



**NORTHEAST PA  
Manufacturers  
& Employers  
ASSOCIATION**

## **MAEA FEBRUARY HAPPENINGS**

### **2024 Events**

#### **MAEA Legislative Roundtable**



Thank you legislators for providing valuable information on legislation affecting MAEA member companies during our Annual Legislative Roundtable on February 2nd! Over 75 attendees heard updates and asked questions about taxes, economy/budget, workforce development, regulatory reform/energy and infrastructure/transportation. Our next Legislative Roundtable will be held October 4th. Attending manufacturers will be recognized as we celebrate National Manufacturing Day.

#### **MAEA Annual Installation of Officers**



**Date: March 12, 2024**  
**Time: 12pm to 1:30pm**  
**Location: Mt. Valley Clubhouse**

***Pictured 2023 MAEA Officers***

As a member of the Association, we invite you to participate in the Installation of Officers for 2024.

NEPA Manufacturers and Employers Association Announces  
Human Resource Professional of the Year

\*

Graduates Recognized for Completion of the  
NEPA Manufacturers and Employers Association  
Certificate Series

**Where: Mt. Valley Clubhouse, Barnesville**

**When: March 12, 2024**

**Time: 12:00pm to 1:30pm**

**Cost: \$52 per registered member / \$42 per registered graduate**

*To register, sponsor or for additional information, please call (570) 622-0992 or email Joani at [jtrosterud@nepamaea.com](mailto:jtrosterud@nepamaea.com).*

## **MAEA Wants to Celebrate Your 2023 Successes! Submit a Nomination form for the 2024 Excellence Awards**

The NEPA Manufacturers and Employers Association *Manufacturers and Employers Excellence Award* actively celebrates the mission of supporting the achievement of excellence among the member companies of the NEPA MAEA.

The *Manufacturers and Employers Excellence Award* honors companies who have invested and innovated in areas such as (1) community involvement, (2) process



improvement (3) product innovations (4) expansion, (5) EHS—Environment, Health & Safety or (6) MAEA Investment Award.

**We encourage you to complete a detailed explanation of accomplishments made in the year 2023.**

**RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO (no later than March 6):**

**Joan Trosterud** via email to [jtrosterud@nepamaea.com](mailto:jtrosterud@nepamaea.com), fax to 570-622-2776, or mail to  
NEPA Manufacturers & Employers  
Association, P. O. Box 541, Pottsville, PA 17901

**[CLICK HERE FOR THE EXCELLENCE AWARDS NOMINATION FORM](#)**

## Join MAEA at Upcoming Events

- Annual Wellness Summit, April 12, 10am to 3pm, Top of the 80s
- Annual Excellence Awards, May 7, 5pm to 8pm, Mt. Valley Clubhouse
- Annual Summer Golf Outing, June 14, Mt. Valley Golf Course



**[CLICK HERE](#) to view the MAEA Events Calendar**  
**[CLICK HERE](#) for the MAEA 2024 Sponsorship Opportunities**

## MAEA Legislative Updates

### **Gov. Shapiro proposes ambitious state budget.**

Gov. Josh Shapiro proposed an ambitious, wide-ranging state budget Tuesday with major spending for basic education and higher education, funding for a number of first-time initiatives and a call for legalizing adult use of marijuana.

Shapiro proposed a \$48.3 billion state taxpayer-supported General Fund for Fiscal Year 2024-25 drawing on \$3 billion of budget reserves which currently amount to \$14 billion. This would be \$3.8 billion higher than the current \$44.5 billion state budget if enacted by state lawmakers. Pennsylvania anticipates receiving nearly \$49 billion in federal funds although pandemic relief funds are winding down.

Speaking in a crowded Capitol Rotunda, the Democratic governor said “We have a real chance to build safer communities, become more competitive economically, and invest in our students and their success – and this budget lays out a comprehensive and aggressive focus on doing just that without raising taxes and maintaining a surplus of \$11 billion at

the end of June 2025.”

[\*\*CLICK HERE TO READ THE ENTIRE ARTICLE\*\*](#)

### **DOL Issues Independent Contractor Final Rule**

DOL Issues Independent Contractor Final Rule On Jan. 9, 2024, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) released a final rule, effective March 11, 2024, revising the agency’s guidance on how to analyze who is an employee or independent contractor under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). This final rule rescinds the current independent contractor rule that was published on Jan. 7, 2021, and mirrors the DOL’s proposed rule. Background Under the FLSA, employees are entitled to minimum wage, overtime pay and other benefits. Independent contractors are not entitled to these protections and benefits. According to the DOL, this final rule will reduce the risk of employees being misclassified as independent contractors while providing a consistent approach for businesses that engage with individuals who are in business for themselves. 2021 Independent Contractor Rule The DOL published the 2021 Independent Contractor Rule on Jan. 7, 2021. The 2021 rule reasserted the economic realities test (ERT) as the DOL’s preferred method to determine whether a worker should be classified as an employee or independent contractor under the FLSA.

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### **House Passes NAM-Supported Tax Package**

Manufacturers scored a major victory last night when the House passed a bipartisan tax package containing provisions critical to the industry.

**What’s going on:** The House voted 357–70 to pass the bipartisan Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act. The bill includes three important manufacturing priorities:

- Restoring immediate R&D expensing for domestic research
- Reinstating full expensing (also known as 100% accelerated depreciation) for businesses’ capital investments
- Returning the U.S. to a pro-growth interest deductibility standard

**What it means:** The measure will enable manufacturers to invest in their businesses, create jobs and compete in the global marketplace.

- The bill is particularly important for small and medium-sized manufacturers, many of which experienced significant tax increases as a result of the expiration of these pro-growth provisions.
- “While it was once a paid expense, R&D is now a cost that many small businesses cannot afford,” [said](#) Rep. Carol Miller (R-WV), in a speech on the House floor last month.
- The overwhelming majority—89%—of respondents to the NAM’s Q4 2023 Manufacturers’ Outlook Survey said higher tax burdens on manufacturing would make it more difficult for them to hire, buy new equipment and expand their facilities.

[\*\*CLICK HERE TO READ THE ENTIRE ARTICLE\*\*](#)

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[Click here to learn more about St. Luke's Occupational Medicine](#)

## MAEA Group Programs

[MAEA Group Program LVBCH](#)

[MAEA Group Program Predictive Index](#)

[MAEA Group Program Enerconnex an SJI Company](#)

[MAEA Group Shipping Program](#)

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

**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
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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)



*EnerConnex is a proud supporter of NEPA MAEA.*

## **Discover the power of our energy services:**

- Natural Gas & Electricity Procurement
  - Demand Management
    - Renewables
  - Energy Efficiency



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**Funding Your Energy Future: Solutions for cash flow positivity and CapEx avoidance.**

EnerConnex is The Group Energy Solutions Provider for NEPA MAEA. As a valued member and trusted partner, EnerConnex has provided significant value to many of our members over the years offering a comprehensive range of value-added services for Electricity and Natural Gas Procurement, Demand Management, Energy Efficiency and Renewables.

EnerConnex is excited to announce their partnership with ECOSAVE to drive sustainable energy solutions for mid-to-large commercial and industrial end users. Ecosave has more than 20 years of engineering expertise reducing energy costs and carbon emissions through tailored efficiency, technology, and renewable solutions.

**[Click here to continue reading "Funding Your Energy Future"](#)**

## **MAEA Training**

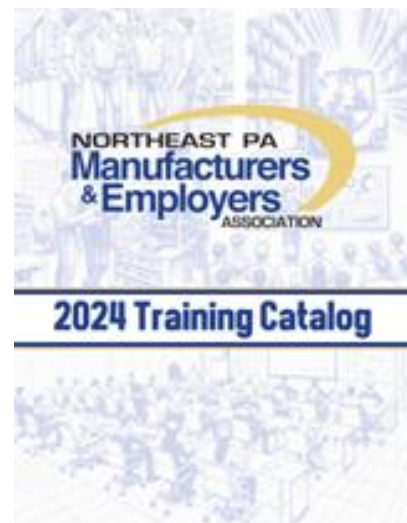
**MAEA Training Catalog is Available**

**DOWNLOAD THE CATALOG**

at: [www.nepamaea.com](http://www.nepamaea.com)

Public training courses will be offered in Pottsville and Hazleton.

Providing training and development solutions for all levels of associates in your company.



## MAEA PROVIDES CONSULTING SERVICES

*Did you know MAEA has a team of consultants who specialize in helping companies resolve their most urgent problems, issues, or projects?*

Our experienced consultants will conduct an on-site evaluation and provide proposed solutions. MAEA can provide coaching and personalized one-on-one support to help your employees develop interpersonal skills, overcome challenges, and achieve their goals.

Consultants work across a wide range of roles and areas of expertise including:

- Communication
- Data Management and Development
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Process Improvement
- Safety

### LEARN MORE

If you are interested in learning more about MAEA's Consulting Services, please contact Eileen Kuperavage at 570-622-0992 or [ekuperavage@nepamaea.com](mailto:ekuperavage@nepamaea.com)



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**Member Satisfaction Survey Open  
Wage & Salary Survey Available**



Our 2023 Member Satisfaction survey will be open until February 29, 2024. As valued members your opinion matters! Please take a few minutes to complete the 2023 Member Satisfaction survey and your input will help guide MAEA in serving your needs in the future.

[Click here to take the 2023 Member Satisfaction survey](#)

## MAEA's Wage & Salary Survey Reports are Available for Purchase

**Regional Wage & Salary Report** is currently available for purchase. This Survey provides regional wage data with information from local companies. Data includes wage and salary information for 151 job titles with job descriptions as a reference. Beneficial for employers who want their wage structure to attract, motivates, and retain the best

**Pricing:**

- o Free to member participant; \$500 for member non-participant
- o \$500 for non-member participant
- o \$1000 for non-member non- participant

**National Wage & Salary Report** is currently available for purchase

This year's Survey provides data submitted by 20 members of the Employer Associations of America. This survey covers 151 benchmark jobs.

**Pricing:**

- o \$200 for member participant of Regional Wage & Salary
- o \$400 for member non- participant of Regional Wage & Salary
- o \$400 for non-member participant of Regional Wage & Salary
- o \$800 for non-member non- participant of Regional Wage & Salary

To purchase any of our Survey Reports contact Alison at 570-622-0992 to [averbosh@nepamaea.com](mailto:averbosh@nepamaea.com)

## MAEA Roundtables

*Executive Schuylkill and Luzerne Roundtable (Combined)*

Date: February 20, 2024

Presenter: Ed Kollar, CPA, EA, ESEP Firm Director & Matthew M. McNelis, CPA,



Partner-Tax Services both at Baker Tilly US, LLP  
Topic: Tax Update  
Location: Virtual (ZOOM)

***Maintenance Roundtable***

Date February 22, 2024  
Presenter: Bud Fogleman, Sr. Account Manager, PPL Electric Business Energy Efficiency Program and Del Molina, Director of Energy Solutions, Ecosave Inc.  
Topic: PPL & EcoSave Program  
Location: Virtual (ZOOM)

***Executive Schuylkill Roundtable***

Date: March 19, 2024  
Presenters: Barron Hetherington, Larry Padora, Gary Hess, Schuylkill County Commissioners  
Presenter: Frank Zukas, President, Schuylkill Economic Development Corp  
Presenter: Patrick Caulfield, Executive Director, Schuylkill County Municipal Authority  
Topic: The Current and Future State of Schuylkill County Economic  
Location: MAEA Conference Room

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

## PPL Electric Utilities Offers Tips to Stay Safe and Prepare for Winter Weather

As a new year begins and the cold of winter intensifies, PPL Electric Utilities is committed to delivering reliable power no matter what the weather brings – a commitment that is rooted in year-round preparation.

PPL Electric Utilities' grid is one of the most reliable in the country. Over the past decade, the company has made significant investments to build a stronger, smarter and more resilient grid. From clearing vegetation around power lines and replacing aging equipment to installing state-of-the-art grid technology, our reliability investments mean customers are experiencing 30% fewer outages since 2011.

“PPL Electric is a national leader in grid reliability and the investments we have made over the past decade help us deliver the safe and reliable power that our customers depend on, said Sal Salet, vice president of Distribution Operations. “The bottom line is, sometimes emergencies happen. We are a 24/7/365 business. No matter what the emergency is, our team is continually monitoring, drilling and preparing to respond.”

PPL Electric wants customers to stay safe and save on their energy bills this winter with the following tips

[CLICK HERE TO READ PPL'S TIPS](#)

## Mark Your Calendars!

**2024 SCHUYLKILL COUNTY CAREER FAIR**

**APRIL 11**

Save the dates!

📍 Martz Hall, Pottsville Area School District

**2024 YES RECOGNITION BREAKFAST**

**MAY 9**

📍 St. Nicholas Hall, Minersville

**Contact:**

**Darlene J. Robbins**

**President**

**Northeast Pennsylvania Manufacturers and Employers Association**

**Your Business Resource Partner**

**250 One Norwegian Plaza**

**Pottsville, PA 17901**

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