



## News, Views & Comments from the World of Building Service Contracting

Submit your news for publication to Carol Dean at [cdean@wfbsc.org](mailto:cdean@wfbsc.org)

### ARGENTINA-BUENOS AIRES

#### Percentage Of Informal Labor Drops

**A**ccording to Indec Statistics Agency, the percentage of informal labor dropped 0.3 percentage points from 36.5 percent in the second quarter of 2008 to 36.2 percent in the second quarter of 2009. In the first quarter of 2009, the percent was 36.4 percent. The Northeastern region of Argentina has the highest percentage of employment without contract at 41.6 percent, while Patagonia had the lowest at 21.5 percent.

### AUSTRALIA-VICTORIA

#### Insurers Work Together To Avoid Crisis

**I**nsurers Avant Mutual and Medical Insurance Group Australia (MIGA) joined MDA National and Medical Indemnity Protection Society in confirming coverage for physicians who administer the H1N1 vaccine, averting a potential crisis. The concern was that doctors would not be able to be insured and hence, unable to give shots. The Federal Government and insurers developed a special consent form to be used in the event the vaccine has not received full registration from the Therapeutic Goods Agency in time for its dissemination. The consent form will allow physicians to be covered. Rollout of the vaccination program is expected to begin within weeks.

### BELGIUM-BRUSSELS

#### Total Hourly Labor Costs Rise

**A**ccording to Eurostat, increases in wages and salaries and non-wage costs led to a rise in total hourly labor costs. In the euro area, total hourly labor costs rose 0.4 percent in the second quarter 2009 over the second quarter of 2008 to four percent. In the EU27, costs rose from 1.3 percent in the first quarter of 2009 to 3.7 percent. Wages and salaries rose from 0.9 percent in the first quarter to 3.6 percent and non-wage costs rose by one percent over the first quarter. In the industry sector, labor costs rose by over 5 percent, construction sector costs rose by over 4 percent and the costs in the services sector rose by almost 3 percent.

### BRAZIL-BRASILIA

#### Despite Decline, Brazil Has Record Deaths

**D**espite a report from the health ministry that the number of serious cases in the country declined for the fifth straight week, Brazil remained the country with the highest number of flu deaths. As of September 6, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) listed 3,205 deaths attributed to the H1N1 virus in 2009 with 899 deaths occurring in Brazil and 512 deaths in Argentina. Southeastern Sao Paulo state has seen the most deaths at 327 followed by Parana in the south with 222. Rio de Janeiro has reported 84 deaths.

## CANADA-OTTAWA

### Prices Continue To Drop

Statistics Canada has reported that the annual rate of inflation dropped 0.8 percent in August led by a fall in gasoline and energy prices. Gasoline prices decreased over 21 percent from August 2008. The decline in the annual rate of inflation in July 2009, which was 0.9 percent, was the steepest decline in the rate since 1953. Overall, prices fell at the fastest pace in Alberta, down 1.7 percent, and British Columbia, down 1.1 percent. A senior economist at BMO Capital Markets predicts that the lack of economic activity will keep prices down and will lead The Bank of Canada to hold the overnight (interest) rate at 0.25 percent until the end of the second quarter of 2010.

## FRANCE-CULOZ

### Bonus For Buying Clean Car

Over the next 16 months, French consumers will be able to receive a \$7,300 bonus from car dealers for purchasing environmentally friendly electric or hybrid automobiles. The new "Clean Cars" program, announced last October at the Paris Motor Show is part of the effort by President Nicolas Sarkozy to combat global warming. The French government has set aside 400 million euros over four years to increase the development of environmentally friendly vehicles.

## GERMANY-BERLIN

### Study Reveals Huge Gender Gap

A study by the Karlsruhe Institute for Technology (KIT) reported that only 42 or 2.4 percent of the 1,721 executive committee members at Germany's top 600 listed companies are women and just 8.2 percent of those sitting on Boards of Directors are female. While on paper it appears to be an improvement over 1998 when just 1.2 percent of women sat on Executive Committees, the ratio since 2005 has actually been declining and no significant change has occurred in the numbers. The large study reported on all of the major listed companies in Germany. Germany has long been viewed as having a low ratio of women to

men in positions of power within organizations among its European counterparts. Norway, for example has a mandatory requirement of 40 percent minimum from each gender.

## JAPAN-TOKYO

### Land Prices Fall At Fast Pace

The Annual Land Survey has shown that commercial and residential land prices declined in all 47 prefectures as a result of businesses closing and a decline in a demand for housing. The prices fell at the fastest pace in five years with commercial land prices dropping almost six percent and residential land prices falling four percent. According to the report, only three of the roughly 23,000 locations in the survey rose in price. The average commercial and residential land prices fell in Tokyo and Osaka for the first time in four years by 8.9 percent and 6.5 percent respectively for Tokyo and 7.1 percent and 4.5 percent respectively in Osaka. In Nagoya, commercial prices dropped by 7.3 percent and residential dropped by 4.2 percent.

## NEW ZEALAND-AUCKLAND

### Schools Hit By Leaky Building Syndrome

The Auckland City Council in a recent weather-tightness report listed 73 schools in the nation as being affected by leaky building syndrome, double the 36 affected schools reported by the Ministry of Education in November of 2008. The City Council and Ministry of Education have been in a tug of war over the responsibility and money to fix the buildings. The Ministry sued the Council but the Council argued successfully it was up to the original owners or developers to retain experts to draw up the proper plans that complied with building codes and to supervise construction.

## SOUTH KOREA-SEOUL

### Many Investment Firms Looking To Korea

Unitas Capital, previously known as CCMP Capital Asia, is looking to invest in Korea with nearly \$4 billion and a signed investment partnership with the state-run Korea Development Bank (KDB). KDB is also

partnering with investment house Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, which is looking to take over assets from cash-strapped local companies. And CVC and Morgan Stanley PE are also said to be looking for opportunities to invest in Korea. Unitas has expressed interest in machinery and chemical companies. In Korea, several large companies are said to be seeking new owners including Daewoo Engineering & Construction, Hynix Semiconductor and Daewoo International.

## TAIWAN-TAIPEI

### Hotels And Hostels To Receive Aid

The Ministry of Transportation and Communications (MOTC) has outlined a plan to give hotel and hostel owners with property damaged by Typhoon Morakot, tax breaks, loans and credit guarantees. The Tourism Bureau has found that hotels and hostels in Chiayi, Tainan, Kaohsiung, Pingtung and Taitung counties were severely damaged by the typhoon and 492 hotels and 697 hostels may qualify for the subsidy program. Those that qualify will receive a 50 percent discount on their establishment's property tax for the year and will be able to borrow up to NT\$10 million for hotels and NT\$1 million for hostels. In addition, owners can qualify for credit lines up to NT\$30 million for hotels and NT\$4 million for hostels and can receive a credit guarantee from the government if they are unable to furnish collateral. In order to receive the subsidies, hotel and hostel operators must include evidence of damage in their applications.

## THE NETHERLANDS-AMSTERDAM

### Cleaning Service Agencies See Loss In Turnover

In the first decline since 2004, cleaning service agencies had a turnover loss of one percent in the second quarter of 2009 over the second quarter of 2008. With many office building and hotel vacancies, the demand for cleaning services has fallen and agencies working for offices, hotels and the construction sector in particular were seriously affected. However, agencies providing interior cleaning services, which account for three quarters of total turnover in the cleaning services industry, realized a small growth in turnover. And within the entire business services sector, which had four percent turnover loss over the same period in 2008, cleaning

agencies are performing fairly well. In the cleaning services sector, prices rose by three percent.

## UK-LONDON

### Mixed Bag On Pandemic Planning

While a survey of more than 420 businesses and organizations across the UK from international law firm Eversheds has revealed that 72 percent of firms have already suffered absenteeism as the result of H1N1, 41 percent said they have no contingency plans in place and 74 percent considered the pandemic flu threat as a mid to low-level priority. Of those that had contingency plans, a majority reported that they were not expecting to put them into place in the next two months. The survey further showed that 38 percent of businesses believe they will lose revenue as a result of the H1N1 flu and 21 percent report they expect to close or partially close their businesses.

## UK-LONDON

### MITIE Lands FM Contract With Santander

MITIE, has secured a three-year integrated facilities management contract with Santander. The contract, with a total value of £100m, will cover all of Santander's UK Head Office buildings portfolio of 33 sites in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Central to the new contract, will be MITIE helping to bring together the facilities management teams from Alliance and Leicester, Abbey and GE Money into one enlarged team as they rebrand as Santander. The contract, which started at the beginning of August includes a complete range of soft and hard FM services involving more than 450 employees transferred into MITIE.

## US-DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

### New Preparedness Guide for Small Businesses

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano joined Small Business Administration (SBA) Administrator Karen Mills and Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention Influenza Division Deputy Director, Daniel Jernigan, this week to announce release of a preparedness guide to assist small businesses in planning for the H1N1 flu. To see the guide go to <http://www.sba.gov/flu>

## US-MASSACHUSETTS

### Absenteeism Will Impact Business

**A** study by the Harvard School of Public Health reported that two-thirds of the over 1,000 businesses surveyed could not carry out operations if half their workers were out for two weeks. In addition four out of every five businesses expect severe problems if half their workers are out for a month. The study reveals that many American businesses are unprepared to deal with widespread employee absenteeism in the event of an outbreak of H1N1 flu.

## US-MASSACHUSETTS

### Bill Gives State Power To Forcibly Quarantine

**T**he "Pandemic Response Bill" passed by the Massachusetts State Senate in April and now awaiting approval in the house will allow the state to forcefully quarantine people in the event of a pandemic. The bill includes forcing health providers to vaccinate people, and authorizes forcible entry into private homes. Violators could face jail time or a fine of \$1,000 per day.

## US-OHIO

### Meth Problem Requires Cleaning Services

**T**he widespread meth problem in Ohio is creating a boom for companies that test for and clean up after meth labs, which turn homes, motel rooms, storage lockers and any other location where the drug is made into a toxic waste site. In 2008 over 68 meth labs were found and experts expect the trend to continue, resulting in the need for professional testing and cleanup services, especially as landlords, hotel owners and others realize the legal ramifications of renting homes, apartments or rooms used in meth operations without first cleaning them.

## US-PENNSYLVANIA

### Cleaning Mixture Causes Lethal Cloud

**T**he Penn State Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Response Team responded to the Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity house at Pennsylvania State University after fraternity members mixed cleaning chemicals in a bathroom. The mixture, of ammonia and bleach was five times the lethal dose of chlorine gas and formed a lethal gas cloud. Three fraternity members were taken to the hospital and the building was evacuated until the gas was cleared.

## US-WISCONSIN

### Drain Cleaner Causes Reaction

**A**fter a plumber used drain cleaner in a sink in the photo department, the resulting chemical reaction with the residual photo chemicals forced the evacuation of a Walgreens store on South Park Street in Madison, Wisconsin. About a dozen people were in the store when the incident happened.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

18th Congress of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors  
Auckland, New Zealand

Congress updates will be available at:  
BSCNZ PO Box 31-067, Lower Hutt 5040  
EMAIL: [info@bsc.org.nz](mailto:info@bsc.org.nz)  
WEBSITE: [www.bsc.org.nz](http://www.bsc.org.nz)

19th Congress of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors  
Curitiba, Brazil  
2012



ALL BUILDING SERVICE CONTRACTING COMPANIES THAT ARE MEMBERS OF ONE OF THE ASSOCIATIONS THAT IS A WFBC MEMBER, ARE AUTOMATICALLY MEMBERS OF THE WFBC.

## WFBC ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

ConverPro, Inc.  
St-Cesaire, QC  
450-469-5588  
www.converpro.com

Daniels Associates  
Phoenix, AZ  
602-992-5192  
www.danielsworldwide.com

Ecolab  
St. Paul, MN  
651-293-2233  
www.ecolab.com

JohnsonDiversey  
Sturtevant, WI  
262-631-4001  
www.johnsondiversev.com

TruVox  
UK  
44 (0) 23 8070 2200  
www.truvov.com

Wood Wyant, Inc.  
Laval, QC  
450-680-9731  
www.woodwyant.ca

## WFBC MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Algemene Belgische  
Schoomaakunie-Union  
Generale Belge du Nettoyage  
Brussels, Belgium  
Hilde Engels-ABSU.UGBN@skynet.be

Association de Empresas de Limpieza  
Buenos Aires, Argentina  
Norberto Peluso-correo@limpiolux.com.ar

Building Service Contractors Association of Australia  
Crows Nest, NSW, Australia  
bscaansw@bscaa.asn.au

Quebec Building Service Contractors Association, Inc.  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada  
Roger Gauthier-fortier.gauthier@sympatico.ca

Building Service Contractors Association International  
Chicago, Illinois, USA  
Maurice Desmarais-mdesmarais@bscai.org

Building Service Contractors of New Zealand, Inc.  
Auckland, New Zealand  
Marja Verkerk-info@bsc.org.nz

Bundesinnungsverband des Gebaeudereiniger-Handwerks  
Bonn, Germany  
Johannes Bungart RA-biv@gebaeudereiniger.de

Cleaning and Support Services Association  
London, United Kingdom  
Andrew Large-alarge@cleaningassoc.org

Febrac  
Brasilia, Distrito Federal, Brazil  
Silvio Gaspar-silviojgaspar@upsbeneficios.com.br

Building Managers Association of the Republic of China  
Taipei, Taiwan  
Kenneth Kao-pacifico@ms37.hinet.net

Federation des Enterprises de Proprete  
Paris, France  
Carol Sintes-csintes@federation-proprete.com

Japan Building Maintenance Association  
Tokyo, Japan  
Keizo Kozen-kozen@j-bma.or.jp

Korean Association of Sanitary Maintenance  
Seoul, Korea  
Young Hoi Um-kasm@kasm.or.kr

OSB  
Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands  
info@osb.nl