# HBANews

Updates from the HBA of the Valley









Massachusetts construction industry workers are six times more likely to die of an **opioid overdose** than the average worker, according to a recent report from the state's Department of Public Health.



The report summarized the findings of a study funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Researchers examined the death certificates of everyone in the state who died of an opioid overdose from 2011 to 2015 with an occupation listed on the certificate.

"Construction and extraction" workers had an opioid overdose death rate of 150.6 deaths per 100,000 workers over the study period, with 1,096 deaths recorded, accounting for almost a quarter of all opioid-related deaths among the working population.

The report also highlighted specific jobs within the construction industry listed on death certificates. The highest rates of overdose deaths among construction workers were: Construction laborers (374 deaths representing 34.2% of overdose deaths among construction workers) and carpenters (201 deaths representing 18.4%).

#### September 2018

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#### **NAHB Backs Kavanaugh for Supreme Court**

NAHB supports Judge Brett Kavanaugh's nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court because of his **extensive record** as a highly qualified, principled, and fair jurist who deserves confirmation to the nation's highest court.

In his 12 years on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, Kavanaugh has been involved in eight cases in which NAHB was a petitioner. NAHB members need only look at Kavanaugh's judicial decisions to see that he has a strong record of curbing regulatory overreach.

Visit NAHB.org to <u>send a message</u> through BuilderLink to your senators encouraging them to vote yes on Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh.

#### **NAHB Offers Ideas on EPA Regulatory Process**

EPA has requested public comments on how it can be **more transparent** 

regarding the scientific data it relies upon to establish new federal environmental regulations. The Agency also aims to be more consistent when evaluating the costs and benefits of proposed rules.

In its comments, NAHB asked EPA to extend the scientific data transparency proposal to proposed rules as well as Agency guidance documents. NAHB also urged EPA to develop a consistent methodology for conducting cost-benefit analyses during the federal rulemaking process.

#### **Ruling Muddies the WOTUS Waters**

A recent ruling by the U.S. District Court for South Carolina means that for now, half of U.S. states will have one set of rules pertaining to waters of the U.S. while the rest have different rules. The decision leaves the <u>regulated</u> <u>community in disarray</u>.

In 24 states, the 1986 definition of waters of the United States is applicable. In the remaining 26 states, the 2015 WOTUS rule defines the term "waters of the United States."

EPA is trying to finalize a 2017 rulemaking that would help resolve the issue.

### **HUD to Amend Fair Housing Rule**

HUD is inviting public comment on amendments to its **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing** (AFFH) regulations.

Under the AFFH rule, as a condition of receiving certain HUD funds, state and local governments must identify barriers to fair housing choice and ensure that practices and policies do not promote racial segregation.

HUD found that the AFFH rule proved ineffective and highly prescriptive, and discouraged production of affordable housing.

#### Treasury Issues Draft Rule for 'Pass Throughs'

The Treasury Department in August released draft regulations for the new 20% pass through entity deduction under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017.

The regulations will affect individuals, partnerships, S corporations, trusts, and estates.

NAHB is in the process of reviewing the proposals to determine how they will affect its members.



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#### OSHA Releases FAQ for Silica Standard as it Applies to Construction

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration in August released a set of 53 **frequently asked questions** – and their answers – to provide guidance to employers and employees on its respirable crystalline silica standard for construction.

Through the Construction Industry Safety Coalition, NAHB was an important contributor to the formulation of this FAQ. The development stemmed from litigation filed against OSHA by numerous construction industry trade associations challenging the legality of the new silica rule.

NAHB will continue to work with OSHA to

improve the workability of this significant rule.

The extensive FAQ is organized by topic with a short introductory paragraph for each group of questions. The answers appear in an expanded box when each question is clicked.

Importantly, the FAQ clarifies that many common construction tasks are likely to be outside the scope of the standard. This includes mixing small amounts of mortar; mixing small amounts of concrete; mixing bagged, silica-free drywall compound; mixing bagged exterior insulation finishing system base and finish coat; and removing concrete formwork.

#### Older than the Reagan Administration

Census data reveal the median age of owner-occupied housing has increased to 37 years old, meaning half of all homes in the U.S. were built prior to 1980 — before Ronald Reagan took office, before Michael Jackson first performed "Thriller" and long before M\*A\*S\*H aired its last episode.

The <u>age of the housing stock</u> is an important remodeling market indicator. Older houses are less energy-efficient than new construction and ultimately will require remodeling and renovation in the future.

As NAHB economist Na Zhao wrote in a recent post for Eye On Housing, the aging housing stock is largely due to the cyclical effect of residential construction's modest pace combined with ever-rising home prices. Those factors are compelling many home owners to simply stay put and consider updating their current home.

#### **FHFA Ends Single Family Rental Pilot**

The Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) has announced that it is directing Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (the Enterprises) to conclude their single-family **rental market pilot** programs except through their previously existing investor programs.

FHFA determined the Enterprises' singlefamily investment home rental programs have played an important role for small investors, but the market for larger investors has performed well without Enterprise participation.

NAHB had urged caution about the Enterprises expanding into this market, noting concerns about the potential effects on single-family sales and the diversion of resources from multifamily housing.

This decision does not preclude the Enterprises from proposing changes to their existing single-family programs to meet the needs of the single-family rental market.

### SEPTEMBER CALENDAR & MEMBER EVENTS

Monday Sept. 10th 4pm Nominations Committee Meeting

Tuesday Sept. 11th 6pm HBA Board Meeting HBA office

Saturday Sept. 15th 9am Habitat for Humanity 5K Run/2K Walk Holy Family

Saturday Sept . 22nd BAIRD BROS. 7th Annual Red White & True

**Thursday Sept. 27th SAFEGUARD Ignite Your Brand Seminar** 

Wednesday Oct. 3rd. 2:30pm HBA Membership Committe Mtg. HBA office





5K & 2-Mile Walk Sept. 15, 2018 at 9am Holy Family Church September

Questions? 330-743-7244 x101 knicholas@hfhmvorg







SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2018 • 9 A.M. - 4 P.M.

#### We are proud to host our 7th Annual Red, White and True Celebration!

Pack up the family, rain or shine, and join us at Baird Brothers Fine Hardwoods' celebration of fall and American craftsmanship. Our Red, White & True fall festival on Saturday, September 22, will prove to be educational and fun for the entire family. The festivities begin at 9:00 am and continue until 4:00 pm. Tour the Baird Brothers Mill, attend the how-to installation demonstrations, register for prizes and share information.

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#### **Forecast: Growth May Begin to Slow**

The nation's economy is enjoying one of the longest stretches of continued GDP growth in history, but the level of economic acceleration might soon begin to ease.

In a midyear economic forecast, NAHB Chief **Economist Robert Dietz was** quick to point out that aside from the declining affordability of housing, "overall economic conditions remain solid."

He noted that while certain seemingly negative dynamics of the economy will actually prove to be good news for housing demand, several challenges will persist.

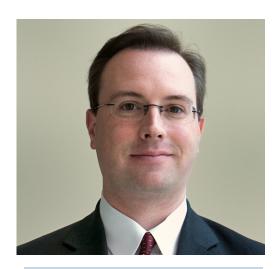
"We're in an aging growth cycle **America** and some imbalances are beginning to build up in the macroeconomy, [so] we have to be aware of those risks going forward," Dietz said.

Dietz's full presentation, as

well as several more from other NAHB economists, can be viewed for free at nahb.org/forecasts. The presentations provide insights on many key areas of the housing sector — some that are likely to experience sustained growth, and others showing signs of a slowdown.

The additional presentations include: Lumber and Tariffs; Multifamily Cost of Regulation; Macro and Regional Conditions; and Living Arrangements of Young Adults.





























#### **Townhouse Construction Sees Big Gains**

Townhouse construction posted significant gains during the second quarter of 2018, according to NAHB analysis of the most recent Census report on Starts and Completions by Purpose and Design. **Townhouse construction** is set for further expansion given the demographics of renters enter- ing the for-sale market, as well as ongoing land constraints and growth of demand for walkable neighborhoods.

Using a one-year moving average, the market share of new townhouses stands at 13.1% of all single-family starts, a post-recession high.



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HBA members had a wonderful time at the August HBA Summer Backyard Bash hosted by Past President Rich Abel and his wife Erika! We truly thank them for being such amazing hosts!



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