



2025 Legislative Priorities

Utility Contractor Scope Expansion-As stated above, one of our 2025 legislative initiatives will be to expand the scope of the utility contractor to include the duties of a Contractor V. This will streamline construction projects allowing for more efficiency in the industry.

Sunshine 811 Enforcement- Currently, Florida is one of only three US states that do not have a dedicated body of enforcement to determine fault when on-site accidents happen. We recently spoke with the lobbyist for Sunshine 811, Chris Lyons, who indicated that they, too, are looking to introduce a bill that would provide for better enforcement in these instances. We will work together to identify possible solutions for this problem.

Contractor Fraud- One initiative of the construction coalition this year is to reign in contractor fraud and unlicensed activity by introducing legislation to increase the penalties for both infractions.

Mitigation Banking- As Florida continues to grow, some of our basins are running out of mitigation credits for developers and are expected to run out in the next few years. Unlike Florida, the Army Corps of Engineers allows mitigation credits to be purchased from adjacent basins when a basin no longer has available credits. We will seek to align the state process with the federal process to allow for mitigation credits in areas depleted of credits to be purchased from surrounding basins.

Impact Fees-Currently, local governments are only allowed to increase impact fees by 12.5% each year unless they are experiencing "extraordinary circumstances." However, "extraordinary circumstances" was never defined in the Florida Statutes, and local governments have been abusing the term and increasing impact fees arbitrarily. Along with other interested parties, we will be seeking to define "extraordinary circumstances" in order to limit the exception from being abused by local governments.

Pool Contractor Scope Expansion-The Swimming Pool Association is seeking to expand the scope of swimming pool contractors, both commercial and residential, to allow pool contractors to include the duties of other licensed contractors. Along with other groups, we will oppose such legislation to ensure our scope as excavation contractors is not encroached upon.

Proposed OSHA Heat Illness and Injury Rule- The proposed rule would require employers to develop an injury and illness prevention plan to control heat hazards in workplaces affected by excessive heat. Among other things, the plan would require employers to evaluate heat risks and — when heat increases risks to workers — implement requirements for drinking water, rest breaks and control of indoor heat. This would apply to all employers conducting outdoor and indoor work in all general industry, construction, maritime and other sectors.

Appointments to the Construction Industry Licensing Board

NICK BURGESS, WAYNE MAYO, STEVE RICHMOND, DONALD CESARONE, JONATHAN COOK, FRED KOBIE, RACHELLE WOOD AND BRIAN ZETTLE have been appointed or reappointed by Gov. Ron DeSantis to the Construction Industry Licensing Board. Burgess, of Zephyrhills, is executive director for AdventHealth Pasco County Foundations. Mayo, of Tallahassee, is president and founder of Southern Standard Construction, LLC. Richmond, of Naples, is founder of Projotech, Inc. Cesarone, of Lake Worth, is chief executive officer of Lucas Lagoons Construction, LLC. Cook, of Chipley, is vice president of CINCH Underground, Inc. Kobie, of LaBelle, is

president of Kobie Kooling, Inc. and Kobie Inspection Services. Wood, of Jupiter, is president and contractor for Dolphin Sheet Metal, Inc. Zettle, of Tallahassee, is a partner and consultant at Boyette Zettle, LLC.

Governor DeSantis Announces Funding For Everglades Restoration & Statewide Water Projects

The Governor announced \$805 million in Everglades restoration funding and statewide water quality projects to be included in this year's upcoming state budget and is requesting authority from President-elect Trump over federal funding for the Everglades restoration projects. The Governor also called for a congressional block grant to expedite the Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir construction. In 2019, Governor DeSantis called for \$2.5 billion to be invested over four years for Everglades restoration and water quality. The Governor surpassed that goal by securing over \$3.3 billion during his first term. In 2023, Governor DeSantis reinforced his commitment in his second term by calling for a historic \$3.5 billion investment for Everglades restoration and protection of water resources.

Regulatory Update

On Friday, December 20, 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) made a controversial announcement approving the use of phosphogypsum in a road project in Polk County, Florida. Phosphogypsum is a radioactive byproduct of the phosphate industry that is normally stored in large stacks. The EPA approved a proposal from Mosaic Fertilizer, LLC, a subsidiary of The Mosaic Company, to use the materials in a road project on the company's property. Environmental Groups are opposed to the announcement, citing potential risks to human health, as well as water quality and other environmental concerns. In its announcement, the EPA acknowledged the large amount of opposition, but concluded that the project would be safe and confined to this particular project.

Following the 2023 legislative session, Governor DeSantis signed a bill authorizing the FDOT to conduct a study to evaluate the suitability of using phosphogypsum as a construction aggregate material. The bill further authorized the use of phosphogypsum from phosphate production as a construction aggregate material in accordance with the conditions of the EPA's approval for such use. We will monitor the pilot program closely and will provide updates on this controversial topic.

NUCA National Washington D.C. Fly-In

The NUCA National Government Affairs Working Group is hosting a Winter Fly-In in Washington D.C. for members of NUCA to meet with Federal Agency staff to discuss issues pertinent to our industry at the federal level. The event will be held on February 25-26, 2025. NUCA FL Advocacy Team plans on participating in this event to ensure Florida is represented during these meetings. Much like the issues important to NUCA FL, the issues that will be discussed include: Reauthorization and increase of funding for the SRF programs; Workforce development; Damage Prevention; and Increased funding for vital infrastructure projects, such as natural gas projects and fiber-optic and broadband projects.