

CRCA TODAY

2026, ISSUE 3

The Magazine
of Roofing and
Waterproofing
in Illinois
and Beyond

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- A Journey Through the NRCA
- Getting Paid: A/R Best Practices
- Why Clarity Wins Bids: *Featured in Both English & Spanish!*

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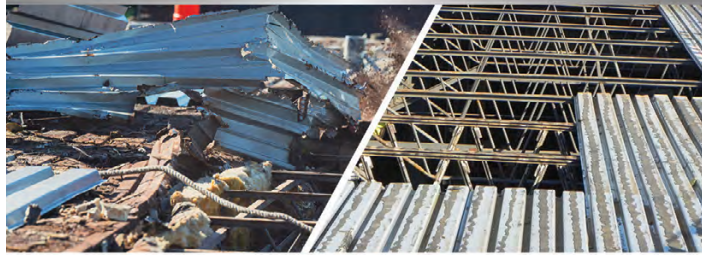
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A Journey Through the National Roofing Contractors Association: Alex Hernandez's Leadership Story

By CRCA Staff



Alex Hernandez

The Chicago Roofing Contractors Association (CRCA) and the National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA) have long shared a strong and collaborative relationship. With NRCA headquarters located in Itasca, Illinois, the connection between the two organizations is especially close. Members involved in both associations

understand how effectively they work together in support of the roofing industry, continually partnering to strengthen and advance the profession.

Because the NRCA operates on a national—and even international—level, the CRCA wanted to gain greater insight into the responsibilities and experiences that come with serving as NRCA Chairman. Recently, the CRCA had the opportunity to sit down with Alex Hernandez, who completed his term as Chairman of the Board of the National Roofing Contractors Association on June 1, 2026. Hernandez is also the President of Clark Roofing. Clark Roofing is a third-generation roofing company based in Broadview, Illinois, as well as a long-time CRCA Contractor Member.

Hernandez began his journey with the NRCA more than 30 years ago, following in his father-in-law's footsteps by joining the association as a committee member. From the beginning, involvement was important to him. Over the years, he chaired several committees, gaining valuable experience while building relationships throughout the organization.

"Being chairman one day? I always thought those guys were at the top of the food chain—they knew everything," Hernandez reflected. "I always felt like I was learning way more in those rooms than I was offering. I wasn't really looking for that type of role."

More than anything, Hernandez believes timing plays a major role in taking on such a significant commitment.

"Years ago, the nominating committee approached me about the Chairman position," he explained. "At that time, my kids were very young & still involved in after school activities and sports, so my afternoons were busy with them. I knew I wouldn't be able to make that big of a commitment."

By 2025, however, Hernandez knew the timing was right.

"You meet people you never would have met from all over the country," he said.

The role itself is a three-year commitment. It begins with one year serving as Incoming Chairman, allowing time to meet key leaders within associations and companies across the nation before transitioning fully into the role of Chairman. After serving a one-year term, the individual then completes a final year as Immediate Past Chairman.

During his time in leadership, Hernandez traveled extensively—covering enough miles to circle the globe more than twice. He visited China and several European countries including Germany, Slovakia, United Kingdom, & Belgium to participate in regional meetings, trade shows and annual roofing competitions.



One experience in particular stood out to him. After attending an International Federation for the Roofing Trade IFD meeting in the city of Bratislava, Slovakia, Hernandez spent an evening at a local pub alongside several roofing tradesmen from across Europe.

"No one spoke English, but we didn't need to communicate with words," Hernandez recalled.

"I pulled out my phone and started showing the men photos of roofing projects in Chicago, and they did the same on their phones." "It struck me at that moment—half a world away—that I felt very much at home with this group of men from Slovakia, Germany, and Vienna," he continued.

"It was awesome. We weren't speaking the same language, but we all understood exactly what we were doing without having to say much. So many of the things we do every day are universal."

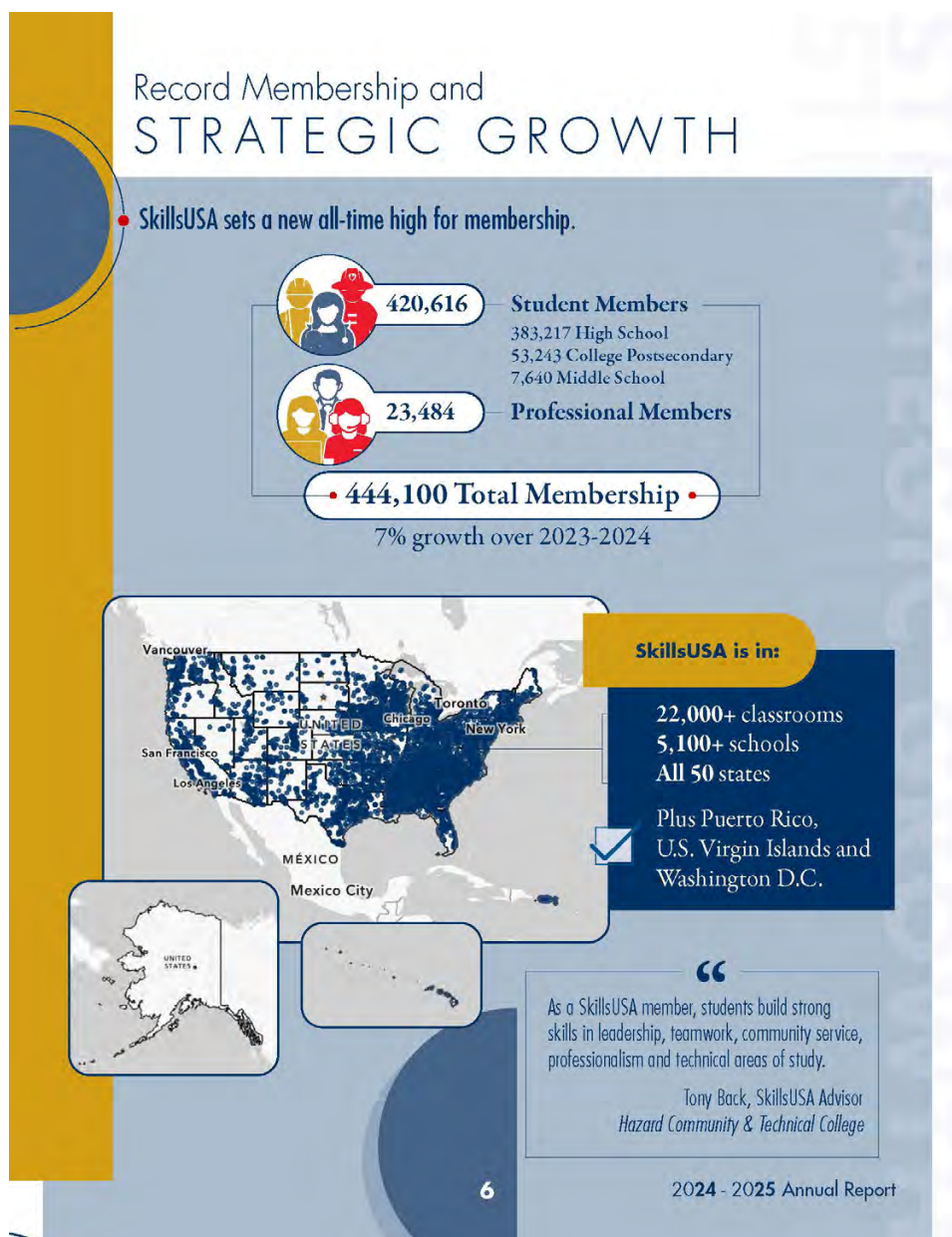
One challenge that also proved universal was the growing need for skilled labor and workforce development.

"It's not just an issue in the United States," Hernandez said. "Whether it's China, Germany, or here at home,

everyone needs employees and training. Companies are worried about their current labor force aging out, with no strong pipeline of incoming workers."

To help address this issue, the NRCA partnered with SkillsUSA through its Alliance for Progress initiative. Throughout the year, SkillsUSA students develop and sharpen their trade skills through local, regional, and state competitions designed and judged by professionals within the construction industry.

For many years, roofing was not included in the construction competition categories. However, within the last three years, roofing has officially been added to the SkillsUSA competition platform—a major step forward for the industry and an important opportunity to introduce young people to careers in the skilled trades.



Graphic from Skills USA website, 2024-2025 Annual Report

According to Hernandez, workforce development and training remain among the NRCA's top priorities as the industry continues working to attract and educate the next generation of roofing professionals.

Chicago's Influence and an NRCA Misconception

Many contractors who are not directly involved with the NRCA may hesitate to join because they believe the organization is geared only toward large commercial roofing companies. According to Alex Hernandez, that perception could not be further from the truth.

"A lot of people think of the NRCA as being an association only for large contractors—that you have to be doing large-scale commercial work to become a member," Hernandez explained. "In reality, the vast majority of our members are smaller-scale contractors doing less than \$2 million a year. I think the name National Roofing Contractors Association sometimes gives people the impression that it's not for them—that they're not a 'national player.' But the organization is really made up of contractors from across the country, both large and small."



Chicago's influence within the NRCA has

also become increasingly evident in recent years. Three of the last five NRCA Chairmen have come from the Chicago area, a reflection of the region's strong reputation within the roofing industry.

When asked how his Chicago roots influenced his decision to accept the nomination as NRCA Chairman, Hernandez admitted he initially had concerns.

"At first, I wondered if there had been too many Chicago representatives in a row," he said. "But I quickly found that wasn't the case. Contractors from across the country truly respect Chicago contractors because of the wide range of roofing systems we install and the complexity of the projects we handle. All of those challenges that come with working in Chicago ultimately benefited me in my role as Chairman."

Hernandez believes Chicago's leadership within the NRCA reflects positively on the city and its roofing industry as a whole.

"The focus of leadership is coming from here," Hernandez said. "Literally, the entire roofing world is looking at Chicago. It puts this city in a very positive light that, within the last six years, we've had three Chairmen of the

Board come from this market—and all three represented completely different types of roofing contractors."

After traveling throughout the United States and internationally during his time with the NRCA, Hernandez says one quality continues to set the Chicago roofing market apart: camaraderie.

"I've always felt like I could pick up the phone and ask another contractor for help, and they'd be willing to help," he said. "I could look through the CRCA directory, scroll my finger down, call someone, and say, 'Hey, I'm having trouble with this project—how would you approach it?' And they'd respond, 'Yeah, a competitor worked on the building next door a few months ago. The owner of the other roofing company called just to let us know and avoid any potential friction. I told them there would be no problem and if we could help support their project, we would be happy to help.' That willingness to support one another is what makes Chicago contractors different from almost any other market."

For Chicago contractors interested in becoming more involved, Hernandez strongly encourages participation.

"I'm all for it," he said. "I think we have a lot to offer as a group. I would support and encourage anyone who wants to become more involved. I don't think people join an association saying, 'I'm going to be Chairman someday.' You join because you want to be part of something and help shape the future of the industry. Those opportunities exist within both the CRCA and the NRCA."

Looking back on his experience, Hernandez says he has no regrets.

"I'm thankful for everything I was able to do with the NRCA and for all of the opportunities it provided me," he said. 

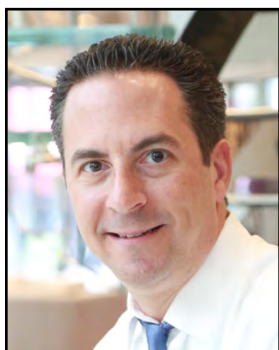
Alex Hernandez was elected Chairman of the Board for the National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA) in June 2025. Emigrating from Cuba with his family as a toddler, he worked his way up into construction and roofing to his role as Clark Roofing Co. President today. To learn more about Hernandez's roofing career, visit NRCA's Professional Roofing Article, "Building a Legacy" by Chrystine Elle Haus at <https://nrca.net/search?q=alex%20hernandez>

Prompt Carefully: AI Has Entered Your Building

By Mike Zimmermann and Philip J. Siegel



Mike Zimmermann



Philip J. Siegel

Artificial Intelligence has been around for what seems like only half a second and it already dominates our conversations, our news and our workplaces. On July 13, 2026 alone, the Midwest print edition of The Wall Street Journal featured 4 key articles covering artificial intelligence in the business and finance section. (*Citations for these articles are available via the Wall Street Journal archive for the Midwest edition.*) That was just one day and one publication. Go to work and open your computer and you will be bombarded with AI.

It is now a new feature on most software. Call a vendor and your call may be answered and

routed by an AI agent. Answer your phone and you may be accosted by the unconvincing AI cold caller who is fooling no one in telling us that she's not a "bot".

Within the CRCA, conversations with members reveal that our individual understanding of AI ranges from totally foreign for some to indispensable tool for others. We hope this article demonstrates some of the basic use cases that members can use tomorrow. We also wish to inform our readers that, as with all new tools, there are risks and legal issues that need to be addressed.

First, let's start with the uses for this amazing new tool. In short, they are nearly infinite. Mike (Zimmermann) asked ChatGPT (a type of AI software) how he most uses AI at Reliable Roofing. Here is what it said:

"The Top Five Ways you've used ChatGPT at Reliable Roofing:

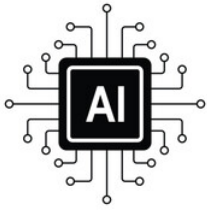
1. **To Enhance Business & Accounting Systems and to Troubleshoot**
QuickBooks Online setup and problem-solving, including invoicing, payroll, credit-card syncing, purchase orders, account numbering, and permissions.
2. **Streamline Roof Estimating and Job Costing**
Building estimating spreadsheets, setting production rates, calculating labor/material quantities, and creating budget ranges.
3. **Roof Scope of Work/ Material Lists**
Writing detailed scopes for EPDM, TPO, insulation, cover boards, edge metal, fasteners, crickets, saddles, and flashing details.
4. **Hiring and Employee Management Tool**
Screening applicants, ranking candidates, creating phone and in-person interview templates, defining job roles, and evaluating DISC profiles.
5. **Business Planning and Growth Strategy**
Sales pipelines, organizational structure, management-team development, market strategy, and expansion planning."

The results are not surprising. In fact, the first use case, QuickBooks support, is Mike's favorite. Anyone who works in QuickBooks regularly knows that getting support from QuickBooks is worse than a root canal. ChatGPT, however, is excellent at QuickBooks and far superior to the actual support technicians answering QB's phones and QB's own AI help system. In fact, AI is also very good at instruction for most business software staples such as Excel.

But perhaps the most impactful project on which Mike used AI was to organize a shortlist of applicants for a recent opening in Reliable Roofing's office administrator position.

Over 250 people applied. Mike reviewed the applications, then generated a "shortlist" of 37 qualified applicants. But this "shortlist" was not short enough, and narrowing the list would require a great deal of work because the remaining pool of candidates varied

significantly. However, using ChatGPT to create a structured, objective process for evaluating the remaining pool of applicants was a game changer.



First, Mike loaded the job description into AI. ChatGPT then prompted Mike to identify job factors that were most important. After a little back and forth, it concluded that because the role included significant financial and

administrative responsibility, accounting and bookkeeping experience received the greatest weight.

Then all 37 resumes were loaded into the prompt. ChatGPT reviewed the resumes and created a list which ranked the applicants based on the job criteria and weighted the rankings based on Mike's priorities. This allowed Reliable Roofing to interview just the top 2 candidates, and the top candidate accepted the job.

The process did not replace human judgment. Instead, it acted as a hiring-support tool. Using AI turned a day long task into an organized 30-minute process.

Overall, the efficiency was two-fold: it cut down resume review time considerably and minimized the number of interviews needed. While our recent hiring project shows some of AI's basic time-saving benefits, there are other important tasks it can assist your company with that otherwise may be put off indefinitely.

For example, AI is very good at writing simple HR policies which are finalized and reviewed by human lawyers. In the past, when we came across a gap in our employment policies, we would note the gaps on a "to-do list" and hopefully, someday fix it during the next employee manual update.

In the past 12 months we closed those "gaps" by using AI to draft many simple policies: Here are two:

- **Attendance and Punctuality:** Expectations for arriving on time, maintaining reliable attendance, notifying supervisors of absences, and presenting a professional appearance.
- **Meal and Rest Breaks:** Guidance on when lunch periods must be paid or unpaid, how employees should record time, and the importance of remaining fully relieved from work during unpaid breaks.

These are just a few examples of AI's reach in a construction company. But by using AI, roofing contractors should also recognize the substantial legal and practical risks that accompany its use.

Key Legal Considerations for Roofing Contractors Using Artificial Intelligence



As artificial intelligence (AI) becomes more common in the commercial roofing industry, contractors are finding new ways to improve efficiency. However, AI also introduces legal and operational risks that should not be

overlooked. The following areas deserve particular attention as contractors develop policies for responsible AI use.

Verify AI-Generated Information

Contractors should be cautious about relying on AI-generated information without human review. AI systems can produce inaccurate or fabricated information, including incorrect code references, safety guidance, specifications, weather assumptions, or contract language. In the roofing industry, reliance on inaccurate AI-generated recommendations could expose contractors to defective work, OSHA violations, design errors, warranty disputes, or project delays. Qualified personnel should independently verify all technical, legal, and safety-related information before it is used.

Protect Confidential and Proprietary Data

Roofing contractors routinely handle sensitive information, including customer data, employee records, pricing structures, bid strategies, estimating methods, photographs, and building plans. Uploading this information into public AI platforms may inadvertently disclose confidential information or allow it to be used to train future AI models. Contractors should establish written AI-use policies that prohibit employees from entering confidential project or customer information into public AI systems without authorization.

Exercise Caution in Employment Decisions

The use of AI in hiring, applicant screening, productivity monitoring, and workforce management presents significant legal risks. AI systems may unintentionally produce discriminatory outcomes that violate federal and state employment laws, including Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), and similar state statutes. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has warned employers that AI-assisted employment decisions may create liability if protected groups are disproportionately affected or disabled applicants are unfairly screened out.

In Illinois, these concerns have become even more significant. Effective January 1, 2026, amendments to the

Illinois Human Rights Act prohibit employers from using AI in ways that result in discrimination against employees or applicants based on protected characteristics. The law also requires employers to notify employees when AI is being used in covered employment decisions. Human oversight and regular validation of AI-driven employment tools remain essential.

Understand Contractual Responsibilities

AI-generated estimates, schedules, scopes of work, and project communications can create misunderstandings regarding project obligations and performance expectations. Many construction contracts require professional judgment, certifications, and compliance representations that cannot be delegated to AI. Contractors should also consider addressing AI use within their contracts by defining responsibility for AI-assisted work products, protecting confidential information, and clarifying that all AI-generated deliverables remain subject to human review.

Consider Intellectual Property Issues

AI-generated proposals, marketing materials, training manuals, specifications, designs, and images raise evolving questions about copyright ownership and infringement. Contractors should exercise caution when using AI-generated content whose origin cannot be verified. Likewise, companies developing proprietary forms or operational documents with AI should recognize that intellectual property protections for AI-generated content continue to evolve.

Balance Innovation with Workplace Safety

AI-powered monitoring systems, drones, wearable technology, and predictive safety tools have the potential to improve jobsite safety. However, these technologies may also create new liabilities. If AI-generated safety alerts are ignored—or if automated systems fail—contractors could face claims that they failed to address known hazards. Employee monitoring technologies may also create privacy concerns or negatively impact morale if implemented without transparency and clear workplace policies.

Develop a Comprehensive AI Policy

Perhaps the most important step contractors can take is establishing clear internal governance. Many companies are adopting AI informally without defining acceptable uses, confidentiality standards, verification procedures, cybersecurity requirements, document retention practices, or employee training expectations. A written AI-use policy, combined with regular employee education and

management oversight, can help organizations realize AI's benefits while reducing legal and operational risks.

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence will continue to become a valuable tool within the commercial roofing industry, helping contractors improve efficiency and streamline routine tasks. However, AI should be viewed as an aid to professional judgment—not a substitute for it. Today, AI performs best when assisting with repetitive tasks and producing first drafts of documents, while experienced professionals remain responsible for reviewing the work and making final decisions. As with any business tool, thoughtful policies, sound human judgment, and an understanding of evolving legal responsibilities remain the foundation of successful AI adoption. 

Philip J. Siegel is a Partner and shareholder with CRCA Associate Member firm Hendrick, Phillips Salzman & Siegel, P.C. His practice focuses primarily in the areas of labor/employment law, including defense of OSHA citations, contract consulting, and construction litigation, including representation of general contractors, subcontractors and suppliers, all on a national basis. For more information, contact pjs@hpsslaw.com

Mike Zimmermann is the President of CRCA Contractor Member Reliable Roofing in Lake Zurich and serves as Secretary on the CRCA Board of Directors and Co-Chairs the Contracts and Insurance Committee. He is a licensed attorney and practiced law for 25 years before joining the commercial roofing industry.



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Building Better Businesses Starts on the Roof: The New Generation of Roofing Contractors

By Carl Moose



Carl Moose

Every commercial roofing contractor has that one client they never forget—the one who never quite approves the purchase order for a full roof replacement.

Year after year, the calls come in for another leak, another repair, and another request to make the roof last “just one

more year.” If you’ve been in this business long enough, you’ve seen this scenario play out countless times. Maintenance work can be profitable, and helping owners extend the life of their roofs is an important service. Repairs protect their investment while postponing one of the largest capital expenses they’ll ever face.

But after decades in the roofing industry, I’ve begun to wonder if we’ve been looking at the situation the wrong way.

What if the cost of replacing the roof isn’t the real obstacle?



What if the obstacle is that a roof replacement competes with every other capital investment a business owner must make?

As both a roofing professional and a building owner, I’ve found that’s usually the case. Roof replacement rarely sits at the top of the priority list. Business owners are often focused on production equipment, technology, facility expansion, payroll, debt reduction, and countless other investments that directly affect their operations.

The roof becomes just another capital expense waiting its turn.

That’s why many owners continue repairing aging roofs long after they understand replacement is necessary. They’ve seen the inspection reports, approved the repairs, and know the risks. What they often lack isn’t information—it’s available capital.

This realization changed my perspective.

The roofing contractor isn’t competing against another roofing company. We’re competing against every other capital priority within our client’s business.

That helps explain why maintenance programs are so valuable. We don’t just repair roofs—we buy owners time. But perhaps our greatest opportunity isn’t simply helping them delay replacement. Perhaps it’s helping them recognize when replacing the roof becomes the smarter financial decision.

That shift changes the conversation entirely.

Instead of discussing only roofing systems, warranties, and repair history, we begin talking about property performance, long-term operating costs, asset value, and the future of the building itself.

The roof is no longer just a building component. It becomes the platform for improving the property’s performance and increasing its long-term value.

That doesn’t mean roofing contractors need to become engineers, accountants, tax advisors, or energy consultants. Our responsibility remains exactly what it has always been: protecting our clients’ buildings.

What may be evolving is our role as trusted advisors.

When a roofing project creates an opportunity for a broader capital discussion, we can help clients ask better questions and connect them with the right expertise.

Annual maintenance meetings are the perfect time to have these conversations, when owners are already evaluating the long-term health of their facilities.



Contractors who embrace this approach will distinguish themselves for reasons that have little to do with offering the lowest price. They'll stand apart because they provide greater value, strengthen client relationships, and become trusted partners in important business decisions.

Imagine helping more maintenance clients move forward with roof replacements—not because you lowered your price or increased your marketing budget, but because the financial conversation changed.

Your client remains your client. Your company remains your brand. You continue doing what you do best.

The difference is that your customers begin to see you differently—not simply as the contractor who repairs and replaces roofs, but as the trusted advisor who helped them make one of the smartest capital investments for their business.

Commercial roofing has always been about protecting buildings.

The next generation of commercial roofing contractors may be known for something even more valuable: helping owners build stronger businesses by maximizing the performance and long-term value of their buildings.

The roof will always protect the building. But the relationships we build, and the guidance we provide, can help protect—and strengthen—the businesses beneath it.



Carl G. Moose is the Director of Greenlight Energy, a CRCA Associate Member. He is a Seasoned Renewable Energy Expert with emphasis on Residential, Commercial and Enterprise Level Solar Installations—Other credentials include: Napoleon Hill Found Member, a Certified "Think & Grow Rich" Trainer and a Business Development Consultant. He can be reached at: carl@greenlightenergy.solar www.greenlightenergy.solar

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Construction Worker Overdose Deaths Plummet, Suicides Decline



Training and North America's Building Trades Unions

Article originally appeared in the February 2026 issue of REASON (Resources and Effective Programs Addressing Suicides and Opioids Now), published by CPWR—The Center for Construction Research and

We recently obtained access to 2024 overdose and suicide data by industry and occupation, and it is encouraging because it demonstrates that our prevention efforts make a difference. Among construction workers aged 16-64, drug-related overdose deaths declined 28.8% from 2023 to 2024, decreasing from 15.9K to 11.3K. The overdose death rate fell from 135.0 to 94.8 per 100,000 workers. Over 11,000 workers in our industry dying in a year from overdose is still much too high, but the reduction marks meaningful progress and good news!

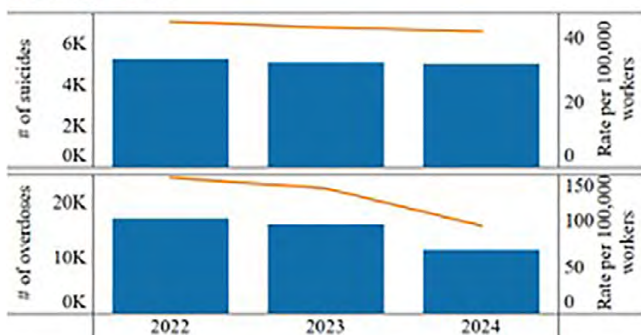
We believe a series of actions, including many our industry has taken, have contributed to fewer lives lost:

- Education on risks of prescribed opioids and opioids in general
- Fewer opioid prescriptions between 2019 and 2023
- Widespread availability of naloxone on jobsites and in public
- Decreased stigma around substance use and mental health disorders
- Improved treatment and recovery support in the construction industry

We are committed to continuing these efforts, as well as further improving peer support for construction workers,

Suicide and overdose deaths among construction workers aged 16 to 64 years old (2022-2024)

■ Number ■ Rate



Source(s): 1 National Center for Health Statistics, 2022-2024 Mortality Multiple Cause File and IPUMS, 2022-2024 Current Population Survey. Calculations by CPWR's Data Center.

mental health and substance use treatment access, and awareness training. Deaths by suicide dropped 1.7% from 2023 to 2024 (5.1K to 5.0K), and the suicide rate decreased from 43.2 to 41.9 per 100,000 workers.

We are encouraged by this progress, but our efforts must continue. To make even more substantial reductions in overdose and suicide deaths, the essential actions our industry is already taking must be accompanied by more upstream efforts like reduction of injuries causing pain, increased availability of paid leave, anti-bullying training and policies, and safety culture. They can all weave a tapestry of intervention.

CRCA thanks the Center for Construction Research and Training. Sign up for the newsletter from CPWR and NABTU.

<https://www.cpw.com/research/research-to-practice-r2p/r2p-library/other-resources-for-stakeholders/mental-health-addiction/mental-health-newsletter-sign-up/>

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Getting Paid: Accounts Receivable Best Practices

By Trent Cotney



Trent Cotney

For roofing contractors, accounts receivable deserves the same attention as sales.

Winning work matters, but collecting what is owed keeps the business operating, employees paid, suppliers current, and the lights on. Most contractors do not need to send every overdue account to counsel the moment payment

slows. Many receivable problems can be reduced through disciplined internal collection practices. The key is to act early, communicate professionally, preserve leverage, and recognize when the matter has become legal.

The best collection practice starts before the invoice becomes overdue. A contractor should make sure the contract identifies the correct legal customer, project address, payment terms, change-order process, and any right to recover collection costs or attorneys' fees. Collection disputes become harder when the invoice went to the wrong person or the contractor cannot prove who authorized the work.

Once work begins, documentation should become routine. Keep signed contracts and project documents in one project file. A strong file lets the contractor identify the invoice, approved change order, due date, and balance due with precision. In construction, generally, the party with the "best paper" has an advantage in court or arbitration.

Contractors should create a written AR standard operating procedure and follow it consistently. A reasonable process may include a friendly reminder before the due date, a written follow-up immediately after the due date, a firmer notice at 15 days, a management-level call at 30 days, and a final internal escalation at 45 or 60 days. The timing can vary, but collections should be scheduled and documented. Utilize technology such as email drip campaigns to automate the communications and timing.



The tone of collection communications matters. Contractors should be firm, factual, and unemotional. Avoid threats, insults, exaggerated claims, or statements that the contract does not support. A good collection email identifies the invoice, the amount due, the contractual basis for payment, the due date, and the requested action. It should also ask whether the customer disputes any specific portion. If so, separate the undisputed amount and request immediate payment of that portion.

A contractor should never let an overdue account drift without protecting statutory and contractual rights. In Illinois, lien rights and related notice issues are deadline-driven. As a general matter, subcontractors on private projects should be particularly careful about the 90-day preliminary notice requirement, and lien claims are commonly associated with a four-month recording deadline from last furnishing. These deadlines are technical and fact-specific. Internal AR efforts should include a tickler system so payment follow-up does not accidentally waive lien or bond claim leverage.

Self-help does not mean pretending to be a collection agency or using tactics that create unnecessary exposure. Illinois regulates collection agency activity, and the law distinguishes between a creditor collecting its own debt and a third-party collecting debts for others. Contractors collecting their own receivables generally have more flexibility than outside collectors, but they should still avoid deceptive names, misleading letters, harassment, improper disclosures, or embarrassing tactics.



Payment plans can be useful, but they should be documented. If a customer cannot pay in full, the contractor should consider a short, written agreement confirming the balance, the payment schedule, the absence or limited scope of any dispute, and the consequences of default. The agreement should not release lien, bond, contract, or warranty rights unless the contractor intentionally agrees to do so.

Internal coordination is critical. Sales personnel may want to preserve the relationship. Operations may want to finish the job. Accounting may want to stop work. Ownership may want leverage. Those goals can conflict. A contractor should identify who has authority to approve payment plans, waive interest, continue work despite nonpayment, or threaten suspension. Mixed messages weaken collection efforts.

There is also a point when legal counsel should be brought in. Warning signs include a large balance, a request for broad lien waivers without payment, claims of defective work, or a customer who asks the contractor to keep working while refusing to cure past-due amounts. At that stage, counsel can help position the claim before the contractor loses rights.

Contractors collect more effectively when they treat AR as a project-management function, rather than a last-minute accounting problem. Clean contracts, organized documents, professional communications, and deadline tracking will resolve many payment issues without immediate legal intervention. When those tools do not work, the contractor will have a stronger file and better leverage if legal help is required. 

Disclaimer: This article is for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Contractors should consult qualified counsel regarding specific collection, lien, bond, contract, bankruptcy, or consumer-credit issues, including any Illinois-specific deadline or notice requirement.

Trent Cotney is a CRCA member and a partner and Construction Team Leader at Adams & Reese, LLP. You can reach him at 866.303.5868 or trent.cotney@arlaw.com

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Roof Talk—Contractor



Company Name: Raincoat Roofing

Location: Broadview, IL

Year Business Founded: 1981

Number of Employees: Around 65

Name/Title of person answering questions:

Eric Suess, VP

What Service(s) Does Your Company Offer?

Commercial, Industrial and some residential Roofing

What Sets Your Business Apart?

At Raincoat Roofing, our culture is built around our core values. We often say that Raincoat is R.A.R.E.:

R – Do the Right Thing

A – Always Willing to Try

R – Respect

E – Everyone Works Safe

Do You Have an Interesting or Unique Business Experience You'd Like to Share?

Having grown up in the roofing industry, it's difficult to choose just one experience. Some of my favorite memories are from when I was a kid coming to work with my dad and climbing onto the roofs of some of Chicago's most iconic buildings.

Today, one of the things I enjoy most is driving through the city with my own children and pointing out the buildings Raincoat Roofing has worked on, including landmarks like the Chicago Theatre. There is a great sense of pride in knowing that our work helps protect some of the city's most recognizable structures.

What makes my experience especially unique is being part of a family-owned business with a rich history and legacy. I'm honored to help carry that legacy forward while working alongside the incredible people who make up the Raincoat family every day.

What Value Does CRCA Membership Bring to You?

CRCA membership provides access to a network of experienced contractors, architects, consultants,

manufacturers, and industry leaders who are all working toward the same goal—advancing the roofing industry.

The educational opportunities, advocacy efforts, safety resources, and industry relationships CRCA provides are invaluable. The association helps us stay informed, connected, and prepared for the challenges and opportunities facing our industry.

What Advice Would You Give a New CRCA Member?

Get involved. CRCA is made up of some of the most experienced and respected roofing professionals in the country. Take the time to get to know the contractors, architects, consultants, and industry leaders who are helping shape our profession.

Attend events, join committees, ask questions, and build relationships. The more involved you become, the more value you will gain.

One of my favorite quotes is: *"You can't solve your problems with the same thinking that you used to create them."*

If You Could Sit Atop Any Rooftop in Chicago, What Rooftop Would It Be and Why?

The top of the Sears Tower.

Its iconic architecture sits at the center of what Chicago represents. From that vantage point, you can see the city's incredible skyline, historic landmarks, and world-famous architecture stretching in every direction.

Tomorrow is never promised, and from the top of the Sears Tower, it feels like you can see forever—close to the stars and a little closer to heaven.

If You Could Witness a Sporting or Concert Event From Any Rooftop in the World, What Event and Where?

The rooftop of the Roman Colosseum. The history, architecture, and significance of the Colosseum are fascinating. It represents nearly 2,000 years of human history and stands as one of the world's most remarkable engineering achievements.

Experiencing a concert or event from above such an iconic structure would be unforgettable—a chance to witness modern entertainment while surrounded by the legacy of one of history's greatest civilizations. 

Roof Talk—Associate



Company Name: ABC Supply

Locations: 19 locations in the Chicago District

Year Business Founded: 1982

Number of Employees: 20,000+ in ABC North America, 350+ in Chicagoland

Year Business Joined CRCA: 2018

Name & Title of person answering questions:

Tyler Remaly, Chicago District Manager

What Service(s) Does Your Company Offer?

ABC Supply is your trusted partner committed to providing a positive experience every step of the way. We simplify your deliveries, pickups, quotes, responsiveness, and product availability. By asking the right questions and understanding your business, we tailor our service to meet your specific needs.

What Sets Your Business Apart?

As a privately held company, ABC Supply brings a family-driven, entrepreneurial spirit to the business. Even as the industry faces consolidation and uncertainty, we remain focused on building long-term relationships grounded in trust that help our customers grow.

Do You Have an Interesting or Unique Business Experience That You'd Like to Share?

Becoming CRCA's first Diamond Sponsor has been a great business experience. All 19 ABC locations in Chicago came together in support of CRCA's mission. It has also been rewarding to see more attendees get involved and help strengthen CRCA's future.

List Your Favorite CRCA Event. Why?

The trade show is always a standout event. The energy and traffic are impressive, and it inspired our ABCs of Success show in Rosemont by fostering camaraderie,

training, and professional growth. On a personal level, I most enjoy the CRCA golf outing because it offers a smaller setting for building strong relationships.

What Value Does CRCA Membership Bring to You?

CRCA membership gives ABC Supply valuable opportunities to build trusted relationships and meet customers where they are. Whether they are new, well established, or private equity-backed, we can support them across every stage and business model.

What Advice Would You Give a New CRCA Member?

Take full advantage of CRCA's training and educational resources. Their programs help members strengthen best practices, stay current on products and processes, and build stronger business knowledge.

If You Could Sit Atop Any "Roof" in Chicago, What Rooftop Would It Be and Why?

As a music lover, my pick would be the Tree Top Lounge at the Salt Shed Fairgrounds. On a warm summer night, it offers an incredible view of the skyline and Chicago River while you enjoy live music from above. If you haven't been, let me know. We can meet at our new downtown ABC Supply location right next door and go together.

If You Could Witness a Sporting or Concert Event from Any "Rooftop" in the World, What Event and Where?

Two come to mind: the 2028 Olympic Opening Ceremony from the roof of the LA Memorial Coliseum, or a camera tower overlooking the 18th hole at Augusta National Golf Club. Closer to home, one unforgettable rooftop experience is watching the Chicago Air & Water Show from the Wrigley Field Rooftops during a Cubs game. 

First Impressions Matter: Why Scope Clarity Wins Commercial Roofing Bids

By Jorge Niño Jr.



Jorge Niño Jr.

In commercial roofing, a lot of contractors think the bid is just a number. They send over a price, maybe attach a product data sheet, and wait. When the phone doesn't ring, they blame the market.

But here's what I've learned after 10 years in this industry: the proposal isn't just a quote. It's your first impression. It's your

handshake in document form. And if you can't clearly communicate what you're going to do, why would anyone trust you to actually do it?

Scope Is Where Trust Starts

Building owners, facility directors, and procurement officers are evaluating more than your price. They're evaluating whether you understand their problem. A vague proposal tells them you're guessing. A clear one tells them you've been on the roof, you've seen the conditions, and you know exactly what it's going to take.

That means your scope of work needs to read like a plan, not a parts list. When I write a proposal, I want the reader to see the job unfold in their mind. What's getting torn off. What's going down. How the transitions and penetrations are getting handled. What the finished product looks like. If I can walk them through the work on paper before we ever mobilize, I've already started building confidence.

Drop the Jargon (Most of It)

There's a temptation to load proposals with technical shorthand because it makes us feel credible. And yes, there's a place for product specifications and system details. But if the person signing the contract can't follow your scope language without a glossary, you've created distance instead of trust.

I keep my proposals conversational where it counts. I write scope descriptions that flow naturally instead of reading like a spec sheet. The technical details belong in

the backup documentation, not buried in the body where they slow down the decision-maker. The goal is clarity first, detail second.

That said, know your audience. A facilities manager that has overseen 30 re-roofs wants precision. A village board reviewing bids for the first time wants confidence and simplicity. Read the room before you write the page.

One Page Beats Ten

This might be the most counterintuitive lesson I've learned. When I started writing proposals, I thought more detail meant more professionalism. Longer documents. More line items. Pages of exclusions and qualifications.

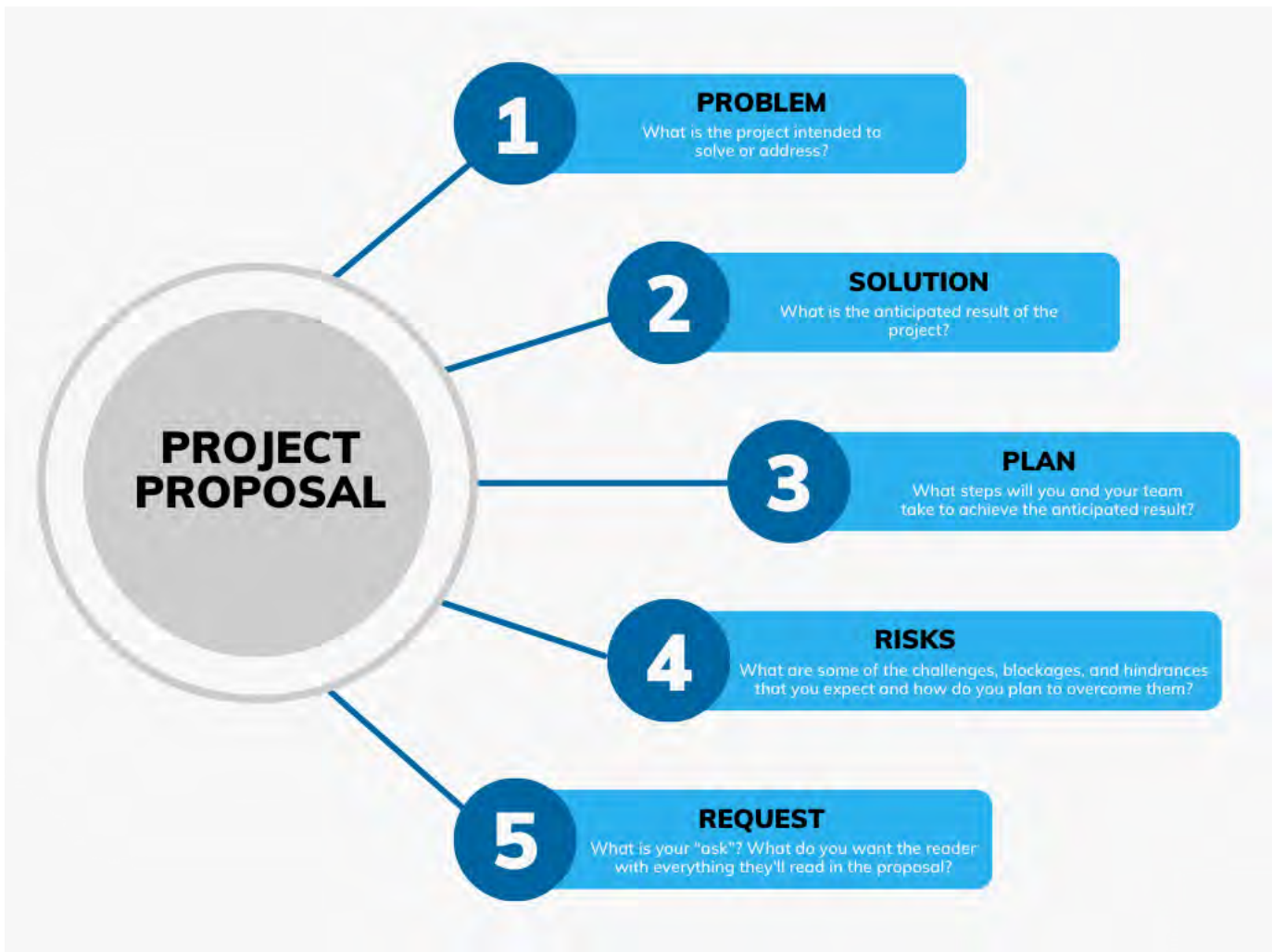
What I found is the opposite. A concise, well-structured single-page proposal on clean letterhead communicates more authority than a bloated packet. It says you know exactly what this job requires and you don't need filler to prove it. Decision-makers are busy. Respect their time and they'll respect your bid.

That doesn't mean cutting corners on substance. It means being intentional about what goes on the page. Lead with who you are and what you're proposing. State the scope clearly. Present the investment. Close with your timeline and next steps. Everything else can live in supporting documents if they ask for it.

Format Is Part of the Message

The way a proposal looks matters more than most contractors realize. A clean layout, consistent formatting, and a professional letterhead aren't superficial details. They signal that your company pays attention, that you take pride in how you present yourself, and that the same discipline will carry over to the jobsite.

I've seen bids come in on plain paper with inconsistent fonts and handwritten notes in the margins. Those might be perfectly competent contractors. But when a building owner is comparing three proposals side by side, the one that looks organized and polished is going to get the benefit of the doubt. Presentation creates an assumption of quality before a single shingle gets installed.



The Real Differentiator

Commercial roofing is competitive. In a lot of bid situations, the pricing is going to be close. The materials are going to be similar. What separates one contractor from the next often comes down to communication. Can you clearly explain what you're going to do, how you're going to do it, and why your approach makes sense?

That's what a strong proposal does. It doesn't just quote a number. It tells a story about competence, clarity, and professionalism. It gives the client a reason to feel good about the decision before the work even begins.

If you're a contractor wondering why you keep coming in second on bids, take a hard look at your proposals before you start cutting your price. The answer might not be in your numbers. It might be in your words.

Final Thoughts

This article is intended for commercial roofing professionals, general contractors, and facility managers responsible for evaluating roofing proposals. The message is straightforward: in a competitive marketplace where

pricing is often comparable, the quality of your proposal can be the deciding factor.

A well-crafted proposal does more than outline costs. It demonstrates professionalism, attention to detail, and a clear understanding of the project. Clear scope language, organized formatting, and concise presentation help build confidence and establish trust long before work begins on the jobsite.

My hope is that readers leave with a renewed appreciation for the proposal itself. While price will always be important, the document that supports it often plays a critical role in winning the work and setting the stage for a successful project. 🏠

Jorge Niño Jr. is a Service Estimator, Project Manager and CRCA Contractor Member at DCG Roofing Solutions, Inc. in Melrose Park, with 10 years of experience in commercial roofing serving institutional, municipal, and commercial clients across Chicagoland. He holds a Project Management Certificate from Loyola University Chicago's Quinlan School of Business and an OSHA 30-Hour certification, and he is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Business Management at National Louis University. Jorge is bilingual in English and Spanish and can be reached at jorge.nino@dcgroofing.com

Las Primeras Impresiones Cuentan: Por Qué La Claridad En Las Propuestas Gana Contratos En El Techado Comercial

By Jorge Niño Jr.



Jorge Niño Jr.

En el techado comercial, muchos contratistas piensan que la cotización es solo un número. Mandan un precio, a veces adjuntan la ficha técnica del producto, y se ponen a esperar. Cuando el teléfono no suena, le echan la culpa al mercado.

Pero esto es lo que he aprendido después de 10 años en esta industria: la propuesta no es solo una cotización. Es su primera impresión. Es su apretón de manos en forma de documento. Y si usted no puede explicar con claridad lo que va a hacer, ¿por qué alguien confiaría en que de verdad lo va a hacer?

La Confianza Empieza Con La Descripción Del Trabajo

Los dueños de edificios, los encargados de mantenimiento y los departamentos de compras evalúan más que su precio. Evalúan si usted entiende su problema. Una propuesta vaga les dice que usted está adivinando. Una propuesta clara les dice que usted se subió al techo, vio las condiciones y sabe exactamente lo que se va a necesitar.

Eso significa que la descripción del trabajo (lo que en los contratos formales aparece como "alcance de trabajo") debe leerse como un plan, no como una lista de materiales. Cuando escribo una propuesta, quiero que el lector vea el trabajo desarrollarse en su mente. Qué se va a quitar. Qué se va a instalar. Cómo se van a manejar las transiciones y las penetraciones. Cómo va a quedar el trabajo terminado. Si puedo llevarlos paso a paso por el trabajo en papel antes de llegar a la obra, ya empecé a ganarme su confianza.

Deje El Lenguaje Técnico (La Mayor Parte)

Existe la tentación de llenar las propuestas de términos técnicos porque nos hace sentir creíbles. Y sí, hay un lugar

para las especificaciones de productos y los detalles del sistema. Pero si la persona que firma el contrato no puede entender su propuesta sin un glosario, usted creó distancia en lugar de confianza.

Mis propuestas son conversacionales donde importa. Escribo descripciones del trabajo que se leen con naturalidad, no como una hoja de especificaciones. Los detalles técnicos van en los documentos de respaldo, no enterrados en el cuerpo de la propuesta donde le quitan tiempo a quien decide. La meta es claridad primero, detalle después.

Dicho esto, conozca a su audiencia. Un encargado de mantenimiento que ha supervisado 30 cambios de techo quiere precisión. Un concejo municipal que revisa propuestas por primera vez quiere confianza y sencillez. Lea el ambiente antes de escribir la página.

Una Página Vale Más Que Diez

Esta puede ser la lección más sorprendente que he aprendido. Cuando empecé a escribir propuestas, pensaba que más detalle significaba más profesionalismo. Documentos más largos. Más renglones. Páginas de exclusiones y condiciones.

Lo que descubrí fue lo contrario. Una propuesta concisa y bien estructurada, de una sola página y en hoja membretada limpia, comunica más autoridad que un paquete inflado. Dice que usted sabe exactamente lo que requiere este trabajo y que no necesita relleno para demostrarlo. Quienes toman las decisiones están ocupados. Respete su tiempo y ellos respetarán su propuesta.

Eso no significa recortarle a la sustancia. Significa ser intencional con lo que va en la página. Empiece con quién es usted y qué propone. Describa el trabajo con claridad. Presente la inversión. Cierre con los tiempos y los siguientes pasos. Todo lo demás puede ir en documentos de apoyo si se los piden.



El Formato Es Parte Del Mensaje

La apariencia de una propuesta importa más de lo que la mayoría de los contratistas cree. Un diseño limpio, un formato consistente y un membrete profesional no son detalles superficiales. Dicen que su empresa pone atención, que usted se enorgullece de cómo se presenta y que esa misma disciplina se va a ver en la obra.

He visto cotizaciones llegar en papel simple, con diferentes tipos de letra y notas escritas a mano en los márgenes. Pueden ser contratistas perfectamente capaces. Pero cuando el dueño de un edificio compara tres propuestas lado a lado, la que se ve organizada y pulida se lleva el beneficio de la duda. La presentación crea una impresión de calidad antes de subir el primer rollo al techo.

El Verdadero Diferenciador

El techado comercial es competitivo. Cuando varios contratistas cotizan el mismo trabajo, los precios van a quedar parejos. Los materiales van a ser similares. Lo que separa a un contratista del otro muchas veces se reduce a la comunicación. ¿Puede usted explicar con claridad qué va a hacer, cómo lo va a hacer y por qué su enfoque tiene sentido?

Eso es lo que hace una propuesta sólida. No solo da un número. Cuenta una historia de capacidad, claridad y profesionalismo. Le da al cliente una razón para sentirse tranquilo con la decisión antes de que empiece el trabajo.

Si usted es un contratista que se pregunta por qué sigue quedando en segundo lugar en los trabajos que cotiza,

revise a fondo sus propuestas antes de empezar a bajarle al precio. Puede que la respuesta no esté en sus números. Puede que esté en sus palabras.

Reflexiones Finales

Este artículo está dirigido a los profesionales del techado comercial, a los contratistas generales y a los encargados de edificios que evalúan propuestas de techado. El mensaje es directo: en un mercado competitivo donde los precios suelen estar parejos, la calidad de su propuesta puede ser el factor que decida.

Una propuesta bien hecha hace más que detallar costos. Demuestra profesionalismo, atención al detalle y una comprensión clara del proyecto. Una descripción clara del trabajo, un formato ordenado y una presentación concisa ayudan a generar confianza mucho antes de que empiece el trabajo en la obra.

Mi esperanza es que los lectores se queden con un nuevo aprecio por la propuesta misma. El precio siempre va a ser importante, pero el documento que lo respalda muchas veces juega un papel clave para ganar el trabajo y preparar el terreno para un proyecto exitoso. 

Jorge Niño Jr. es Estimador de Servicios y Gerente de Proyectos en DCG Roofing Solutions, Inc., en Melrose Park, con 10 años de experiencia en el techado comercial atendiendo a clientes institucionales, municipales y comerciales en toda el área de Chicago. Cuenta con un Certificado en Gestión de Proyectos de la Escuela de Negocios Quinlan de Loyola University Chicago y con la certificación OSHA de 30 horas, y actualmente estudia la Licenciatura en Administración de Empresas (Business Management) en National Louis University. Jorge es bilingüe en inglés y español. Lo puede contactar en jorge.nino@dcgroofing.com

Managing Workers' Compensation Costs Through Your EMR—What Illinois Roofing Contractors Need to Know

By Philip Hayes



Philip Hayes

For roofing contractors, few metrics have a greater impact on insurance costs and bidding opportunities than the Experience Modification Rating (EMR). Whether you're pursuing public work, negotiating with general contractors, or controlling workers' compensation expenses, your EMR remains

one of the most important indicators of your company's safety performance.

An EMR below 1.00 can generate substantial workers' compensation savings and improve your competitiveness in the marketplace. Conversely, an EMR above 1.00 can lead to higher premiums, increased scrutiny from underwriters, and potential challenges during contractor prequalification.

One of the most misunderstood aspects of the EMR formula is the relationship between claim frequency and claim severity.

NCCI continues to place greater emphasis on the number of claims rather than the size of a single claim because claim frequency is viewed as a stronger predictor of future losses. In other words, five smaller claims are often viewed more negatively than one large claim.

Focus on reducing the total number of claims.

For roofing contractors, this means:

- Strengthening fall protection programs
- Conducting daily safety meetings
- Enforcing ladder and scaffold inspections
- Improving driver safety training
- Developing stronger new-hire onboarding procedures

Reducing claim frequency remains the fastest path to improving an EMR.

Medical-Only Claims Vs. Indemnity Claims

The distinction between medical-only and indemnity claims remains critical.

When an injured employee misses enough time from work to trigger wage replacement benefits, the claim becomes an indemnity claim and has a significantly greater impact on your EMR. Medical-only claims receive a substantial reduction within the NCCI calculation, making them far less damaging to your future modifier.

Example

Claim Scenario - Employee suffered a strain of the neck and shoulder at work.

Example 1.
Claim was not reported 10 days after it happened. Transitional duty was not be accommodated. Employee received 200 days of temporary total disability benefits.
Indemnity \$20,000
Medical \$50,000
Expenses \$10,000
Total claim costs \$80,000
NCCI'S VIEW - Valuation for the Experience Modification factor with no discount due to indemnity benefits: \$80,000

Example 2.
Claim was reported within 48 hours. Transitional duty was accommodated by employer. Employee received zero days of temporary total disability benefits.
Indemnity \$0
Medical \$50,000
Expenses \$10,000
Total claim costs \$60,000
NCCI'S View - Valuation for the Exp. Mod factor with 70% discount because claim remains medical only: \$18,000

A strong return-to-work program remains one of the most effective strategies available to roofing contractors.

When transitional or modified duty is available, employees can often remain on payroll while recovering, reducing the long-term impact on your experience rating.

Many contractors are surprised to learn that payroll and EMR have an inverse relationship.

As payroll increases, expected losses increase as well. If losses remain stable while payroll grows, the EMR generally improves. If payroll declines while losses remain constant, the EMR may increase.

Growth alone won't improve your EMR, but growth combined with stable claim frequency can significantly reduce your modifier over time.

For 2026, NCCI introduced an additional refinement to the rating system:

NCCI expanded rating calculations and Expected Loss Rates (ELRs) from two decimal places to three decimal places. This change is intended to produce more accurate and refined experience ratings while remaining premium neutral overall.

What This Means for Roofing Contractors

- More precise calculation of expected losses
- Greater accuracy in experience modifications
- Less reliance on rounding within rating calculations
- Stronger alignment between actual performance and EMR results

While the average employer is not expected to see a dramatic premium change solely because of this update, contractors with strong safety performance may benefit from ratings that more accurately reflect their risk profile.

One of the most important facts to remember is that your EMR is based on your three prior policy years, excluding the current policy term. This means the actions you take today may not be fully reflected in your modifier for several years.

Because of this delayed effect:

- Every claim matters.
- Every reserve review matters.

- Every return-to-work effort matters.
- Every safety investment matters.

The roofing industry continues to face some of the highest workers' compensation exposures in construction. In today's marketplace, a favorable EMR is more than an insurance metric—it is a competitive advantage.

Contractors that focus on reducing claim frequency, implementing aggressive return-to-work programs, reviewing open claim reserves, and maintaining strong safety cultures will be best positioned to control workers' compensation costs and protect their EMR in 2026 and beyond. As rating calculations become increasingly precise, excellent safety performance is more likely than ever to be rewarded.

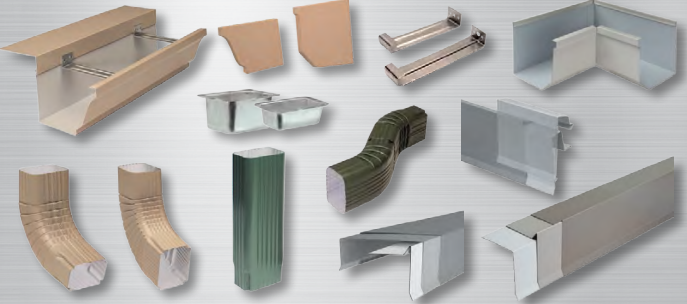
The best time to influence your 2029 EMR is today. Every claim prevented now has the potential to pay dividends for years to come. 

Philip Hayes is Vice President of Sales with CRCA Associate Member firm, Assured Partners and also serves on the CRCA Contracts & Insurance and Health & Safety Committees. To learn more, contact philip.hayes@assuredpartners.com

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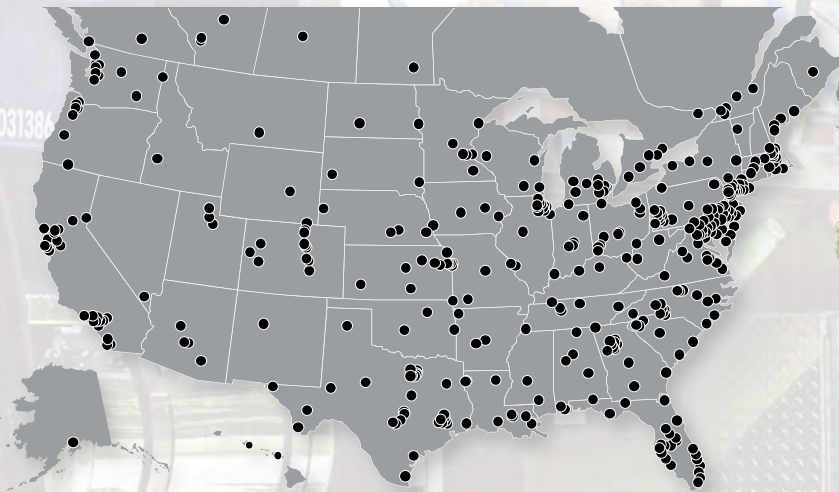
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Flameproof Companies

Industry News

By CRCA Staff

Play Ball! Join the CRCA, CSI & IIBEC for the Chicago Dogs Game!



Baseball season is in full swing, and you're invited to join the **CRCA, CSI, and IIBEC** for an evening of fun, food, and family at the ballpark! Bring your family, colleagues, and friends for a great night of baseball and networking!

Proudly Sponsored by: Architectural Building Solutions

Date: Friday, August 15

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Tickets: \$55 per person

Your ticket includes:

- Chicago Dogs baseball hat
- Burger and hot dog meal with drink
- Spectacular post-game fireworks
- **Register today:** www.crca.org/events



Become a Sponsor of CRCA's Annual Casino Night!



Join the CRCA for an unforgettable evening of entertainment, networking, and excitement by sponsoring our Annual Casino Night. Showcase your company to

industry professionals, strengthen relationships with CRCA members, and gain valuable brand exposure—all while helping make this premier event a success. **Sponsorship Registration Closes September 1st**

Don't miss this opportunity to support the industry and put your business in the spotlight!

Date: Thursday, October 9, 2025

Time: 5 PM – 9 PM

Location: Chicago Marriott Schaumburg

For any inquiries or additional information, please contact us at info@crca.org

CRCA Annual Golf Outing Celebrates Members with a Historic Hole-in-One



The CRCA hosted its annual Golf Outing on Thursday, July 9, at Silver Lake Country Club in Orland Park, bringing together more than 200 members for a day filled with camaraderie, competition, and fun!

Members enjoyed a full day of golf, great food, prizes, and networking with industry colleagues. This year's outing was especially memorable as the event celebrated its first-ever hole-in-one! Sam Irwin with Architectural Building Solutions made history by sinking the winning shot and taking home a prize. Congratulations to Sam, and thank you to all of our members, sponsors and participants who helped make this year's golf outing a tremendous success. What a fantastic way to celebrate the CRCA community!



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Emerging Leaders Gather for an Evening of Networking and Fun



The CRCA Emerging Leaders Committee hosted one of its most popular events of the year at Topgolf on May 7. Members gathered for an evening of networking, friendly competition, and plenty of fun. A

special thank you to our event sponsors for their generous support and for helping make this memorable evening possible: A.C.T. Metal Deck Supply, ABC Supply Company, Inc., GAF, RP Rents, Sheet Metal Supply LTD.



CRCA Members at Emerging Leaders Top Golf Outing



2026 CRCA Foundation Scholarship Recipients

CRCA Recipients

Lahari Beeram Ethan Ferrucci

CRCA Members Only Recipients

Javier Acosta (Anderson & Shah Roofing)
Abigail Plank (Olsson Roofing Company)

CRC Recipients

Adrian Bahena - Ridgeworth Roofing
Omar Diaz - Riddiford Roofing Company
Brayden Dyche - Olsson Roofing Company
Evan Kase - A-1 Roofing Company
Abby Pauls - TORI Construction, LLC
Olly Sanchez - Roofers' Local 11
Brooklyn Socha - BP Roofing Solutions, Inc.
Matthew Tulley - Riddiford Roofing Company

The CRCA Foundation Awards Scholarship Winners

The CRCA Foundation proudly hosted its Annual Scholarship Awards Dinner on June 17 at the beautiful Morton Arboretum. The evening brought together an inspiring group of high school graduates, their families, and industry supporters to celebrate academic achievement. The CRCA Foundation extends its sincere congratulations to all scholarship award winners for their outstanding accomplishments and commitment to excellence. Special guest speaker Jeff Joniak, radio play-by-play announcer for the Chicago Bears, shared his

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personal journey with attendees, discussing the challenges he faced throughout his education and career. His message of perseverance and determination resonated with the audience and served as an inspiration to the students as they embark on their next chapter. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make this memorable event a success.



Jeff Joniak with Scholarship Recipients

CRCA Associate Member



Sheet Metal Supply Receives Acuity Insurance

Safety Award CRCA's Associate Member Sheet Metal Supply (SMS), a leading fabricator serving the metal construction industry, was named a recipient of the Acuity Insurance Safety Award. "You are among a select group of Acuity customers being recognized," says Neil Argall, Vice President-Acuity Commercial Insurance. "Your efforts

to provide safe working conditions to your employees have resulted in a record of which you should be proud of."

SMS has 52 employees working in its state-of-the-art 80,000 square foot facility. "Safety has always been a major focus to us at SMS," says Phoebe McCorkindale, Director of Operations. "We routinely discuss safety awareness in weekly department meetings, engage in continuing education on current safety practices and prioritize a safe working environment for our team. To be recognized for this by Acuity means we're doing things the way they're supposed to be done." Congratulations SMS to this much deserved award.



Pictured: Phoebe McCorkindale, Phil Kweton and Ben Kweton of SMS

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CRCA Contractor Member Celebrates 30 Years



Leaders Roofing Marks Three Decades Serving Chicagoland Jan Koszyk, founder of

the family-owned Mount Prospect roofing contractor established in 1996, extends a heartfelt thank-you to the Chicagoland community. From customers who first hired the company in 1996 to those who called just last week, Leaders Roofing is grateful for every opportunity to serve and also appreciates the property managers who have partnered with them across multiple buildings for 15 and 20 years, as well as everyone who has referred a neighbor, friend, or colleague. Three decades in business happened because Chicagoland kept calling—and Leaders Roofing kept showing up. CRCA congratulates Leaders Roofing on 30 years of service in the roofing industry.

Cedar Shake & Shingle Bureau Annual Trade Show

The CRCA is proud to announce the upcoming 111th Cedar Shake & Shingle Bureau Annual Trade Show to be held October 14-15 in Chicago for the first time in over 14 years! The trade show and educational programs will feature AIA-accredited seminars, guest speakers, networking opportunities and more. Contact www.cedarbureau.org for more info.

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Join us for our AGM, followed by our welcome reception at Sarabande Chicago on October 14. The trade show and education program continue October 15, featuring AIA-accredited seminars, guest speakers, networking, innovation, and collaboration.

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**Construction
Industry Service
Corporation Hires New
Executive Director**



The Construction Industry Service Corporation (CISCO) is pleased to announce Stephanie Kifowit as their next executive

director. Kifowit takes the lead after the retirement of Dan Allen, who has served as CISCO's executive director for the past 13 years. CISCO's core mission is to fortify the Unionized Construction sector within the expansive Chicago Metropolitan area. "Due to his amazing energy and dedication, the task of finding a suitable successor to Dan was of course challenging," remarked CISCO VP Bruce Diederich, signatory contractor and the Vice President of Waukegan Roofing and Past President of the CRCA. "Yet Stephanie proved to us that her blend of civic and legislative experience, proud military service, earned educational degrees, accomplishments in business and finance, and practical backgrounds in marketing and event planning—and more—exceeded all the criteria we were seeking in our next Executive Director".

Kifowit, a current State Representative who is leaving the Illinois House at the end of her term, has served the residents of Illinois for the past 14 years. She has over 20 years of experience in government, finance, and non-profit management. The CRCA congratulates Stephanie on her new role. 

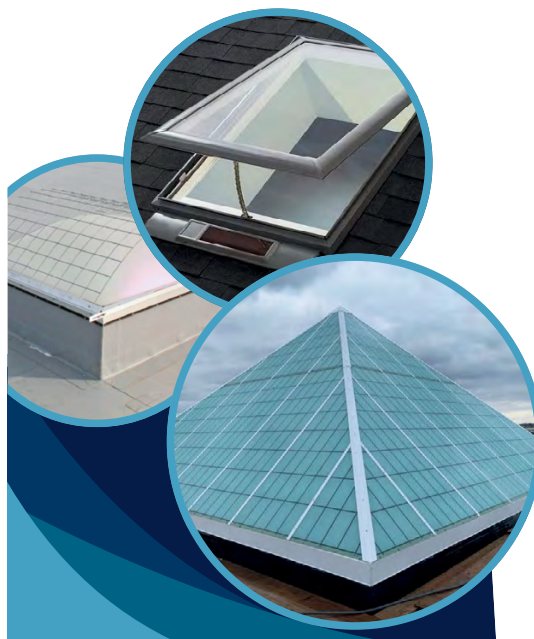
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The Contractor Members of the Chicago Roofing Contractor Association install all types of roofs, including reflective single ply, modified bitumen, built up, gravel, reflective coatings, shingle, shake, slate and tile, vegetative garden or photovoltaic coverings. From formation following the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, CRCA Members have moved with the times and technology, yet continue to maintain some of the same goals set forth over 140 years ago. To find a CRCA Professional Contractor, visit www.CRCA.org.

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The Associate Members of the Chicago Roofing Contractors Association are a vital part of the association and actively support the activities. Besides their generosity, they are represented on the CRCA Board of Directors, Co-Chair the Membership and Trade Show Committees and serve on the Health & Safety, Contracts & Insurance, Industry Affairs, Program and Scholarship Committees.

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NSS Skylights	(708) 385-5815
OMG Building Products LLC	(800) 633-3800
Panasonic Industrial Devices Sales	
Company of America	(502) 395-0593
Performance Roof Systems	(708) 380-5045
Petersen Aluminum Corporation	(800) 722-2523
Phoenix Industrial Cleaning	(708) 449-4441
Polyglass U.S.A, Inc.	(847) 431-6005
Pro Lightning Protection	(262) 925-7199
Progressive Materials	(630) 488-9277

QXO

Carol Stream	(630) 790-3400
Arlington Heights	(847) 357-0433
Chicago / Pulaski	(773) 772-6500
Chicago Metal Supply	(773) 227-6200
Des Plaines	(847) 795-9378
Hickory Hills	(708) 599-9770
Oak Forest	(708) 802-6123
Rockford	(779) 368-2264
Warrenville	(630) 326-4711
Wauconda	(847) 416-3202
R.M. Lucas Company	(773) 523-4300
Raptor Synthetic Underlayment	(317) 800-8444
Readyslate	(866) 339-2038
RestoreWorks Masonry Restoration	(219) 924-9700
Richards Building Supply Company	
Corporate	(773) 586-7777
Chicago/Belmont Ave.	(773) 499-7177
Joliet	(815) 725-2458
Rocket Equipment LLC	(531) 215-1500
Roofing REV Marketing	(773) 680-6952
Roofivent, LLC	(708) 618-9525
RP Rents	(800) 732-2490
Rugged Coatings	(205) 440-4996
Runnion Equipment Company	(708) 447-3169
S.J. Mallein & Associates	(630) 570-0301
Safety Check, Inc.	(815) 475-9991
SBC Waste Solutions Inc.	(312) 522-1115
Schwab Group LLC	(630) 326-9444
Sentry Building Innovations	(503) 575-9025
Service First Solutions	(469) 496-0055
Sheet Metal Supply LTD.	(847) 478-8500
Sika Roofing and Waterproofing	(800) 532-5123 x7222
Siplast	(800) 922-8800

SOPREMA, Inc......(330) 334-0066

SRS Building Products

Naperville	(630) 637-0750
Chicago Heights	(708) 754-9339
Elgin	(847) 241-2000
Joliet	(815) 600-8886
Loves Park	(815) 877-6778
Waukegan	(847) 249-3328
Suman Building Group	(708) 635-9928
Sustainable Building Components	(815) 641-0634
Swanson, Martin & Bell, LLP	(312) 321-9100
Tarco	(501) 945-4506
Terial	(857) 231-2816

The J & R Group of Bank of

 America Merrill.....(312) 696-7518

TOPWET INC......(331) 258-4134

TransChicago Truck Group.....(312) 257-7499

Triangle Fastener Corporation	(800) 486-1832
TRUFAST	(800) 443-9602
United Asphalt Company	(800) 843-0317
USG Corporation	(773) 213-6192
Vacuum Resources Inc.	(630) 366-9698
Van Boxel Building Supply	(440) 721-1504
VaproShield	(253) 851-8286
VB Synthetics	(312) 664-3810
VELUX America LLC	(864) 941-4770
Verde Solutions LLC	(847) 276-8718
Versico	(800) 992-7663
VFC Lightning Protection	(801) 292-2956
W. R. Meadows, Inc.	(847) 214-2100
Walter Payton Power Equipment LLC	(708) 656-7700
WickRight Inc	(312) 720-1467
WindSmart Systems	(800) 474-8186
Wintrust Bank	(630) 321-2153

Architects & Roof Consultants

ARCON Associates, Inc.	(630) 495-1900
Building Envelope Consultants Ltd.	(317) 432-1727
Building Technology Consultants, Inc.	(847) 454-8800
C.E. Crowley & Associates, Inc.	(847) 662-8132
Century Roof Consultants	(847) 202-8500
Hutchinson Design Group, LLC	(312) 343-9595
Illinois Roof Consulting Associates Inc.	(815) 385-6560
INSPEC, Inc.	(847) 652-6617
Interstate Roof Systems Consultants, Inc.	(847) 695-1460
K2N Crest	(630) 990-9595
Kellermeyer Godfryt Hart, P.C.	(847) 318-0033
Klein and Hoffman, Inc.	(312) 251-1979
Legat Architects	(630) 990-3535
Mac Brady Associates, Inc.	(312) 550-1343
MTech Roofing Solutions LLC	(630) 777-8024
O'Brien Roof Consulting, Inc.	(708) 951-8271
Raths, Raths and Johnson, Inc.	(630) 325-6160
Skyline Solutions RAM	(847) 250-1987
SRI Consultants Inc.	(608) 831-5333
STR Building Resources LLC	(847) 652-6115
YA Engineering Services	(312) 919-8279

Media

BNP Media/Roofing Contractors Magazine	
RoofersCoffeeShop	(877) 419-0477

Vacuuming

Dietz Vacuum Service, Inc.	(708) 301-9127
Ready Vac, Inc.	(847) 437-5771
RK HydroVac	(800) 754-9376
Vac-It-All Services, Inc.	(314) 487-5600
Velocity Roof Vac Service Inc.	(630) 936-2421

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