



## MAEA OCTOBER HAPPENINGS

### 2024 Events

#### **MAEA Presenters Provided Valuable Information at the Labor & Employment Law Summit**

#### **Thank you!**

Our 16th Annual Employment Law Summit brought together members for an insightful exploration of critical topics shaping the workplace in 2024. Key discussions included:

- **Important HR Developments:** Attendees received comprehensive updates on evolving HR policies, ensuring they remain compliant with new regulations and best practices.
- **Medical Marijuana and Drug Testing:** Experts shared valuable information on navigating the complexities of medical marijuana use and drug testing policies. The discussions highlighted the importance of clear communication and accommodation strategies.
- **The Use of AI in the Workplace:** Participants engaged in vibrant discussions about the role of AI in recruitment, employee monitoring, and training. Concerns regarding bias and privacy were thoroughly addressed, fostering a deeper understanding of AI's impact on HR practices.
- **Employee vs. Independent Contractor Classification:** The session provided critical insights into the legal distinctions between employee and contractor classifications, emphasizing the importance of compliance to avoid misclassification pitfalls.



## MAEA Discovery Breakfast

**Date:** December 6, 2024

**Time:** 8:00a.m. to 9:30a.m.

**Location:** Mt. Valley Clubhouse

**Cost:** Complimentary



We invite you to join us for breakfast and learn about the many ways MAEA can assist in your company's operations. During this event, MAEA member company representatives will provide testimonials of MAEA services assisting them in their daily operations.

*To register and for additional information on MAEA Events, please email Joani at [jtrosterud@nepamaea.com](mailto:jtrosterud@nepamaea.com) or call 570.622.0992. Sponsorship Opportunities are available for all events.*

[CLICK HERE to view the MAEA 2025 Events Calendar](#)

## MAEA Legislative Updates

### **House panel moves bill that would require employers to provide paid leave to workers.**

Employers would be required to provide workers with paid leave under legislation approved by the House Labor and Industry Committee on Monday.

House Bill 2548 was approved on a party-line vote.

Republicans blasted the proposal as a "heavy-handed mandate."

Democrats said it's a necessary change to protect the rights of workers.

"I don't believe that the state should be telling businesses how to run their businesses," said Sue Gleim, R-York.

“It’s the job of the state to protect workers,” responded Rep. Jennifer O’Mara, D-Delaware, the prime sponsor of the legislation. She pointed to the COVID pandemic as an example of how dangerous it is for businesses to force workers to choose between staying home sick and losing pay or coming to work sick to keep getting paid while spreading illness.

Democrats beat back an amendment from Rep. Ryan Mackenzie, R-Lehigh, that would have required businesses to use the E-verify system to ensure that new employees are legally entitled to be in the country.

Later in the meeting, Mackenzie, the minority chairman of the committee, criticized Democrats for running “partisan legislation.”

That prompted committee chairman Rep. Jason Dawkins, D-Philadelphia, to counter that the committee has moved some Republican-sponsored legislation and assert that when Republicans held the majority they rarely moved any Democratic-sponsored bills.

He also, in an apparent reference to Mackenzie’s E-verify amendment, said that while he’s not opposed to moving Republican-authored legislation he won’t allow the committee to perpetuate “racist tropes” suggesting that immigrants are taking jobs from other residents.

Under HB 2548, employers would be required to pay workers on leave at the same rate they’d been paid for their last week of work.

Workers would be granted an hour of leave for every 40 hours they work. Workers would be entitled to up to 40 hours of leave a year. Workers would not be entitled to leave until they’ve been on the job for at least 90 days.

The measure now goes to the full House for consideration.

Capitolwire



### **Crisis Averted: East Coast and Gulf Coast Ports Reopen**

After days of disruption, and sustained advocacy by the NAM to keep manufacturers' concerns at the forefront, the East Coast and Gulf Coast ports strike has ended, allowing for the resumption of normal operations crucial to manufacturers and the broader supply chain. Background on the strike: The strike, which began last week, had halted operations at key shipping terminals stretching from Boston to Houston, exacerbating the backlog at some of the busiest ports in the U.S. ([Reuters](#), subscription). NAM data on the effects of a prolonged strike—including a hit to the U.S. GDP by as much as \$5 billion a day—was cited widely by supporters of a compromise that would keep ports open as negotiations continued.

- The tentative agreement is for a wage hike of around 62% over six years, Reuters reports, with the current Master Contract extending until January to allow for ports to remain open as a final contract is negotiated.

Impacts on manufacturing: NAM members voiced deep concerns over shipment delays and the effects on production timelines. The strike impacted everything from raw materials to finished goods, underscoring the interconnectedness of the global supply chain and domestic manufacturing.

- “Manufacturers are encouraged that cooler heads have prevailed and the ports will reopen,” NAM President and CEO Jay Timmons said in a [statement](#). “This decision avoids the need for government intervention and invoking the Taft-Hartley Act, and it is a victory for all parties involved—preserving jobs, safeguarding supply chains and preventing further economic disruptions.”

Resolution and next steps: The resolution came after intense negotiations facilitated by federal mediators, with both parties agreeing to resume operations while finalizing contract details. The NAM will monitor developments and remain engaged with policymakers to support stable labor conditions at key ports.

- “Manufacturers depend on the stability of our ports to continue building, innovating, delivering products to American families and supporting communities across the country,” Timmons continued. “Another strike would jeopardize \$2.1 billion in trade daily... We cannot afford that level of economic destruction.”

NAM

## Hydro to Invest Nearly \$100 million in Cressona Plant

Join the Northeast PA Manufacturers & Employers Association (MAEA) in celebrating our member, Hydro, as they make a \$48.3 million investment at their Cressona facility. This project will expand recycling capabilities, increase production capacity, and further Hydro's commitment to sustainability and innovation. Discover how this cutting-edge investment is driving the future of low-carbon aluminum production in North America.



[MAEA Celebrating Hydro - Click here to view](#)

[Click Here to View Channel 16's Announcement](#)

## Green Plant of the Year: Keystone Potato Products Takes Sustainability to New Levels



Keystone uses landfill-sourced methane and cleaned coal-mine water to reach nearly 100% potato utilization through value-added, environmentally friendly outputs for off-grade spuds.

[Click Here to Read More About Keystone Potato Products](#)



The Occupational Medicine Care Trusted by Lehigh Valley Employers for 35 Years.

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### MAEA Group Programs

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[MAEA Group Shipping Program](#)

**MAEA offers a variety of group programs for their member companies.**

Would you like to learn more about:

- Lehigh Valley Business Coalition on Healthcare
- Energy - EnerConnex an SJI Company
- Shipping - DM Transportation
- Predictive Index

To learn more about the exclusive member MAEA Group Programs, please contact Darlene J. Robbins at (570) 622-0992 or email at [drobbins@nepamaea.com](mailto:d Robbins@nepamaea.com)

***Click above for information about MAEA's group program providers.***



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**Balancing Energy Consumption and Customer Satisfaction in a Complex Market**

Many types of businesses, from cannabis cultivation facilities to hospitality and tourism, consume energy continuously. The caveat is that business owners are caught in a constant balancing act, trying to be more mindful of consumption — both for cost efficiency and climate change — while also maintaining customer satisfaction.

Here, we're discussing cost efficiency for businesses that run on a 24/7 schedule, why creating cost efficiencies matters, and how to become more energy efficient to achieve the perfect balance between greener practices and great service.

[Click Here to continue reading "Balancing Energy Consumption"](#)

# NORTHEAST PA Manufacturers & Employers ASSOCIATION

## Power Up Your Excel Skills!

### MAEA CAN NOW TRAVEL WITH 10 LAPTOPS TO PROVIDE TRAINING ON-SITE!



#### **Excel I: The First Step**

- Create simple formulas
- Create and save workbooks
- Use functions in formulas

#### **Excel II: Intermediate**

- General Features: freezing panes, copying & moving sheets, hiding and protecting data, etc.
- Formulas & Functions: basic functions including - MIN, MAX, AVERAGE, IF, rounding.
- Charts: chart wizard, editing embedded charts, formatting charts, and more!

#### **Excel III: Mastering**

- Importing and exporting data
- Using and creating templates
- VLOOKUP and HLOOKUP functions

#### **Excel Just Formulas & Functions**

- Learn about ExceIs built in formulas & functions
- Work through hands-on examples
- Formula types covered include mathematics, logical, text, lookup, statistics, date/time, and financial.

#### **Excel Pivot Tables & Charts**

- Create and edit pivot tables
- Sorting and grouping data
- Creating and updating charts

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SCHEDULED AT OUR  
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SCAN QR CODE FOR  
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
570-622-0992  
EKUPERAVAGE@NEPAMAEA.COM**

## YOUR PARTICIPATION IS VITAL!



### **Complete the 2025 National and Regional\* Benefits Survey Online by October 18 and receive both reports AT NO CHARGE!**

We are pleased to offer the **2025 National and Regional\* Benefits Survey** to our members. The survey is open through October 18, 2024 and will assist your company in benchmarking benefit packages against companies in Pennsylvania and across the nation.

Supporting the national survey not only gives your area representation on a national level, but we will also provide you with a local breakout report containing data from our MAEA participants.

Please contact Eileen at 570-622-0992 or [ekuperavage@nepamaea.com](mailto:ekuperavage@nepamaea.com) to obtain your personalized link to access the survey, ensuring your information is safe and secure.

This survey is divided into four major sections, with sub-categories within each section:

- Health and Welfare Benefits: such as medical plans, prescription, and insurance offerings
- Retirement Benefits: types of benefits, income plans, and related topics
- Part-time Employee Benefits: vacation, holiday, and incentives
- Miscellaneous Benefits

Member Participants: FREE COPY OF THE REPORT

Member Non-Participants Cost: \$325.00

Non-Member Cost: \$600.00

**\*We need at least 50 MAEA members to participate in order to receive the regional breakout. Results will be available in January 2025.**

# BLAST OFF ONLINE!



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**2024-2025 Regional Pay Trends Survey is Available for Purchase NOW!**

#### **Data Reported:**

- Actual Changes - Applies to pay changes granted between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024.
- Projected Changes - Applies to pay changes "planned" for the period July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.
- % (Percent) - The average actual or projected percentage change in the wages and salaries of employees in the specified grouping.

#### **Pricing Structure:**

- Member companies that participated in this survey have already been sent a complimentary copy of the results.
- Member companies that did not participate in this survey \$25
- Non-Member companies: \$50

#### **Place an Order:**

If your company is interested in purchasing this survey, please contact Alison Verbosh at [averbosh@nepamaea.com](mailto:averbosh@nepamaea.com) or call 570-622-0992.

Member companies that place an order will immediately be e-mailed a PDF file of the survey report. Non-member companies must pre-pay before receiving the survey

## MAEA Upcoming Roundtables

### Save the Date!

#### Energy Schuylkill/Luzerne

**Date:** October 17, 2024

**Topic:** PJM Capacity Increases and Demand Reduction Strategies

**Presenters:** Tom Dufraigne, Enerconnex and Tom Timmins & Del Molina, EcoSave

**Complimentary Virtual Presentation**

**Time:** 2:00pm-3:00pm

#### Safety Schuylkill

**Date:** October 25, 2024

**Topic:** OSHA's New Proposed 1910.156 Emergency Response Rule

**Presenter:** Jeff Ritter, Compliance Assistance Specialist, OSHA

**Location:** MAEA Pottsville Office

**Time:** 11:00am-1:00pm

*For registration or additional information, please email Darlene at [dobbins@nepamaea.com](mailto:dobbins@nepamaea.com) or call (570) 622-0992.*



**"The Council is a proud Partner Agency of the SUW. Their support of YES allows for our Schuylkill County youth to develop their skills and prepare for success."**

**Courtney Fasnacht**, Executive Director,  
Northeast PA MAEC, Inc.



That support includes participating in MAEC's annual career fair, conducting mock interviews with YES students, and a financial allocation. Learn more about SUW's work at [www.schuylkillunitedway.org](http://www.schuylkillunitedway.org).

[Click here to learn more about Schuylkill United Way](http://www.schuylkillunitedway.org)

**Northeast PA Manufacturers & Employers Council**



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