

JANUARY NEWSLETTER



NUCA
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

BUILDING SOUTHWEST FLORIDA
FROM THE GROUND DOWN





NUCA SWFL Installation of Officers & Membership Meeting—January 30th

F.T.B.A. Construction Conference—February 11th & 12th

NUCA SWFL Construction Day at the Ballpark—February 28th

NUCA SWFL Spring Clay Shoot—March 7th

NUCA National Convention @ Orlando—March 18th-21st

NUCA FL Legislative Days—March 31st-April 2nd

NUCA SWFL Member Social—April t.b.a.

NUCA FL ASJMSF Bass Fishing Tournament—May 1st—3rd

NUCA SWFL Fishing Tournament @ Tween Waters —May 2nd & 3rd

NUCA SWFL Membership Meeting—May/June t.b.a.

NUCA National Washington Summit—May 13th & 14th

NUCA SWFL Trade Show—June 19th (tentative)

NUCA SWFL Scholarship Awards—July 2025 t.b.a.

NUCA FL Annual Conference @ Ocean Reef, Key Largo—July 16th—July 19th

NUCA FL President's Cup @ Longboat Key—September 19th & 20th

NUCA SWFL Scholarship Golf Tournament—October 17th

NUCA SWFL Membership Meeting—November t.b.a.

NUCA SWFL Clay Shoot—December 5th

NUCA SWFL Holiday Social—December 11th

“Building Southwest Florida from the Ground Down”

HOPE4KIDS

Caring for SWFL Children



**Thank you members of NUCA of SWFL
for donating \$1500.00 in gift cards to
HOPE 4 KIDS this holiday season!**

RSVP!

Membership Meeting & Installation of Officers and Directors

Please join us for a membership meeting dinner

GUEST SPEAKERS: *Kari Hebrank and Lucas Parsons
(NUCA of FL's Advocacy Representatives)*

30th January 2025

KJ's Steakhouse Fort Myers, FL

Social - 5:30 to 6:00 pm

Dinner / Guest Speaker / Installation of Officers

6:00 - 8:00 pm

COST: \$57.00

RSVP [*nucaswfl@gmail.com*](mailto:nucaswfl@gmail.com)

or 239-939-1952



**JOIN US FOR OUR JANUARY MEMBERSHIP MEETING
AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS & DIRECTORS**

Florida 2025 Legislation & Regulatory Updates

GUEST SPEAKERS – NUCA of Florida’s Advocacy Representatives
Kari Hebrank, Senior Government Consultant
Lucas Parsons, Government Consultant

DATE: January 30th, 2025

PLACE: KJ’s Steakhouse , 10950 S Cleveland Ave. Fort Myers, FL

TIME: Social @ 5:30 pm, Meeting begins @ 6:00 pm

PRICE: \$57 per person , cash bar

Please RSVP in Advance

Email or Fax the names of those attending – nucaswfl@gmail.com Fax: 239-790-1369

Company: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Person (s) Attending: _____

Cailyn Finn, Executive Director Intern

Rhonda Cason, Executive Director

P. O. Box 62207, Fort Myers, FL 33906

Phone 239/939-1952, Fax 239/790-1369

“Building Southwest Florida From The Ground Down”

2025 Market Outlook

Commercial Auto Insurance

For much of the past decade, the commercial auto insurance market has been challenging for both insurers and insureds—a trend that's expected to continue into 2025. Various factors have led to difficult market conditions, including widespread driver shortages, nuclear verdict concerns, inflation issues and distracted driving challenges. Altogether, these cost-driving trends have pushed claims frequency and exacerbated overall loss severity. As a result, most insureds can expect to encounter ongoing premium hikes. Further, policyholders with sizeable fleets or poor loss history may be more susceptible to double-digit rate jumps, reduced capacity and possible coverage restrictions.

Developments and Trends to Watch

- **Nuclear verdict concerns**—The commercial auto sector is particularly susceptible to nuclear verdicts (e.g., extremely high jury awards) due to the serious nature of accidents involving large commercial vehicles like trucks. According to the American Transportation Research Institute, trucking verdicts have increased by more than 50% each year for the past decade, with nuclear verdicts in the sector doubling during this time frame. Due to the rise in nuclear verdicts, attorneys are more inclined to go to trial, which typically extends litigation and significantly raises the cost of defending a claim. The ongoing surge in nuclear verdicts has caused many commercial auto insurance carriers to either decrease their risk appetites and restrict coverage offerings or exit the market altogether.
- **Physical damage claims**—While the financial impact of an accident can vary based on the severity of a collision, steep repair costs continue to drive up the cost of claims overall. Technological advancements have made vehicles safer and more efficient. However, as commercial vehicles are outfitted with a variety of sophisticated components (e.g., backup cameras), they are becoming increasingly expensive to repair. According to a report from AAA, vehicles equipped with driver assistance systems often cost twice as much to repair as those that aren't. As such, losses associated with a collision are much more substantial, leading to rate increases and creating numerous challenges for insurers.
- **Driver shortages**—While an estimated 3.05 million truck drivers were employed in the United States in 2023, the American Trucking Associations (ATA) estimates a shortage of roughly 82,000 by the end of 2024. Further, the ATA anticipates that rising freight demand and an aging workforce could cause the driver shortage to skyrocket to 160,000 open positions by the end of the decade. To help minimize this shortage, many businesses have adjusted their driver recruitment and retention strategies and, in some cases, have had to lower their driver applicant standards to fill open positions. These drivers often have fewer years of experience and shorter driving records. Such factors can make these new employees more likely to be involved in accidents on the road, contributing to an increase in commercial auto losses and related claims.
- **Fleet electrification**—Electric vehicles (EVs) continue to gain traction in the U.S. auto market. By 2030, experts estimate there will be over 4 million EVs in U.S. fleets. However, EV adoption isn't without its share of challenges. In one Accenture survey, 35% of respondents cited high up-front costs and an unclear return on investment as challenges toward fleet electrification. That same survey found that 30% of respondents didn't currently have any EVs in their fleet. Infrastructure upgrades could also slow down EV initiatives for some fleets, as the change may require electrical system upgrades, specialized charging equipment and updates to the organization's IT systems. Further, because EVs tend to cost more than standard automobiles, their insurance rates are usually higher. However, other factors unique to EVs, like cyberthreats and battery problems, could also make insuring them costlier.

Tips for Insurance Buyers

- Examine your risk management practices relative to your fleet and drivers. Enhance your driver safety programs by implementing or modifying policies on safe driving.
- Design your driver training programs to fit your needs and your business's exposures. Establish effective onboarding and educational initiatives for new drivers. Regularly retrain drivers on safe driving techniques.
- Ensure you are hiring qualified drivers by using motor vehicle records (MVRs) to vet a driver's past experience and moving violations. Disqualify drivers with an unacceptable driving record. Review MVRs regularly to ensure that drivers maintain good driving records. Define the number and types of violations a driver can have before losing their driving privileges.
- Evaluate and integrate advanced vehicle technology solutions, such as telematics, GPS tracking and dash cameras, to bolster your current loss control practices.

Jonathan Brooke

Vice President – Sales Producer
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11215 Metro Pkwy | Bldg 1,
Suite 4 Fort Myers, FL 33966



A Foundation Risk Partners Company

NUCA

REPRESENTING UTILITY & EXCAVATION CONTRACTORS
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

LEE HEALTH SPORTS COMPLEX CONSTRUCTION DAY AT THE BALLPARK

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28
AT 1:05 PM

Twins

VS

*Orioles*TM

**SECTION 128 "THE PORCH"
TICKETS - \$18 EACH**

**PURCHASE TICKETS WITH
RHONDA & CAILYN
EMAIL: NUCASWFL@GMAIL.COM
PHONE: 239-939-1952**

Southwest Florida **Safety** **Council, Inc.**

Temporary Traffic Control (IMOT) 16 hr. Class on February 4, 2025 & February 5, 2025.

Temporary Traffic Control (IMOT) 8 hr. Refresher on February 6, 2025.

Both classes run 8 AM to 5 PM each day at our location, 1714 Evans Avenue in Fort Myers. Registration will be open until January 24, 2025. Payment can be taken prior to the class date.

CONTACT SOUTHWEST FLORIDA SAFETY COUNCIL 239-479-4904.

TTC 
TEMPORARY
TRAFFIC CONTROL
16hr Intermediate
NEXT CLASS
FEB 4th & 5th 2025
Southwest Florida Safety Council
1714 Evans Ave. Fort Myers FL 33901
CALL for INFO:
239-479-4904




Non-Member \$375 / Member \$350 per Student

TTC 
TEMPORARY
TRAFFIC CONTROL
8hr Intermediate
REFRESHER
NEXT CLASS
FEB 6 2025
Southwest Florida Safety Council
1714 Evans Ave. Fort Myers FL 33901
CALL for INFO:
239-479-4904




Non-Member \$250 / Member \$200 per Student



NUCA of SWFL's SPRING CLAY SHOOT @ BERMONT SHOOTING CLUB

**FRIDAY
MARCH 7**

- 50 targets/person
- Carts Available
- Lunch and Beverages
- Awards and Raffles
- Rentals Guns

(CALL Bermont Shooting Club TO RESERVE)

40571 BERMONT RD. PUNTA GORDA, FL

Registration = 8:00 am

Safety Talk = 8:30 am

Shotgun Start = 9:00 am

REGISTRATION FEE

\$500
MEMBER TEAM

\$650
NON MEMBER TEAM

**TO REGISTER
CONTACT RHONDA AND CAILYN**

NUCASWFL@GMAIL.COM

239-939-1952





2025 Spring Clay Shoot Sponsorship Form
March 7th, 2025

Company: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Authorized Representative _____

Donations Are Appreciated: Hats, koozies, gift certificates, raffle prizes, door prizes, etc.

SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

Breakfast Sponsor @ \$250.00 EACH _____

Lunch Sponsor @ \$500.00 EACH _____

Beverage Sponsor @ \$500.00 EACH _____

Cart Sponsor (1) @ \$1,000.00 _____

Shooting Stand Sponsor @ \$200.00 EACH _____

Challenge Bird Contest @ \$200.00 _____

Green Bird Contest @ \$200.00 _____

Raffle Sponsor @ \$100.00 EACH _____

Awards Sponsor @\$100.00 EACH _____

TOTAL SPONSORSHIP AMOUNT \$ _____



NUCA of Southwest Florida

P. O. Box 62207, Fort Myers, FL 33906

Email to: nucaswfl@gmail.com

Friday, March 7th, 2025

40571 Bermont Rd, Punta Gorda, FL 33982

Registration: 8:00 A.M.

Safety Talk: 8:30 A.M.

Shotgun Start: 9:00 A.M.

NUCA SWFL MEMBER COST: \$500 per (4) Person

Team NON-MEMBER COST \$650 per (4) person Team
(includes 50 targets, golf cart, lunch, beverages and awards)

(Ammunition is not included)

Clay Shoot Rules & Info

- ◆ Liability Waiver Required
- ◆ Shotgun must have a barrel length minimum of 20 inches
- ◆ Safety meeting is mandatory
- ◆ Training available
(appt. required) \$150/hour
- ◆ Tie Breaker—1 person from the tied teams shoot off
- ◆ Rental Guns Available **-CALL BERMONT SHOOTING CLUB TO RESERVE**



Bermont Shooting Club Inc.
Sporting Clays, 5 Stand, Clays, Trap, 3D Archery Course

Team Entry Form: NOTE: Carts are issued first come basis, you may bring your own.

Contact: _____ **Company:** _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Name of Shooters:

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

****Please designate any shooters 16 years or under** **Must have one experienced shooter on each**

team** _____ **NUCA Member Team of 4—\$500** _____ **Individual Shooter \$125**

_____ **Non NUCA -Member Team of 4-\$650** _____ **Individual Shooter \$165**

_____ **Challenge Bird Contest—\$5 per shot**

_____ **Green Bird Contest 5-Shots—\$25 (two stations)**

_____ **Raffle Basket Tickets (5) for—\$10**

Total Amount Due \$ _____

RETURN FORM STO: Rhonda Cason, E.D. and Cailyn Finn Intern E.D.
NUCA of Southwest Florida, P. O. Box 62207, Fort Myers, FL 33906

nucaswfl@gmail.com

LET'S CATCH UP ON NUCA NEWS!



AND



Worker rescued from trench collapse in Fla.

First responders faced a challenging rescue when a trench wall collapse injured a construction worker in St. Johns County, Fla. The worker's leg was trapped, requiring paramedics Lance Robinson and Greg Kelly to maneuver for an hour within the unstable and slippery trench to extract him safely.

Full Story: [WTLV-TV/WJXX-TV \(Jacksonville, Fla.\) \(12/30\)](#)

OSHA to raise civil penalties 2.6%

OSHA will raise civil penalties by about 2.6% on Jan. 15, as required by the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015. OSHA's maximum penalty for willful or repeat violations will increase to \$165,514

Trench-related fatalities down 70% from 2022 numbers

Trench-related fatalities have decreased 70% from the total from 2022, according to preliminary OSHA data, highlighting the success of safety initiatives such as the Safe

Trenching and Excavation Operations Alliance. "While CGA and our fellow members of the Safe Trenching Alliance have made significant progress in reducing fatalities through education and outreach, our work isn't complete until we reach zero preventable tragedies," says Sarah Magruder Lyle, president and CEO of the Common Ground Alliance.

Full Story: [Utility Contractor](#) (12/9)

Join NUCA's National Equipment Operator Championship at the 2025 Convention

New in 2025, NUCA is hosting a National Equipment Operator Championship on March 20, in conjunction with NUCA 2025 National Convention in Orlando, Florida! Does your crew have what it takes to be crowned the first-ever NUCA National Champion? Take advantage of our annual membership event to improve your contracting business and network with fellow industry professionals at a relaxing and warm Florida resort. Register today at nucadigs.com! A special thanks to our National Equipment Operator Championship sponsor U.S. Pipe.

5 ways Trump could impact infrastructure construction in 2025

The incoming administration promises new policies that could affect permits, materials, labor and project funding. [CLICK HERE FOR THE FULL STORY](#)

Construction pros discuss upcoming administration



(NurPhoto/Getty Images)

The construction industry is preparing for regulatory changes under the incoming presidential administration, and construction professionals expect many of them will be positive for the sector.

Such changes could include speeding up preconstruction environmental reviews and rescinding OSHA's proposed heat safety rule.

Sewer, drainage lead growth in HDPE pipe market

The high-density polyethylene pipes market is expected to surpass \$25 billion by 2029, driven by a 5.3% compound annual growth rate, according to a MarketsandMarkets report. Sewer and drainage infrastructure is the fastest-growing segment due to urbanization and the need for efficient wastewater management.

Full Story: [Underground Infrastructure](#) (1/2025)

IRS INCREASES STANDARD MILEAGE RATE FOR BUSINESS USE

The IRS today increased the optional standard mileage for automobiles driven for business by 3 cents for 2025, while the mileage rates for vehicles used for other purposes will remain unchanged from 2024. Optional standard mileage rates are used to calculate the deductible costs of operating vehicles for business, charitable and medical purposes, as well as for active-duty members of the Armed Forces who are moving. Beginning Jan. 1, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car, van, pickup or panel truck will be 70 cents per mile driven for business use and 21 cents per mile driven for medical purposes, the same as in 2024. The rate per mile driven for moving purposes for qualified active-duty members of the Armed Forces is 21 cents, unchanged from 2024. The rate per mile driven in service of charitable organizations is 14 cents, equal to the rate in 2024. The rates apply to fully electric and hybrid automobiles, as well as gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles.

Junior Achievement of Southwest Florida receives \$40K grant

Junior Achievement of Southwest Florida received a \$40,000 grant from the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation to help prepare middle and high school students in the region for the workforce. Junior Achievement connects students from both public and private schools with local business professionals who serve as role models. These professionals teach practical lessons and inspire students by sharing their real-world experiences. They guide young people toward success by highlighting the importance of education and essential life skills.

NUCA names new safety director

Board-certified construction health and safety technician Edward DeNeale has been named NUCA's new director of safety programs. "Ed has the industry experience, leadership, and conviction needed to maintain our industry's extremely high standards for safety," said CEO Doug Carlson.

Full Story: [Construction Briefing \(12/17\)](#)

Governor appoints Naples resident, 7 others to Construction Industry Licensing Board

Naples resident Steve Richmond was among eight appointments and reappointments to the Florida Construction Industry Licensing Board by Gov. Ron DeSantis. Richmond is the founder of Projetech Inc., a provider of cloud-based solutions and services for IBM Maximo. The author of "Working SMART" and member of Forbes Technology Council was appointed alongside Nick Burgess, executive director for AdventHealth Pasco County Foundations, and Wayne Mayo, president and founder of Southern Standard Construction LLC. DeSantis' reappointments to the board were Donald Cesarone, CEO of Lucas Lagoons Construction LLC; Jonathan Cook, vice president of CINCH Underground Inc.; LaBelle resident Fred Kobie, president of Kobie Kooling Inc.; Rachele Wood, president and contractor for Dolphin Sheet Metal Inc.; and Brian Zettle, partner and consultant at Boyette Zettle LLC. These appointments are subject to confirmation by the Florida Senate.

2024 NUCA Webinar Wednesdays Available On YouTube

If you were out on a jobsite and missed any of our 2024 webinars, they are now available on NUCA's YouTube channel. Our most recent webinar presented by NUCA National Partner Tenna, "[Enhancing Construction Safety: Leveraging AI and Dash Cameras For Safer Operations](#)" (Dec. 11), discusses construction-focused AI technologies that address safety issues and reduce risk. This webinar focused on the latest in AI safety cameras used to detect common distracted driving behavior and alert drivers in real time. You can find this and our other past webinars on our [YouTube channel](#).

Register Today



NUCA

2025 National Convention

Orlando, FL

March 18–21, 2025 | Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress

Where Contractors Meet!

NUCA's annual member extravaganza is your gateway to unlocking new business opportunities, expanding your professional network, and gaining cutting-edge industry insights.

Our 2025 National Convention is built to be the utility contractor's best-in-class business and networking experience. Stay ahead of the curve with sessions and meetings featuring industry experts who'll share the latest products, trends, technologies, and regulatory updates. Our popular industry social events return, and we'll cheer on the winner of the first-ever National Equipment Operator Championship!

Enjoy the perfect blend of business and pleasure at the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress. With its world-class amenities and proximity to Orlando's top family attractions, this venue offers a unique experience for both you and your guests.

Register today and join us in Orlando in March 2025 to imagine the possibilities ahead for your construction business.



2025 Keynote Speaker

JASON REDMAN

(Retired) Navy SEAL

Sponsored by Core & Main



Join Us For NUCA's Premier Event!

- National Partner Networking Events
- Inaugural National Equipment Operator Championship
- Silent Auction & Raffle
- Member & Chapter Excellence Awards
- Industry Committee Meetings
- Profit Pipeline Roundtables
- Educational Sessions on Business, Workforce, Technology & Politics
- Inspiring Speakers, Social and Team Events, And So Much More!

Registration is now open!
For more information visit

NUCAadigs.com

#NUCA2025



NUCA 2025 NATIONAL CONVENTION ATTENDEE REGISTRATION FORM

March 18 - 21, 2025 | Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress Spa & Resort | Orlando, FL

THANK YOU TO OUR NUCA NATIONAL PARTNERS!

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Company Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

1. Registrant _____ Title _____ Email _____

2. Registrant _____ Title _____ Email _____

3. Registrant _____ Title _____ Email _____

4. Registrant _____ Title _____ Email _____

Spouse/Guest Names _____

Please select: Member Non-Member Press How did you hear about the event? _____

Is this your first NUCA Annual Meeting? Yes No

REGISTRATION FEES

<u>REGISTRATION DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>EARLY BIRD CONTRACTOR RATE</u>	<u>EARLY BIRD MEMBER RATE</u>	<u>NON MEMBER RATE</u>	<u>TICKETED EVENTS</u>	<u>QTY</u>
FULL MEETING REGISTRATION - INCLUDES ALL EVENTS	\$765	\$875	\$1500		
MARCH 19 DAY PASS	\$475	\$525	\$525		
MARCH 20 DAY PASS	\$475	\$525	\$525		
MARCH 21 DAY PASS	\$475	\$525	\$525		
KEYNOTE SPEAKER & WELCOME RECEPTION - MARCH 19				\$250	
AWARDS BREAKFAST & ANNUAL MEETING- MARCH 20				\$150	
AWARDS DINNER - MARCH 20				\$255	
NATIONAL EQUIPMENT OPERATOR CHAMPIONSHIP MARCH 20				\$50	
TEAM BUILDING EVENT- MARCH 21				\$150	
CLOSING NIGHT CELEBRATION - MARCH 21				\$250	
EARLY BIRD RATE IS VALID UNTIL DEC 2, 2024. RATES INCREASE TO \$1095 FOR ALL MEMBERS				TOTAL DUE:	\$_____

Full payment must accompany this registration. Email completed registration form to lauren@nuca.com

Check

Check payable to NUCA
Mail to: NUCA Convention
3925 Chain Bridge Road, Ste 300
Fairfax, VA 22030



Email form with credit card payment to: lauren@nuca.com

Credit Card Number _____

Expiration _____ CID _____ Billing Zip Code _____

Name as it appears on the card _____

Cardholder Signature _____

IMPORTANT: Registration fees will not be refunded for any cancelations or no-shows. Attendee substitutions are accepted in writing and can be sent to NUCA office (nuca@nuca.com) by February 20, 2025. Questions? Contact Catie Amsden at catie@nuca.com.

LEGISLATIVE DAYS 2025



Support our Advocacy efforts
& sponsor NUCA FL's 2025
Legislative Days.

Platinum.....	\$2500
Diamond.....	\$2000
Gold	\$1500
Silver.....	\$1000
Bronze.....	\$500
Copper.....	\$250
Advocacy Friend.....	\$150

The 2025 Legislative Session kicks off this next year on March 4th. NUCA of Florida is hosting Legislative Days April 1-2, 2025, at A/C Marriott. On April 1st, attendees will gather for a Breakfast Legislative Briefing from 8 a.m. -10 a.m. Members will then “walk the halls” and meet one-on-one with legislators at the Capitol. Industry- specific bills covering fire suppression, development, construction practices, crane regulations, & licensure are all on the table. In the evening, we’ll gather with lawmakers for a cocktail reception. On April 2nd, the Executive Committee begins at 8:30 a.m. and the Board of Directors convenes at 10:30 a.m. Join us in Tallahassee to advocate for the underground utility industry!

[TO REGISTER & SPONSOR
CLICK HERE](#)

[TO BOOK HOTEL STAY
CLICK HERE](#)



Regulatory Update

On Friday, December 20, 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) made a controversial announcement approving the use of phosphogypsum in a road project in Polk County, Florida. Phosphogypsum is a radioactive byproduct of the phosphate industry that is normally stored in large stacks. The EPA approved a proposal from Mosaic Fertilizer, LLC, a subsidiary of The Mosaic Company, to use the materials in a road project on the company's property. Environmental Groups are opposed to the announcement, citing potential risks to human health, as well as water quality and other environmental concerns. In its announcement, the EPA acknowledged the large amount of opposition, but concluded that the project would be safe and confined to this particular project.

Following the 2023 legislative session, Governor DeSantis signed a bill authorizing the FDOT to conduct a study to evaluate the suitability of using phosphogypsum as a construction aggregate material. The bill further authorized the use of phosphogypsum from phosphate production as a construction aggregate material in accordance with the conditions of the EPA's approval for such use. We will monitor the pilot program closely and will provide updates on this controversial topic.

Please contact Kari with your thoughts on this section at 850-566-7824 or email Khebrank@carttonfields.com.

Florida Democrats Switch Parties

The Republican Party has increased its supermajority in the Florida House of Representatives after two lawmakers switched their party affiliation from Democrat to Republican. Following the switch of Representative Susan Valdes (R-Tampa) earlier this month, Representative Hillary Cassel (R-Dania Beach) announced on X last week that she, too, would be switching political parties before the 2025 legislative session, citing the Democratic Party's inability to "relate to everyday Floridians."

Florida Republicans already returned a supermajority back to both chambers of the legislature during the November elections, holding a 28-12 advantage in the Senate and 85-35 advantage over Democrats in the House of Representatives; With the two additional seats in the Florida House, the Republican supermajority has increased to 87 members of the 120 seats in the lower chamber. With over two-thirds of the seats in both chambers, Republicans enjoy immense powers, such as, overriding gubernatorial vetoes, fast-tracking controversial bills by waiving procedural rules, and imposing mandates on local governments.

Minimum Wage Increase

Florida's minimum wage is set to increase this year in accordance with the 2020 constitutional amendment voters passed. In November 2020, the citizens of Florida voted to pass a constitutional amendment that created a schedule of raises to the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2026. This September, the minimum wage will increase to \$14 for non-tipped workers and \$10.98 for tipped workers before increases again next year to \$15 and \$11.98 for the respective groups [Read More Here](#)

Governor DeSantis Announces Funding For Everglades Restoration & Statewide Water Projects

The Governor on Thursday announced \$805 million in Everglades restoration funding and statewide water quality projects to be included in this year's upcoming state budget and is requesting authority from President-elect Trump over federal funding for the Everglades restoration projects. The Governor also called for a congressional block grant to expedite the Everglades Agricultural Area Reservoir construction. In 2019, Governor DeSantis called for \$2.5 billion to be invested over four years for Everglades restoration and water quality. The Governor surpassed that goal by securing over \$3.3 billion during his first term. In 2023, Governor DeSantis reinforced his commitment in his second term by calling for a historic \$3.5 billion investment for Everglades restoration and protection of water resources.

Legislative Update

With Floridian lawmakers back in Tallahassee for the first interim committee weeks this month, the NUCA FL Advocacy Team has been back at the capitol on behalf of the association. Along with the many incoming freshman legislators, we have been meeting with potential bill sponsors for our legislative initiatives for the 2025 legislative session. Last week, we met with Representative Judson Sapp (R-Green Cove Springs) and Senator Clay Yarborough (R-Jacksonville) in hopes of having them sponsor our bill expanding the scope of the Underground Utility and Excavation Contractor to include the duties of a Contractor V. We had robust discussions with both lawmakers and are confident they will sponsor our effort. We also met with Senator Johnathan Martin (R-Fort Myers) as a potential backup sponsor. As you'll recall, Senator Martin spoke at our summer conference in Bonita Springs and is a good friend to NUCA FL. Along with potential bill sponsors, another good friend of NUCA FL, Minority (Democrat) Leader Senator Jason Pizzo (D-Hollywood), was also very receptive and supportive of the issue. The meetings with legislators also involved a discussion regarding Sunshine 811 enforcement and potential solutions. Lastly, we have met with Senate Community Affairs Committee staff, the House State Affairs Committee staff and will meet next with the House Commerce Committee staff to make them aware of our initiatives that will come to their committees. As always, we will continue to keep you updated on our advocacy efforts.

2025 Legislative Priorities

Utility Contractor Scope Expansion-As stated above, one of our 2025 legislative initiatives will be to expand the scope of the utility contractor to include the duties of a Contractor V. This will streamline construction projects allowing for more efficiency in the industry.

Sunshine 811 Enforcement- Currently, Florida is one of only three US states that do not have a dedicated body of enforcement to determine fault when on-site accidents happen. We recently spoke with the lobbyist for Sunshine 811, Chris Lyons, who indicated that they, too, are looking to introduce a bill that would provide for better enforcement in these instances. We will work together to identify possible solutions for this problem.

Contractor Fraud- One initiative of the construction coalition this year is to reign in contractor fraud and unlicensed activity by introducing legislation to increase the penalties for both infractions.

Mitigation Banking- As Florida continues to grow, some of our basins are running out of mitigation credits for developers and are expected to run out in the next few years. Unlike Florida, the Army Corps of Engineers allows mitigation credits to be purchased from adjacent basins when a basin no longer has available credits. We will seek to align the state process with the federal process to allow for mitigation credits in areas depleted of credits to be purchased from surrounding basins.

Impact Fees-Currently, local governments are only allowed to increase impact fees by 12.5% each year unless they are experiencing "extraordinary circumstances." However, "extraordinary circumstances" was never defined in the Florida Statutes, and local governments have been abusing the term and increasing impact fees arbitrarily. Along with other interested parties, we will be seeking to define "extraordinary circumstances" in order to limit the exception from being abused by local governments.

Pool Contractor Scope Expansion-The Swimming Pool Association is seeking to expand the scope of swimming pool contractors, both commercial and residential, to allow pool contractors to include the duties of other licensed contractors. Along with other groups, we will oppose such legislation to ensure our scope as excavation contractors is not encroached upon.



**NUCA OF SOUTHWEST
FLORIDA'S
ANNUAL FISHING
TOURNAMENT
2025**

**TWEEN WATERS ISLAND RESORT AND SPA
CAPTIVA, FL
MAY 2ND-3RD, 2025**

**CALL 1-800-223-5865
TO BOOK YOUR ROOM NOW!
ASK FOR MARISSA SAVARD**

NUCA of Southwest Florida Annual Fishing Tournament 2025 Sponsorship Form

MAY 2nd & 3rd, 2025 TWEEN WATERS INN—CAPTIVA ISLAND

Each year the fishing tournament committee solicits members and companies affiliated with the underground utility and excavation industry to assist with sponsoring this event. Sponsors help with the cost of providing an affordable tournament for members and guests. Sponsors are acknowledged throughout the weekend. Sponsors receive recognition in the NUCA of SWFL newsletter, website, NUCA FL Ditchmen, video presentation and table signs.

Thank you in advance for your support!!

DESCRIPTION	COST	#SPONSORSHIPS REQUESTED	TOTAL
DIAMOND SPONSOR	\$3,500	ONLY 1	= \$3,500
PLATINUM SPONSORS	\$2,000	X	= \$ _____
GOLD SPONSORS	\$1,300	X	= \$ _____
MAJOR SPONSORS	\$1,000	X	= \$ _____
COCKTAIL PARTY SPONSORS	\$500	X	= \$ _____
LONGEST FISH INSHORE (REDFISH, TROUT & SNOOK)	\$250	X	= \$ _____
REDFISH MOST SPOTS (LEGAL)	\$250	X	= \$ _____
HEAVIEST FISH OFFSHORE (GROUPER & SNAPPER)	\$250	X	= \$ _____
JR. ANGLER HEAVIEST FISH	\$250	X	= \$ _____
JR. ANGLER MOST FISH	\$250	X	= \$ _____

Company _____ **Signature** _____

Sponsorship form must be received in advance to guarantee sponsorship. Please mark appropriate items above and send completed form to Rhonda Cason at NUCASWFL@gmail.com or 239-790-1369 (fax). If paying by check, please make payable to NUCA of Southwest Florida and send to P.O. Box 62207 Fort Myers, FL 33906. Sponsorships need to be received no later than April 7th.
Please note: If payment by credit card is preferred, a 3% processing fee will be added to the total.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE NUCA OF SWFL ANNUAL FISHING TOURNAMENT ENTER AT THEIR OWN RISK. OFFICIALS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS, SOUTH SEAS RESORT PERSONNEL, AND ALL PERSONS CONNECTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY WITH SOUTHWEST FLORIDA UTILITY CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION D/B/A NUCA OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA, SHALL BE EXEMPT FROM ANY LIABILITY FOR LOSS, DAMAGE, NEGLIGENCE, HARM OR INJURY SUFFERED BY ANY PARTICIPANT, ENTRANT, SPORT FISHERMAN, THEIR COMPANIONS, BOAT CAPTAINS, AND CREW MEMBERS, VESSELS AND EQUIPMENT, WHICH MAY OCCUR DURING THIS TOURNAMENT.

2025 NUCA of Southwest Florida Fishing Tournament Registration Form

MAY 2ND & MAY 3RD, 2025

TWEEN WATERS INN—CAPTIVA ISLAND

ALL ANGLERS, JR. ANGLERS, GUESTS, & CHILDREN MUST BE REGISTERED IN ADVANCE

Angler Registration / Shirt Size

List Names

(List Calcutta Information on Separate Registration Form)

Jr. Angler Registration / Shirt Size

Must Be 14 Years Old or Younger

(Jr. Anglers Are Eligible For the Calcutta)

Charge \$330.00 Each Total Anglers: _____

Charge \$60.00 Each Total Jr. Anglers: _____

Guest Registration / Shirt Size

List Names (Other Than Anglers)

Child Registration / Age / Shirt Size

List Names (Other Than Jr. Anglers)

Charge \$225.00 Each Total Guests: _____

Charge \$30.00 Each Total Children: _____

Single Night Registration \$175.00 per person _____

Total Anglers @ \$330 each = \$ _____

Total Jr. Anglers @ \$60 each = \$ _____

Total Guests @ \$225 each = \$ _____

Total Children @ \$30 each = \$ _____

Total Calcutta @ \$50 each = \$ _____

(Total from Calcutta Form)

**Single Night Guest @ \$175 each = \$ _____

Grand Total = \$ _____ Check # _____

Single night registration for Friday May 2nd or Saturday May 3rd, advise which night. **Registration form must be received in advance to guarantee reservations by April 7th, registrations received after the deadline date will be assessed a \$100.00 late fee.** Please send completed form to Rhonda Cason at NUCASWFL@gmail.com or 239-790-1369 (fax). If paying by check, please make payable to NUCA of SWFL and send to P.O. Box 62207 Fort Myers, FL 33906. **Please note** payments are accepted by check, cash or credit card. **If payment by credit card is preferred, a 3% processing fee will be added to the total.**

Thank you! We look forward to seeing you at Tween Waters!

PARTICIPANTS IN THE NUCA OF SWFL ANNUAL FISHING TOURNAMENT ENTER AT THEIR OWN RISK. OFFICIALS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS, TWEEN WATERS INN PERSONNEL, AND ALL PERSONS CONNECTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY WITH SOUTHWEST FLORIDA UTILITY CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION D/B/A NUCA OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA, SHALL BE EXEMPT FROM ANY LIABILITY FOR LOSS, DAMAGE, NEGLIGENCE, HARM OR INJURY SUFFERED BY ANY PARTICIPANT, ENTRANT, SPORT FISHERMAN, THEIR COMPANIONS, BOAT CAPTAINS, AND CREW MEMBERS, VESSELS AND EQUIPMENT, WHICH MAY OCCUR DURING THIS TOURNAMENT.

Company: _____

Contact: _____ **Phone #:** _____

Signature _____



Board of Directors – 2024

OFFICERS

President	Cheryl Ricciardi – Andrew Sitework
President Elect	Aaron Hunt-Branch – Guymann Construction
Vice President	Trevor Reese – B C Underground
Secretary	Russell Tripp – Rinker Materials
Treasurer	Jerry Haas – Honorary Director / Treasurer
Past President	Dustin Gibson – Denco Construction

DIRECTORS



Brian Balsley – Core & Main
Brian Brandfass – Andrew Sitework
Butch Moore – Ferguson Waterworks
Chris Stewart – Flygt a Xylem Brand
Dominick Stefanacci – Quality Precast Solutions
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Kenny Cabana – Cabana Construction
Mike McDonnell – Quality Precast Solutions
Mitchell Penner – Mitchell & Stark Construction
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Scott Anderson
Scott Ferrell – BC Underground

"Building Southwest Florida From The Ground Down"

NUCA OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Advertising Opportunity

BUSINESS CARD SIZE AD (1/4 page) ~~~~ \$150.00

BUSINESS CARD X2 (1/2 PAGE) ~~~~ \$250.00

FULL PAGE ~~~~ \$350.00

Pricing is for 1 full year of advertising on the website and newsletter

Over 100 Electronic Newsletters are sent out semi-monthly to contractors, associates, and affiliates in our industry.

If you would like to place an ad, email your ad in jpeg format and email to: NUCASWFL@gmail.com

Please complete the following

Member Company Name:

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please mail payment to:

NUCA of Southwest Florida

P. O. Box 62207, Fort Myers, FL 33906

If payment preference is by credit card please request an authorization form.



FOLLOW US!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE



Thank you Members and Sponsors for Your Support!

Working Together For The Betterment Of Our Industry.

**NUCA of Southwest Florida
Southwest Florida Chapter of the
National Utility Contractors Association
P. O. Box 62207
Fort Myers, FL 33906
Phone: 239-939-1952
Fax: 239-790-1369**