

Statistics Show Overwhelming use of Non-Union Labor

A recent study by the Bureau of Labor shows that construction jobs comprise some 7 percent of the 108 million Americans employed outside government in the country's private sector. With a total employment level of 7.6 million, 6.5 million of the workers do not belong to unions, according to the study. That brings the non-unionized sector of the construction industry to 84 percent. The U.S. Bureau reported that last year, 12.4 percent of employed wage and salaried workers belonged to unions. That figure included government employees, who the bureau says, are five times more likely to belong to a union than private sector employees. Total employment in construction dropped by 10.6 percent between 2007 and 2008. The only two states with growth in construction employment were North Dakota and Louisiana.

Department of Labor Proposes Rule to Inform Employees of Right to Join Union

In August, the Department of Labor Office of Labor-Management Standards published a proposed rule for the implementation of Executive Order 13496. This order requires federal contractors and subcontractors to post a notice aimed at informing employees of their rights to join or not join a union. Executive Order 13496, signed by President Obama in January, repealed existing Executive Order 13201, often referred to as the "Beck Order," requiring contractors to inform employees of their right to refuse to pay union dues that would be spent on earmarks for non-collective bargaining activities, including politics and lobbying.

In addition to specifying the wording of the notice, the proposed regulations would require the notice be posted in a place where employees would be likely to see it, including on internal portions of company Web sites.

MURRAY BUILDING COMPLETES EPIC SCHOOL UPGRADES

Murray Building Company, Inc., completed major renovations to EPIC Elementary School ahead of schedule, allowing students and staff to occupy the building for the 2009-2010 school term. The project modernized the building, which was originally constructed in 1976, during a relatively short summer break. The school is attended by 395 students in kindergarten through 5th grade.

"I applaud Birmingham City Schools and their consultants for a well-designed and executed project that returned a large amount of value in a short time. We were proud to help make the investment, and were not prepared for the joy we saw on the faces of the students and staff when they returned."

—Daniel Murray, president, Murray Building Company

Murray Building Company was given 61 days to complete upgrades in some 80,000 square feet of building area. Volkert & Associates, Inc., the program manager for Birmingham City Schools, subsequently realized the need for a later start and faster completion to allow time for school property to be moved out before construction and moved back in after construction.



Creative scheduling allowed Murray to meet the tight deadline of the project.

Work included demolition and replacement flooring, new paint for the entire school, and replacement of existing lighting to upgrade the school to modern lighting standards. Glenn Slater, Program Manager for Volkert & Associates, Inc., said, "Contractor requests for changes were always substantiated by truly unforeseen or unaccounted for circumstances and were priced in a fair and equitable manner. Murray Building Company fulfilled their obligations by developing a tight schedule and adhering to it."