



Underground Utility Contractors of Florida, Inc.

FEBRUARY 2013

Paid Sick Leave Update (See page 4 for details)

UUCF Board Meeting and Walk the Halls of the Capitol (See page 12 for details)



Ditchmen February 2013	
Doubletree by Hilton Tallahassee 101 South Adams Street Tallahassee, Florida	Underground Utility Contractors of Florida April 1 – 2, 2013
UUCF has secured a block of rooms at the Doublett 2013 and Monday, April 1, 2013.	ree by Hilton Tallahassee on the nights of Sunday, March 31,
	n — \$129.00 (Single/Double Occupancy) ouble beds. (All requests are subject to availability).
	om rate is based on availability and le taxes (subject to change) at 12.5%.
	ired to guarantee accommodations. Deposit is refundable if cancellation number must be obtained. Please return
Reservations can be made by either the following:	
 Call reservations at (800) 222-8733 (be sure to ask for the Underground Utility room block), or Go on-line to <u>http://www.tallahassee.doubletree.com</u>. Enter arrival and departure date. Scroll down and click on "Add special rate codes." Type in UCF next to Group code and click check availability. Follow the instructions to complete a new reservation. 	
The UUCF room block expires on Friday, March 8, 2013. After Friday, March 8, 2013, UUCF cannot guarantee hotel accommodations or the group room rate at the Doubletree by Hilton Tallahassee. Check-in time is 3:00 p.m., and check-out time is 12:00 noon.	
TEAR AL	ONG DOTTED LINE
	Underground Utility Contractors of Florida April 1 – 2, 2013
Please make reservation(s) for the UUCF E 10:00 a.m 12:00 noon at the Governors Club.	xecutive Committee Meeting on Monday, April 1, 2013 from
Name(s) of those attending	
Please make reservation(s) for the UUCF Co 10:00 a.m 12:00 noon at the Governors Club.	onference Committee Meeting on Monday, April 1, 2013 from
Name(s) of those attending	
Monday, April 1, 2013 from 12:30 p.m 4:00 p.m.	12:00 noon and the UUCF Board of Director's Meeting on at the Governors Club.
Name	Telephone # ()
CompanyAddress	FAX # () City/State/Zip
Please complete and mail to UUCF no later than Fr	
221.1	UUCF West Bay Avenue
Longwo	od, FL 32750–4125 -1880 • FAX: (407) 260–1582
× /	

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n August 8, 2012, UUCF joined in support of several local and statewide business organizations in filing a legal injunction against the Citizens for a Greater Orange County (CGOC) political committee relating to the CGOC's petition drive to place a paid sick leave measure on the November 6, 2012 ballot in Orange County. The petition would have required all Orange County businesses with 15 or more employees to provide up to 56 hours per year of sick pay to employees. Employers with less than 15 employees would not have to meet the above requirement; however, the employer cannot retaliate against a person who takes sick time.

Ditchmen February 2013

On September 17, 2012 the Circuit Court issued a procedural writ effectively saying the county has twenty (20) days to respond to the suit. Tuesday, September 18, 2012, was the deadline to print the ballots. This decision by the courts made it impossible for the Orange County Petition Drive for "Paid Sick Leave" to go before the Voters of Orange County on November 6, 2012.

On September 12, 2012, Orange County commissioners voted 4–3 to hire an outside attorney to suggest revisions to the proposal's title and summary and to bring it back to the board October 16, almost a month past the printing deadline for the ballot — a decision that kept the measure off the November 6 ballot.

After a short legal battle the Co-Plaintiffs and Interveners prevailed, and the measure was not placed on the ballot in November.

In a ruling issued Friday, February 15, 2013, three Orange–Osceola judges found that the Orange County Commission "failed to act as its charter requires." Because of this

ruling, the commissioners will now need to do what the county charter and the judges say, and put the initiative on the next ballot in 2014.

On Tuesday, February 26, 2013, the Orange County Commissioners voted 6-1 to put the paid sick-time measure on the August 2014 ballot. Commissioner Edwards was the sole no vote stating that the panel should have rewritten the ballot title and summary, arguing that the current language is misleading. However, Mayor Jacobs stated that the board should stick with the current language because to change it would be viewed as "suspect" by the public. She agreed with the concerns about the language but said that she thought the court ruling directed commissioners to use the original petition wording.

Back in October 2012, we told you to look for this to be a legislative issue during the 2013 Legislative Session. On February 7, 2013, Representative Steve Precourt filed **HB 655**. On February 8, 2013. Senator David Simmons filed **SB** 726. HB 655 was referred to two committee references (Local & Federal Affairs and State), and **SB 726** was referred to three committee references (Community Affairs; Health Policy and Judiciary). These bills would preempt such ordinances. On February 20, 2013, HB 655 passed the House Local & Federal Affairs Committee on February 20, 2013 on a vote of 10–7. The bill now goes to its final committee reference, State Committee.

In 2003, the Florida Legislature



prohibited political subdivisions from establishing minimum wage levels in their individual jurisdictions. This law did not limit the authority of a local government to establish a minimum wage for its own employees, employees of its contractors, or employers to which it provides direct tax abatements or subsidies. HB 655 amends current law to further restrict political subdivisions from requiring an employer to provide employment benefits not required by state or federal law. This bill also specifically prohibits a political subdivision from requiring a minimum wage or employment benefits for the employees of its contractors and employers receiving tax abatements or subsidies, or awarding contract preferences based on the wages or benefits provided to employees. However, the bill does not limit the authority of a political subdivision to establish a minimum wage or provide employment benefits not otherwise required under state or federal law for its own employees. The bill has no fiscal impact on the state. If this passes, it will take effect July 1, 2013.

In the Senate, **SB 726** which provide that a political subdivision may not require an employer to provide family or medical leave benefits to an employee and may not otherwise regulate such leave. For purposes of uniform application of this section throughout the state, with the exception of family or medical leave benefits regulated under federal law or regulations, the regulation of family and medical leave benefits is expressly preempted to the state. In addition to any family or medical leave benefits available to an employee pursuant to applicable federal or state laws, an employee who has worked for an employer in this state for a total of 12 months and has worked a minimum of 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, is entitled to the following rights:

- (a) An employee may be absent from his or her employment for up to 5 days during a calendar year, without risk of termination, in the event of the illness of the employee or a dependent child of the employee which is documented by a signed letter from a licensed medical professional.
- (b) An employee may, without risk of termination, leave work for up to 1 day during a calendar year due to a medical emergency involving the employee, a dependent child of the employee, the employee's spouse, or a member of the household which is documented by a signed letter from a licensed medical professional which attests to the existence of a medical emergency.

- (c) An employee may, in consultation with his or her employer, obtain an adjustment of the employee's work schedule in order to accommodate up to a total of five doctor or dentist appointments each calendar year for the employee or a dependent child of the employee. The employee shall provide reasonable notice to his or her employer of the appointments.
- (d) As a condition of receiving the benefits specified in paragraphs (a)–(c), an employer may provide, and require an employee to participate in, a wellness or preventive health care program.

This bill does not limit the authority of a political subdivision to establish family or medical leave benefits for the employees of the political subdivision or prohibit a federally authorized and recognized tribal government from requiring family or medical leave benefits for a person employed within a territory over which the tribe has jurisdiction. If this bill passes, it will take effect upon becoming law.

UUCF will keep its members up-todate on this issue with its weekly Legislation Reports. The Pre-Legislative Session Report will be posted on the website on March 4.

State Certified Underground Utility & Excavation Exam

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UUCF

UUCF 2013 Conference

July 25–28, 2013 Boca Raton Resort & Club Boca Raton, FL

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Mark your calendar now for the UUCF 2013 Annual Conference. The UUCF 2013 Conference Chairperson is Kim Bryan with Petticoat–Schmitt Civil Contractors, Inc. in Jacksonville, FL.

Watch for information on the 2013 Conference in future issues of the Ditchmen.

DBPR Update

ADVERTISING: Signs to Social Media, License Numbers Required!

Advertising is important to Florida contractors and can make the difference between a great business year and just making ends meet. Florida contractors have many new ways of promoting their businesses with the increased use of internet websites and the advent of social media technologies. As advertising evolves, it is important for Florida contractors to remember that their license number must be included in all offers of service, bids, business proposals, contracts or advertisements, regardless of the medium. Pursuant to **Rule 61G4–12.011, F.A.C.**, advertisements include any electronic media including Internet sites. So please remember to include your license number on your websites, social media pages and other advertisements.

If you have any questions regarding advertising requirements please review the Construction Industry Licensing Board's **FAQs** or you may contact the Department's Customer Contact Center at (850) 487–1395.

Certification of Registered Contractor's Licenses (Grandfathering)

House Bill 897, which passed during the 2012 legislative session, was approved by Governor Rick Scott on May 4, 2012. This bill will re–open and extend the time period

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(DBPR Update Continued from Page 6)

for contractors to request that their registered contractor's license be grandfathered to a state wide certified contractor's license. The time period requesting grandfathering of registered licenses has been extended until November 1, 2015. The re-opening of the grandfathering time period took effect on October 1, 2012. Registered contractors may submit their application for grandfathering of their licenses beginning October 1, 2012.

Please see our *Grandfathering FAQs* for more information.

Re-activation of Inactive Licenses *House Bill* **517** passed during the 2012 Legislative Session and was approved by Governor Rick Scott on April 6, 2012. This bill reduces the number of continuing education credits an inactive or delinquent contractor licensee must complete prior to reactivating his or her license. Effective July 1, 2012, an inactive or delinquent licensee will only need to complete the continuing education requirements for the renewal cycle immediately preceding license reactivation.

APPLICATIONS AND LICENSURE: Streamlined Applications Released

In an effort to assist applicants through the licensure process and to reduce the number of deficient applications, the Department of Business and Professional Regulation and the Construction Industry Licensing Board conducted a complete review and revision of construction applications. The new application forms provide clearer instructions, reduce paperwork and provide clear criteria to establish financial stability/responsibility and work experience.

The Construction Industry Licensing Board began accepting the Department's new streamlined applications on April 13, 2012.

If you would like more information on the new bonding form or the required credit score, please visit the Department's financial responsibility

and stability website by clicking the following link: **Contractor Financial Responsibility and Stability**.

EXAMINATION AND RE-EXAMINATION: Board Increases Time Limit to Pass of All Examination Parts.

The Construction Industry Licensing Board has amended Rule 61G4-16.009, Florida Administrative Code, to grant candidates more time to complete all portions of the initial licensure examination. Beginning November 1, 2011, examination candidates are permitted four years from the date he or she initially sat for the initial licensure examination to pass all portions of the examination and will not be limited in the number of times they may re-take a test during the four year period. If you have any question regarding the Board's change, you may visit **www.** myfloridalicense.com/dbpr/ pro/cilb/index.html or call (850) 487–1395 for more information.

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Florida Supreme Court — "An Unlicensed Contractor Has No Rights or Remedies for the Enforcement of a Contract" By — George E. Spofford, IV

> GrayRobinson, P.A. Florida Offices Statewide george.spofford@gray-robinson.com

E arlier this year in the Earth. Trades, Inc. v. T &G Corporation case, the Florida Supreme Court issued a decision making it clear that unlicensed contractors simply cannot enforce a contract for which they lack the proper license.

You may be thinking, "So what? I have a license." That may well be true, but ask yourself if you have ever done a small piece of work that you were qualified to do, but didn't really have the correct license? By doing that work as part of the larger contract for which you did have a license, you could be putting your entire contract at risk.

So, what happened in the <u>Earth</u> <u>Trades</u> case and why is it important?

In 2004, T&G Corporation was the prime contractor on a parking garage project. T&G subcontracted the site work to Earth Trades, Inc. Earth Trades was not licensed to perform the work required by the contract. The parties had a dispute and Earth Trades filed suit against T&G for nonpayment. T&G counterclaimed that Earth Trades had breached the contract and sued Earth Trades' surety to enforce Earth Trades' performance bond.

At trial T&G argued that Earth Trades could not sue for breach of contract, because Florida Statutes, Section 489.128 prohibited an unlicensed contractor from enforcing the contract for which the claimant was not licensed. Earth Trades and

the surety countered by arguing that because T&G had willingly entered into the contract with an unlicensed contractor, T&G was equally at fault (*in pari delicto* for anyone out there that took Latin in high school). In other words, Earth Trades argued that because T&G was equally at fault by choosing to do business with an unlicensed contractor, T&G also could not enforce the contract against Earth Trades or the surety.

In some situations and in some parts of the state, that defense would have worked. Unfortunately for Earth Trades, the suit was brought within the jurisdiction of the 5th District Court of Appeals where the in pari delicto defense was not allowed. In contrast, in the 3rd District Court of Appeals, the in pari delicto defense had been recognized as a viable defense in similar circumstances. The District Courts of Appeal are usually the place where appeals end, but when the District Courts of Appeal are in disagreement, the Florida Supreme Court can weigh in and resolve the disagreement.

In Earth Trades, because there was disagreement between the 5th and the 3rd District Courts of Appeal, the Florida Supreme Court resolved the dispute and held that even if the other party is aware that the contractor is unlicensed, that will not prevent the other party from enforcing the contract, and the unlicensed contractor may not enforce its contract. In other words, the in pari delicto defense could not be used by an unlicensed contractor to prevent the other party from suing the contractor or the contractor's surety. The Florida Supreme Court also stated that it mattered not whether the other party was a consumer or a contractor, or whether the unlicensed party was a prime contractor, subcontractor or sub–subcontractor.

The statute governing the dispute provided in part, "[a]s a matter of public policy, contracts entered into on or after October 1, 1990, by an unlicensed contractor shall be unenforceable in law or in equity by the unlicensed contractor."§ 489.128(1), Fla. Stat. (2005).

The Florida Supreme Court recognized that the applicable statute, 489.128, had gone through several revisions affecting the rights of the parties to a construction contract when the contractor lacks a proper license.

For example, the 1991 version stated that if the contractor was unlicensed, the contract was unenforceable in law, but equitable relief was permitted, i.e. neither can enforce at law, but can possibly enforce if it would be equitable to do so. In 1999 the statute was revised to provide that such a contract was unenforceable in law or equity, i.e. neither party could enforce in law or equity. Then, in 2003, the statute was revised to state that such a contract was unenforceable in law or equity by the unlicensed contractor, i.e. only the unlicensed contractor was

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(Florida Supreme Court — "An Unlicensed Contractor Has No Rights or Remedies for the Enforcement of a Contract" Continued from Page 8)

precluded from enforcing the contract in law or equity, but the other party could enforce the contract.

Under the two prior versions of the statute, neither party had the power to sue for breach of contract if the contract was with an unlicensed contractor, but under the later version of the statute applicable in Earth. Trades, only the unlicensed contractor had no right of contract enforcement.

What's more, usually the statutes in effect at the time a contract is entered into are the statutes that govern the parties, even if the statutes later change. In other words, if Earth Trades' contract had been entered into in 2002, then the version of the statute in effect at that time (the 1999 version) normally would apply even though the lawsuit was filed sometime after 2004. T&G would not have been able to recover from Earth Trades for breach because under the 1999 version, neither party had the right to enforce a contract. But here, the 2003 statute expressly states that the new statute applies to all contracts entered into on or after October 1, 1990. Thus, it didn't matter whether Earth Trades' contract was entered into prior to the current statute (2003 version) or afterwards, because the new statute would apply retroactively. Retroactive application of a new statute does not happen often, but when it does, it can be a game changer.

The Florida Supreme Court rejected the *in pari delicto* argument made by Earth Trades recognizing that while T&G's alleged knowledge of Earth Trades' lack of a license made both parties wrongdoers, they were not equally at fault. The Court illustrated the different degrees of fault between the unlicensed contractor, Earth Trades, and the other party, T&G, which merely had knowledge of the lack of license, by pointing out that the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) may issue a cease and desist notice to and impose fines of up to \$5,000 on anyone who knowingly hires an unlicensed contractor. § 455.228(1)-(2), Fla. Stat. (2005). Therefore, because T&G had contracted with an unlicensed contractor, T&G was indeed a wrongdoer. However, unlicensed contracting is a crime for which a first offense is a first-degree misdemeanor and a second is a thirddegree felony. § 489.127(1)-(2), Fla. Stat. (2005). In addition, DBPR may impose a fine of \$10,000 on any person found guilty of unlicensed contracting. § 489.13(3), Fla. Stat. (2005). And, as explained above, the Legislature in 2003 amended Section 489.128, removing language that made contracts with unlicensed contractors unenforceable by either party and declaring instead that only the unlicensed contractor had no enforceable contract or lien rights with regard to the contract. Therefore, while T&G was a wrongdoer, Earth Trades was a worse wrongdoer. They were not equal wrongdoers and the in

(Continued on Page 16)

Help Wanted

Holland Pump is seeking a **Rentals & Sales Pump Consultant** for their **Tampa, Florida** office. Utilize individual technical, communication and product skills to solve customer fluid handling problems and increase company business through the development of Holland pumping systems and related pumping products, particularly as related to the rental of pumps in **sewer bypass applications**. The position also involves assisting other branches when expertise is required. Contacting and meeting with potential clients, tracking projects, designing and bidding dewatering systems. Analyzes, assesses, recommends and designs pumping systems. Execute job by deploying Holland resources and supervising logistics. Use judgment to supervise job on site from start to finish depending on location of job and other Holland resources available. Generate sales reports, bids, proposals and quotes. Be point man with customers for **after-hours emergency sewer bypass response**. Competitive Salary, Commission, Bonus and Benefits available. Please e-mail resume to Eugene Lant, <u>eugene@hollandpump.com</u>, or fax resume to 561.683.7247.



A Disciplined Subcontractor Risk Management Strategy will Help Protect Your Business By — Brian Pratt

Insurance Advisor at Frank H. Furman, Inc. brian@furmaninsurance.com

M any underground utility professionals are experiencing an increase in sales. The challenge of increased production faced by some contractors is a shortage of experienced labor personnel. As a result, some underground utility professionals who historically have performed their own work for the vast majority of their projects are now seeking labor-only subcontractors to help them meet schedules. Using a subcontractor, without a disciplined risk management approach represents increased risk for a underground utility professional. Contractors at the highest risk are those who rely on a hand shake or purchase order instead of executing a written contract. Without a contractual agreement that holds subcontractors accountable, the losses stemming from their actions can have a severe impact on the prime underground utility contractor's balance sheet. The absence of a written contract leaves the greatest burden of risk on the prime contractor, not the subcontractor. A disciplined risk management strategy that allows contractual risk to flow downstream is essential. This transfer can be achieved when the prime underground utility contractor contractually obligates subcontractors to assume their share of the risk. Through our experience in the underground utility industry, serving as insurance advisors for many underground utility professionals, we recommend that prime contractors insist on a formal executed subcontract agreement with all lower-tier subcontractors regardless of the contract size or scope of work.

Here are five additional considerations

that prime underground utility contractors should include in their risk management disciplines:

- 1. Additional Insured Subcontractors must name the prime trade contractor as an additional insured on the subcontractor's General Liability insurance policy.
- 2. Indemnification & Hold Harmless Agreement - it is important to contractually flow your risk downstream. The provisions under a Hold Harmless Agreement will minimize the risk of being part of litigation or allow the prime contractor to pursue a claim for indemnity if a subcontractor or his employees get hurt or cause property damage to a third party. It is highly recommended that contracts and contractual obligations be reviewed with a construction-focused attorney.

OSHA Compliance – As a prime trade contractor, you have a duty under the multiemployer rule to maintain a safe and OSHA-compliant worksite. We occasionally find subcontractors being cut loose to work on projects by the prime trade contractor with little discipline and weak direction from an OSHA compliance perspective. Remember, the actions of your subcontractor will likely flow to you under the Multi-employer OSHA ruling. We recommend that you insist that all subcontractors be OSHA competent. OSHA competency centers around a subcontractor's ability to identify hazards and then proactively contain hazards that expose employees to injuries. For a copy of the OSHA Multiemployer Ruling e-mail **brian@furmaninsurance. com**.

- 3. Workers Compensation Many smaller labor-only subcontractors utilize the service of a professional employer organization (PEO) or leasing company. It is very important for the prime contractor to request an employee roster from the subcontractor confirming that all employees on the prime contractors' job site, are listed on the leasing company's payroll register. If the labor subcontractor employs a worker that is not listed on payroll register, the prime contractor is considered the employer at risk. Profit margins in the underground utility industry are too thin to absorb a loss from a labor subcontractor. Can vour balance sheet take a hit? A claim from a subcontractor may cause the prime contractor to forfeit a safety bonus from its workers' compensation carrier.
- 4. The benefit of a construction focused attorney with underground utility /contracting expertise – Modest investment in legal counsel to effectively manage contractual risk will improve your legal position. In general, when attorneys draft a contract, they can stand behind the provisions of that contract.



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UUCF to Hold Board and Committee Meetings in Tallahassee

The 2013 Legislative Session will begin on March 5. The Underground Utility Contractors of Florida (UUCF) Board of Director's and Committee Meetings will be held in Tallahassee while the state legislature is in session. The date is Monday, April 1, 2013. As with every board meeting, UUCF members are invited to attend. However, this is a special invitation to all UUCF members to attend this "legislative session" Board of Director's Meeting.

The UUCF Executive and Convention Committee Meetings and Board of Director's Meeting will be held on Monday, April 1, 2013 at the Governors Club located at 202 South Adams Street in Tallahassee. The Executive and Convention Committee Meetings will be held from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon, lunch will start at 12:00 noon and the Board of Director's Meeting and Legislative Briefing will be held from 12:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

On Tuesday, April 2, 2013, attendees are encouraged to walk the halls of the Capitol and meet with their local representatives and senators. Attendees will be briefed on the issues to discuss with their legislators during the Legislative Briefing on Monday, April 1, 2013.

UUCF has secured a block of rooms attheDoubletreebyHiltonTallahassee. The rate is \$129.00 single/double occupancy. Information, along with a Hotel Reservation Form, is included on **Page 2** in this issue of the Ditchmen. Please contact the hotel directly at (800) 222–8733. The room block will expire on Friday, March 8, 2013, so make your room reservation now. Tallahassee is busy this time of year.

Don't forget to make appointments with the senators and representatives from your district on Tuesday, April 2, 2013.



Contractor Member of the Month: Layne Heavy Civil, Inc.

L ayne is a global Water Management, Construction and Drilling company, providing responsible solutions for water, mineral and energy resources.

Our experts collaborate across divisional, functional and geographic lines to deliver total solutions for the world's toughest water, mineral and energy challenges. This integrated approach ensures streamlined communications, expedited timelines, a constant focus on safety and sustainability, and allows us to offer more than the sum of our individual services.

Since our founding in 1882 as a regional water resource provider, Layne has grown and evolved to operations in over 100 locations, on five continents (North America,



South America, Europe, Africa and Australia). Our customers include government agencies, investorowned utilities, industrial companies, global mining companies, consulting engineering firms, heavy civil construction contractors, oil and gas companies, power companies and agribusiness.

IER - MINERAL - ENERGI

Layne, one word kept emerging over and over – solutions. We invent solutions. We propose solutions. We deliver solutions.

For a company previously known as a service provider, this is an important distinction. Our solutions give clients a single point of

In defining a path forward for

(Continued on Page 26)



Not a Member of UUCF?

Is your company located in one of the following counties?

UUCF District 1

Brevard, Indian River, St. Lucie, Volusia County (East of I-95)

UUCF District 2

Lake, Orange, Osceola, Polk, (East of Lakeland), Seminole, Volusia (West of I–95)

UUCF District 3

Broward, Dade, Martin, Monroe, Palm Beach

UUCF At Large

Alachua, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Marion, Suwannee, Taylor

Did you know that UUCF does not have an affiliated chapter in these counties? Did you know that membership with UUCF is only \$200 per year, per district?

For a list of What We Have Done For You, **please click here**. If you are interested in joining UUCF, **please click here** for a Membership Application.

Registered Contractor License Renewal Reminder

Just a reminder that the Registered Contractor licenses from the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) are up for renewal on August 31, 2013. Current law requires licenseholders to obtain 14 hours of continuing education with at least one hour in workplace safety, one hour in workers' compensation, one hour in business practices, one hour in the advance building code module, one hour in laws and rules (Chapter 489) and one hour in wind mitigation (this requirement only affects general, residential, building, roofing and glass and glazing contractors).

Don't forget to notify the DBPR office of any address change. Section 489.124(2) gives sole responsibility to the licensee for notifying DBPR in writing of the licensee's current mailing address and phone number.

Failure to notify the department of a change of address shall constitute a violation of this section. In addition, if your address changes and you do not notify the department, you may not receive important mailings from the department such as your renewal notice.

Thank You for Making Us Part of Your Team for Over a Century.

This year, as *The Blue Book Building and Construction Network* celebrates its 100th Anniversary, we feel privileged to have played a part in the industry's growth over the last ten decades. We are indebted to the millions of industry professionals who put us to work and continue to rely on our products to help build the relationships needed for their projects...from design through post-construction.

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President's Message



If you're going to the UUCF Tallahassee Summit on April 2, please raise your hand. Now,

look around and see who doesn't have their hand raised. Now, put your hand down and go ask them why they are not attending the most important UUCF function of the entire year. All members have paid for this "access in numbers" through their dues and large numbers actually mean something to legislators.

Our elected officials are literally bombarded by issues during session, and the best way to cut through the noise is to be the loudest. We have



only a few very important issues on our legislative agenda this year that we want to focus on. The most important one is the

elimination of "public's best interest" clause in Florida Statute 255.20 – Competitive Bid. This clause pretty much allows public officials to declare that because doing underground utility work with in– house forces is in the public's best interest. It doesn't matter what the cost of the project is. That means we are competing with public sector utility departments for our work. We really think we have a chance of getting this clause eliminated from current statute, but we need your help. We need your attendance in Tallahassee. Please spread the word among other members in your chapter. Let's have a great turnout and get some legislation past the finish line this session. To make a hotel reservation and notify the UUCF office of your attendance at this meeting, please go to **Page 2**. The deadline to make your hotel reservation is March 8. Hope to see you there.

> Sincerely, Bruce Wendorf, UUCF President





(DBPR Update Continued from Page 7)

Florida Homeowners' Construction Recovery Fund Experiencing Funding Shortfall

Due to a shortfall in funding, there are not sufficient funds available to pay claims received by the Florida Homeowners' Construction Recovery Fund at this time. The Department will monitor revenues for the Recovery Fund and make payments as funds become available.

The Department will continue to process claims until the claims are complete and ready for review by the Construction Industry Licensing Board. The Department will then present claims to the Board, in the order they are completed, as funds become available. The Department will notify claimants by mail when the claims are complete and when they are ready for Board review. For more information, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions regarding the status of the Recovery Fund or contact the Department's Customer Contact Center at (850) 487–1395.

(Florida Supreme Court — "An Unlicensed Contractor Has No Rights or Remedies for the Enforcement of a Contract" Continued from Page 9)

pari delicto defense was not viable.

So, the lesson to be learned from the <u>Earth Trades</u> case is – don't do work for which you are not licensed. Do so, and you may be working for free, and you also risk criminal and DBPR sanctions.

George Spofford is a shareholder in the Tampa office of the GrayRobinson law firm. Spofford has represented the construction industry since 1985 and serves as General Counsel to UUCF. GrayRobinson, P.A. (**www.grayrobinson.com**) is a full-service business law firm with over 275 attorneys and 10 offices across Florida. If any member has specific questions relating to this topic or any topic they would like to see addressed in future editions, please feel free to contact George at (813) 273–5000 or **george.spofford@grayrobinson.com**.

The information provided in this article is for informational purposes only and not for the purpose of providing legal advice. You should contact your attorney to obtain advice with respect to any particular issue or problem. Use of this information does not create an attorneyclient relationship between the author and the reader. The opinions expressed in this article are the opinions of the individual author and may not reflect the opinions of the firm.



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Division of Workers' Compensation Offers Free Classes

The Florida Department of Financial Services, Division of Workers' Compensation, is offering free classes regarding Florida's workers' compensation laws and workplace safety to business owners, licensed contractors and employers.

Workers' compensation topics covered include:

- Review of Key Statutory Definitions
- Contractor Responsibilities
- Exemptions
- Insurance Coverage Requirements
- Enforcement Provisions

Workplace safety topics presented by OSHA (U.S. Dept. of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration) include:

- Direct and Indirect Costs
- Inspections
- Florida Fatalities

The following is a list of class dates and times for future sessions:

March 6, 2013

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST Workers' Compensation WEB Based class

March 7, 2013

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST Workplace Safety WEB Based class

March 12, 2013

Orlando 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon State Office Building Hurston Complex, 400 West Robinson Street, South Tower, Conference Room N–101 Orlando, FL 32801

March 19, 2013

Miramar 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon Miramar Pembroke Pines Regional Chamber of Commerce Ana G. Mendez University System 3520 Enterprise Way Miramar, FL 33025

March 21, 2013

Tallahassee 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon Hartman Building 2012 Capital Circle S.E., Room 102 Tallahassee, FL 32399

April 9, 2013

Jacksonville 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon Florida Department of Law Enforcement 921 North Davis Street, Building E, Training Room Jacksonville, FL 32209



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April 10, 2013

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST Workers' Compensation WEB Based class

April 11, 2013

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST Workplace Safety WEB Based class

April 18, 2013

Miami 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon State of Florida Office Building 401 N.W. 2nd Avenue, North Tower, Suite N–423 Miami, FL 33128

April 23, 2013

Fort Myers 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon State of Florida Office Building 42295 Victoria Avenue, Room 165A Fort Myers, FL 33901

(Continued on Page 26)

Calendar of Events

Mar. 1–2	UUCF/ASJMSF Annual Bass Fishing
	Tournament, Lake Toho, Kissimmee
Apr. 1B	oard of Director's Meeting, Tallahassee
Apr. 2 Wa	alk the Halls of the Capitol, Tallahassee
June 7	Board of Director's Meeting, Orlando
July 25	Board of Director's Meeting,
H	Boca Raton Resort & Club, Boca Raton
July 25–28	Annual Conference,
ŀ	Boca Raton Resort & Club, Boca Raton
Sept. 27–29	President's Cup Golf Tournament
Nov. 1	Board of Director's Meeting, Orlando

NUCA of North Florida

Mar. 18 Mar. 28 Apr. 9 May 14 May 23 June 11 July 9 July 18 Aug. 13 Sept. 10 Sept. 10 Sept. (TBA) Oct. 8 Oct. (TBA) Nov. 5 Nov. 21 Dec. 10	Executive Committee Meeting Golf Tournament General Membership Meeting Executive Committee Meeting Jacksonville Suns Baseball Executive Committee Meeting General Membership Meeting Executive Committee Meeting
Dec. 10 Dec. (TBA)	Executive Committee Meeting Holiday Party

NUCA of Northwest Florida 2013

Mar. 15	Clay Shoot
Apr. (TBA)	
June 15	
	Equipment Rodeo, Equestrian Center

2014

Feb. (TBA)..... Annual Meeting, Museum of Commerce

NUCA of Southwest Florida

Mar. 21Board of Director's Meeting, Holiday Inn Airport, Gulf Coast Town Center Apr. 18Board of Directors/General Membership Meetings

May 4 Golf Tournament	t
May 16Board of Director's Meeting	ş
June 20 Board of Directors/General Membership)
Meetings/Scholarship Awards	3
July 18Board of Director's Meeting	Ş
Aug. 15.Board of Directors/General Membership Meetings	3
Sept. 20–21 Fishing Tournament	t
Sept. 26Board of Director's Meeting	ş
Oct. 17 .Board of Directors/General Membership Meetings	3
Nov. 21Board of Director's Meeting	Ş
Dec. 7 Holiday Party & Installation of Officers	;

National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA)

May 7–9......Washington Summit, Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria, VA, Capitol Hill Oct. 2–4......Fall Board of Directors and Leadership Meeting, El Conquistador in Las Croabas, Puerto Rico

Sunshine 811 Meetings

Mar. 12–14 CGA Excavation Safety Conference
& Expo, West Palm Beach
Mar. 14
Mar. 12–14, 2013 CGA Conference and Expo,
Palm Beach County Convention Center,
West Palm Beach
Mar. 14
Convention Center, West Palm Beach
Apr. 3 Damage Prevention Forum,
Homewood Suites by Hilton, Miami
Apr. 19Executive Committee Meeting, Conference Call
May 22 Committee Meetings, Call Center, DeBary
May 23Annual Membership/Board Meeting,
Call Center, DeBary
May 24 Sunshine 811 Golf Tournament,
DeBary Golf & Country Club, DeBary
June 21Executive Committee Meeting, Conference Call
July 17–19 Strategic Planning, Committee Meetings
and Board Meeting, TBA
Oct. 18Executive Committee Meeting, Conference Call
Nov. 14–15 Committee & Board of Director's Meetings,
Call Center, DeBary

Construction Industry Licensing Board (CILB) Meetings

Mar. 13–15	
Apr. 10–12	
	Howey-in-the-Hills
May 8–10	. Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront
June 12–14	Embassy Suites – Fort Lauderdale
July 10-12	
Aug. 14-16	
Sept. 11-13	
Oct. 9–11	
Nov. 13–15	



NUCA Now Accepting Scholarship Applications

The NUCA Scholarship Application is now available. The following scholarships are anticipated to be awarded at the following values in 2013.

- D.A. Foster Memorial Scholarship \$8,000 award (\$2,000/year over four years)
- William & Shirley Burgett Scholarship \$2,000 one-time award
- NUCA \$4,000 Scholarship \$4,000 award (\$1,000/year over four years)
- NUCA \$1,000 Scholarship \$1,000 award (\$500/year over two years for those enrolling in two-year programs)

Any high school senior whose parent or legal guardian is employed by a NUCA member company in good standing at the time of the application deadline may apply. Student employees, including part-time employees, are also eligible, as are dependents of NUCA Chapter Executive Directors. The applicant must be graduating from high school in 2013 and enrolling full time in an accredited two- or four-year college or university for their freshman year beginning in the fall of 2013.

Complete application forms and all required supporting documentation must be received in the NUCA office no later than 6:00 p.m. eastern time, Friday, May 24, 2013. Supporting documentation may be sent separately. Incomplete and improper applications will not be considered. Please address to: NUCA Foundation Scholarship Committee, 3925 Chain Bridge Road, Suite 300, Fairfax, VA 22030. Emails and faxes will not be accepted. NUCA staff will endeavor to advise applicants of incomplete applications only if, in staff's judgment, the incomplete information can be reasonably expected to be resolved and missing information received before the deadline.

Applications will be judged and winners announced by Friday, June 28, 2013, and notified by letter shortly after. If you have questions regarding the application and review process, please contact NUCA at (703) 358–9300.

The **scholarship application** describes the scholarships, criteria and deadline.

Sunshine 811 Holiday Calendar

Memorial Day	05/27/13
Independence Day	
Labor Day	
Thanksgiving Day	11/28/13
Day after Thanksgiving Day	11/29/13
Christmas Eve	
Christmas Day	12/25/13

Sunshine 811's business hours are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. **Please keep** the above dates in mind when calling for locates two business days prior. The law now requires two full business days prior to digging.



2013 FDOT Letting Date

March 27 May 22 July 31 September 25 December 4 April 24 June 19 August 28 October 30

2014 FDOT Letting Date

January 29 March 26 May 21 February 26 April 30 June 18

NUCA of North Florida

The NUCA of North Florida Annual Golf Tournament will be held on Monday, March 18 at St. John's Golf & Country Club. Jon Woodall, John Woody, Inc., is this year's Golf Chairman. Sponsorships are available beginning at \$260 for Tee/Green to \$600 Vendor Showcases. The cost for players is \$125. Contact the office at (904) 296-1230 to register or for additional information. We appreciate the following sponsors who have already signed up: Vendor Showcase: All Pro Asphalt, Beard Equipment Company, Cecil W. Powell & Company, Custom Fab, Duval Asphalt Products, Ferguson Waterworks, Fortiline Waterworks and United Rentals Trench Safety. Event Sponsors: Godwin Pumps, HD Supply Waterworks, Linder Industrial Machinery, Professional Shoring &

Chapter News

Supply, Sigma, Standard Precast and U.S. Pipe. **Tee/Green Sponsors:** Barney's Pumps, Blue Book, Ford Meter Box Company, John Woody, Inc., Layne Heavy Civil, Porter Associates, Star Pipe Products and Sunshine 811. Don't miss out on the fun! This is one of our big fundraisers of the year and everyone always has a great time.

I just returned from the NUCA National Convention in Phoenix, AZ. Although the number of attendees was down, NUCA provided a very robust program, from excellent keynote speakers, Former CEO of Southwest Airlines Howard Putnam and Columnist Gene Marks, to Bootcamps on various topics, Special presentations, NUCA Committee meetings, Case Study presentations, Yellow Bird Hoop Dancers, and a Corn Hole tournament, there was truly something for everyone. The next NUCA event will be the Washington Summit which will be held May 7–9. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

Do you have a student who will be entering college this fall? If so, the 2013 NUCA Scholarship form is now available on the NUCA website. NUCA offers four scholarships annually based on merit. Forms are due by May 24, and winners will be announced in late June.

Have you made your plans yet to attend the UUCF Legislative visits in Tallahassee April 1–2? Don't miss this great opportunity to meet will our local delegations to push our legislative issues. We will be staying at the Doubletree by Hilton Tallahassee. Room rate is \$129 per night. Make

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) Half page (7" w x 4¾" h)	\$125.00 net/month
Quarter page (3 3/8" w x 4 9/16" h)	\$75.00 net/month
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Business Card (reduced 75%) – 12 month	\$125.00 net/year
Business Card (reduced 75%) – 6 months	\$85.00 net/six months

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To place an advertisement in the Ditchmen, please contact the UUCF office at the following:

UUCF 231 West Bay Avenue Longwood, FL 32750–4125 Phone: (407) 830–1880 – FAX: (407) 260–1582

-**7**6

your reservations soon as there is only limited availability.

NUCA of Northwest Florida

NUCA of Northwest Florida and Sunshine 811 will host a Contractor's Luncheon on February 28, 2013. It will be held at the Pensacola Bay Center from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Brad Martin, with Sunshine 811, will be covering a course on Five Steps to Safer Digging and Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles will be covering the Current Rules and Regulations. You can go online to Sunshine 811 and register for this event.

We will be holding our Annual Sporting Clay Shoot Tournament on March 15. It will be held at the Santa Rosa Shooting Center in Pace, Florida. For sponsorships or registration please contact our office at (850) 434–8328.

NUCA of Southwest Florida

The NUCA of Southwest Florida Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament will be held Saturday, May 4 at Old Corkscrew Golf Club, which is the number 1 rated golf course in Southwest Florida. Our scholarship awards are based solely on the proceeds from our Annual Spring Scholarship Golf Tournament. Please contact the NUCA of Southwest Florida office at *nucaswfl@ gmail.com* or (239) 939–1952 for additional information. Sponsorship and registration forms will be available on the website at *www.nucaswfl. com*.

The NUCA Foundation for Education and Research 2013 Scholarship Application is now available for any high school student whose parent or legal guardian is employed by a NUCA member company. Applications must be received by May 24, 2013, recipients will be announced late June 2013.

The Associated Builders and Contractors Florida Gulf Coast Chapter is hosting a breakfast, "Ready to Rebound: The Commercial Construction Industry," on Thursday March 7 at 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. at the Perkins Restaurant in Bonita Springs. There is no charge to attend. RSVP by e-mail to **rickmartin@ abcflgulf.org**.

Spring Forward – Daylight savings time begins 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 10. Set your clocks ahead one hour.

SUCA

SUCA is now accepting credit card payments for all services. Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover are accepted. If paying membership dues via credit card, there will be a 3% transaction fee added.

Speaking of membership dues, thank you to the many members who have continued their support of the associations by renewing their dues for 2013. Please keep in mind that dues were due in January. For your company to appear in the UUCF and NUCA membership directories, your dues must be paid before March 15. If you are not sure whether you have renewed, please contact the SUCA office.



SUCA's Annual Family Barbecue is scheduled for Saturday, February 16, 2013 at Lupton's Boggy Bottom Ranch in Plant City. This event is a long time favorite attended by over 300 people each year. Bring your family, guests and employees out to enjoy all you can eat ribs and chicken. Kids will have a blast with the bounce house, power jumper, caricature artist, choo-choo train, face painting clown and playground. The adults may participate in the horseshoe tournament to win cash prizes, sponsored by Ajax Paving Industries of Florida. Bragging rights are also up for grabs in the pie eating contest and the tug-of-war contest between contractors and associates. Door prizes, sponsored by Professional Shoring & Supply, include tickets to the upcoming Kenny Chesney concert, The Zac Brown Band concert, movie tickets, gift cards and much, much more! Thank you to the following companies for their general sponsorship of the BBQ: Acme Barricades, All South Underground, Associated Construction Products. Inc., Dallas 1 Construction & Development, Ferguson Waterworks, HD Supply Waterworks, Lane Construction, MWI Pump Rental, Stuart Angelo & Co., CPA's, National Trench Safety, Ring Power Corp. and Woodruff & Sons, Inc. Ten BBQ tickets were be mailed to all member firms. Be sure to return any unwanted tickets to the SUCA office by February 11 to avoid being charged. Contact Misty McKendree if you are interested in sponsoring this event or to request any additional tickets.

SUCA will be hosting a Red Cross Adult CPR, First Aid & AED (Automated External Defibrillator) training class on Friday, February 22 at Ring Power in Riverview. Red Cross certification cards will be issued to participants completing the course and certifications are valid for 2 years. The cost is \$25 per person for members and \$35 per person for nonmembers. Please contact the SUCA office to register for the course.

SUCA Scholarship applications will be mailed to members in March. The scholarship is offered to the children of SUCA members who are seniors in high school this year and will be attending college in the fall. SUCA's Scholarship committee chair Tom Woodward of David Nelson Construction Co. recently announced that SUCA will now be awarding two scholarships each year. The first place award will be in the amount of \$6,000 (4 installments of \$1,500) and the second award will be in the amount of \$2,000 (4 installments of \$500). In addition to SUCA's scholarship, UUCF and NUCA have programs available to members as well. Keep an eve out for the scholarship packages in the mail, and please ensure your employees are aware of this great member benefit.

All SUCA members are encouraged to travel to Tallahassee April 1–2, 2013 for the UUCF Board Meeting, Legislative Briefing and Capitol visits. This is your golden opportunity to meet your legislators one–on–one to informally discuss industry issues. UUCF has secured a block of rooms at the Doubletree by Hilton Tallahassee for \$129 per night. Please make your reservations early and remember the UUCF room block expires on Friday, March 8. Contact Misty McKendree at the SUCA office if you are interested in attending.

If you are interested in SUCA's projects or events, please contact our office at (813) 355–4879 or visit our website at **www.suca.org**.

(A Disciplined Subcontractor Risk Management Strategy will Help Protect Your Business Continued from Page 10)

Subcontract agreements should be thoroughly reviewed at least every 24 months. If you engage subcontractors on a recurring basis, a "master contract" can be drafted by a construction-focused attorney and then purchase orders used for future projects that refer to the master contract.

Another strategy to manage subcontractor risk is to use the State of Florida's diary system to track the subcontractor's insurance expiration date The diary system can be found on the Florida Department of Financial

Services website at *www.fldfs.com/ wc* Click on "Databases" (left column), click on "Proof of Coverage Database (Compliance)" under Workers' Compensation Databases and enter the name of the corporation and city of the subcontractor's location. When the database returns a list of companies, click on the company name and then "View Locations" to find the company's workers' comp effective date.

In addition to the diary system, the prime contractor should have their insurance advisor review subcontractor's insurance policies to ensure that the contractual obligations match the scope of work with little or no pitfalls in coverage that could flow back to the prime contractor in case of litigation. It is fairly common to have exclusions in General Liability policies that may expose the prime contractor's balance sheet with inadequate coverage on behalf of the subcontractor.

In 20-plus years of experience in the contracting industry, we have witnessed some very severe claims created by labor-only subcontractors. At the same time, we recognize that there are some very reputable, well run, labor-only subcontracting firms that exercise care in their practices as well as display a desire to comply with OSHA standards. At the end of the day, it is the prime contractors and their balance sheets that will absorb a significant amount of risk for their subcontractors.

In conclusion, our message is to implement the strict controls and recommendations outlined in this article to contain your risk when subcontracting portions of your underground utility projects.

Brian Pratt serves as an insurance advisor at Furman Insurance. Furman Insurance encourages UUCF members to request a review of your company's subcontracting procedures and associated risks. For more information, contact Brian Pratt at (800) 344–4838, ext. 401 or brian@furmaninsurance.com.





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(Contractor Member of the Month: Layne Heavy Civil, Inc. Continued from Page 13)

accountability for even the most complex projects, and enable us to deliver high levels of both quality and economic efficiency through our six (6) Divisions that include: Water Resources, Geoconstruction, Mineral Exploration, Energy Services, Inliner and Heavy Civil.

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We are the responsible growth company.

Responsible growth is both our strategy and our commitment. It's what drives us to continually do the right thing for our people, the environment, our company and the clients we serve everyday. It means we hold ourselves accountable for the safety of every individual who works with us, for the wellbeing and sustainability of the environments and communities around us, the integrity of our employees and their actions, and for the overall excellence of our work. We continually strive to achieve growth and success for our

clients, while leaving the individuals and places we touch better off for their interaction with us. While our services are impeccable, it is our solutions that make us truly remarkable.

For more information about Heavy Civil, or any of the other solutions we provide please visit us at **www.** *layne.com*.

(Division of Workers' Compensation Offers Free Classes Continued from Page 19)

May 7, 2013

Pensacola 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon Division of Workers' Compensation 610 East Burgess Road Pensacola, FL 32504

May 8, 2013

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST Workers' Compensation WEB Based class

May 9, 2013 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST

Workplace Safety WEB Based class

<u>May 14, 2013</u>

Tampa 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon State Office Building 1313 North Tampa Street, Suite 605 Tampa, FL 33603

May 16, 2013

Lantana 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon Gold Coast Schools 6216 South Congress Avenue Lantana, FL 33462

<u>June 4, 2013</u>

Orlando 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon State Office Building Hurston Complex, 400 West Robinson Street, South Tower, Conference Room N–101 Orlando, FL 32801

<u>June 5, 2013</u>

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST Workers' Compensation WEB Based class

<u>June 6, 2013</u>

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST Workplace Safety WEB Based class

<u>June 11, 2013</u>

Tallahassee 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon Hartman Building 2012 Capital Circle SE, Room 102 Tallahassee, FL 32399

<u>July 10, 2013</u>

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST Workers' Compensation WEB Based class

<u>July 11, 2013</u>

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST Workplace Safety WEB Based class

August 7, 2013

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST Workers' Compensation WEB Based class

August 8, 2013

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EST Workplace Safety WEB Based class

The Division of Workers' Compensation is an authorized provider (Provider Number: 0004354) for continuing education purposes through the CILB. Course Number: 0010118 – one hour satisfies the workers' compensation requirement and Course Number: 0010630 – one hour satisfies the workplace safety requirement.

The form is available on the Division's website at **www. myfloridacfo.com/WC**. For additional information, e-mail **bocseminars@MyFloridaCFO. com**, or call (813) 221–6518.



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Safety Matters

Get your damage prevention questions answered in Safety Matters. It's Sunshine 811's one-hour online course. You get real life examples and relevant content to help you make good decisions before putting your shovel in the ground.*

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ITE makes it easy to:

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> * For more details or to download an ITE application visit www.Sunshine811.com.



Safe digging is no accident. Always call 811 before you dig. Sunshine 811 raises awareness and educates Florida on preventing digging damages to underground utilities. The goal is to make Florida the safest place to dig through a series of five steps that begin with "Call 811 Before You Dig." Learn more at www.Sunshine811.com.



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