

# 90 YEARS OF WECA...AND COUNTING!



## 1920s

The Western Electrical Contractors Association, Inc. (WECA) was first established as the Electrical Contractors and Dealer Association of Sacramento on April 9, 1929. Affiliated with the Association of Electragists International (now known as NECA); in December 1929, the Association's name was changed to the Sacramento Electragists and, subsequently, to the Western Electrical Contractors Association, Inc. in 1990.

## 1940s

In 1946 WECA was chartered as the Sacramento Valley Chapter, NECA (formerly the Association of Electragists International).

## 1960s

WECA opened its Sacramento office on Elvas Avenue in 1960. This coincided with Kenneth W. Carlson's tenure as Association Manager from 1961 through 1990. He was instrumental in securing an historical place for WECA in the electrical industry.

## 1980s

Prominent in the fight against the unions was Edward J. Miltner, a member who resisted the IBEW until his business went bankrupt. Sadly, he died before seeing an end to the conflict, but his legacy lives on with the WECA Man of the Year Award founded in his honor.

## 2000 - 2010

The Department of Labor approved WECA to federally indenture apprentices. WECA also won the right to train apprentices statewide. The WECA Board of Directors hired Terry Seabury as the Executive Director and CEO. WECA opened its San Diego and Riverside Training Facilities as well. The Low Voltage Apprentice Training Program was also approved. Get Wired!, WECA's non-apprenticeship Electrician Trainee training program launched in 2005 as well.

## 2019 - PRESENT

WECA celebrated its 90th anniversary on April 9, 2019. As of this date, WECA was already the largest provider of electrical education in California--with over 250 member companies, 700 Apprentices, and 4,000 Electrician Trainees all active under our toolbelts during that year. In 2021, WECA expanded its unparalleled electrical industry education and electrical contractor membership services into Arizona with the opening of our Phoenix training facility, and began serving the Central Valley of California with its fourth training facility in that state, in Fresno. That year also saw the launch of a new online educational initiative, WECA's "PE to PM" (Project Engineer to Project Manager) Program, which provides essential electrical training for non-electrician construction professionals. The association is also setting new records for membership and service in 2021, with over 300 contractors and partners active as members, over 900 active apprentices across California and Arizona, and over 6,000 active electrician trainees and journeyperson continuing education students.



The Association incorporated on October 28, 1937, with these illustrious names appearing prominently in the Articles of Incorporation: Rex Moore, E.L. French, George C. Foss, J.D. O'Connor, C.E. Vorlander, Sam Bissett, and C.S. Donley. These early partnerships continue to define our Association.

## 1930s

The Association suffered a tragic loss in July 1958 when WECA's greatly respected inaugural manager, Bill Welch, died in an automobile accident. He'd logged in nearly 30 years of devoted service, but it was still too soon to say good-bye.

## 1950s

Strikes and pressure from organized labor defined the next decade, but WECA stayed true to its values, refusing to give in to the threats that jeopardized our charter. The Association, along with its charter members, aligned behind their mission to elevate the principles of the Merit Shop electrical industry.

## 1970s

In 1990, the Sacramento Valley Chapter of NECA was ended, and the membership changed the name of the Association to "Western Electrical Contractors Association, Inc." (WECA). WECA doubled down on managing local and national priorities for a rapidly growing membership as well as establishing its Commercial Apprentice, and Residential Apprentice programs in 1992 and 1998 respectively. It also began its Government Relations & Political Action Committee in 1997.

## 1990s

WECA's self-paced, online curriculum launched in 2012 and continues to grow during this time with eight new course offerings, allowing students anytime, anywhere learning options. In 2016, WECA released "Blueprint to California's Prevailing Wage: A Contractor's Guide," an eBook which guides readers through California prevailing wage compliance and in 2019 released the 2nd edition with updated information on Prevailing Wage Law in California.

## 2010 - 2018

WECA's Curriculum Development and Instructional Teams continue to explore and integrate advanced learning and industry technologies into apprentice and student learning experiences. The WECA Political Action Committee and Political Action Fund continue their fight for California and Arizona's merit shop contractors. WECA looks forward to future challenges and opportunities with optimism and confidence, and continues to set its sights on serving and training an ever-increasing count of electrical and low voltage contractors, their apprentices and students, and the industry partners who support them, across the American West.

## THE FUTURE