



The Washington Connection

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The National Maintenance Agreement: Securing Work for Roofers Since 1982

Over the past thirty years members of our union have had the opportunity to work on projects that were covered by the National Maintenance Agreement (NMA). The Roofers and Waterproofers Union first began participation in the NMA in 1982, and since that first year we have worked over eleven million man-hours under the agreement (11,171,304 through the end of 2012). The NMA has certainly provided our organization the means to secure a significant amount of work over the years in the industrial sector, and it continued to do so in the recessionary period over the last

three years, when we captured over 628,094 man-hours.

Brief History of the NMA

In 1970 the National Erectors Association along with several national Building and Construction Trades Unions formed an exploratory committee to address a shrinking market share in the industrial plant sector. Some of the key issues discussed in the beginning were work stoppages, poor scheduling and work practices. From these collaborative meetings the National Maintenance Agreement Policy Committee (NMAPC) was formed in 1971.

The NMAPC was the first national joint labor-management organization in the construction industry to become incorporated, and it is

based in the philosophy of tripartite cooperation among the customer, contractor and union craft personnel. The NMAPC negotiates and

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Project Labor Agreements Update

In the calendar year 2012, approximately 161 project labor agreements (PLAs) were submitted to the Building and Construction Trades Department (BCTD) for approval. We strongly encourage our locals to support and promote project labor agreements. PLAs are one of the most effective tools for keeping our members working. However, please remember that project labor agreements are to be submitted to the BCTD for approval. There continue to be locals that are signing PLAs that either are not approved by or do not meet the criteria as established by the Department. ■

administers the National Maintenance Agreements, a series of collective bargaining agreements used by over 2,000 industrial contractors who employ members of the 14 building trades' international unions. The NMA is basically a project labor agreement (PLA), and there are 14 of them: one for each of the international unions that participate in the NMAPC. There are a few minor differences between the agreements; however, for the most part they are nearly identical.

The NMA is used by contractors who perform industrial construction or maintenance, renovations or repairs at hundreds of facilities nationwide, including the auto industry, utility companies, steel

mills and refineries. The NMA sets out the terms and conditions of a job before work begins. Without it, an employer would have to bargain separately with each union. But the NMA essentially does away with the need for contractors and local unions to engage in this process. All of the unions agree up front to the same terms and conditions, thus eliminating the need for individual negotiations and establishing a level playing field for everyone.

Benefits of Utilizing the NMA

The key to the NMA is that it allows owners of industrial facilities to continue operating with very little disruption or downtime, and it ensures that the projects are completed in a safe, productive and cost-effective manner.

The NMAPC addresses several concerns of the partners in the program, including safety in all phases of work; no disruptions of the owner's work; performance on schedule; cost-effective and quality craftsmanship; productivity flexibility; a trained and available workforce; attainable work opportunities; and a resolution process for jobsite issues.

One of the main components of the NMAPC program is that it expressly forbids job disruptions of any kind. Unions that sign on to the agreement are prohibited from striking, picketing or engaging in slow-downs or other disruptive activities. Since the agreements are basically the same across the trades, it provides a level playing field since all of the various trades agree to the same terms and conditions.

Key differences of the NMA versus other maintenance agreements,

such as the General Presidents Maintenance Agreement (GPMA) or a standalone PLA, is that it is jointly controlled by an equal number of labor and management representatives through the Policy Committee. In addition, the NMA program is administered under a system of tripartite governance and cooperation, with owners, contractors and building trades craft workers sharing equally in the responsibilities and rewards generated by the program.

Future of the NMA

The NMAPC has not only refined the NMA—which was updated effective January 2012 to meet the demands of the current construction environment—but we are constantly developing ways to streamline all phases of the administrative process, making the agreement one of the most recommended and utilized in the industrial sector.

The NMA has been wildly successful in securing work: from its inception through the end of 2012, the NMA program has accounted for more than \$300 billion of work and more than 2 billion work-hours for building trades members and their contractors. The construction market has become increasingly competitive with the non-union rapidly encroaching on work historically performed by the union sector. The NMA has been an effective means of retaining this work. We will continue to support and promote the NMA as a critical tool in gaining market share for the benefit of our members and contractors. ■

Helmets to Hardhats Update

A reminder: please keep your local and/or apprenticeship program registered with the Helmets to Hardhats program. Our military veterans deserve an opportunity to become a member of our organization. You can go to helmetstohardhats.org to register. If you have any problems registering or other issues regarding the program, you may contact Lisa Ford at 202-756-4625. ■

Facts About Helmets to Hardhats

- ▶ Helmets to Hardhats is a national program that connects National Guard, Reserve and transitioning active-duty military members with quality career training and employment opportunities within the construction industry.
- ▶ The program is administered by the Center for Military Recruitment, Assessment, and Veterans Employment and headquartered in Washington, D.C.
- ▶ Direction for management of the center comes from a board of trustees comprised of equal numbers of employer and labor trustees.
- ▶ Candidates can access information about careers and apprenticeships via the Internet from anywhere in the world. The Helmets to Hardhats profile they complete helps communicate to hiring managers the transferable skills they acquired during their military service.

