866.0	0.8	10000.0	-0.5	9807.0
Electrical Mfrs' Inventory-to-Shipments Ratio	SEPT	2.2	2.2	0.9	2.1	2.9	2.1
Electrical Mfrs' New Orders (millions of dollars, SA)[2]	SEPT	4579.0	4606.0	-0.6	4762.0	-3.8	4619.5
Electrical Mfrs' Unfilled Orders (millions of dollars, SA)[2]	SEPT	21591.0	21510.0	0.4	22274.0	-3.1	22337.0
Exports, Electrical Machinery (f.a.s. value in millions of dollars)[2]	SEPT	8223.0	8940.0	-8.0	7576.0	8.5	87894.0
U.S. Dollar vs. Other Major Currencies (1973=100)[5]	OCT	117.2	115.6	1.4	117.4	-0.1	114.5
PRICES & INTEREST RATES							
Industrial Commodities Wholesale Price Index (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1967=100)	OCT	253.7	252.5	0.5	257.0	-1.3	256.4
Electrical Price Index (Electrical Marketing, 1997=100)	OCT	210.9	210.2	0.4	204.9	3.0	205.4
Construction Materials Wholesale Price Index (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1982=100)	OCT	354.9	354.5	0.1	351.4	1.0	351.0
Copper Prices (Metals Week, cents per pound)	OCT	438.5	423.3	3.6	360.0	21.8	385.8
Prime Rate[5]	OCT	8.0	8.3	-3.6	8.5	-5.9	8.2
Federal Funds Rate[5]	OCT	4.8	5.1	-5.8	5.3	-9.4	5.0
Mortgage Rate[7]	OCT	6.4	6.2	4.0	7.6	-15.6	6.8

*Several series related to employment are now being reported on a NAICS basis. Because of this change, some numbers are not directly comparable to previously reported data, but are consistent in year-over-year comparisons and comparisons shown in the table.

Sources: [1]Dodge Construction Network; [2]Dept. of Commerce; [3]Manufactured Housing Institute; [4]Dept. of Labor; [5]Federal Reserve Board; [6]The Association for Manufacturing Technology; [7]Federal Home Loan Bank Board.
Note: Some figures shown—prime rate, for example—are averaged for month. NYA—not yet available
SA–seasonally adjusted. SAAR–seasonally adjusted annual rate. Source for chart: Global Insight.
For further information about construction starts, please contact Dodge Analytics at 1-877-784-9556

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Crescent Electric Supply Co. (East Dubuque, IL): **Scott Teerlinck,** president and CEO, will leave to pursue opportunities outside the company. Teerlinck will remain with the company through Jan. 31, 2025, to help ensure a smooth transition.

The board of directors is implementing its succession process and will soon commence a search for the next CEO. Kristi Dahlke, senior VP and CFO, will serve as interim CEO.

"We have come a long way since Jan. 2021, when we kicked off our transformation to meet the changing needs of the marketplace and the expectations of our shareholders," said Teerlinck in the press release. "During our transformational journey, we have navigated the highs and lows of inflation, supply chain disruptions and a global pandemic. I am extremely proud of how our employees have remained engaged and customer-focused along the way. I am equally grateful for the support of our supplier partners as we jointly pivoted toward stronger alignment and collaboration."

Ranked #11 in *Electrical Wholesaling's* 2024 Top 100 Distributors ranking, Crescent Electric has more than 140 branches in 28 states. In addition to the Crescent Electric brand, customers are served by BA Supply in Missouri; Interstate Electric Supply in Idaho and Oregon; Mesco Electrical Supply in Ohio; National Electric Supply in New Mexico; Womack Electric Supply in Virginia and North Carolina; Stoneway Electric in Washington and Idaho; and Lowe Electric in Georgia and South Carolina.

Summit Electric Supply/Sonepar (Albuquerque, NM): **Dwayne Roberts** will be president of Summit Electric Supply, effective Jan. 3. He has more than two decades of experience in the electrical distribution industry and currently holds the position of VP-Operations at the company. Current Summit President Ed Gerber will be leaving the company, effective Jan. 3 to pursue another opportunity.

Rob Taylor, president Sonepar Americas, said in the press release, "We are deeply appreciative of the tremendous contributions Ed Gerber has made during his tenure as president; his leadership, along with the work of the talented Summit associates, has strengthened Summit, leaving us with a solid foundation for continued success. We look forward to a bright future under Dwayne's leadership."

Mayer Electric Supply/Rexel USA (Birmingham, AL): **Pat Daley** will be president and Rexel senior VP, replacing Mike Kidney who announced he is retiring at the end of the year. Daley will begin his new role on Jan. 2.

Daley most recently served as the VP of Industrial Sales and Strategic Accounts for Schneider Electric's National Sales Force (NSF). Under his leadership, the NSF-Industrial team was the fastest-growing industrial sales pipe in the organization. He spearheaded key strategic initiatives, including development of saturation strategy, leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) for new customer acquisition and implementing a leadership development program. Prior to that he served as the area sales manager for Schneider's Southeast Area, the largest in the NSF. Before joining Schneider, Daley spent a decade at Eaton.

"It has been my great pleasure to serve as the president of Mayer for the last two years and work alongside great leaders for nearly two decades with the company," said Kidney in the press release. "We spent a great deal of time considering the right person for the president of Mayer, and we all reached a unanimous decision that Pat was the one person we felt could lead us forward. We are confident that he will be a strong and effective leader."

Rep News

Genlyte Solutions, a Signify business, transitioned to new sales representation in Idaho. **Idaho Lighting Solutions and Controls** is now accepting quote requests and orders for brands including Interact connected lighting; Philips Dynalite; Color Kinetics; indoor luminaire brands Alkco, Chloride, Day-Brite CFI, Ledalite and Lightolier; outdoor luminaire brands Gardco, Hadco, Lumec and Stonco; Philips EvoKits; and BrightSites by Signify.

Nexus Power will continue to represent Genlyte Solutions' Philips lamps and Advance drivers and ballasts in the territory.

The press statement from Genlyte Solutions also said, "We are excited to partner with Idaho Lighting Solutions and Controls, and thank Northwest Lighting Alliance for its past support in servicing Signify's professional customers in the region."

NOARK Electric, Kitchener, ON, appointed **P&M Sales Ltd.,** South Windsor, CT, to represent its electrical circuit protection and motor control solutions for OEMs, contractors and distributors in New England. P&M Sales Ltd. calls on a network of stocking distributors throughout all of New England. Their strength is in engineered products, shelf goods and commodities sold to the industrial MRO, residential & commercial construction and institutional markets through wholesale distribution.

P&M Sales was founded by Thomas Mooney and Steve Peperis in Sept. 1986. William Terry Jr. became a partner in 2005, and David Cofske became a partner in 2018.

ElectricalMarketing

Subscriptions: 877-382-9187
(8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Central Time)
or Electrical Marketing@omeda.com

Subscription rates: $99 per year. Group subscription discount rates are also available.

Electrical Marketing is published semi-monthly by Endeavor Business Media, LLC. 201 N .Main St. 5th Floor, Fort Atkinson, WI 53538. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Electrical Marketing, PO Box 3257, Northbrook, IL 60065-3257. Subscription prices: U.S. ($ 99.00); Canada/Mexico ($ 99.00 year); All other countries ($ 99.00). All subscriptions are payable in U.S. funds. Send subscription inquiries to Electrical Marketing, PO Box 3257, Northbrook, IL 60065-3257. Customer service can be reached toll-free at 877-382-9187 or at ElectricalMarketing@omeda.com for newsletter subscription assistance or questions.

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