



# THE WIRE

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Harry J. Sassaman*



Ten years ago, getting a head start on what was understood to be a mandate from its parent organizations, the Northern New Jersey NECA Chapter and IBEW Locals 164 and 456 put in place drug-free workforce programs. At the time, the participants took great pride in being in the vanguard of policy entrepreneurship that not only made good sense from a safety standpoint but also garnered praise from construction users who have a right to expect that, when they hire union electricians, they were getting the craftspeople that not only possess the finest skills but are “fit for duty” in the fullest sense. At that time, NECA Chapters and IBEW Locals across the country were advised that drug-free workforce programs were going to be mandatory and were provided with a list of principles around which such drug-free workforce

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## LOCAL 164 CELEBRATES OPENING OF NEW TRAINING FACILITY

On Monday, September 10th, the Northern New Jersey Chapter of NECA and Local Union 164 celebrated the Grand Opening of its Training Academy Addition. The program included a ribbon cutting ceremony followed by training facility tours, workshops and a trade show showcasing electrical industry leading manufacturers and vendors displaying current innovations, products and services. Among the attendees were chapter members and staff, as well state and local political leaders.

To mark the event and the state-of-the-art facility, NECA NNJ President, Harry Sassaman of Forest Electric, and JATC Chairman, Phil Chianetta of Sal Electric, addressed the attendees and commended Local 164 for their commitment to world-class craft training for electrical and telecommunications apprentices, journeypersons and technicians. IBEW President Lonnie Stephenson, NECA National President David Long, and New Jersey State Governor Phil Murphy also presented remarks.

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policies were to be organized including compulsory random testing and treatment components. And at that time, we at NECA were confident that all of our partner locals would soon work with us to create similar programs that would allow for reciprocity.

Everyone knows that the construction job sites can be fraught with dangers and construction users and contractors have a responsibility, legally and morally, to ensure the safety of the men and women whom they employ. This responsibility is enshrined in workplace safety laws and in the collective bargaining agreements to which we are signatory. In this industry as in so many other facets of life, we strive to manage those matters that lie within our control, that is why most contractors have safety policies that are often voluminous and comprehensive. Unfortunately, one thing that lies beyond our control is a choice made by an individual to use a substance that leaves him or her in a state of impairment and therefore, a danger to others on a job site. Construction users recognize this and in many instances have created their own protocol for testing individuals who work on their projects. Many contractors have recognized this by setting up their own safety policies regarding drug and substance abuse testing. And the IBEW, at the international level and some local levels, has recognized this by negotiating with their NECA counterparts, drug and alcohol testing policies. Having participated in the creation of the programs that exist in Locals 164 and 456, I know firsthand the challenge of creating programs that satisfy the need for stringent, comprehensive testing protocol and a robust treatment component while maintaining strict confidentiality for those undergoing the testing all while making sure of their economic feasibility. While the task seemed enormous, my NECA colleagues and chapter staff, our IBEW counterparts, and our professional support teams and testing organizations created programs that, while requiring occasional tweaking, have stood the test of time.

During the subsequent decade, I believe that we have prevented many accidents by ensuring that our IBEW employees were, as their cards suggest, “clean” and not under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on the worksite. And there have been a number of other dividends from the investment in these programs. This has resulted in economic savings to construction users and contractors in the form of fewer job dislocations due to accidents, lower workers’ compensation premiums and reduced litigation costs. It has made work sites safer and helped ensure all of our employees return home to their families without harm. And of course, it has helped control the costs for health and welfare programs because it is well documented that substance abuse leads to greater health care costs over an individual’s lifetime. But there is a more poignant dividend that has been related to me by members of the leadership of Locals 164 and 456 who, some speaking of their own personal struggles, have related to me the benefits to their parents, spouses and children who were spared the emotional costs of dealing with an individual caught in the affliction of substance abuse for the affliction ultimately harms those who care most for the victim. Outcomes like those substantiate the worthiness of our initiative.

And yet, a decade after the establishment of these programs, the job remains unfinished. I am hopeful that we can work in partnership with Locals 102 and 400 to put in place drug-free workforce programs that are compatible with those in their sister locals so that we can demonstrate to our customers and our employees, many of whom already possess drug-free work force cards from the existing programs, that we are serious about all aspects of workplace safety. All anyone needs to do these days is watch any news program to see that the scourge of addiction is more widespread and common than ever. By putting in place a drug-free workforce program we satisfy our obligation to many people. We owe it to those construction users who place their faith in our ability to deliver our services in an efficient and SAFE manner to ensure that our workforce, in addition to possessing the finest skills available, are also committed to working on the project unimpaired. We owe it to workers who may face injury on a job made more dangerous by individuals who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. We owe it to our workers who may need the help that can be provided to them if they are or in peril of abusing drugs or alcohol and we owe it to their families who deserve to have their loved ones come home safely every day. This is a moral imperative that we can and that we must get this done.

# 33RD ANNUAL ROBERT G. BYRNE GOLF OUTING

Each year, NECA and Associate members, as well as guests come together for the annual Robert G. Byrne Golf Outing held at the Ridge at Back Brook in Ringoes. This year, over 97 golfers registered, completing 18 holes of golf at one of New Jersey’s premier private courses.

Following the tournament, a networking dinner and awards ceremony took place at the clubhouse. The Northern New Jersey Chapter would like to extend its appreciation to those members who attended and supported the event. We would like to thank our generous sponsors below for making this outing a huge success!

Altec	Cooper Electric	Eaton
DeWalt	Graybar	Gumersell Cashdan
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Liberty Lighting	Mazars	Milwaukee Tool
Samson Electrical Supply	Specialized Fire & Security	Swift Electric
Thomas & Betts	Topaz	

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On behalf of the Northern New Jersey Chapter of NECA, we commend Local 164 and the JATC Trustees for the opening of their new training facility and for their dedication to excellence that has long been the hallmark of the NECA-IBEW team.



Local 164 JATC Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



Local 164 Business Manager Dan Gumble



Phil Chianetta, JATC Chairman



NECA NNJ President Harry Sassaman



IBEW President Lonnie Stephenson, NECA NNJ President Harry Sassaman, NECA National President David Long



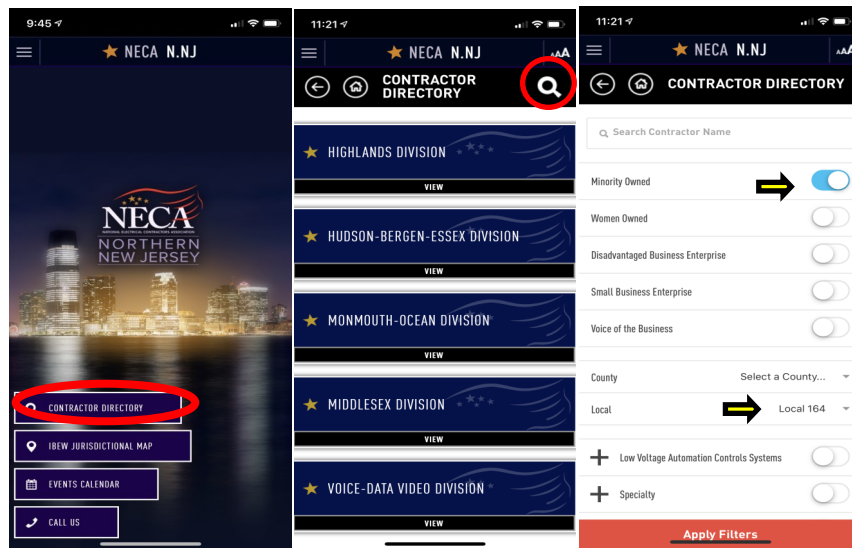
NECA NNJ President Harry Sassaman, Governor Phil Murphy

# NECA ANNOUNCES NEW APP UPGRADES

The Northern New Jersey Chapter of NECA is excited to announce the second iteration of updates to the NECA NNJ app. Here’s a quick overview of the latest updates:

## 1. SPOTLIGHT and SEARCH — Contractor Directory

Along with offering click-to-touch contact information for each member company, the new Contractor Directory also spotlights minority designations and business certifications, as well the work types the company performs. The search features allows app users to find a contractor by minority designation, location, local union, and work type. For example, a user can check off minority owned and Local 164 and the app will produce a list of contractors who fall within those specific search requests.

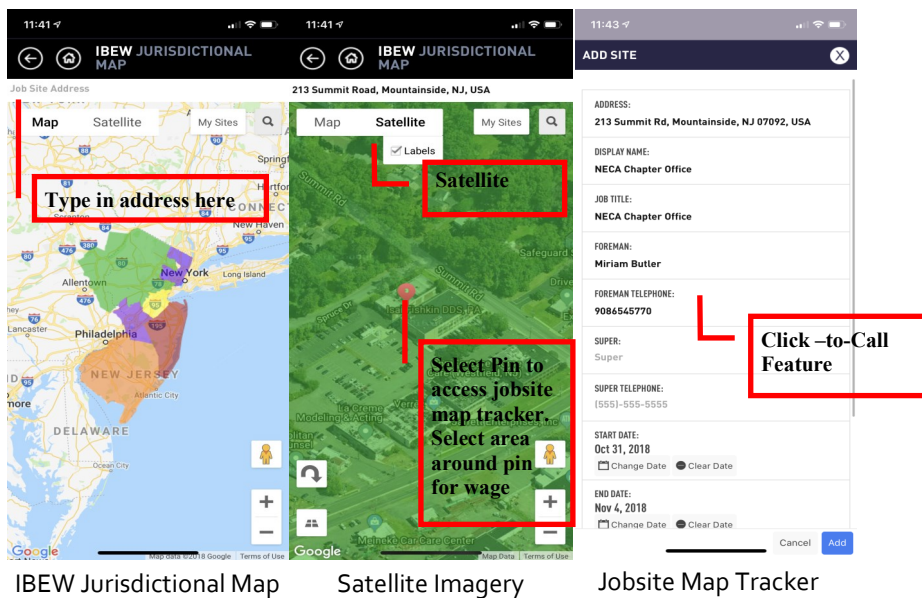


## 2. TRACK — IBEW Jurisdictional Map

The jobsite tracking feature allows you to pin and save current work sites along with relevant information relating to the job, such as job title, start and end date, foreman and supervisor information including click-to-touch access to their contact information. If you are looking to bid a new project, the map also allows you to view the surrounding area of the job through satellite imagery (select satellite icon, top left). To use the job search feature, search an address at the top (i.e. 213 Summit Road Mountainside NJ). The map will zoom in to the desired address, click on the area surrounding pin for wage sheet and Local information. Select the pin specifically to add address to the jobsite tracker list, such as the job name, foreman, contact information, etc. Hit ADD to save information. To access this information next time, click on "MY SITES" on the top right corner of the app and the job will be listed, along with the new click-to-call feature for the contact information added.

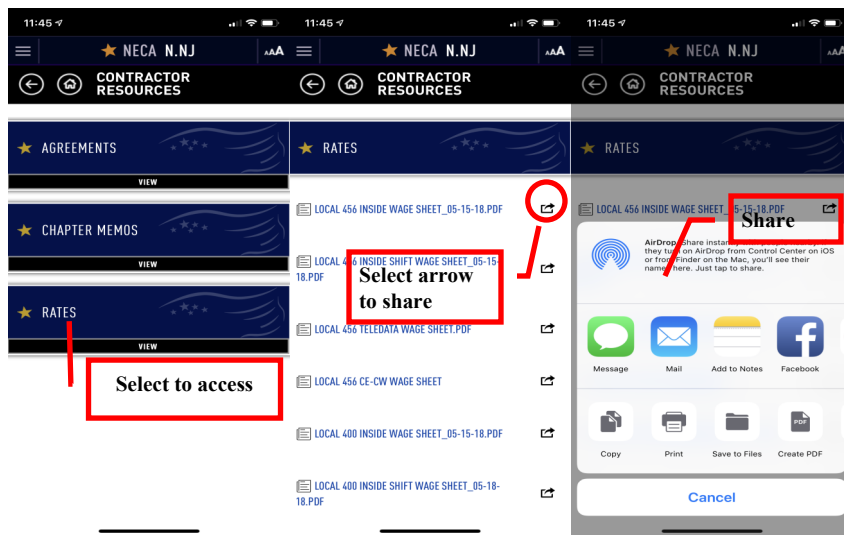


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### 3. SHARE — Contractor Resources

The Contractor Resources section of the app provides NECA members with access to current agreements, relevant Chapter memoranda, and wage sheets. The app upgrade now allows members to share with their personnel any of the information listed in any capacity that your mobile device allows by selecting the arrow next to each resource. Please note that Android devices, do not allow the text-to-share feature.



Visit our app tutorial online at <https://youtu.be/wUr2yMVDp6M> for additional key features. Forgot or lost your app access code, contact Miriam Butler at the Chapter Office to get signed up! We will continue to update the mobile app regularly, with new events, content, resources and features. Please take a moment to use and navigate our new app.



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Data Entry Clerk .....	Anna Serafino

## Our Associate Members



Arthur J. Gallagher  
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