

Rio West Quarterly

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Making Sustainable Attainable

In recent years, the growth of sustainability within the commercial property world is both clear and widespread. During this time, it has grown from an idea seen as “the right thing to do for society” to a disciplined approach that also has become “the right thing to do for my property.” While sustainability takes different forms and is driven by different goals, most leaders will agree on one thing: It is part of a continuum and an ongoing, ever growing initiative. For a growing number, sustainability is no longer being looked at as a practice that must be underwritten. Instead, it’s viewed as a discipline that can stand on its own from a business care perspective. While overall interest in third party green building certification systems is increasing, the number of



Fed Ex Ground, Tucson, Arizona

executives planning to seek certification under alternatives to LEED nearly doubled. The 2014 Green Building Market Barometer shows that 62% of respondents say their organizations would be extremely or very likely to seek LEED certification if they were undertaking a

green building project. This is marked increase from the previous survey in 2012, which showed that only 48% of respondents would pursue LEED.



Construction Adds 48,000 Jobs in December

The new-year is upon us and once again we are awash in projections what it will bring. The construction industry ended 2014 on a strong note with a surge of 48,000 jobs in December driving its unemployment rate down sharply from its year earlier level. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) report on January 9th that construction’s jobless rate last month was 8.3% well

below the 11.3% of December 2013. The BLS also reported that construction’s average unemployment rate for 2014 was 8.9%, the lowest annual level since 2007. The 48,000 new jobs gained was the largest monthly increase since January 2014 when the industry added 51,000 jobs. Ken Simonson, chief economist with AGC, also pointed out that

“construction added 290,000 jobs for 2014 which represents the best annual figure since 2005”. He added that “demand for workers to construct apartments, pipelines and industrial projects is likely to remain robust for 2015. That said, while much of the construction industry in the US has been on a fairly steady upturn, Arizona remains one state that is not following along with the trend.”

“Augmented reality holds much potential that we have not really begun to see.”

Augmented Reality

For those of you that have not heard of “augmented reality” (AR), you will soon. In the next few years, the application of augmented reality will impact every phase of design and construction projects. The promise of AR presents the possibility of walking into a building while holding a smart phone or tablet and being able to see all the

pipes and conduits in the wall. Augmented reality is a technology application and methodology to supplement and expedite access to information in context with reality. Just imagine in the future having access to vast images of the construction of your project at your fingertips. The tipping point will be when connectivity, deliverability and cost

intersect to make this a common feature on all construction projects. It’s not a question of if, but the question becomes when.

Tips for Better Compaction

Anyone involved in the site and road building process understands it is not an easy job. It takes patience, experience and great amount of knowledge. Getting the job done right the first time all starts with most critical process, compaction. Soil compaction is a process that increases the density of the soil. Before we lay asphalt or concrete, the soil is the base layer. Soil compaction increases load bearing capacity and stability, prevents soil settlement and

reduces water seepage. It is critical to get this first step right. It is also important to know what kind of soil you are dealing with, as different soil types are not all suitable for compaction. The moisture content in the soil also must be considered before starting the compaction work. There is a happy medium in terms of soil moisture, too much weakens stability, but too much will result in poor compaction. The ideal moisture will allow the soil to

mold in your hand when squeezed but allowed to break into pieces when dropped. Poor compaction will result in settlement of the soil. This creates ongoing maintenance issues, such as cracking or worst case, structural failure. In the end, it is important to take the time to do it right as improper compaction is unforgiving and long term very expensive.

“Experience the power of integrity.”

Hand Dryers Spread Bacteria in Restrooms

While modern bathroom hand dryers may be more sustainable than paper towels, they could also be harboring harmful bacteria. New research from University of Leeds shows that the space surrounding the jet dryers is more contaminated than the air near paper towel dispensers. Nearly 50% of germs can

stay airborne for over five minutes after the drying cycle. The study published in the Journal of Hospital Infection, tested after applying to a researcher hands a harmless form of bacteria to mimic hands that had been improperly washed and measured air bacteria counts around jet dryers, warm air dryers and paper

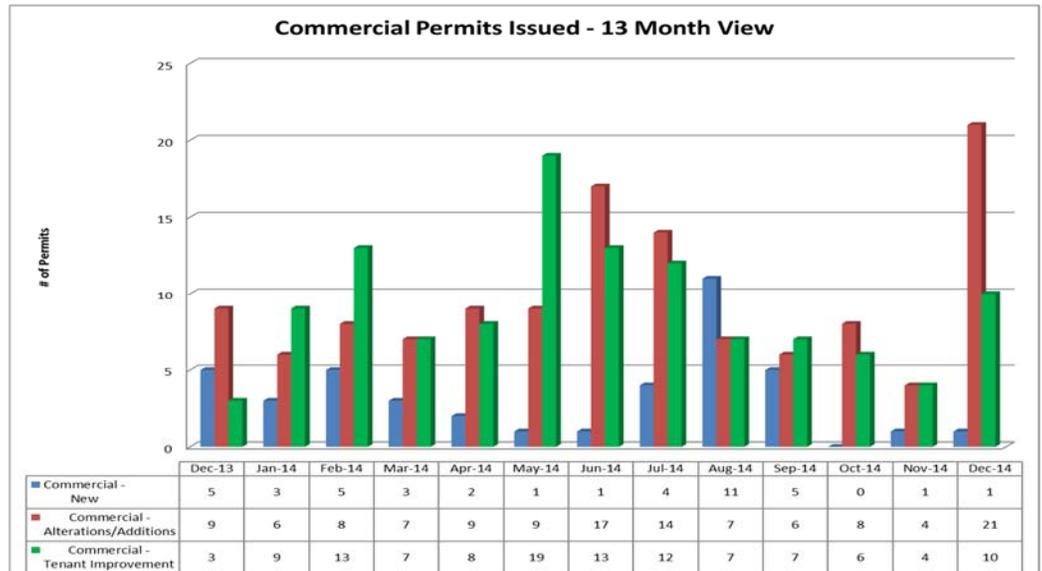
towel dispensers. The amount of germs reported near jet dryers was 4.5 times higher than warm air dryers and 27 times higher than around paper towel dispensers. This appears to be a case where sustainability and public health need some reconciliation.

Just the Facts!

This chart reflects the commercial building permit activity within Pima County over the last 13 months ending December 31, 2014.

During this period 42 new commercial building permits were issued. By comparison the 13 months ending December 31, 2013, forty-

three commercial permits were issued. The balance of the chart reflects additions & tenant improvement activity.



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We're on the Web!
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Founded in August 1994 by brothers Brad & Walter Hoge, Rio West will be celebrating its 20 year anniversary this year. Over the course of the last 20 years, we have constructed or developed projects in all jurisdictions in Pima County that include; medical buildings, office buildings, retail centers, industrial buildings, schools, assisted living facilities and other specialty type buildings. Our work experience includes:

- Pre-Construction Services
- Design Build
- CM@ Risk
- Building Inspection Services
- Development
- Solar Installations

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