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FOR JULY**

Center Section

**Kenyan officials
visit RIBA**

Three officials from Kenya's National Construction Authority visited Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters in June, participating in the annual Networking BBQ.

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**RIBA thanks
Pella® Windows
for a great BBQ!**

Thanks to sponsorship by Pella Windows and Doors, RIBA members and guests enjoyed a great Networking Barbecue on June 9th.

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**Finding our
future workforce**

In this issue we feature the talented students from the Warwick Area Career and Technical Center, along with the latest on our industry's work to solve its own labor shortage.

Pages 10-13

**Some R.I. areas
face water crisis**

See our interview with Kenneth J. Burke of the University of Rhode Island on how to avoid projected drinking-water shortages in key areas of the state.

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Housing rethink required?

Rhode Island undergoes huge demographic changes

A wide-ranging effort at coordinated planning by government and business must take place if the economy is to respond, experts say.

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

With a population that's dwindling and aging, housing that's scarce and expensive, more childless households, an unskilled workforce, and a crumbling infrastructure, Rhode Island has to make a coordinated effort on many fronts to avoid a serious and long-term economic crisis.

That's the consensus of planning and housing experts who believe that Rhode Island's demographics

are undergoing a permanent change and that conventional policies won't adequately address the new realities.

"All these demographic and economic factors are interconnected, but things can work out for us if we are all on the same page," said Nathan E. Kelly of the Providence-based Horsley Witten Group and president of the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Planning Association.

"In fact, these trends are nothing new. An aging demographic, a falling population, too many unskilled workers, and families being priced out of the housing market: That's been going on for at least 10 years, but now the population issues are becoming more dramatic," Mr. Kelly stated.

see CHANGES...page 26

It's almost clambake time!

The Rhode Island Builders Association's 66th Annual Clambake takes place on Friday, August 5th at Francis Farm in Rehoboth, Mass.

It's RIBA's social event of the year! Enjoy a full day of fun, food, drink, games and networking for only \$35 per person while those tickets last!

Many thanks to our generous sponsors for helping us keep those ticket prices low! But we need more sponsors so we can keep welcoming guests for that low price.

Details on page 2.



66th Annual Clambake: August 5

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A whole day of food and fun for only \$35 as long as sponsorships keep coming in. Benefit by being a sponsor!

WHEN: Friday, August 5th, noon to 8 p.m.

WHERE: Francis Farm, 27 Francis Farm Rd., Rehoboth, MA 02769

COST: \$35 per person while they last, \$70 per person after that

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: July 29th

FOR INFORMATION, FOR SPONSORSHIPS AND TO REGISTER: Contact Elizabeth Carpenter at ecarpenter@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Over 400 people are expected to attend the Rhode Island Builders Association's 66th Annual Clambake, and is it any wonder? Tickets are only \$35 for a whole day of fun, food, drink, contests and networking, for as long as the sponsorships keep coming.

The more sponsors who sign on this year, the longer the lower

the price can be offered, and the more people will be able to enjoy a fabulous day of fun, contests, events, prizes, food and drink. Each ticket includes two free beers.

As always, great food will be featured throughout the day. There will be clamcakes and chowder, hot dogs, and little necks on the half shell. The traditional clambake will include steamers, barbecued chicken, brown bread, fish and all the fixings, followed by ice cream. Steak and lobster will be available for an extra charge. Soda, beer and assorted drinks will be available all day.

Enjoy volleyball, horseshoes, basketball, the football toss, insulation toss, the RIBA-invented sport of plywood throwing, and more! And, at the end of the day, enjoy awards and many door prizes.

Consider making this great event, a RIBA tradition since 1950, your company's annual outing, as so many companies do, and please consider a sponsorship!



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Contact Elizabeth Carpenter at the RIBA office,
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LOOKING AHEAD!

♦ **July 13th: 4-Hour Lead-Safe Refresher Class** - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, 7:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. FREE for members and their employees, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. \$75 for non-members, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. You must pre-register for this class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy, smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 14.*



♦ **July 19th: Fall Protection for Residential Roofers** - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. FREE for members and their employees, with a \$25 materials/registration fee. \$50 for non-members, with a \$25 materials/registration fee. *This class counts for two credits toward your state-mandated continuing education requirement.* No admittance without pre-registration and payment. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy, smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 14.*

♦ **July 27th: 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course** - 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., RIBA Headquarters, East Providence. Course is FREE for members with a \$40 materials/registration fee, \$110 for non-members with a \$40 materials/registration fee. This course is required to obtain or renew a Lead Safe Remodeler/Renovator License, which is necessary for work in all pre-1978 buildings in Rhode Island. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy, smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 14.*

♦ **August 5th: 66th Annual RIBA Clambake** - Noon to dusk at Francis Farm, Rehoboth, Mass. Watch for more information. To become a sponsor, contact Elizabeth Carpenter at (401) 438-7400 or ecarpenter@ribuilders.org. Premier Sponsors will have exhibit space at the Clambake. *Details on page 2.*

♦ **August 9th: OSHA 3-Hour Refresher** - 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. This class will inform you about the most recent updates to OSHA regulations. FREE for members, with a \$10 materials charge. \$75 for non-members, with a \$10 materials charge. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy, smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 14.*

♦ **August 16th: 4-Hour Lead-Safe Refresher Class** - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. FREE for members and their employees, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. \$75 for non-members, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. You must pre-register for this class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy, smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 14.*

♦ **August 22nd: Hydraulic Forklift Pre-Licensing Class** - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. FREE for members and their employees, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. \$110 for non-members, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. You must pre-register for this class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy, smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 19.*

♦ **September 12th: 26th Annual RIBA Golf Classic** - Warwick Country Club. Watch for more information. To become a sponsor, contact Elizabeth Carpenter at (401) 438-7400 or ecarpenter@ribuilders.org. Premier Sponsors will have exhibit space at the event.

♦ **September 15th: RIBA Breakfast, New Member Orientation, Open House and Networking Event, sponsored by Davitt Design Build** - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, between 7 and 10 a.m. Participants may stay longer if they wish. This FREE event is for new and current members who want to learn more about their member benefits and to meet the RIBA team. RSVPs are requested. To RSVP or if you or your company would like to sponsor a breakfast, please contact Cheryl Boyd at (401) 438-7400 or cboyd@ribuilders.org. *Information on Page 6.*

**More information, registration and payment for most
RIBA events is available at RIBUILDERS.org.**

♦ Indicates a RIBA-sponsored event.



Designates a course eligible for Rhode Island state-mandated continuing education credits. Contact RIBA for confirmation.

S Class will be taught in Spanish.

President's Message



Roland J. Fiore

Our demographic dilemma: Housing can be the answer

In this month's featured story (see page 1), we learn about the demographic dilemma that Rhode Island faces and the potential economic issues that we may face because of it.

In short, our children aren't staying in the numbers we need them to, and those who are here just keep getting older. It's a challenge for the long term, and it's good to see that planners seem to be aware of the issue.

With that, certainly the housing industry must adjust to these trends, but what we hope others realize is that housing can also be an effective tool to respond to, and help change, these demographic challenges.

In short, build a supply and they will stay!

If we target a supply of new, market-rate homes that are naturally

affordable, and couple that with solid job-creation efforts, you'll see more of our youth stick around and contribute to our future.

You see, what we tend to forget on the policy side is that these young lives aren't just a number or trend. For the next generation, just like it was for those before them, it's not just about a job. It's about the ability to own a home, raise a family, set down your own roots, and try to make your financial numbers work.

Housing affordability is a key part of that, and we hope planners and policy makers continue to work with the industry on the solutions to remedy this problem. If not, I'm quite certain that a large share of these future "millennial homeowners" will continue to search elsewhere, and little Rhode Island will end up with a bigger demographic dilemma.

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Governor addresses RIBA board

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Kenyan officials visit RIBA

Officials from Kenya's National Construction Authority visited Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters in June, once to tour the offices and again on June 9th to enjoy the annual Networking Barbecue (see page 8). Hosting the visitors was the Rhode Island Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board (CRLB). From left are past RIBA President Steven Gianlorenzo, Stephen Mwilu, Christine Kiriimi, Steve Obare and CRLB Executive Director George W. Whalen. Headquartered in Nairobi, the National Construction Authority functions much like our CRLB, but has some 200 employees. Kenya itself has 14 million people and roughly 30,000 building contractors.



RIBA thanks Unilock for sponsoring our May 19 breakfast *Free networking breakfasts will resume in September*

WHEN: Thursday September 15th, 7 to 10 a.m.
WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914
COST: FREE for members and non-members.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: September 12th
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Cheryl Boyd at cboyd@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

The Breakfast, New Member Orientation, Open House and Networking Events at Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters are taking the summer off but will resume on September 15th with an event generously sponsored by Davitt Design Build.

The breakfast will begin at 7 a.m. instead of 8, making it more convenient for contractors who get an early start at the jobsite. Many thanks to Unilock for sponsoring the May 19th event.

The breakfast, FREE for members and non-members, is an opportunity to visit the RIBA offices, meet the RIBA team and find out more about the many benefits you receive as a member.

Bring your non-member subcontractors, suppliers and other industry colleagues so they can find out about the benefits of membership. The hot buffet includes eggs, bacon, home fries, fruit, coffee and more. RSVPs are requested by September 12th.

If your company would like to sponsor a monthly Breakfast, and be entitled to a display table at the event, contact Cheryl Boyd at (401) 438-7400 or cboyd@ribuilders.org.



Marc Petrowicz, left, of Unilock, which sponsored the May 19th Breakfast event, chats with member Dean Martineau. Below are Jay White of Propane Plus, Elizabeth Carpenter of the RIBA staff and Chuck Lowe of the Builders Insurance Group.





RHODE ISLAND BUILDERS ASSOCIATION
PROFESSIONAL WOMEN
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PWB News

Council elects officers for '16-'18

Carol O'Donnell of CRM Modular Homes took the reins on June 7th as she became president of the Rhode Island Builders Association's Professional Women in Building Council (PWB).

The occasion was PWB's Annual Meeting, held at Roma on Federal Hill.

Other officers elected for the 2016-2018 term were Vice President Joelle Rocha of the Law Offices of Michael Kelly, PC, Secretary Linda Bohmbach of Home HealthSmith LLC, and Treasurer Lorena Voyer of Davitt Design Build.

Many thanks to these women from the construction industry who have offered their time, talents and support to PWB!

PWB meets monthly, to network, hear informative and educational presentations, enjoy holiday activities, help the community, and simply to have fun. For information, contact Cheryl Boyd at (401) 438-7400, cboyd@ribuilders.org.



New officers of Professional Women in Building are, from left, President Carol O'Donnell of CRM Modular Homes, Vice President Joelle Rocha of the Law Offices of Michael Kelly, PC, Secretary Linda Bohmbach of Home HealthSmith LLC, and Treasurer Lorena Voyer of Davitt Design Build.

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140 members and guests welcome summer at Networking BBQ



It was a great turnout on June 9th as the Rhode Island Builders Association held its annual Networking Barbecue for members and non-members. Among the guests were members of the National Construction Authority of Kenya, visiting Rhode Island from Nairobi (see page 6). Here, Rhode Island Contractors' Registration and Licensing Board Executive Director George Whalen, left, chats with Ron Caniglia of Stand Corp.



Representing Pella® Windows and Doors, the event sponsor, were Charlie Milot, Bob Milligan, Steve Bonas, Chase Pursley, Greg Noblet, Cosimo D'Elia, Mike Cabral and Tanner Tribolet.



▲ Jay Pires, left, and Steve Rendine from Douglas Lumber, Kitchens & Home Center drop by for the occasion.



▲ Members get to know the visitors from Kenya (see page 6).



► Some of the 140 attendees enjoy hot dogs, hamburgers, chicken, salad and all the fixings. If you or your company are interested in sponsoring a RIBA networking event such as this, please contact the RIBA office: (401) 438-7400. Sponsors are entitled to exhibit at the event.

Member Profile: David Payette of Jutras Woodworking

What a ride!



Dave Payette

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

A few years back, Jutras Woodworking Co. got involved in the *This Old House* project in Bristol.

"During the design development stage, we convinced the homeowners to use curly cherry throughout the kitchen," recalls Jutras Woodworking President Dave Payette. "The folks at *This Old House* were intrigued with the idea of using something other than white-painted cabinets, so they sent Norm Abrams and their film crew down to spend a day filming at our shop and documenting the process."

The Jutras staff all got to meet Norm, whom Dave describes as "the godfather of woodworkers."

"Norm had lunch with our crew and entertained us with stories: Absolutely a great guy! He was very humble and appreciative of where he was and how he got there. He was genuinely interested in our craft," Dave adds.

Much the same can be said of Dave Payette himself, who came to Jutras Woodworking by a winding and unexpected path.

The story begins with three Jutras brothers fabricating cabinets

in the basement of an unfinished home in 1980. Now Jutras Woodworking has more than 30 employees and is housed in a 35,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art facility off Route 44 in Smithfield.

"For my first 15 years out of college, I was a mechanical engineer," said Dave, a stepson of Paul Jutras, one of those founding brothers.

Dave's degree came from Stanford University. His first job was with Boeing in Seattle, then he headed back to his native Rhode Island to work for several companies, including Brown and Sharpe.

"I was working for machine-tool firms here. Then, nearly 11 years ago, I finally joined the family business. As a project engineer, it was a natural

transition for me," Dave recalls.

Decision time came about five years ago.

"Paul and Joe Jutras decided to sell the business. What to do? So I stepped up with another longtime employee, Pete LeBlanc, and we bought the company," Dave said.

Jutras Woodworking is still very much a family business, with nine family members on the staff. And the company has had quite a ride.

"From that basement in 1980, we've grown to offer a full range of engineering and project-management services. And we do everything from shop drawings and fabrication to shop finish and installation," Dave explains proudly.

The company works the whole region between Boston and the Islands, and New York City.

Jutras Woodworking joined the Rhode Island Builders Association within a few years of opening and has been active ever since. The company is prominent at association events, and is legendary at the yearly RIBA Clambake, which is the company's annual outing. Many a Jutras team has triumphed at horseshoes, tug-of-war and on the volleyball court. Individual staffers are among the greats in plywood throwing, golf chipping and the football toss.

"We also take advantage of the free tuition for our people at RIBA classes, especially lead certification and OSHA," Dave says.

The activities don't stop there. Jutras Woodworking built the front wall and reception desk in the new RIBA headquarters when the association moved from offices at the Biltmore Hotel in 1995.

"Even when times were lean, we tried to have a strong presence at the Clambake, and to support RIBA," Dave states.

So what does the future hold?

"There's a lot of good work out there right now," Dave says. "Let's keep it that way!"

Jutras Woodworking Co.

President: David Payette

RIBA member since: 1990

Focus: Residential, commercial and marine design, fabrication and installation.

Serves: New England and New York

Founded: 1980

Based: Smithfield, Rhode Island

Profile: Warwick Area Career and Technical Center

It's hands-on for these students

Second in a Series

By Paul F. Eno Editor

"Hands-on. That's what we're all about."

That was the word from Instructor Michael Haynes as *The Rhode Island Builder* joined construction students from the Warwick Area Career and Technical Center (WACTC) on May 19th. Supervised by Mr. Haynes and his colleague Brian Vadeboncoeur, the students were deep into an off-site construction project.

"Our students spend 75 percent of their school time in off-site instruction like this," Mr. Haynes said. "What better way to teach construction than actually doing it?"

The students have seen what it's like on a tough building site, he emphasized.

"There was a rock half the size of a garage. They got to see it drilled, cracked and moved. They've also seen septic systems installed and concrete poured. They see the electricians, plumbers and HVAC people, and they watch the floor systems and roofs going in - every component. It's all real stuff."

With staging and ladders, the students also see that one site is different from another, Mr. Haynes said, when it comes to setting those up. They also learn first-hand about floor systems and roofs.

"Most of all, they learn teamwork."

When in the WACTC classroom, the students may be found on-site at 575 Centerville Road, Building #5, in Warwick. WACTC serves students from Toll Gate High School, along with West Warwick, East Greenwich, Veterans and Pilgrim High Schools.

WACTC has about 450 students in all its programs, with 44 in the Carpentry Program.

"We should have more," Mr. Haynes declared.

There's never a dull moment for WACTC students. Along with lots of off-site instruction, they're active in student industry groups like SkillsUSA. At this year's competition, held at the Community College of Rhode Island's Warwick Campus on March 24th, they won gold and a silver medals in carpentry, gold and bronze medals in cabinet making, and a gold medal in TeamWorks.

WACTC's Derek Penta of Warwick, a student at Toll Gate High School, was one of 12 students working in the field on May 19th.

"My dad is a remodeler," Derek reported proudly. "I spent a lot of time at the RIBA Home Show in April and I worked on the



In March, students from the Warwick Area Career and Technical Center assist at the Rhode Island Convention Center, helping other CTE students build the Ultimate Solar Treehouse for the RIBA Home Show. Many also helped as guides to various exhibits at the show.

Ultimate Solar Treehouse. It was a good experience, and it was fun working with kids from other schools."

Derek is already in the construction industry workforce: He has a job with Stand Corp., a member of the Rhode Island Builders Association. He works every day after school, on weekends and during vacations, and he plans on a career in the industry. Derek would especially like to operate heavy machinery.

"The program at WACTC has helped me advance a lot, not just in learning about all aspects of a job but in building a whole house start-to-finish as a team," Derek states.

This isn't his first house.

"We built one house last year and a garage, and we remodeled a two-car garage with an apartment."

Jonathan Bates of West Warwick High School is another WACTC student who spent time at the Home Show. Jon came to WACTC from another career and technical education (CTE) program, and he has a job with an electrical contractor. He won a bronze medal in cabinet making at the SkillsUSA competition in March.

"I worked on the Treehouse at the Home Show. It was exciting, and it was a great experience in teamwork. Everybody helped each other," Jon said.



Derek Penta



Jonathan Bates

see WACTC...next page

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**The Rhode Island
Builder**

WACTC...from previous page



On a May morning, students and instructors debark for a supervised off-site construction project.

At the worksite, the two instructors' pride in their students was clear.

"This is a typical day," Mr. Haynes said. "They set up, and they know what's going on from the day before."

Mr. Vadeboncoeur, himself a graduate of the WACTC program, said that every student has a job in the industry who wants one.

"Each graduating senior already has a job somewhere in the construction industry, except for two who are going to college and will join the industry later," he stated.

One senior plans to attend Roger Williams University in the Construction Management Program. Another will attend Clemson University.

"Our mission is to make these students a success, and we want them to work for the professionals," said Mr. Vadeboncoeur, who has taught at WACTC for nine years, previously serving as an instructor at the Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center for six years.

Mr. Haynes, the graduate of a CTE program, has taught in Warwick since the early 1990s



Jake Mossman, Nick Horne and Alex Meinel are about to get busy during an off-site construction project.

'...75 percent of our projects are in the field....' *WACTC Instructor Mike Haynes*

"Brian and I both try to teach the way we would want to learn," Mr. Haynes said.

Mr. Vadeboncoeur added that students are placed in internships whenever possible, but they have to have at least a B average academically first.

"I have a pile of messages half an inch deep from contractors large and small looking for skilled employees," he stated.

Along with job skills, students are taught to be polite, Mr. Haynes stressed.

"When we get doughnuts, the lady in the class (Kylea Henseler of West Warwick) always goes first. They wear uniforms. The rest of the faculty is impressed by how great these students are," he said.



Kylea Henseler



WACTC students at their supervised jobsite are flanked by their enthusiastic instructors, Mike Haynes, at left, and Brian Vadeboncoeur. "Our mission is to make these students a success," they said.

Back at the WACTC campus, Director William McCaffrey echoed the can-do spirit of his instructors and students.

"We try to do real-world, hands-on projects," said Mr. McCaffrey, who has served in Warwick Schools for 20 years.

"We have program advisory committees made up of industry representatives, and they help drive the curriculum. We value that industry input, and we solicit feedback from individual contractors annually about what they're looking for in employees, and what the entry-level opportunities are," he added.

Along with its construction program, WACTC offers programs in automotive, fashion, aviation, culinary, finance, mechanical and architectural computer-aided design and drafting (CADD), electric, graphic design and computer production, electronics and audio production, health occupations, child development, facilities operations and management, marine trades, and even a CISCO Networking Academy.

For more information, call WACTC at (401) 734-3150.

Need good employees?

Call RIBA to post your job openings

The shortage of skilled labor in Rhode Island is well known to employers, especially in the residential construction industry.

Over the past few months, aided by grants from Gov. Gina Raimondo's Real Jobs Rhode Island program, the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership (RCWP), with the Rhode Island Builders Association as its hub, has set out on an ambitious, two-pronged campaign to match employers in our industry with the workers they need. And if potential workers need training, RCWP will match them with it.

This effort involves continuing support of the state's career and technical education (CTE) schools with a special emphasis on encouraging those students to stay in Rhode Island and work in the residential construction industry.

The RCWP is well under way, notably with its increasingly busy online Jobs Bank at RCWPJobs.com, where employers can sign up for a free account, post job openings and view the résumés of potential employees.

"Many job-seekers are already being matched with employers," noted Cheryl Boyd, RIBA's director of membership and



Cheryl Boyd

education. "It's not just about the website. For our industry to solve its own labor shortage, we need to communicate. Call me if you're looking for skilled workers. And if you have an event as a contractor or supplier, invite me down to set up a booth so people who need to hear about the RCWP and the Jobs Bank can learn about it."

Ms. Boyd said that she is happy to go to schools and job fairs as well. She also emphasized that each CTE school needs partners in the residential construction industry, and that individual students need industry mentors.

"With the Jobs Bank off to such a great start, it's important now to get the word out," Ms. Boyd said. "We need everyone talking about it, encouraging all employers, along with CTE students and other potential job seekers, to sign up for the free RCWPJobs.com account, then post their job openings and résumés."

Employers are very anxious to fill positions, she added. "So those with résumés to post, don't wait!"

In addition, a free e-mail Jobs Bank newsletter is now available via the website. Sign up for this at RCWPJobs.com. Contact Ms. Boyd at (401) 438-7400 or cboyd@ribuilders.org.

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Second in a series

What to ask a potential employee

*This month: Lorena Voyer
Davitt Design Build Inc.*

As the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership continues to match employers with the workers they need, *The Rhode Island Builder* will present suggestions from members of the Rhode Island Builders Association about what you should ask when interviewing a potential employee.

"One of the most important things I want to know is: 'Are you a team player?'" says Lorena Voyer, general manager at Davitt Design Build Inc.



Lorena Voyer

"We have a culture in our office where everyone steps in and helps each other when necessary. We don't have any room for egos. We want employees who want to see everyone succeed," Ms. Voyer added.

Multitasking is another priority at Davitt.

"Can you multitask? Our environment is fast-paced and can be stressful. Our project managers often run a minimum of three projects in production and two in design. A potential employee here has to be able to handle that pace."

Handling unexpected situations is another concern.

"How do you handle situations that arise last-minute or out of the blue and throw off your schedule for the day or even the whole week? Time-management skills are necessary for this line of work," Ms. Voyer stated.

If you're an employer in the residential construction industry and would like to share your insights on interviewing potential employees, please contact the editor at (401) 527-5345 or at builder@newriverpress.com.



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Photo by Doug Verry

Forty students from the Warwick Area Career and Technical Center, the Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center, the William M. Davies Jr. Technical High School and the Coventry Regional Career and Technical Center gather at Warwick City Hall on June 2nd. All seniors, the students received certificates for successfully completing the challenging International Code Council (ICC) High School Residential Code Class and the subsequent exam. Along with the certificates, the successful students each were presented with \$350 worth of tools from Stanley/Black & Decker®, Netco® Tools and Forgings, and the Rhode Island Building Officials Association.



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Lead licensing refresher

July 13th

WHEN: Wednesday, July 13th, 7:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914
COST: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. A \$75 charge for non-members and a \$40 materials/registration fee.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class.
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This is a four-hour RRP refresher class with Scott Asprey of Risk & Safety Management, for contractors who have their lead renovator/remodeler certification and whose certificate is up for renewal.

The class will review lead-hazard controls and update attendees on any changes to state or federal regulations. You must pre-register for this class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.



Initial 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler Course

July 27th

WHEN: Wednesday, July 27th, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914
COST: FREE for members and their employees, with \$40 materials/registration fee. \$110 for non-members, with \$40 materials/registration fee. Lunch is included.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

The Rhode Island Builders Association will present the 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course in July. This course is required to obtain a Lead Safe Remodeler/Renovator Certificate, which is necessary for work in all pre-1978 buildings.

Federal and state enforcement of the Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) rule continues to be stringent, with jobsite inspections that are unexpected and strict.

Be sure your knowledge and license is up to date.



Fall Protection for Residential Roofers

July 19th

This course eligible for 2 hours of continuing-education credits

WHEN: Tuesday, July 19th, 7:30 to 9:30 a.m.
WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914
COST: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$25 materials/registration fee. \$50 for non-members, with a \$25 materials/registration fee.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Falls are the number-one cause of injuries and fatalities on construction sites, and OSHA is aggressively enforcing its fall-protection requirements. This class, Fall Protection for Residential Roofers, will help you increase jobsite safety and compliance.

Learn about safety harnesses along with scaffolding and ladders, and much more.

This class provides two credits toward your state-required continuing education credits if taken with 24 months of your next registration date. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.



OSHA Refresher

August 9th

WHEN: Tuesday, August 9th, 7:30-10:30 a.m.
WHERE: RIBA headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy. #301, East Providence 02914
COST: FREE for members with a \$10 materials charge. \$75 for non-members with a \$10 materials charge.
DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class
FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy, smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This 3-Hour Refresher Class will get you up to date on the most recent changes to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations.

OSHA routinely focuses on high-hazard industries like residential construction for surprise jobsite inspections. Fall protection is especially important.

Ignorance of the regulations is no excuse. Stay on top of changes to avoid costly fines!



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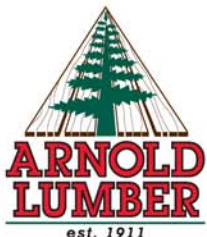
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Hydraulic Forklift Pre-Licensing Class

August 22nd

WHEN: Wednesday, August 17th, 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. A \$110 charge for non-members and a \$40 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This all-day class will prepare potential hydraulic forklift operators for the state test for the forklift operators license from the Dept. of Labor and Training.

The class covers:

- The mechanics of the forklift
- Daily inspections
- Fuel/electric storage
- ANSI and OSHA standards

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•Proper care and maintenance

You must pre-register for this class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

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**For more information
on scheduled RIBA classes, see
page 14, the calendar on page 4
and RIBUILDERS.org.**

**If there is a class you would like
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We're already planning for the 2017 legislative session



Steven Carlino

As of this writing, the 2016 session of the Rhode Island General Assembly hadn't yet ended, and our Legislative Committee is still working hard on advocacy for bills that will help housing and the state's economy.

At the same time, as we always do at this time of year, we are looking ahead to the 2017 legislative session, which begins in January.

That's because some old issues remain after each session, and new ones can be seen coming down the road.

In order to see more clearly what's coming, we need your eyes as well as our own. All the members of our committee are connected with the residential construction industry, but we can't cover the entire state and see what each municipality is doing.

That's where you come in! Keep tabs on what's happening in your community and let us know. Also let us know when you run into delays, excessive fees and other hassles that are holding up your projects.

Call or e-mail your concerns: (401) 438-7400, jmarcantonio@ribuilders.org.

We continue to battle the high cost of construction in Rhode Island, reducing excessive regulations, improving tax policy and the business climate and more. We need to hear from you now!

Watch the August *Rhode Island Builder* for a report on the current legislative session. We await the passage of measures important to housing, along with the support of Gov. Gina Raimondo in signing them into law.



Robert J. Baldwin

RIBA's Legislative Committee

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DEM: Website redesign will lead to complete e-permitting



Jean Gervacio of the state Dept. of Information Technology, left, guides Thomas E. D'Angelo of Terry Lane Corp./Progressive Realty Group through the Dept. of Environmental Management's newly redesigned website on May 31st. Mr. D'Angelo is co-chairman of RIBA's Environmental Committee.

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

A small group of curious customers turned out at the Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM) offices in Providence on May 31st. Their quest: To check out the agency's redesigned website and to tell enthusiastic state tech staffers whether they liked it.

The redesign is part of a three-phase program to make all DEM services fully available online, including electronic application and permitting, according to Rose Jones, DEM's public information officer.

"Our old site has been online for many years. This redesign makes a dramatic difference, but it's only part one of a three-phase project," Ms. Jones said.

"This first phase takes all the information we had on the old site and repackages it, and we've streamlined it where we could. The next two phases will bring increased functionality and interaction."

Phase two will involve a consolidation and redesign of the content.

At this point, many forms and applications on the site still must be printed and filled out by hand, but "as of phase three of the project, forms and applications will be able to be filled out and submitted online," Ms. Jones said.

"We will continue our work on this project, but I can't say exactly when that functionality will be available."

Among the visitors were two members of the Rhode Island Builders Association, Thomas E. D'Angelo of Terry Lane Corp./Progressive Realty Group and Elsie Johnson of DiPrete Engineering Associates Inc. Mr. D'Angelo is co-chairman of RIBA's Environmental Committee.

"The new site is 'responsive.' In other words, it will fit on any device screen, including smart phones," said Robert Martin of the state Dept. of Information Technology, the web designer for the DEM project who guided participants during the May 31st test session.

"We feel the new site is more intuitive than the old one, and we are migrating some

18,000 pdf documents from the old site," Mr. Martin added.

Participants were asked to complete an anonymous survey at the end of the one-hour session.

"I was used to the old website, but this one seems to be pretty functional," said Mr. D'Angelo, whose business deals with, among other things, repairing onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS).

"The first thing I need to see is the regulations, and I'll have to get used to where they've put the information. The history of permit applications is also very important, especially when advocating for or against some of the new regulatory changes. As long as they don't change or reduce the content, it's fine," he added.

The project to update DEM's website began nearly two years ago.

Watch for details as the project continues. For more information, contact Ronald Gagnon at DEM's Office of Customer and Technical Assistance, (401) 222-6822 or ron.gagnon@dem.ri.gov.

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WOTUS creates nightmare for housing developer

Regulatory horror story illustrates need to block funding for Waters of the U.S. Rule

National Association of Home Builders

A developer's nearly three-decade regulatory nightmare in trying to obtain a Clean Water Act permit shows why Congress must take action to prevent the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) final "Waters of the U.S." (WOTUS) rule from being implemented.

That's the word from the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), which has a member firm, Virginia-based The ESG Companies, at the center of the storm.

During a hearing before the Senate Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water and Wildlife, lawmakers heard how The ESG Companies has been denied a Section 404 Clean Water Act permit to develop its property for nearly 30 years, even though the company has repeatedly gone through proper channels and put forth state-approved plans that would result in no net loss of wetlands.

Testifying on behalf of NAHB before the Senate panel, Valerie Wilkinson, vice president and chief financial officer of The ESG Companies, told lawmakers how land that was acquired by her firm in the 1980s for a multi-use community to address local housing demand still lays undeveloped.

"For almost three decades, we've been held hostage by the EPA and Corps, who have continually altered the Clean Water Act 404 permit requirements," said Ms. Wilkinson.

"Throughout every step of the process, the rules have changed and new requirements have been added. This is perplexing, as the relevant sections of the Act have not changed since 1972."

After obtaining required zoning approvals from the City of Chesapeake, Virginia, in 1989, the Corps asserted that the property contained jurisdictional wetlands and that a wetland delineation was required. The delineation took years to complete because Corps officials disagreed on the criteria for determining wetlands.

Over the ensuing years, The ESG Companies hired specialists with expertise in environmental geology and wetlands hydrology to develop a new wetland delineation for the Virginia Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) wetland permit.

The firm revised its development plan to further avoid and minimize impacts so that, for every acre impacted, two acres of wetlands would be restored and another acre placed in preservation.

Though DEQ applauded the firm for exceeding typical protective measures and issued a 15-year permit, the Corps concluded that the state-approved wetland delineation, which was the basis for the approved state permit, was not accurate, even though state and federal requirements are the same.

The firm further reduced the scope of its development plan so that it decreased wetlands impacts by more than 80 percent. However, the Corps failed to budge. So the Corps has prevented the company from de-

veloping any of its 428 acres for 27 years, and it has been forced to spend millions of dollars fighting for this permit.

The EPA and Corps are now finalizing the WOTUS rule, further expanding their authority under the Clean Water Act. The rule would put millions of additional acres under federal jurisdiction. That's why NAHB Chairman Ed Brady said that this "awful regulatory horror story" could be just a prelude of more to come.

"The WOTUS rule will lead to increased litigation and delays," said Mr. Brady. "Small businesses will not survive under these rules as most do not have the time or resources to fight. Though the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals has currently intervened and prevented this rule from being implemented, Congress must do its part to block funding for this rule."

For more information, contact Liz Thompson at NAHB, (202) 266-8495 or ethompson@nahb.org.



NAHB hails SCOTUS wetlands ruling

National Association of Home Builders

In a unanimous decision on May 31st, the U.S. Supreme Court endorsed the long-held position of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) that courts should be able to review federal decisions that determine whether and how a property owner can develop a piece of land so that the owner doesn't have to go through the time- and money-consuming federal permit process before a decision can be made.

The court ruled in the case of Army Corps of Engineers v. Hawkes Co. Inc. and concluded that when the government conducts a Clean Water Act jurisdictional determination (JD) the recipient landowners can contest the decision in court. The verdict marks the culmination of a 25-year NAHB battle for regulatory certainty.

"NAHB commends the Supreme Court," NAHB Chairman Ed Brady said in a statement released immediately after the decision. "This common-sense ruling represents a clear victory for property owners to assert their rights if they disagree with an arbitrary edict by the federal government."

Before this ruling, the only way a property owner could contest such a ruling in court was to obtain a federal Clean Water Act permit, which, Mr. Brady said, "is costly and time-consuming, or proceed without a permit and risk ruinous Clean Water Act penalties. Today's ruling will allow property owners to dispute a JD in court without first seeking a permit they believe is not required in the first place."

Chief Justice John Roberts wrote the opinion for the court, which followed the reasoning behind a "friend of the court" brief filed by NAHB. It recognized the uncertainty surrounding whether a water feature is a "water of the United States" and the expense involved in determining whether the federal government has regulatory jurisdiction over that feature.

For additional information, contact NAHB Vice President for Legal Advocacy Tom Ward at (800) 368-5243, ext. 8320.



Kenneth J. Burke PE

of the University of Rhode Island

Kenneth J. Burke PE has been assistant director of the University of Rhode Island's (URI's) Office of Capital Projects since April. Mr. Burke is a registered professional engineer with over 20 years of experience in leadership positions in the public and private sectors. Before assuming his current post, he was general manager for the Rhode Island Water Resources Board since February 2009. Mr. Burke also has served as public works director in Cranston and Westerly, and as development manager for the Cranston-based Procaccianti Group, a real estate development firm.

The comments made in this interview are from Mr. Burke's personal perspective and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of URI or the State of Rhode Island.



THE BUILDER: Where does Rhode Island have drinking-water surpluses and shortages?

BURKE: The surpluses are generally in the northern part of the state, where we once built large reservoirs to accommodate the industry that drove prosperity in Rhode Island. As we all know, most of that industry has since moved on, and the large water users are no longer in business. But the reservoirs, treatment plants and distribution systems are still in place.

As far as shortages, generally speaking there are intermittent shortages in water supply in southern Rhode Island. I have to qualify this by clarifying that the southern part of the state draws water from groundwater sources. As such, every drop of water that we take from the ground eventually has a connection to nearby rivers, streams and lakes that we all hold near and dear.

In the summer, Rhode Island has a predictable reduction in precipitation, while there is an increase in water consumption because of tourism, farming (only when needed), evapotranspiration* and non-essential uses of water such as excessive lawn irrigation. The confluence of the lack of rain and all these water uses in the summer and early fall typically impact our rivers and streams. That can, in some instances, create a "shortage" of water in terms of an optimal ecological system.

THE BUILDER: How adequate is the drinking-water infrastructure in older urban areas of the state?

BURKE: There are 28 major water suppliers in Rhode Island, and perhaps one or two more, depending on their annual sales of water. They each have varying degrees of completeness regarding their water-supply infrastructure replacement programs. The last

time I checked, the State of Rhode Island had a backlog of approximately \$1.2 billion in water supply-infrastructure (repair/maintenance needs) for these largest water suppliers over the next 20 years.

It's critical for the state to appreciate the fact that when we speak about "infrastructure," it's not just the roads and bridges that need attention. The state's water suppliers need our support to continuously invest in their drinking-water supply systems, and they need the support of state and local government to phase in these projects so as to minimize the overall impact to the taxpayers.

THE BUILDER: So South County is thirsty, at least during part of the year. Are there plans to bring water to that area from Providence County and other areas that have it?

BURKE: The State Water Resources Board (SWRB) held a year-long strategic planning session in 2011-2012 and assessed Rhode Island's water resources and supplies on a statewide and regional basis. This exercise included performing an analysis of where the water in the state is, how much we're using, how much we need in the future, and where.

Several scenarios identified conceptual options for statewide and regional drinking-water supply systems that balanced the needs of the environment as well as the needs for future growth that are also consistent with statewide and local zoning and land-use requirements. The projects range from a regional water-supply system on the East Bay to development of a new water-supply system for South County, to enhanced water conservation initiatives.

THE BUILDER: In the 1970s and early 1980s, there were plans to build the Big River Reservoir in Kent County to help meet the drinking-water needs in southern Rhode Island. Why was this reservoir never built?

BURKE: If you ask five different people that question, you may get five different answers. My answer is that the Big River Reservoir project wasn't built because the initial assumptions for the project, such as future growth projections, proof of adequate conservation programs, etc., were not adequately addressed in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) application. The project was denied and subsequently reverted, I say temporarily, to an "open space" designation until such time as the state can prove it needs this area as a drinking-water supply source.

For redundancy in water supply sources and increased resiliency

see *INTERVIEW...page 29*

MEMBERS...from page 3

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How to comply with new overtime rule

National Association of Home Builders

Despite strong opposition by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and other leaders in the nation's small-business community, the U.S. Dept. of Labor (DOL) in May issued its final overtime rule, which will more than double the current overtime salary limit of \$23,660 to \$47,476.

Set to take effect on December 1st, the rule will have significant ramifications for many employers, including home-building firms and non-profit organizations such as local and state home-builders associations (HBAs).

NAHB has prepared an FAQ to help our members better understand and to comply with the rule. See it at www.NAHB.org/en/research/nahb-priorities/overtime-salary-threshold.aspx?_ga=1.216313055.856595435.1438025984.

Learn what employers need to know before December 1st, find out which staff will be due overtime, and find out how to assist NAHB's advocacy efforts on this issue.

Most small businesses, including the vast majority of home-building companies, operate under tight margins. The huge spike in the overtime threshold could force many employers to convert salaried employees to hourly workers in order to remain solvent. Many employers will be forced to scale back on pay and benefits, as well as cut workers' hours, in order to avoid overtime requirements and remain in business.

Under the new standard, the salary threshold will be indexed to inflation and adjusted every three years, forcing employers to go through this process on an ongoing basis.

NAHB continues to lead the effort to urge Congress to quickly pass the Protecting Workplace Advancement and Opportunity Act (House bill H.R. 4773 and Senate bill S. 2707). The legislation would force the Dept. of Labor to withdraw this rule until it has considered the effects it would have on small businesses, consumers, workers and the economy.

For more information, contact NAHB's Suzanne Beall at (800) 368-5242 ext. 8407.

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CHANGES...from page 1



Scott Wolf

Scott Wolf, executive director of Grow Smart Rhode Island, agreed, and he views the current circumstances as an economic opportunity in disguise.

"If we all accept that permanent demographic changes are taking place, and if we all come together on the same page on housing, economic development, transportation, workforce development, infrastructure and other factors, we can make a smooth transition

to this new economy," Mr. Wolf said.

He added that Gov. Gina Raimondo's administration has already begun this process through programs like Real Jobs Rhode Island (RJRI), a massive effort to provide job training where required and to match employers with workers.

The Rhode Island Builders Association, and the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership of which RIBA is the hub, are key participants in RJRI. *Related stories on pages 10-13.*

Workforce development

Good jobs are the basis of any economy, but for a long time Rhode Island's officials and planners "have chronically underestimated the importance of workforce development," according to Mr. Kelly.



Nathan Kelly

"Economic expansion inside Route 495 in Massachusetts is gangbusters. A skilled workforce and the availability of jobs are what's driving that," he said.

"When we (at Horsley Witten) talk with major corporations and management groups, they tell us they're drawn to an area first and foremost by a high-quality workforce. That's even more important to them than land costs and taxes."

Workforce development is too often viewed as a social program,

Mr. Kelly noted.

"It is, in fact, an economic-development program. It has to be a major focus in Rhode Island moving forward."

Mr. Wolf agreed.

"With a holistic approach, we can get workers trained, attract more jobs, get young people to stay in Rhode Island, and offer more and better housing choices. This means that we can't rely on traditional economic and housing policies," he added.

Housing

Mr. Wolf cited a recent prediction that might surprise many Rhode Islanders. In December, Jonathan Smoke, chief economist with Realtor.com, ranked the Metro Providence region (which

includes Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts) as the nation's number one real estate market to watch in 2016.

On the to-watch list, Metro Providence was followed by St. Louis and San Diego. The Boston area didn't turn up until number 10.

These markets "are poised for substantial growth in prices and sales" this year, according to Mr. Smoke. He looked at which markets are seeing 60 percent or more online listing-page views than the national average, and whose inventory is moving faster than the national average. The Metro Providence market, he believes, is most likely to take off this year.

Statistics to support this aren't yet available, but Mr. Kelly stressed that any future growth in the housing market here will require serious rethinking not only by planners but by the residential construction industry itself.

"If we keep relying almost exclusively on single-family homes to bolster the housing economy, I think we're in trouble," he explained. "Many younger millennials will look for smaller homes of the innovative, multi-family type."

While some demand for single-family homes will remain, Mr. Kelly cited a February report from the National Association of Realtors®, *Economic and Housing Trends for 2016*, which indicates that many older Americans will seek smaller homes.

"The single-family market will still be there, especially when millennials start having families. So there is still enormous economic opportunity in residential construction," he said.

"The best opportunities, however, will be for housing types that haven't gotten much attention over the past few decades. There will be significant demand for city dwellings, especially for younger people, and for suburbs and rural areas to create some type of smaller housing choices for seniors or younger people who can afford it."

Affordability will be the key, according to Mr. Kelly.

"Right now, younger people can't afford a home on a two-acre lot in North Kingstown for \$500,000 or \$600,000. But if you build a denser cottage community, as was done in East Greenwich, you're selling out those units before construction is done."

He pointed out an "enormous pent-up demand."

"Single women are a major market. They're looking for something smaller and safe, in an urban or village center. So the residential construction industry has to change course a little."

The cost of construction

It's often said that "a rising tide lifts all boats." While a more skilled workforce, an improved job market and more housing choices will go a long way to improve the state's economy, those in the residential construction industry urge planners to consider the cost of construction.

In Rhode Island, much of this cost can be placed at the door of excessive regulation, according to John Marcantonio, executive director of the Rhode Island Builders Association.

"While the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) estimates that, nationally, over-regulation adds 25 percent to the cost of a home, in Rhode Island it's more like 40 percent," Mr. Marcantonio said.

see PLANNING...next page

PLANNING...from previous page

"While the Raimondo administration has taken some solid steps toward eliminating unnecessary regulation, much more needs to be done, especially on the local level."

Mr. Wolf echoed RIBA's concerns, adding that "we must streamline the permitting process."

Land Use 2025?

Used by the Rhode Island Division of Planning as its blueprint for the 21st century, *Land Use 2025* sets out the overarching goals for conservation and development, and it calls for "Rhode Islanders to work collectively to design, build, and conserve the state's communities and landscapes to insure that they are of a caliber Rhode Island deserves."

Among the policies it calls for are higher residential densities in urban areas and "village centers."

"This new demographic and economic scenario we're talking about might actually make *Land Use 2025* easier to achieve," Mr. Wolf commented.

"The biggest population increase is expected to be in Providence, with some in southern Rhode Island. In fact, the recent report from HousingWorks RI at Roger Williams University, *Projecting Future Housing Needs*, suggests that the population of Providence will expand by 29 percent over the next 10 years," he noted.

"Yes, there may be fewer children. But it's not just about young people and families abandoning the state. It's about people living longer than we used to live."

The infrastructure problem

Behind any scenario for Rhode Island's overall recovery and growth is the problem of an aging infrastructure that can't support growth.

"Much of the emphasis has been on fixing roads and bridges, which is important. But our drinking-water and sewer infrastructure is, in some cases, antiquated enough to constitute a health hazard. We have to start finding the money to repair, upgrade and expand it," Mr. Marcantonio said.

"The success of any economic scenario ultimately depends on infrastructure."

Mr. Kelly agreed.

"Where economic development is happening, such as inside Route 495, people are willing to make those critical infrastructure investments."

Mr. Wolf sees the problem as not limited to Rhode Island.

"We need to invest a lot all over southern New England. We're old and we're cold, and we must include transportation infrastructure as well."

The big picture

Economically, Mr. Kelly expanded on the idea that Rhode Island doesn't stand alone in any economic scenario.

"We shouldn't fall prey to a common disease in Rhode Island: 'unique-itis,' the idea that we're different from every other place in America. If you look at national projections, household size all over America is expected to decrease and the population is

expected to age."

Rhode Island's economy is not unique but is part of the Greater Boston economy, Mr. Kelly emphasized.

"Despite our negative headlines, the overall trends are somewhat positive. I hope we will take steps to become even more integrated with the Boston market, especially in transportation: A quicker commute will have its own helpful effects for the economy and housing."

Mr. Kelly cited a recent Center for Freedom and Prosperity statement that "we don't want to become a suburb of Boston."

"There are worse things in the world than becoming a suburb of one of the most dynamic metropolitan economies in the world. Certainly we want to maintain our distinctive character and have our own industry. But being a "bedroom community" to some extent, while maybe not as great as having all those people working here as well as living here, is a viable option. Having people living here is half the battle."

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OSHA will post employer-specific injuries, illnesses online

A new rule to “modernize” injury data-collection is meant to “nudge” employers to prevent workplace injuries and illnesses.

That’s the news from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), whose new requirements will take effect on August 10th.

The rule requires employers in high-hazard industries, including construction,

with between 20 and 249 employees to send injury and illness data to OSHA for posting on the agency’s public website.

The forms that must be used are 300, 300A and 301.

While employers will still have to complete and retain injury and illness records under the Recording and Reporting Occupational and Injury and Illnesses Regula-

tion, employer-specific data will be made public when the rule takes effect.

The final rule is available on Federal Register at: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/public-inspection.federalregister.gov/2016-10443.pdf>*

For more information, visit www.osha.gov.

-Paul Eno

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INTERVIEW...from page 23

to climate change alone, the state should take a new, strong look at Big River and the topic of statewide and regional water supply.

A lot of people in Rhode Island are passionate about the Big River Reservoir area, as they and their families lost their homes and farms to the state after we experienced our worst drought in the 1960s. I'm pleased that the state is taking steps to continue cleaning up the Big River Reservoir area, razing abandoned or derelict houses, remediating old dumps, in an effort to continue to prepare this site for its eventual intended use as a water supply source.

This site is the state's last opportunity for a very large (approximately 8,400 acres) tract of contiguous land to be preserved in perpetuity for drinking-water supply. We will never be able to duplicate this site from the perspective of clean and pristine open space, and in hydro-geologic terms.

THE BUILDER: You certainly seem to see a need for planning and funding to improve and expand drinking-water infrastructure in Rhode Island. Can you say more on that point?

BURKE: Absolutely. The Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank is the state's go-to source for infrastructure funding. The state's major water suppliers also pay into an existing state tax that's explicitly meant to fund water resource and supply projects. It's collected but most of it goes into the general fund instead. This tax, called the water quality surcharge, is similar to the gas tax. It's intended to be used for the water-supply community to ensure consistent funding for water resources and supply projects.

Some of it goes toward servicing old general obligation bonds, staff costs and projects. But if the surplus was properly applied it would still provide \$2 to \$3 million annually toward drinking-water system maintenance and upgrades.

I think the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank could be a great centralized resource for our state's water suppliers if coupled with the water quality surcharge.


THE BUILDER: What has to happen for state agencies, especially the Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM) and the Dept. of Health (DOH) to work smoothly with local/municipal drinking water suppliers to get this done?

BURKE: DEM and DOH have very specific roles in state government as it relates to water resources. DEM's role is to protect

and to restore the quality of the environment, water being a major component of the environment. DOH similarly has the unique authority to ensure that the quality of water for human health and sanitation meets local and federal standards.

The gap between these two agencies is filled by the WRB, which is responsible for the protection, conservation, use and development of the state's water resources and supplies. Effectively, WRB is the "glue" that binds the other state agencies together so they are all making well informed decisions now and in the future.

The WRB program has become anemic over the past several years because of budget and staff cuts, although they do exist in statute and they still have policy control over the \$5.2 million that is collected annually through the previously mentioned water quality surcharge.

This is a public board appointed by the governor and staffed by one person. Public support for this program, in its current form or some modified form, is needed in order to achieve both short-term and long-term policy and program changes that protect both our public and the environment, while preparing for the future. 

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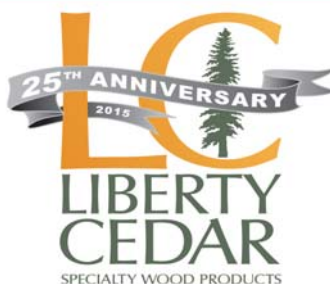
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