

The *Electrical* **CONTACTOR**

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA
ASSOCIATION OF ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

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SPRING 2009



GPS *Help Drive Profits*

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- › FAEC Central Florida Chapter Report
- › Preparing for a Pandemic Is Serious Business



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With summer quickly approaching, we are busy with plans for the fall educational symposium along with several new programs being implemented by the Board of Directors. First, we are very excited about a new Professional Development Committee that has been put into place and, as its' name implies, the sole purpose of this new committee is to help create educational program opportunities for you and your employees along with a new Monthly Technical Bulletin management tool that will be e-mailed to members only each month. The bulletin will contact all sorts of management tool "tidbits" that you can share with your staff. There will be code articles, business management tips, technical information, etc.—anything our members wish to share with industry will be in these bulletins. At the end of each year, along with a dues renewal notice, will be a CD with the entire year's Bulletins on it. Print them out, store them in a binder, reproduce them for staff reference; do what you wish with them but, by all means, USE THEM!

Next on our list is additional continuing education program for journeymen electricians. While we know you are all very slow now and not sending anyone to class, we do anticipate that things will change, hopefully, in the near future. We hope by the end of this year, early 2010, you will begin seeing a "turn-around" in construction here in Florida. We expect the housing market to slowly revitalize itself, new commercial projects being let for bid and work improving all around Florida.

I would be remiss if I didn't update those of you who were not at the April 1st Educational Symposium. It was very well received, had a very good attendance and I actually had the opportunity to see and meet several members I had never had the pleasure of meeting in the past. Classes were excellent – special thanks to our friends at Rams/RPG for their participation. Tom Bristoll was on hand from Rams who not only taught several great safety programs, but those members who did attend was given several safety manuals, CD's on Safety, multiple hand-outs, etc. If you missed these classes, you definitely missed out! Again, thanks to Tom and Rams for their help

This fall we will be adding several new classes to our line-up and the Symposium will be held at the Peabody Hotel here in Orlando. Original plans to head to New Orleans were cancelled due to the current poor economic conditions. We felt it best to stay "close to home" for members who might not be able to travel this year. So, we've begun working on classes and will be holding our first series of journeyman classes at the conference. We will be doing an OSHA 10 and an OSHA 30 in a separate certification session. Call me at the office if you want to send your employees to class.

We are also considering "on-line" programs for those of our members who seem to be unable to attend classes for one reason or another. Our initial investigation into this indicates that this will be a very costly endeavor but, we will be looking into it just the same. We'll keep you posted on how we proceed.

I'm sure you've received your session's end Legislative Alert last week. Some good things happened but, so not so great also. Worker's Comp seems to have been repaired – for now at least. Journeyman licensing was defeated but this turned out to be a good

move considering the changes and amendments the bill took along its way. FAEC and our members have always supported Journeyman Licensing; we support continuing education for our journeymen but, we DO NOT support any type of ratios related to journeyman to apprentice. We support apprentice training throughout the state. We just don't want ratios tied into any bill we support before the Legislature. While this issue continues to be a strong issue for FAEC, we will only support a bill that is good for our members. This year's legislation also had the 50,000 square foot requirement eliminated, which meant all jobs needed journeymen, regardless of size. While we will continue to watch this issue and hope for the best for industry, we will be watchful of any proposed detriments to our members.

Last, but certainly not least, I want to thank those of our members who have made great attempts to keep their membership status current in this terrible business climate. We've seen many associations, statewide, go out of business due to a serious drop in membership and dues payments. While we did seem more members go out of business this year than any previous year, our numbers are still holding and

I want to thank those of our members who have made great attempts to keep their membership status current in this terrible business climate.

new members are being solicited each year. If you wish to help your association, bring in a new member. If each current member brought in just one new member, we would double our numbers in a month! Wouldn't that be wonderful! This is your association; I urge you all to get involved. We will be sending out flyers asking for committee volunteers to help with some new plans and programs we've got coming up. I hope you offer to help. We can only be as successful as you help us to be.

I look forward to seeing many of you in October at the Peabody for the Educational Symposium and please take a moment to review the photos from the April 1st event.

JANICE FICAROTTO

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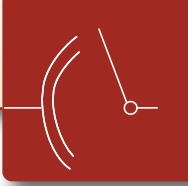
- A Voice in the Legislative Process through a full-time lobbyist in Tallahassee.
- An Annual "Spring Conference" & "Fall Convention" offering Continuing Education classes relative to license renewal.
- The official publication of FAEC – The "Contractor" bringing you up-to-date on association information and industry news.
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FAEC April 1 *Symposium*





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FAEC April 1 *Symposium*



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— Employee Free Choice Act —

March 30, 2009

Dear Senator/Representative:

I ask that you NOT support any part of the so-called Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA). The proposed legislation would not help employees. It would inflict irreparable harm on American businesses, large and small, at a time when our economy has already suffered catastrophic damage.

“Employee Free Choice Act” is misleading. Employees already have free choice in matters of union representation. They have it because, after hearing from the union and the employer, they vote the union in (or out) in a secret-ballot election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board.

It is a lie that employers coerce employees into opposing unions. Since voting is secret, that would be almost impossible. Employers campaign against union organization of their workforces by presenting to their employees facts about collective bargaining. Employers emphasize the facts that, under the law, neither party in collective bargaining has to agree to a proposal which it believes to be against its best interest; that no one can predict the end result of bargaining; and that the result can be worse (or better) than the preexisting status quo. The only way a union can force an employer to agree to its proposals is to call the employees out on strike. Strikes are expensive for employees, because they do not receive pay, and often costly to employers, but cost unions and their paid representatives nothing. Employers remind employees

that unions charge employees dues and assessments (and that unions sometimes make life in the workplace hard for non-payers). Employers point out instances of corruption and violence associated with unions. Unions consider the making of all of the foregoing arguments to be coercion, despite the fact that they are made publicly with full opportunity for the union to respond.

To organize employees, unions promise things they cannot deliver. No party to negotiations can predict, let alone promise, what the other party will agree to. Collective bargaining can go either way, resulting in a deal more favorable or less favorable to the employees. Unions don't want employees to hear that. They try to sell the story that union representation benefits workers. If that were so, why has union membership been in a steep decline for so many years?

What really happens in an organizational effort? It is unheard of for a union to file for an election without having a strong card majority, although 30% is all that is required. If the union has a valid message, and if the employer has acted abusively, the union majority may hold up through the election. The reason employers win so many elections is not that they coerce those who vote in secret: it is that the workers decide, based on facts, that union representation won't help them.

You have just read everything you need to know about the most publicized aspect of the EFCA, the deprivation of a secret ballot election in favor of forced recognition of a union based on cards signed without the employer's knowledge. That, however, is not the worst part. Section 8(d) of the National Labor Relations Act provides that the obligation to bargain “does not compel either party to agree to a proposal or require the making of a concession.” That is in keeping with the constitutional right of freedom of contract. All that is required by law is that each party bargain in good faith with a sincere desire to reach an agreement. The EFCA would change that. It provides that after 120 days of collective bargaining, if no agreement has been reached, a federal arbitrator would impose an agreement. That's right, a federal official would dictate the agreement between a private business and a labor union. We are not living in Russia or Cuba: this is America. Our Constitution provides for freedom of contract. It is outrageous for Congress to even consider a law which would allow the federal government to dictate the terms of a contract between private parties. Apart from the fact that government-forced imposition of a contract is un-American, it is open to abuse. All a union would have to do to get a contract satisfactory to it would be to commence bargaining by proposing things which are excessive. The federal arbitrator would then impose a “compromise” somewhere in the middle.

Accordingly, “Card Check” as a name for the bill is a bad choice of words: the whole thing is anathema to anyone who knows and cares about the American economy.

What would be the consequences of EFCA? First and foremost, many successful businesses employing hundreds of thousands of people (voters) will close. Democrats and unions don't recognize the fact that people are different. There is a relatively small number, compared to the population, of men and women who have the talent, ambition, work ethic and money or access to it to create and grow successful businesses. While huge corporations get the publicity, most employment in this country is held by people who work for employers with anywhere between 5 and 1,000 employees. The most successful are owned by families or investors who could, if they wished, do other things with their time and money. Rather than be unionized, thousands of those companies will sell their equipment and real estate and close. That would be a disaster for an already stricken American economy. Others will stay in business, but will forego expansion and keep their workforces



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as small as possible. As for the large, publicly held employers, they are struggling as it is. The proposed law would be one more reason for their requests for federal bailouts. It would also be a major incentive for overseas outsourcing, which neither the government nor unions can control.

The EFCA would make union organization almost automatic, and would then allow the government to impose contracts which in many cases will be unaffordable. One has only to look at the airlines, the U.S. Postal Service and the American auto industry to know the effect of unionization. We are seeing General Motors, once the mightiest company in the world, on the brink of bankruptcy. We cannot stand one more attack on American business.

Why is this potential law even on the table? One reason: the labor unions have wanted to tip the balance in their favor for years. Without their support, there would be Republican majorities in both houses. It is payback time. The majority in Congress that has already approved this law and the Senators who support it care only about remaining in power.

Who would benefit from EFCA? Not employees. The union mentality is that all employees are equal, and should be treated alike in terms of compensation and benefits. Unions favor work rules which restrict the kinds of and quantity of work an employee can do in a given period of time. That's bad for the achievers in the workforce. Moreover, contrary to the myth, wages and benefits don't necessarily increase with collective bargaining; but in all cases a lot of money goes from the employees to unions in the form of dues and assessments. Some of that money goes to union health plans and retirement plans, many of which are insolvent. The national media love demonizing business for the wrongdoings of a few prominent business people: compared to that, corruption and crime are rampant in American labor unions. The Teamsters Union alone has been under a federal consent decree for almost two decades, having publicly admitted in writing that it was dominated by organized crime. In the last seven years there have been 30 separate convictions of Teamsters officials around the country for fraud, embezzlement and theft of members' money. Union officials don't care where the money is, they could care less if it's in a retirement fund; they have access to it and they take it. That's just one of the many things employers won't have a chance to tell their employees if EFCA passes.

The truth of this matter is that unions are big businesses, and their officials want more money and more power. To get them, they need more dues-paying workers. The workers are mere cannon fodder. The proposed law is a cynical and unprincipled attempt to elevate the wealth and power of labor unions. Its purpose is not to help American workers.

The fact that EFCA is even under consideration means that some federal politicians don't appreciate or understand what has made our country prosperous, not to mention free. Understand, once and for all: only the private sector, meaning the free enterprise system, creates wealth: politicians and the government only take it. If any part of what a leading employer advocate, Peter List, calls the "hallucogenically called" Employee Free Choice Act is passed on your vote, you will have done one of the greatest injuries ever done to your country.

Yours very truly,
Charles Robinson Fawcett
CRF/bam

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GPS Help Drive Profits

PROBLEM:

Joe Christenson started his own business in 1984. Today he has two companies, Remodel Works Bath and Kitchen and Plumbing Plus, as well as a fleet of 33 commercial GMC and Chevrolet vans and utility vans. From the beginning, Christenson relied on technology to give his business a competitive advantage and he has made it a point to stay on the leading edge. "Technology is continually changing," he says, "and if you just have to stay up with it if you are going to stay competitive."

About three years ago, the GPS tracking and fleet management systems the companies had been using began to fall behind in capabilities while steadily raising monthly user fees, according to Christenson, so they began to shop for new solutions. "We were in a growth mode and adding new trucks, so the timing made sense, he notes.

SOLUTION:

Christenson selected Global Process Solutions a reseller for Networkcar's in-vehicle GPS and driver performance monitoring. The Networkfleet system gives us lots more capabilities than we had before. It sends us oil change alerts, for instance and also monitors emissions for us. Technicians can take their vehicles home at night, but they can't use them except for business. We also have a policy against going over the speed limit or exceeding 70 MPH. The onboard system allows us to track that, plus miles per gallon. We had a technician who was siphoning gas for his wife's car. The Networkfleet system enabled us to spot the disparity in his mpg as compared to the rest of the fleet and address the problem.

On the plumbing side of our business, we use flat rate billing based on averages. We monitor the time a technician arrives at the job site and the time he/she leaves. That eliminates any disputes about time spent on the job. I also know where all of our vehicles are all the time, so we can dispatch the closest available vehicle.

"On the remodel side, the Networkfleet system works basically the same. Remodel technicians are paid by the hour, though, so also we use Xora GPS Time Track for workers, which run on GPS Enabled Sprint Phones. When a worker gets to the jobsite, he or she enters a password on their cell phone and then the job code. We can tell if they are at the right job site by matching the job code to the GPS location, and the automated time cards are much more accurate. Our old manual time cards were usually off 15-45 minutes per worker per day and never in our favor.

We are very high-tech for what we do. Mobile workers don't even have to come into the office and clock in and get job assignments. That alone saves us two or three hours per person per week. Our GPS tracking and automated data collection is the difference between getting by and above average profitability. Now everything ties together. We have a running total of budget versus actual for every job and we can give a client a work schedule before the job even begins. We could not do it without Global Process Solutions selling Networks fleet GPS. Tampa Fl 813-269-7477.

Matthew Reilly

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FAEC Central Florida Chapter Report

By Cheryl Hardy, FAEC/CF Staff

As we approach the second half of the year there has been some rumblings that some business is starting to move. Contractors are starting to receive some work and they are saying our economic situation may be turning... albeit... not fast and furious enough yet but a turn none the least.

The FAEC Central Florida Chapter has focused its efforts to service our membership with educational opportunities to keep you abreast of turns and trends in the industry. We will continue on that path keeping business and personnel benefits the priority. During these times it is imperative that you work to educate your key and field people... they will bring you through these times and launch you back into the market when the the black cloud lifts. Are

you ready? Are your business practices in place for the recovery? Are your people ready and is a plan prepared for the ramp up?

This year we have had lunch meeting topics including "LEED - Green Building Certification" and LED Lighting. We have offered FREE Educational Classes for you and your employees... a "Job Foreman Seminar" was held in March and on July 23 we will hold a "2008 NEC Code Change Class". In the Fall we will offer a "Estimating Class". All three of these programs are presented by Joe Bell, VP of Territo Electric, Inc., Orlando, FL. Joe has been instructing classes for the chapter for three years now and all his programs are extremely well received... not to mention... ABSOLUTELY FREE... to all our Central

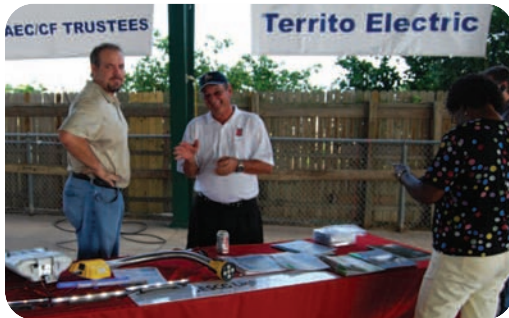
Florida Chapter members.

We are on the heels of the Chapter's Annual Golf Tournament and BBQ held on June 12. It was a great day for Golf that culminated at the Central Florida Fair Grounds for the BBQ. All enjoyed good food, music, a rousing "Volley Ball Tournament" and very intense "Tug of War" competition.

Congratulations go to Tri-City Electrical Contractors (First Place) who unseated an 11 year streak from Brite Future Electric's volley ball team (Second Place) . It was a great evening of matches that lead to the "Tug of War".... In the end it was Brite Future Electric's beastly power in First Place with Territo Electric, Inc. giving them a serious tug for a Second Place Win.

FAEC/CF Annual BBQ

June 12 • Central Florida Fair Grounds



FAEC/CF Annual Golf Tournament

June 12 • Rock Springs Ridge, Apopka



FAEC/CF Calendar of Events

- July 23** FAEC/CF 2008 NEC Code Change Class
Instructor: Joe Bell, Territo Electric
Mid-Florida Tech
- Sept 26** FAEC/CF Casino Night and Annual Edison Award Presentation
Sheraton Orlando
- Oct. TBA** FAEC/CF Estimating Class
Instructor: Joe Bell, Territo Electric
Mid-Florida Tech



GROUNDING VERSUS BONDING

By Mike Holt, NEC Expert

Part 11 of 12:
Pools, fountains, and similar installations



The bonding and grounding requirements of pools can make you feel like you're in over your head.

What comes to mind when you think of pools, spas, hot tubs, and similar installations? Most people would say fun and relaxation. But the person trying to properly ground and bond these is more likely to say confusion and frustration. Why? Because of a wrinkle to what we've covered thus far in this series. To help us iron out that wrinkle, let's recap three basic concepts:

1. When you ground, you connect something to the earth. Think of this as *earthing*.
2. When you bond, you create a conductive path between metallic objects.
3. Bonding is the method by which you create a low-impedance path for fault current.

But with pools and other such installations, the NEC throws a new bit of lingo at us: *equipotential bonding*. The purpose of equipotential bonding is to bring metallic objects to the same potential. This reduces the shock hazard, which is obviously an important consideration for people immersed in a container of water.

The intention of equipotential bonding is to reduce earth voltage gradients in the area around a permanently installed pool or similar installation by the use of a common bonding grid per 680.26(B) and (C).

Equipotential bonding is *not* intended to provide a low-impedance ground-fault current path to the source (which would assist in clearing a ground fault) as required by 250.4(A)(3). It has nothing to do with creating a path for fault current. Therefore, the 8 AWG or larger solid copper equipotential bonding conductor required by 680.26(C) isn't required to extend to (or attach to) any panelboard, service equipment, or electrode.

In addition to equipotential bonding, the requirement is that any wiring method used for equipment associated with the pool, spa, or hot tub is to include an insulated copper equipment grounding (bonding) conductor. You must size this conductor per 250.122, but in no case can it be smaller than 12 AWG copper. Various other requirements apply, depending on the type of raceway used. These requirements all work toward providing an effective ground-fault current path.

Pool lights

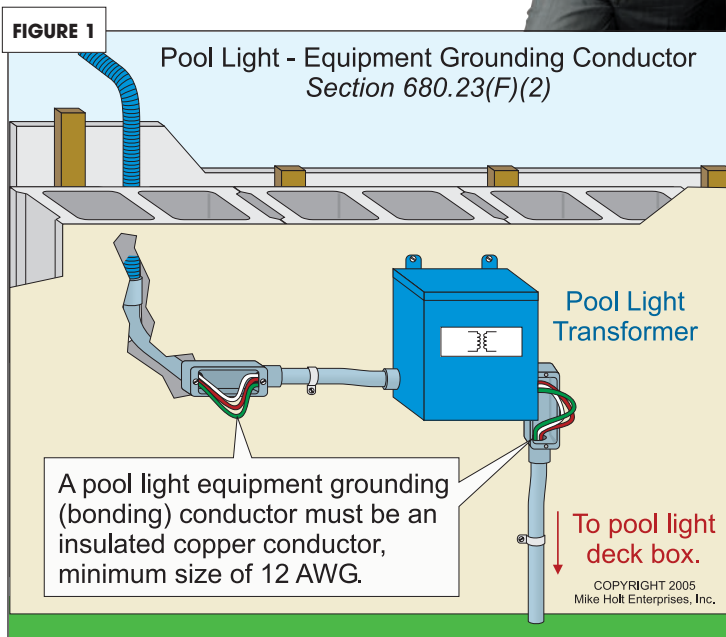
We can all agree that the goal when wiring luminaires in a pool is to light up the pool, not its occupants. This is why branch-circuit conductors for an underwater luminaire must contain an insulated copper equipment grounding (bonding) conductor sized per Table 250.122. In no case can this conductor be smaller than 12 AWG (Figure 1).

The equipment grounding (bonding) conductor for the underwater luminaire must not be spliced [680.23(F)(2)], unless one of two conditions exists (Figure 2):

- More than one underwater luminaire is supplied by the same branch circuit. If so, the equipment grounding (bonding) conductor can terminate at a listed pool junction box that meets the requirements of 680.24(A).
- The equipment grounding (bonding) conductor terminates at the grounding terminal of a listed pool transformer, GFCI, clock switch, or manual snap switch that is located between the panelboard and a junction box connected to the conduit that extends directly to the underwater luminaire.

The branch-circuit conductors for the underwater luminaire must not occupy raceways, boxes, or enclosures containing other conductors on the load side of a GFCI or transformer—unless one of the following conditions exists:

- The other conductors are GFCI protected.
- The other conductors are grounding (bonding) conductors.
- The other conductors supply a feed-through type GFCI.
- The other conductors are in a panelboard.



Junction Boxes

The junction box (deck box) that connects directly to an underwater permanently installed pool, outdoor spa, or outdoor hot tub luminaire forming shell must be listed as a swimming pool junction box and equipped with threaded entries or a nonmetallic hub [680.24]. It also must be constructed of copper, brass, or corrosion-resistant material approved by the authority having jurisdiction. You must provide electrical continuity between all metal conduit and the grounding (bonding) terminals within the junction box.

Also, you must ensure the junction box has at least one more grounding (bonding) terminal than the number of conduit entries [680.24(D)]. Typically, there are four grounding (bonding) terminals in the junction box and three conduit entries. Finally, you must provide a strain relief at the enclosure where you terminate the flexible cord of an underwater luminaire [680.24(E)].

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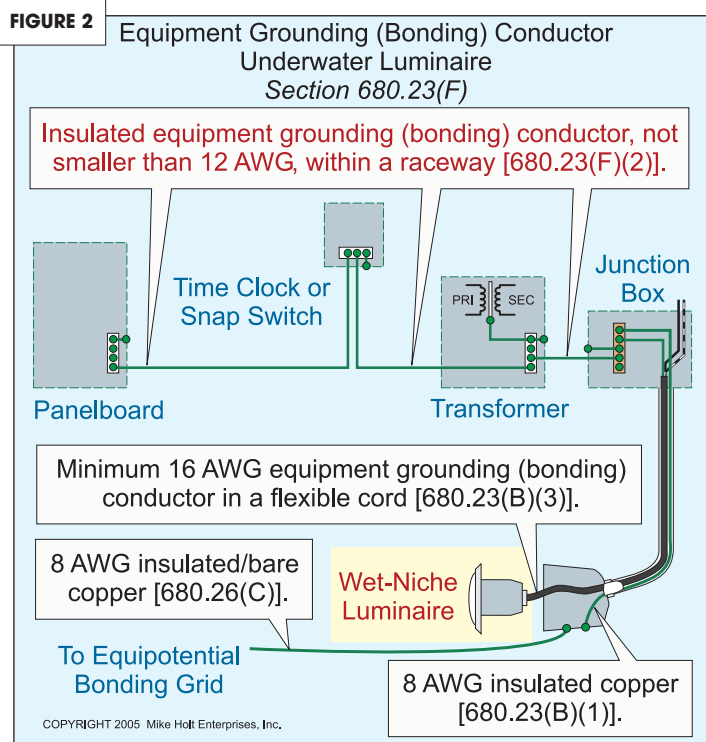
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Bonding Metal Parts to the Equipotential Bonding Grid

Ensure the following parts of a permanently installed pool, outdoor spa, or outdoor hot tub are bonded together and to the equipotential bonding grid.

(1) All metallic parts of reinforcing metal not encapsulated with a nonconductive compound. The usual steel tie-wires that secure rebar together are considered suitable for bonding the reinforcing steel together (Figure 3). Where conductive reinforcing steel of the permanently installed pool, outdoor spa, or outdoor hot tub shell and deck is not available, an alternative means must be provided for in accordance with 680.26(C) to eliminate voltage gradients that would otherwise be provided by unencapsulated, bonded reinforcing steel.

(2) All metal forming shells for underwater wet-niche luminaire.

(3) Metal fittings within or attached to the permanently installed pool, outdoor spa, or outdoor hot tub structure, such as ladders and handrails.

(4) Metal parts of electrical equipment associated with the circulating system (water heaters and pump motors) and metal parts of equipment associated with pool covers.

(5) Metal cables, metal raceways, metal piping, and all fixed metal parts of electrical equipment—except those separated from the pool by a permanent barrier located within:

5 ft horizontally of the inside walls of the permanently installed pool, outdoor spa, or outdoor hot tub.

12 ft above the maximum water level of the permanently installed pool, outdoor spa, or outdoor hot tub; or any observation stands, towers, platforms, or diving structures.

The Equipotential Bonding Grid

All metal parts specified in 680.26(B) must be bonded to an equipotential bonding grid with a solid copper conductor not smaller than 8 AWG. The termination of the bonding conductor must be made by

exothermic welding, listed pressure connectors, or listed clamps that are labeled as suitable for the purpose. An equipotential bonding grid must extend under paved walking surfaces for 3 ft horizontally from the water [680.26(C)].

The equipotential bonding grid must be formed from either or both of:

(1) The structural reinforcing steel of a concrete permanently installed pool, outdoor spa, or outdoor hot tub, tied together by the usual steel tie wires.

(2) The metal walls of a permanently installed pool, outdoor spa, or outdoor hot tub.

But, what if neither of these is available? Where structural reinforcing steel or the walls of bolted or welded metal permanently installed pool, outdoor spa, or outdoor hot tub structures are not available, you must construct an equipotential bonding grid as follows:

(a) The equipotential grid can be constructed with 8 AWG bare solid copper conductors that are bonded to each other at all points of crossing by exothermic welding, listed pressure connectors of the set screw or compression type, listed clamps, or other listed fittings [250.8].

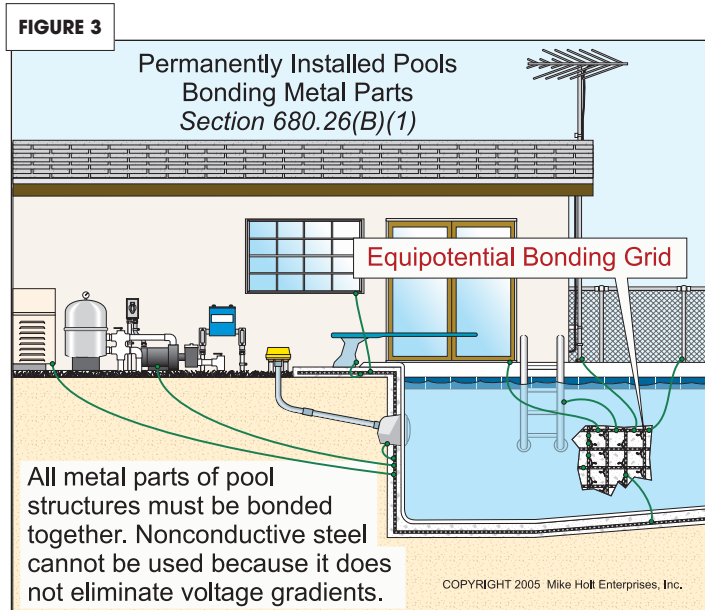
(b) The equipotential bonding grid must cover the contour of the permanently installed pool, outdoor spa, or outdoor hot tub, and deck extending 3 ft horizontally from the water. The equipotential bonding grid must be arranged in a 1 ft x 1 ft network of 8 AWG conductors, with a tolerance of 4 in.

All equipotential bonding terminations must be by exothermic welding, listed pressure connectors of the set screw or compression type, listed clamps, or other listed fittings [250.8].

Let's go back for a moment to a frequently misapplied term: grounding. One of the myths about grounding (earthing) is that it reduces shock hazards by bringing everything to ground potential. Because the earth is not of uniform conductivity that can hardly be the case. Another myth is that grounding (earthing) provides a common reference point. This, also, defies logic.

What about that common reference? If ground (earth) is not it, what is? You can establish a common reference by constructing a *bonding* grid, not an *earthing connection*. Connect your bonding path to the grounding grid, and all of the objects are at an equal potential.

When you have equal potential, then by definition you do not have a voltage difference. Without a voltage difference, there can be no current flow. Thus, you use an equipotential bonding system—not a grounding system—to reduce shock hazards.



Preparing for a Pandemic Is Serious Business

Can you imagine what would happen at your business if ten percent of your employees were too ill to come to work on the same day? Now imagine if twenty-five percent of them were absent for three months or more. Then imagine all businesses are facing these same absentee rates at the same time.

As hard as it may be to comprehend, this could happen—in fact, most experts say it's just a matter of time. What's the reason? An outbreak of pandemic flu that will spread rapidly and easily—from person to person, affecting all age groups. It will cause illness in a majority of those infected.

Influenza pandemics are not isolated events like hurricanes or tornadoes, nor are they confined to a specific region. Pandemics come in multiple waves and experts believe many organizations will have difficulty maintaining operations because of absenteeism due to illness or employees caring for the sick.

Effects on your business

A pandemic flu could disrupt your business and perhaps even force it to close down for a time. According to independent research, a flu pandemic has the potential to cause a typical employer's revenue to drop by 8% and profits by 16-17%. The research showed even a moderate scenario would reduce a typical employer's revenue by 2% and profit by 3-4%.¹

Do you have a plan?

To say a pandemic is serious business is an understatement. However, the effects of a pandemic can be lessened if preparations are made ahead of time.

Ten Steps You Can Take Now²

Here are some things you can do now to help maintain business continuity in the event of a pandemic. Keep in mind that many strategies take time to implement.

- Check that existing business continuity contingency plans address long-term absenteeism rates.
- Identify your essential functions and cross-train employees to perform essential functions to ensure resiliency.
- Plan for interruptions of essential governmental services, such as sanitation, water, power, and transportation, or disruptions to the food supply.
- Determine which outside activities are critical to maintaining operations and develop alternatives in case they cannot function normally.
- Update sick leave and family and medical leave policies and communicate with employees about the importance of staying away if they become ill.
- Establish or expand policies and tools that might enable employees to work from home with appropriate security and network access to applications, such as billing and payroll.
- Collaborate with insurers, health plans, and major health-care facilities to share your pandemic contingency plans and to learn about their capabilities and plans.
- Maintain a healthy work environment.
- Ensure adequate air circulation.
- Post tips on how to stop the spread of germs at work.
- Promote hand and respiratory hygiene.
- Ensure wide and easy availability of alcohol-based hand sanitizer products.
- Tell your employees about the threat of pandemic flu and the steps you are taking to prepare for it.
- Establish an emergency communications plan and revise periodically if necessary.

Valuable resources

The intent of this article is to draw your attention to this very real risk. The federal government, states, communities, and various industries have taken steps to prepare for and respond to an influenza pandemic. It is important that you take action as well. Here are some Web sites with many valuable resources.

HHS and CDC www.pandemicflu.gov

The Department of Health & Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention have developed guidelines, including checklists, to assist businesses, industries, and other employers in planning for a pandemic outbreak, as well as for other comparable catastrophes.

U.S. Chamber of Commerce www.uschamber.com/issues/index/defense/pandemic_influenza.htm The Chamber's Web site offers brochures and other resources.

Open for Business® www.federatedinsurance.com

The *Open for Business®* program is available through Federated Insurance and the Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS). It is more than a planning tool for weather-related emergencies—many features help prepare for illness-related emergencies as well. To get started with this program, visit Federated's Web site and click Open for Business / Disaster Planning under Client Login.

This article is intended to provide general recommendations regarding risk prevention. It is not intended to include all steps or processes necessary to adequately protect you, your business, or your customers. You should always consult your personal attorney and insurance professional for advice unique to you and your business. © 2009 Federated Mutual Insurance Company. All rights reserved.

¹ Pandemic Planning [<http://www.pandemicplan.gsk.com/calculator.html>] 12/5/08

² U.S. Chamber of Commerce [<http://www.uschamber.com/issues/index/defense/pandemic/10steps>] 12/5/08

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HOMETOWN DEMOCRACY NEARING SIGNATURE REQUIREMENT

THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW!

Hometown Democracy is a proposal to amend Florida's constitution. If passed by the voters, it would require that hundreds of local land use changes be decided by referendum. Local test cases prove that this proposal will cost taxpayers untold millions in legal fees and election costs. Designed to permanently freeze economic growth, Hometown Democracy would slow Florida's economic recovery and permanently damage our state's business climate.

After falling short in 2004, 2006 and 2008, *Hometown Democracy* backers are once again bankrolling paid petition-gathering efforts, which should enable them to reach the ballot in the near future. This development has been expected. Since February, 2008, Floridians for Smarter Growth has been operating under the assumption that *Hometown Democracy* will appear on the 2010 ballot.

What does this mean?

It means that this proposed constitutional amendment appears headed for the General Election ballot in November, 2010. Contrary to common fears, the misleading words "Hometown Democracy" will not actually appear on the ballot. Instead, Floridians will be asked to vote on an amendment entitled: REFERENDA REQUIRED FOR ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLANS.

What happens next?

After verifying each petition that is submitted, local Supervisors of Elections will send their petition counts to the state Division of Elections. Upon determining that the submitted signatures meet all constitutional requirements, Florida's Secretary of State will certify the amendment for ballot placement and assign it a ballot number.

What are the impacts of Hometown Democracy?

Hometown Democracy is opposed by a diverse coalition of over 130 environmental, business, labor, education, government and planning groups. Here's what they have to say about it:

1000 Friends of Florida--our state's top growth management watchdog--has said that *Hometown Democracy* may "limit efforts to pass plan amendments intended to lessen sprawling patterns of development" and could result in "legal gridlock" as well as "piecemeal planning."

The Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association has said that *Hometown Democracy* will "increase the influence of special interests through the encouragement of aggressive public relations and media campaigns," adding that this will ultimately "reduce the accountability of elected officials."

The Florida Health Care Association's resolution opposing *Hometown Democracy* contends that it will "burden many healthcare providers, nonprofits and key community groups with the expense of waging costly political campaigns before expanding much needed services."

Finally, the Florida Chamber of Commerce has argued that *Hometown Democracy* will "imperil Florida's prosperity and quality-of-life," calling the amendment a "jobs-killer."

Thousands of Floridians and hundreds of community organizations have voiced their concern over *Hometown Democracy*. They cite different reasons for opposing the would-be amendment, but all agree that *Hometown Democracy* simply has too many dangerous side-effects.

What is the plan?

Since 2007, Florida's business community has come together under the banner of *Floridians for Smarter Growth*--an ongoing campaign designed to educate Floridians on the dangerous consequences of *Hometown Democracy*. Thanks to the support of numerous partners, our message is beginning to resonate with voters.

FSG will continue to build up and build out its grassroots team while maintaining a dialogue with Florida's top media outlets.

What can you do?

If you haven't already, now is the time to get engaged with Floridians for Smarter Growth. The next few months will be critical to defeating *Hometown Democracy* at the ballot box. Specific things you can do include:

- Attend the next meeting of your local Floridians for Smarter Growth stakeholder group.
- If a meeting has not yet been scheduled, please contact me at rhuck@florida2010.org and we will organize one.
- If you are not aware of a local Floridians for Smarter Growth stakeholder group in your area, please contact me and we will connect you with one.

Our message is motivated by the firm belief that *Hometown Democracy* is bad for Florida. As a result, the key to our strategy is education. History proves that the more voters learn about *Hometown Democracy*, the more likely they are to reject it. With your help, we will spread our message to every community in Florida and win a decisive victory for our economy and quality-of-life.

RICHARD WATSON
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS CONSULTANT

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