



Grassi & Co. Construction Survey Results

Grassi & Co., CPAs, one of the region's leading accounting, tax and consulting firms with the largest national construction practice, released its 2009 Construction Industry Survey results and report. This industry-wide survey, The State of Your Business 2009, was conducted in partnership with McGraw Hill Construction's New York Construction.

The survey queried construction companies in seven different information areas: organizational structure, contract types, training and technology, profitability and access to capital, financial tools, business development and future vision. The results uncovered the need

for implementing best business practices that increase reliance on sophisticated business planning tools and programs that focus on ways in which to grow the business over time and rely on financial techniques to increase profitability.

"Construction contractors should key into business planning for both growth and profitability," advises Louis C. Grassi, CPA, CFE, and Managing Partner of Grassi & Co., CPAs, who has been advising construction firms for nearly 30 years.

Overall, many of the firms who responded to the survey reported that they did not have a business succession plan in place. The impor-

tance of succession plans – especially in the construction industry which has followed a father-to-son/daughter business model – cannot be underestimated, according to Grassi.

"For many companies, second generation professionals are in place; however for many others, a new generation of leadership has not been formalized, leaving business growth on an uncertain path," he said.

Some of the other highlights of the survey included 30 percent of the respondents currently participating in joint ventures, 57 percent of respondents reporting they do not have in-house training programs, 52 percent of the respondents cited change order disputes as the

largest cause of litigation and 57 percent saying they have instituted fraud control plans.

In general, firms surveyed were moderately optimistic about future growth, despite the current economic downturn. Almost 80 percent of the respondents indicated that their firms are growing or at least leveling off. However 18 percent of the respondents indicated that they saw their firms declining.

For a complete report on the Survey Results please visit:
www.grassicpas.com/2009constructionurveyresults

National Grid Special Offer

National Grid will be increasing custom incentive levels to cover up to 75 percent of the installed cost of qualified combustion controls, with a maximum per project cost of \$100,000 in a limited time offer. In the United States, there are more than 200,000 commercial and industrial boiler plants currently in operation, with a majority of these being more than 20 years old. The alarming fact is that many of these older boilers are only operating at efficiencies in the 60 to 70 percent range.

While upgrading the entire boiler is an option, the significant investment required can be a considerable obstacle. Fortunately, immediate opportunities to reduce fuel usage can be achieved by installing retrofits and upgrades such as burner controls and retrofit technologies to increase operating efficiency.

Start saving energy and money. Take action today! Call a National Grid account representative at 1-800-843-3636 or e-mail: save@us.ngrid.com and reference custom incentives in the subject line.

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Out2Play Helps Build Playgrounds For NYC Schools

A record-breaking 40 New York City public school yards will be transformed into child friendly play spaces by Out2Play this summer. As a result, more than 26,000 students (43 percent of whom, statistically, are either obese or overweight) will be returning to new play structures, basketball courts and kickball diamonds this September.

The schools, located throughout the five boroughs, are part of this year's roster of play-

grounds to be built by Out2Play, a non-profit group with a mission of delivering playgrounds to economically disadvantaged NYC public schools.

Out2Play has already successfully completed 40 playgrounds around the city since 2005, transforming over 900,000 square feet of dilapidated, vacant lots into active, safe play spaces. The 40 new playgrounds doubles the three-year-old organization's past efforts, bringing the total number of completed play-

grounds to 80 by the end of 2009.

Starting this past fall, Out2Play, along with architects, students, parents and staff, let their imaginations run wild while dreaming up designs for their new playgrounds. Now that all designs are complete, construction is set to begin and Out2Play's team of contractors will work over the next six months to build bright new play spaces for 40 schools across the city.

"Out2Play's main focus is nurturing the health and development of our city's youth,"

said Andrea Wenner, founder and Executive Director of Out2Play. "With childhood obesity continuing to affect almost half of New York City school children, this is an ongoing struggle that none of us can afford to lose."

The renovated playgrounds will include play structures with slides and monkey bars, basketball courts, kickball diamonds, soccer and football fields, tracks, hopscotch, four square and other blackout games, chess tables, trees, benches and more.