
THE LICA CONTRACTOR

Volume 18, Number 4

Fall 2025



**Bridging Continents
Through Drainage**

Summer Meeting Recap

Meet Zog



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The Land Improvement Contractors of America

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A Message From the President



Hello to all,

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the summer meeting in Duluth, Minnesota. The views of Lake Superior were beautiful, the program offered a great balance of education and social interaction, and we made real progress addressing the issues facing our organization.

I was especially encouraged by the level of engagement at this meeting—it was greater than I’ve seen in years. The ideas shared by the many bright minds and the teamwork displayed remind me why LICA is such a strong organization. Together, we are developing changes that will move us forward, and I look forward to continued collaboration at both the state and national levels.

By staying engaged, supporting one another, and maintaining high standards of professionalism, we are ensuring LICA remains strong and respected. I also encourage you to take full advantage of the benefits offered by our generous and supportive associate members.

As the busy fall work schedule approaches, I ask that you all work safely and, the good Lord willing, stay healthy. I am looking forward to seeing everyone this winter.

Thank you for your commitment and support. I am proud of what we’ve built together, and excited for what lies ahead.

Jeff Schell, National LICA President



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Bridging Continents Through Drainage: How Ohio's Overholt Drainage School Is Helping Solve Global Challenges

By CAROLINE KRUG, Editor *The LICA Contractor*

In early March, a group of six agricultural professionals traveled nearly 8,000 miles from southern Africa to Lima, Ohio. Representing Associated British Foods (ABF) Sugar and its subsidiaries in Zambia, Malawi, Eswatini, and South Africa, they came with a clear goal: to improve water management on their sugar cane estates and eliminate drainage issues threatening their crops. What they discovered at the Overholt Drainage School went beyond technology and technique. It was about community, connection, and exchanging ideas across continents.

A Program Rooted in History

Founded in the 1950s and named after Professor Virgil Overholt, the Overholt Drainage Education and Research Program at The Ohio State University has been a cornerstone of drainage education for more than 70 years. What began as a small, two-week training for local contractors has evolved into the world's leading drainage education program.

Today, the Overholt School hosts a week-long intensive workshop attended by drainage contractors, engineers, government agency professionals, manufacturers, and landowners. The curriculum blends engineering theory with hands-on experience, including:

- Drainage system design and installation techniques
- Topographic mapping and GPS-based surveying
- Equipment operation and machine control
- Safety practices, including human, equipment, and utility safety
- Drainage economics, law, and funding
- Conservation practices that improve water quality

Program director Dr. Vinayak Shedekar credits the school's longevity to its collaborative nature:

"What makes Overholt unique is the partnership between academia, industry, and contractors. We teach the science, but our partners show the real-world application. That balance is what keeps us relevant after seven decades."

The program also honors innovators and leaders through the International Drainage Hall of Fame. Notable members include pioneers like Professor Glenn Schwab, who helped establish the program, and Dr. Larry Brown, Vinayak's predecessor, who welcomed attendees from around the globe to the Overholt School with support from the International Program for Water Management in Agriculture (IPWMA). The ABF delegation enjoyed meeting Rick Galehouse, son of Hall of Fame inductee Fred Galehouse, who played an important role in bringing practical knowledge to the training program. At this year's closing dinner, attendees were honored by the presence of Hall of Fame member Dr. Nor-

man Fausey, whose contributions to drainage education are recognized worldwide.

The Road to Overholt

Across southern Africa, ABF Sugar manages more than 53,000 hectares of sugar cane production, which converts to roughly 131,000 acres of land, generating about 1.7 million tons of sugar annually. But in recent years, their estates have faced mounting challenges:

- Rising water tables caused by changing rainfall patterns and over-irrigation
- Soil compaction and salinity that reduce crop yields
- Limited access to specialized drainage expertise and equipment

"Our soils are like our fuel tanks," explained Isobel van der Stoep, Agric Engineering Specialist at ABF Sugar. "Healthy soils are the key to healthy crops. Without effective drainage, we were fighting a losing battle against waterlogging and declining yields."

Historically, the company relied on surface drainage techniques, such as land forming and cutting shallow trenches to divert water. But as problems worsened, they hired a local contractor to begin designing and installing subsurface drainage across their estates. The process has been slow and costly, and scaling it up will require greater in-house expertise.

Their contractor, Agri Drainage, attended the Overholt School back in 2014 and credits the program with launching their business.

"Two brothers stuck their necks out, bought equipment and started a drainage business," says Isobel. "That decision was based on the knowledge they gained from the program. Now, they're one of the leading drainage experts in southern Africa."

Based on that success, Alasdair Harris, ABF Sugar's head of agricultural operations at the One Centre in Durban, South Africa, decided to send a team to Ohio to gain a deeper understanding of the systems being installed and learn techniques that could improve efficiency and reduce costs.

The journey itself was an experience. After nearly 36 hours of travel and multiple layovers, the group landed in Ohio unprepared for the sharp chill of early March. Used to much warmer climates, they quickly stocked up on hats, scarves, and gloves. Despite the cold, they made time to explore between sessions, visiting The Ohio State's massive football stadium, the Wright Brothers Museum, and the National Museum of the United States Air Force. For several of them, it was their first time seeing snow, and the mix of professional development with these glimpses of American culture made the trip even more memorable.



Aerial view of the Nakambala Sugarcane Estate in Zambia, captured with a DJI Mini 4 Pro drone.

Shared Challenges, Shared Solutions

While sugar cane farming in southern Africa looks very different from corn and soybean production in Ohio, the ABF team quickly realized that many drainage challenges are universal. Heavy clay soils, shallow slopes, and rainfall variability affect both regions.

“It was surprising how similar our soils are,” said Bryan Rees of Zambia Sugar. “We deal with the same heavy clays and flat grades, so techniques like closer tile spacing are directly applicable.”

The group also learned about controlled drainage systems, which allow farmers to manage water tables dynamically for crop health and environmental protection. It’s a concept they believe could be transformative for sugar cane production:

“Controlled drainage is a new concept for us,” Isobel explained. “It could help us reduce waterlogging while conserving irrigation water. It’s something we’re hoping to explore further.”

Immersed in Learning

From the moment they arrived, the ABF team joined 50 other participants from across the U.S., Canada, and Argentina in a packed week of lectures, group projects, and technology demonstrations. They began with classroom sessions on design principles, soil science, and mapping techniques, then applied their skills in group projects:

“Students worked through real-world design scenarios, calculating spacing, slope, and installation costs,” said Dr. Shedekar. “It was eye-opening to see how students with only classroom training tended to produce more expensive designs than those with real-world experience. It showed the value of hands-on learning and working alongside LICA members.”



GIS Technician Sarah Chirwa works with an Agri Drainage employee to install tile at Zambia’s Nakambala Sugarcane Estate.

One of the most exciting aspects of the program was access to equipment and technology rarely available in Africa. The group spent time at OSU’s Trimble Technology Lab, where they were introduced to GPS machine control and precision grading tools.

“We were jealous of the Trimble Technology Lab,” Bryan admitted. “The technology was far ahead of what we have access to at home.”

The group was also impressed by the hundreds of years of combined experience held by LICA contractors and program facilitators. For the ABF delegation, the access to this collective expertise was just as valuable as the classroom content.



Ohio LICA member and Inbody Drainage owner Steve Gerten leads an equipment Q&A session with members of the ABF delegation.



Overholt Drainage School participants gather for a group photo in front of a BRON 550 drainage plow.

LICA's Hands-On Role

The Land Improvement Contractors of America (LICA) play an important role in Overholt's success. Contractors bring decades of experience and provide access to equipment, offering participants a chance to see drainage practices up close.

Longtime Ohio LICA member Steve Gerten, owner of Inbody Drainage, hosted the ABF delegation at his shop:

"They were fascinated by everything, from fittings and tile sizing to the shape of the trenches," Steve recalled. "We spent time walking through the equipment, from plows and trenchers to tile stringers."

For many in the group, it was the first time seeing self-propelled plows and trenchers up close. They climbed into the cabs, examined the control systems, and asked detailed questions about installation techniques and equipment choices. While they already used a Case Quadtrac 600 with a Bron DL 750 plow on their estates, the newer technology and GPS integration offered ideas for improving efficiency.

The ABF delegation also visited Jeffry Billenstein of Ag Land Drain Tile, LLC, another LICA instructor and contractor. There, they explored his operation and discussed software for tile mapping and management.

Vinayak described the ABF participants' enthusiasm best:

"It was like watching kids at an amusement park," he said. "They wanted to touch everything, climb into the cabs, and understand how every piece of technology works."

The group toured several LICA partner facilities, including ADS and Baughman Tile, to see how tile is manufactured. At Liebrecht Manufacturing, they examined drain cleaner technology capable of removing sediment without creating new barriers, a critical issue on ABF estates where sedimentation has become a major obstacle.

These visits gave them a broader understanding of the technologies and products driving innovation in U.S. drainage.

Applying Lessons Back Home

The knowledge gained by the ABF Sugar team is helping advance the company's agricultural strategy, "The New Farming

System." The strategy focuses on more sustainable sugar cane production and incorporates practices such as:

- Controlled traffic to avoid further compaction caused by heavy equipment
- Improved soil health management through cover crops and nitrogen replenishment
- Developing greater in-house expertise for designing and managing efficient subsurface drainage

They also identified potential opportunities for collaboration with experts they met at Overholt, given the shortage of qualified specialists in African agriculture. LICA member Joey Schlatter of Schlatter's, Inc. may even be called upon to visit Africa to provide training on GPS technology and machine control.

Building on a Legacy

For Dr. Shedekar, this year's international turnout reinforces a vision he's been working toward.

"Drainage is a global issue," he explained. "When we bring together farmers and contractors from different continents, we're not just solving local problems, we're shaping sustainable agriculture for the future."

Mary Henry, a field technician on Dr. Shedekar's team, agreed: "Having international students changes the conversations in the room. They ask questions we don't always think to ask, and it pushes everyone to look at things differently. It makes the program stronger for everyone."

It's a big job to carry the school forward, and Dr. Shedekar appreciates the help of everyone involved.

With plans underway to introduce an advanced drainage course focused on computer-aided design and field-based machine control, Overholt is expanding its reach while maintaining its roots in hands-on learning.

For LICA members, the opportunity to contribute to this evolution is significant. Contractors bring the practical expertise that bridges the gap between research and reality. As Steve Gerten put it:

"The more knowledge a person has, the better job they'll end up doing. Every time we share what we know, we're not just helping one farm, we're changing how we feed the world."

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Students present their group project design for a drainage system.



The ABF delegation, accompanied by Mary Henry and Dr. Vinayak Shedekar, visits the ADS facility to learn about tile manufacturing.

Both Steve and Dr. Shedekar encourage LICA members to attend the Overholt school and take advantage of the discounted registration fees available to them through the partnership between OSU and Ohio LICA.

A Global Classroom

From Lima, Ohio, to the cane fields of Zambia and Eswatini, the lessons of the Overholt Drainage School are rippling outward. For the ABF delegation, the weeklong program has already sparked new strategies for improving soil health, conserving water, and boosting yields. For Overholt, it marked an-

other milestone in its 70-year journey, proving that education, when shared, transcends borders.

One of the most unexpected outcomes of the trip was the relationships formed. The ABF delegation bonded with fellow international participants from Canada and Argentina, as well as U.S. contractors and instructors. They even started a WhatsApp group to continue sharing updates, photos, and advice.

“This wasn’t just about learning new techniques,” Isobel reflected. “It was about realizing we’re part of a global community working toward the same goal, sustainable farming for the future.” ■

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A Look Back at the 2025 Summer Meeting: Progress, Collaboration, and Looking Ahead

By ALLISON HACK, Executive Vice President, National LICA

Members traveled to Duluth, Minnesota, for the 2025 Summer Meeting, embarking on an exciting journey up north. Greeted by the cool, brisk air that characterizes this northern city, the refreshing change from the summer heat experienced across the Midwest was a welcome relief.

The meeting brought together members, leaders, and partners for a dynamic week of collaboration, learning, and strategic planning. From the start, the energy was unmistakable as attendees gathered for a special “meeting of the minds” on Wednesday evening, setting the tone for thoughtful discussions about LICA’s future direction.



BigIron Lunch – National Past President Steve Gerten



National Board Meeting – National President Jeff Schell



Preserving Families & Perpetuating your Business – Greg Greco, Principal Greco & Associates Financial Services

Executive Committee Initiatives

The Executive Committee wasted no time in addressing key issues. One of the major actions was launching a Heavy Equipment Benefits Survey to our members. The goal: to gather insights and feedback that will help us negotiate a new and improved Heavy Equipment Benefit. This initiative underscores our commitment to ensuring members receive the best possible support and resources.

Diverse and Impactful Seminars

The educational seminars covered a range of timely topics. Attendees engaged in sessions on mental health, septic systems, and business succession—each designed to provide practical takeaways and spark important conversations within our industry.

Audit Committee Update

The National LICA Audit Committee presented their findings, offering transparency and accountability. Members were informed that another audit is scheduled for this fall, reinforcing our dedication to sound financial practices and transparency.

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Summer Meeting Opening Breakfast – National President Jeff Schell

Committees: Planning for the Future

The committees met and got down to business. New co-chairs were appointed, and plans were set in motion for more frequent Zoom meetings leading up to the 2026 Winter Convention. The Insurance & Safety Committee made a significant decision to compile a comprehensive safety manual, utilizing materials from The LICA Safety Portal. This resource will be available to members at no cost, further supporting our commitment to safety and best practices.



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Legislative Engagement and New Faces

A highlight of the Legislative Committee was the introduction of Brian Deery, our new National Director of Government Relations. Brian fielded questions and shared his vision for advocacy, signaling a new chapter in our legislative efforts.

Associates Night: Welcoming New Exhibitors

Associates Night provided a relaxed atmosphere for networking and camaraderie. Members socialized and encountered numerous familiar faces—longtime Associates who have supported LICA for many years. We were also delighted to welcome new exhibitors into the LICA family, strengthening our community and expanding opportunities for collaboration.

Embracing Hybrid Meetings

In a first for National LICA, the Board Meeting was held in a hybrid format, with 20 participants joining via Zoom. This successful experiment in remote participation will continue, making it easier for members to stay engaged, no matter where they are.

Looking Ahead

The 2025 Summer Meeting was a testament to the power of collaboration and the shared commitment to LICA’s mission. With new initiatives underway, fresh leadership, and a renewed focus on member benefits and safety, we are well-positioned for a productive year ahead. Thank you to everyone who participated and contributed to making this meeting a success! █

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Meet Zog: Bringing Tech Solutions to the Job Site

By CAROLINE KRUG, Editor *The LICA Contractor*

When you think of the challenges LICA contractors face, technology might not be the first thing that comes to mind. For Mat Zoglio, owner of Zog, Inc., it is exactly where he sees an opportunity to make a real difference.

Mat earned his degree in electrical engineering, but when he entered the workforce, employers kept asking him to handle IT work instead. The shift felt natural, and one of his first jobs was teaching stockbrokers how to use computers to watch the market in real time. That experience taught him that in the right hands, technology is not just a tool but a lifeline for making confident, timely decisions.

After that, he worked for a bank during the Y2K scare, helping prepare systems for the year 2000. When his contract ended, an unexpected call led to a month-long project with the Royal Saudi Air Force, installing a training classroom for pilots. The job required him to be on-site with no outside network access, and that contract sparked the idea of running his own IT company.

In 1999, he founded Zog, choosing a name inspired by his last name and childhood nickname to stand out from the sea of generic “IT Services” companies. He started as a one-man operation, later hiring his first technician when the workload became too much. Today, Zog has 30 employees, including 20 technical staff, serving clients in construction, manufacturing, and other industries with complex technology needs.

Mat credits his wife, Kathleen, and their three children, Mat Jr., Natalie and Nina, for supporting his entrepreneurial journey. He treasures time with his family and friends and enjoys hosting networking nights that bring people together and strengthen his partner community.

Mat has worked with businesses of all sizes to keep their operations running smoothly by making technology work for them, not against them. He understands that contractors work in an environment where lost time means lost revenue, and small glitches can quickly turn into big delays.

“On a job site, every minute counts,” Mat says. “If you can’t get a signal in your field trailer, or you lose access to important files when you need them most, the impact is immediate. My goal is to remove that stress so you can focus on the work you do best.”



Mat Zoglio,
CEO & Owner of Zog, Inc.

How Zog Can Help LICA Contractors

Mat has designed programs specifically for LICA members. These can be delivered as a complete package or tailored to individual needs:

Job Site Connectivity: Set up fast internet connections in remote or rural areas so you can access plans, permits, and contracts from the field.

Time and Equipment Tracking: Use digital tools to log hours, track equipment usage, and keep tabs on vehicles. This helps control labor costs and reduces paperwork.

Safety Program Coordination: Store safety manuals, training records, and compliance documents in one place so they are easy to access during inspections.

Organized Project Files: Access blueprints, grading plans, GPS machine control data, and municipal specifications from a laptop, tablet, or phone whether you are in the office, in a pickup, or on-site.

Security and Data Protection: Protect sensitive bid documents, project records, and financial information from ransomware or phishing attacks, and recover quickly if a device is stolen from a site trailer or truck.

Audit and Compliance Support: Prepare for audits with organized records that meet municipal, state, and federal requirements, including environmental regulations.

Equipment Downtime Prevention: Maintain a database of suppliers and service contacts so broken equipment can be repaired quickly, avoiding costly delays.

Future Planning: Create a technology budget, plan for equipment upgrades, and design IT systems that can handle larger jobs, additional crews, or new government contracts.

A No-Cost Starting Point

For LICA members, Mat is offering a free IT Health Check and Jobsite Tech Review. It is a walk-through of your current systems to see where improvements can save you time, money, and unnecessary stress. The process begins with a quick screening, then a review of equipment age, file storage, licenses, security measures, and whether sensitive information has been found on the dark web.

The goal is simple: figure out what needs protection and make sure it is secure.

Mat’s approach is rooted in building trust and creating solutions that fit the way people actually work. He believes that contractors should not have to think about their technology once it is set up properly.

“You know your operations,” Mat says. “We know IT. Together, we can keep your business running at its best.” ■



Zog, Inc. Office in Montgomeryville, PA



Mat Zoglio with his family

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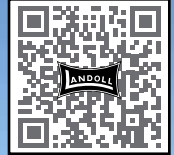
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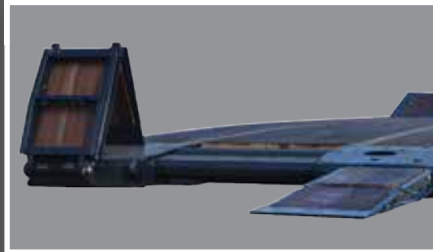
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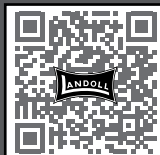
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- Other Ramp Options Available
- 8 Keyhole Tie Downs on Approach



- "V" Type Rear Bumper
- 3 Stop Tail Turn and Strobe Lights
- Electrical Outlet for Accessory Lights

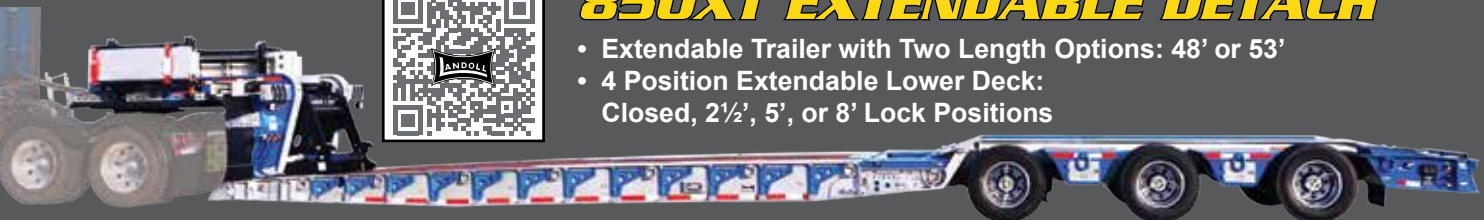
Hot-Dipped Galvanizing Option Up to 27' 6" of Usable Lower Deck Length 19½" Loaded Deck Height

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Formed in 2018, the Drain Tile Safety Coalition is a non-profit dedicated to sharing best practices in safety to reduce the number of accidents resulting from drain tile installation on farms. Learn more at www.draintilesafety.org



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ICE Audits Are on the Rise. Are Your I-9s in Order?

By CRAIG MARTIN, Construction Attorney with Lamson Dugan & Murray

ICE audits are on the rise, which makes staying on top of I-9 paperwork even more important. An ICE auditor can show up with little warning, and scrambling at the last minute isn't where you want to be. Below are some recommendations to deal with an ICE audit and the notices you may receive afterward.

Getting Ready for an ICE I-9 Audit

Start by giving your I-9s a good once-over. Make sure every form is filled out completely – no missing signatures, no blank boxes—and that the documents employees gave you are on the approved list and have not expired. Keep your I-9s in their own file, separate from personnel records, so you can make copies quickly if ICE comes knocking.

It's also smart to train one or two people in your company to handle I-9s the right way, and to run an internal check every so often to catch mistakes early. If you do find an error, fix it using DHS's correction rules instead of starting fresh. The rules for correction are contained in the *Handbook for Employers, M-274*. Ultimately, a little prep goes a long way toward reducing fines and headaches.

Dealing with Notices of Discrepancy

After the audit is completed, ICE may send you a Notice of Discrepancy, which basically means ICE couldn't confirm an employee's work status. If that happens, don't panic. The first thing to do is give the employee a copy of the notice right away and let them know they need to clear things up with Social Security or DHS. They'll usually get a short window of time to fix it.

The next step is to treat them as any other employee. Don't cut their hours or fire them right off the bat. ICE makes clear that firing someone for simply being on the list will get you into more trouble. Give the employee the chance to sort it out. If they can't resolve it within the time allowed, then you may have to let them go to stay compliant. Again, ICE makes clear that if they don't challenge ICE's findings, they can no longer be employed after the deadline.

Here are some do's and don'ts to help you create your I-9 policy.

Be Audit-Ready – No Surprises

DO:

- Keep all I-9 forms **complete, signed, and dated**.
- Accept only documents from the **official I-9 list** (no expired or fake ones).
- Store I-9s **separately** from personnel files (ICE expects quick access).



- Designate a trained person to handle I-9s and keep up with the rules.
- Run **internal I-9 checks** regularly and fix mistakes properly (never backdate).

DON'T:

- Don't ignore missing sections, signatures, or expired documents.
- Don't toss outdated or incorrect I-9s – **correct them** (don't create new ones).
- Don't assume subcontractors are handling I-9s correctly – **check!**

If You Get a Notice of Discrepancy from ICE

DO:

- Give the notice to the employee **immediately**.
- Let them contact **SSA or DHS** to fix the issue.
- Give them a **reasonable time** to respond.
- Keep written records of what was done and when.

DON'T:

- Don't fire, cut hours, or treat the employee differently unless required.
- Don't assume they're undocumented – wait for results.
- Keep them on if they cannot fix the issue; in that case let them go.

If you have questions about your I-9 policy or an ICE Audit, we are here to help. Craig Martin is a Construction Attorney at Lamson Dugan & Murray LLP, cmartin@ldmlaw.com (402) 397-7300.

Craig Martin is a construction attorney with Lamson Dugan & Murray, LLP law firm in Omaha, Nebraska, and a member of the collaborative Johnson Team. The Johnson Team consists of a group of specialists serving LICA members on matters of significance – planning, protection, and preservation of their businesses and families. If you have any questions, Craig's e-mail is cmartin@ldmlaw.com.



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Infrastructure Funding Moves into Focus

By BRIAN DEERY, LICA Director of Government Relations

Now that Congress has finished President Trump's "One Big Beautiful" domestic policy legislation through the reconciliation process, the focus will turn to the appropriations process and funding programs in FY 2026. Also in focus will be the reauthorization of infrastructure programs and the farm bill. Congress passed two major acts during President Biden's administration to provide economic stimulus in response to the COVID pandemic: the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which are now expiring and need to be addressed.

The IIJA provided a record \$1.2 trillion of investment in various infrastructure categories, including roads, bridges, water, wastewater, ports, freight and passenger rail, and broadband internet. It was the vehicle for reauthorizing the five-year highway and transit legislation, which was often described as "historic" or "generational," including its \$673.8 billion in transportation funding for roads, bridges, transit, airports, ports, and rail. Of that amount, the largest share—\$379.3 billion—was for highway infrastructure, with roughly 20 percent of the total highway allocation distributed in each of the five fiscal years from 2022 through 2026. However, this funding runs out on September 30, 2026.

The boost in infrastructure funding in all categories ensured a steady and growing infrastructure construction market. However, the outlook moving forward could prove challenging. Since the IIJA's enactment in November 2021, the nation as a whole—and the transportation sector especially—has experienced a significant loss of purchasing power due to inflation. According to USDOT's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), their "modest inflation" scenario for the IIJA estimates a 31 percent loss in purchasing power for the total of its five fiscal years from 2022 to 2026, reducing the \$379.3 billion in nominal dollars for highways to \$260.5 billion in real dollars. The BTS's "high inflation" scenario estimates a 40 percent loss in purchasing power, reducing \$379.3 billion in nominal dollars to \$224.2 billion in real dollars. The same loss in purchasing power impacts other infrastructure categories as well.

The Congressional debate over the reconciliation legislation put a bright spotlight on the federal debt, currently over \$36 trillion. Congressional Budget Office estimates indicate that the impact of the "Big Beautiful Bill" could be an increase in the debt of as much as \$4 trillion over the next ten years. Many Republican senators and representatives expressed grave concern about these numbers and looked for ways to cut government spending to address the debt. Additional focus on



cutting federal spending can be expected as Congress moves forward with FY 2026 appropriations and the pending reauthorization of the Surface Transportation and Farm bills.

Many members of Congress voted for the reconciliation legislation with the expectation that extending tax cuts and enhancements to government services would lead to economic growth, reducing annual deficits and ultimately lowering the federal debt level. Experience points to infrastructure investment providing that kind of economic growth. The Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM) reports a direct positive impact from the infrastructure law. Shortly after the IIJA was enacted, equipment orders grew by 13 percent and inventories grew by 22 percent, as manufacturers anticipated growing demand. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) also reports record levels of employment since the first quarter of 2023. Employers have added 41,600 jobs in the highway, street, and bridge construction sector, bringing total 2024 summer construction employment to a record 413,400 workers. Simply put, these companies would not be investing in people or equipment if there were not significant work to be done. As promised in the run-up to the 2021 infrastructure law, investments in infrastructure are enabling growth across the economy, and even despite inflation, these positive effects are proving true.

LICA members must be ready to make this case with our senators and representatives. Our future market is at stake. ■

Brian Deery brings over 40 years of experience advocating for highway, heavy, and civil construction contractors before Congress and federal agencies. As LICA's Director of Government Relations, he keeps members informed about legislative and regulatory issues that impact the land improvement industry. If you have any questions, Brian's email is Deery5@gmail.com.

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John Deere has introduced Operations Center PRO Service, a digital platform designed to give equipment owners greater control over maintaining and repairing their machines. Available in the U.S. and Canada, the service supports both connected and non-connected

machines across John Deere's agriculture, turf, construction, and forestry equipment lines.

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An annual license starts at \$195 per machine, and the system integrates seamlessly with the John Deere Operations Center platform. For more information, visit JohnDeere.com/PROService.

CASE Expands Mini Excavator Lineup with Four New Models

CASE Construction Equipment has launched four new mini excavator models, expanding its D Series lineup to provide more versatility for contractors, landscapers, municipal crews, and utility teams.

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“With these additions, we’ve built a lineup that offers competitive pricing and powerful features while making operation, maintenance, and transportation simpler,” said Terry Dolan, Head of CNH Construction Brands, North America.

For more information on the full lineup, visit casece.com.

Infiltrator Water Technologies Refreshes Brand Identity as Part of ADS



Infiltrator Water Technologies, a leader in onsite wastewater solutions, has updated its branding to reflect its role as an endorsed brand of Advanced Drainage Systems, Inc. (ADS).

The refreshed logo maintains Infiltrator’s recognizable chamber arch imagery but now includes the tagline “part of ADS”. This change underscores the strength of the combined companies while preserving Infiltrator’s distinct identity.

“Bringing the ADS name into the Infiltrator logo highlights the strength

of our shared expertise,” said Scott Barbour, ADS President and CEO. “Customers can expect the same innovation and reliability they’ve always associated with Infiltrator, backed by the broader resources of ADS.”

Craig Taylor, President of Infiltrator Water Technologies, emphasized that while the look has evolved, the company’s commitment to performance, innovation, and customer service remains unchanged.

American Earthworks Establishes Permanent Operations in Ithaca, NY

After a decade of successful projects across Central New York, American Earthworks has opened a permanent location in Ithaca, NY to better serve the area’s government, education, and commercial sectors.

“Establishing operations here was the natural next step after ten years of successful work in Ithaca,” said Ansel Acla, Owner of American Earthworks. “We understand the community’s values,



environmental priorities, and high expectations — and we’re ready to continue exceeding them.”

Services Now Offered in Ithaca:

- Excavation and site work
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American Earthworks is known for its on-time, under-budget project delivery and strong safety record. With this expansion, the company is positioned to support projects involving Cornell University, Ithaca College, and local government facilities.

Learn more at american-earthworks.com or call (607) 227-3138. ■



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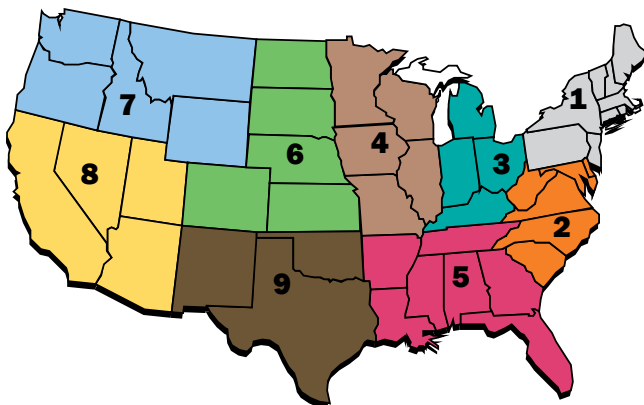
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Market Watch

Landoll's 850XT Extendable Detach is Multi-purpose



Landoll's extendable trailer is manufactured for oversized equipment and is multi-purpose. There are two lengths available on the 850XT: 48 or 53 feet. The trailer features four lock positions on the extendable lower deck - closed, 2½ feet, 5 feet or 8 feet. This allows the trailer to easily accommodate longer loads. The low-load angle and engineered trunnion structure allows for easy loading. The user-friendly rear controls allow for simple adjustments handling nearly any load.

landoll.com

ADS Acquires River Valley Pipe



Advanced Drainage Systems (ADS), a leading provider of innovative water management solutions in the stormwater and onsite septic wastewater industries announced today the acquisition of River Valley Pipe LLC ("River Valley Pipe"), a privately-owned pipe manufacturing company located in the Midwest region of the United States.

River Valley Pipe, LLC is a leading Midwestern manufacturer of high-performance corrugated plastic pipe systems serving the agriculture market. Founded in 2015, River Valley Pipe built a strong reputation for reliability, speed, and hands-on support by focusing on responsive customer service, durable products, and long-term customer partnerships. Operating from two strategically located production facilities in Illinois and Iowa, the company has earned the trust of contractors, distributors, and end-users across the region.

www.adspipe.com/

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