

The Voice of Golden

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INSIDE – Things to know

Colorado FASTER Fact Sheet

www.coloradofaster.com

Colorado's Quiet Crisis:

- Colorado has 125 structurally-deficient bridges rated in poor condition and many more bridges designated as functionally-obsolete. FASTER will begin the process of funding the most urgent maintenance, repairs and reconstruction.
- Colorado's population grew by approximately 660,000 people since 2000, and is projected to grow by an additional 1 million people in the next decade. Colorado's existing transportation system can no longer efficiently move existing – much less projected – traffic volumes, people, goods and services throughout the state.
- Like states all across the country, Colorado's unemployment rate is rising. FASTER is projected to save and create thousands of jobs throughout Colorado.
- Colorado's road and bridge system is in its current state of disrepair because revenues are not keeping pace with the rising costs of maintenance, repair and construction.

Colorado's 22-cent-per-gallon fuel tax, which pays for the majority of roadway maintenance, has not been increased since 1992.

What FASTER Will Accomplish:

- FASTER is projected to generate approximately \$252 million annually for transportation improvements. The impact to the average driver will be about \$2.60 a month in the first year and \$3.50 a month when fully implemented in 2012.
- FASTER establishes a Statewide Bridge Enterprise that begins the process of funding maintenance and repair of Colorado's most urgent structurally-deficient and functionally obsolete bridges.
- Phased in over three years, the bridge fund will build toward a \$100 million annual investment in bridge improvements.

State, Local and Private Collaboration:

- FASTER establishes a High-Performance Transportation Enterprise to encourage innovative financing strategies, including certificates of participation, public-private partnerships, operating concession agreements, user-fee financing and design/build contracting.
- At full implementation, FASTER annually allocates \$150 million to state and local road safety projects based on the existing distribution formula of 60 percent to the state, 22 percent to counties and 18 percent to municipalities
- FASTER gives veto authority over proposed public highway user-fees by requiring 100 percent approval of federal, state and impacted local governments before establishing a highway user-fee or congestion-based tolling. □ \$5 million of the funds will be allocated to the State Transit and Rail Fund proposed in SB09-94 (Williams/Levy) for grants to local governments for local transit projects.
- Allows Regional Transportation District to go to the ballot without legislative approval.

Efficiency and Accountability:

- FASTER brings private sector professional contractors, engineers and others with relevant expertise together with CDOT to form an Efficiency and Accountability Committee to identify financial and operational efficiencies within the Department.
- FASTER requires CDOT's executive director to report annually to the legislature on Committee activities and implementation recommendations.

FASTER's Primary Funding Components

Daily Car Rental Fee

- Requires rental car companies to pay a \$2 daily car rental fee.

Weight-Based Vehicle Registration Fee Increase and Exemptions

- Because vehicle weight disproportionately affects road and bridge deterioration, FASTER establishes the following fee schedule according to vehicle weight. The new fees will be imposed on registrations starting July 1, 2009, and will average \$41 for new registrations when fully phased in over three years.

Fee Schedule

Vehicle Weight Bridge Safety Fee Road Safety Fee Total

2009-2010 2010-2011 2011-2012 2011-2012

Less than 2,000 lbs. \$6.50 \$9.75 \$13.00 \$16.00 \$29.00 Between 2,000 and 5,000 lbs.

\$9.00 \$13.50 \$18.00 \$23.00 \$41.00

Between 5,000 and 10,000 lbs.

\$11.50 \$17.25 \$23.00 \$28.00 \$51.00

Between 10,000 and 16,000 lbs.

\$14.50 \$21.75 \$29.00 \$37.00 \$66.00

Greater than 16,000 lbs.

\$16.00 \$24.00 \$32.00 \$39.00 \$71.00

NOTES: The Bridge Safety fee is phased in over three years. More than 80 percent of all vehicles

registered in Colorado weigh less than 5,000 pounds. Agricultural/farm vehicles pay half the proposed fee increase. Rental car companies are exempt from the vehicle registration fee increase.

"On every unauthoritative exercise of power by the legislature must the people rise in rebellion or their silence be construed into a surrender of that power to them? If so, how many rebellions should we have had already?"

--Thomas Jefferson, Notes on Virginia, Query 12, 1782

A Time for Choosing

Given as a stump speech, at speaking engagements, and on a memorable night in 1964 in support of Barry Goldwater's presidential campaign. This version is from that broadcast.

1964

I am going to talk of controversial things. I make no apology for this.

It's time we asked ourselves if we still know the freedoms intended for us by the Founding Fathers. James

Madison said, "We base all our experiments on the capacity of mankind for self government."



This idea -- that government was beholden to the people, that it had no other source of power -- is still the newest, most unique idea in all the long history of man's relation to man. This is the issue of this election: Whether we believe in our capacity for self-government or whether we abandon the American Revolution and confess that a little intellectual elite in a far-distant capital can plan our lives for us better than we can plan them ourselves.

You and I are told we must choose between a left or right, but I suggest there is no such thing as a left or right. There is only an up or down. Up to man's age-old dream-- the maximum of individual freedom consistent with order -- or down to the ant heap of totalitarianism. Regardless of their sincerity, their humanitarian motives, those who would sacrifice freedom for security have embarked on this downward path. Plutarch warned, "The real destroyer of the liberties of the people is he who spreads among them bounties, donations and benefits."

The Founding Fathers knew a government can't control the economy without controlling people. And they knew when a government sets out to do that, it must use force and coercion to achieve its purpose. So we have come to a time for choosing.

Public servants say, always with the best of intentions, "What greater service we could render if only we had a little more money and a little more power." But the truth is that outside of its legitimate function, government does nothing as well or as economically as the private sector.

Yet any time you and I question the schemes of the do-gooders, we're denounced as being opposed to their humanitarian goals. It seems impossible to legitimately debate their solutions with the assumption that all of us share the desire to help the less fortunate. They tell us we're always "against," never "for" anything.

We are for a provision that destitution should not follow unemployment by reason of old age, and to that end we have accepted Social Security as a step toward meeting the problem. However, we are against those entrusted with this program when they practice deception regarding its fiscal shortcomings, when they charge that any criticism of the program means that we want to end payments....

We are for aiding our allies by sharing our material blessings with nations which share our fundamental beliefs, but we are against doling out money government to government, creating bureaucracy, if not socialism, all over the world.

We need true tax reform that will at least make a start toward restoring for our children the American Dream that wealth is denied to no one, that each individual has the right to fly as high as his strength and ability will take him.... But we cannot have such reform while our tax policy is engineered by people who view the tax as a means of achieving changes in our social structure....

Have we the courage and the will to face up to the immorality and discrimination of the progressive tax, and demand a return to traditional proportionate taxation? . . . Today in our country the tax collector's share is 37 cents of every dollar earned. Freedom has never been so fragile, so close to slipping from our grasp.

Are you willing to spend time studying the issues, making yourself aware, and then conveying that information to family and friends? Will you resist the temptation to get a government handout for your community? Realize that the doctor's fight against socialized medicine is your fight. We can't socialize the doctors without socializing the patients. Recognize that government invasion of public power is eventually an assault upon your own business. If some among you fear taking a stand because you are afraid of reprisals from customers, clients, or even government, recognize that you are just feeding the crocodile hoping he'll eat you last.

If all of this seems like a great deal of trouble, think what's at stake. We are faced with the most evil enemy mankind has known in his long climb from the swamp to the stars. There can be no security anywhere in the free world if there is no fiscal and economic stability within the United States. Those who ask us to trade our freedom for the soup kitchen of the welfare state are architects of a policy of accommodation.

They say the world has become too complex for simple answers. They are wrong. There are no easy answers, but there are simple answers. We must have the courage to do what we know is morally right. Winston Churchill said that "the destiny of man is not measured by material computation. When great forces are on the move in the world, we learn we are spirits--not animals." And he said, "There is something going on in time and space, and beyond time and space, which, whether we like it or not, spells duty."

You and I have a rendezvous with destiny. We will preserve for our children this, the last best hope of man on earth, or we will sentence them to take the first step into a thousand years of darkness. If we fail, at least let our children and our children's children say of us we justified our brief moment here. We did all that could be done.

Citizens Urged to Buy Flood Insurance Now

Release Date: March 16, 2009

Release Number: R8-09-007

[» 2009 Region VIII News Releases](#)

Denver - As we enter the Spring snowmelt season there's always the potential for flooding in FEMA's six-state Region VIII, which includes Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

So what can individuals and families do to prepare? They can buy flood insurance.

And since there is a 30-day waiting period before a policy can take effect, it's important to get flood insurance right away. When the snow melts or the rains come, it may be too late to file a flood insurance claim.

The average cost of flood insurance in FEMA Region VIII states (CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY) is only \$683 a year – less than \$2 a day for financial protection from what could be devastating effects of a flood in a home or business.

“Over the past several years, each of our Region VIII states have experienced some level of flooding,” said FEMA Region VIII Mitigation Division Director Jeanine Petterson. “Springtime is always a good season for families and businesses to assess their flood risks, and seriously consider getting flood insurance.”

Flood insurance benefits can far exceed what is available through federal disaster assistance. The most prevalent form of assistance comes in the form of a low-interest loan and is only made available within a federally declared disaster area. In addition, a disaster assistance payment averages \$4,000 - often well short of the actual damage.

There are many myths surrounding flood insurance. For instance, many people assume that homeowner's or business-owner's insurance covers flood damage – it does not. Many believe that a property must be in a Special Flood Hazard Area or a “floodplain” to be eligible for coverage – not true. In fact, 20 to 25 percent of all claims come from floods that happened in low or moderate flood-risk areas.

Find out more about your risk and flood insurance at www.floodsmart.gov. To purchase flood insurance or find an agent, call 1-800-427-2419.

FEMA leads and supports the nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation, to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the nation from all hazards including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters.

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CAPITOL REVIEW · By MARK HILLMAN · Feb. 26, 2008

Mark's Must Reads

[A letter from The Boss - MarkHillman.com](#)

[In Obama we trust - Wall Street Journal](#)

[Government meddling got us into this mess - Barrons](#)

[Williams: Race cowards in academia - Investors Business Daily](#)

When is a limit not a limit?

Emboldened that the state supreme court still hasn't ruled on Gov. Bill Ritter's plainly unconstitutional property tax hike, tax-and-spenders at the State Capitol are drawing up their game plan for another end-run around voters.

If they can get away with hiking property taxes by claiming it's not a tax increase, then Democrats are increasingly confident they can again bypass voters and the state constitution by claiming that a spending limit is something else.

The Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR) in the state constitution famously mandates that taxes cannot be increased without voter approval. However, voters also get the final word on weakening any limits on "revenue, spending and debt."

In 2005, Referendum C suspended much of TABOR for five years and modified other portions indefinitely. However, Ref C left intact a provision that limits annual increases in general fund spending to six percent and devotes anything over that amount to roads and bridges.

Now Democrats - and one Republican - want to eviscerate that limit, too, although their justification and methods are dubious.

Even Gov. Ritter's budget office - known for its dreamily-optimistic projections - doesn't expect general fund growth to bump against the limit in the next four years.

Why then are liberals chafing at a limit that won't actually impede them anytime soon? For the same reason their counterparts in Washington turned an "economic stimulus" bill into a big-government spending binge.

"You never want a crisis to go to waste," reminds Rahm Emanuel, chief of staff to President Obama.

Taxpayers striving to keep their own financial boat afloat don't have time to worry about the minutiae of government formulas, so Democrats shamelessly use today's economic distress to dismantle anything that might slow state spending when the economy rebounds.

Spendaholics are all atwitter. "We've got to do something!" more often conceals an agenda of opportunism than of necessity.

"We don't have a spending problem, we have a revenue problem," complain activists at the liberal Colorado Center on Law and Policy. Translation: "Government can't spend enough because taxes aren't high enough."

No wonder they don't trust the voters.

Next, Jean Dubofsky, a former supreme court justice with a crafty legal mind and a penchant for legislating from the bench, proffered a clever legal strategy.

Dubofsky is no neutral observer. She's a board member of the Colorado ACLU and two liberal think tanks that despise TABOR. Her opinion suggests that the six percent limit really isn't a limit and can, therefore, be changed without voter approval.

Two Democrat legislators are dutifully parroting that message.

Denver Rep. Mark Ferrandino claims the six percent limit "doesn't actually limit the amount of money we're spending." Colorado Springs Sen. John Morse calls the six percent limit "an allocation strategy. TABOR is silent on allocation strategies."

Past legislatures and former governors from both parties have taken TABOR at its word when it plainly says: "Other limits on . . . revenue, spending and debt may be weakened only by future voter approval." Further, the constitution requires that TABOR's "preferred interpretation shall reasonably restrain most the growth of government."

Although a spending limit of six percent is indeed arbitrary, it is hardly draconian. Yes, it could cause major difficulty in an age of hyper-inflation, but for eight of the past 10 years, six percent was more than the combined growth of inflation and population. Why then do liberals find it so oppressive?

Because expanding entitlement spending is the holy grail of the Left. More people who depend on government means more votes for the party that promises bigger government. Expanding social welfare is difficult when anything over six percent must go to roads and bridges.

It's ironic that liberals who liken government spending to "investment" now prefer to shift money away from lasting infrastructure and into social programs where more spending always begets demand for more spending.

If Gov. Ritter and Democrat legislators aren't willing to trust voters with these decisions, as the constitution requires, why then should voters trust them with their taxes?

CAPITOL REVIEW · By MARK HILLMAN · March 9, 2008

Mark's Must Reads

[Krauthammer: Deception at core of Obama agenda - Real Clear Politics](#)
[Carroll: Ethics watch? Hardly - Denver Post](#)
[The Obama Economy - Wall St Journal](#)
[A Letter from The Boss - MarkHillman.com \(this link works!\)](#)

Drivers pay more, get less due to Dems' doubletalk

Beginning July 1, Colorado drivers will pay higher taxes - we're told to call them "fees" - on every vehicle every year when we renew our license plates.

The increase of \$29 to \$51 per vehicle is projected to generate \$250 million annually to repair unsafe roads and bridges, Gov. Bill Ritter said when he signed the "fee" hike into law.

All this occurs under the guise of economic stimulus as Colorado Democrats learn from their Washington counterparts to strike quickly while the economy is on the ropes and the public is too worried about their own finances to pay attention to statehouse shenanigans.

To be fair, transportation funding from Colorado's fuel tax has been stagnant in recent years because it's calculated on a per-gallon, rather than a per-cent, basis. Higher fuel prices and better fuel efficiency keep total fuel consumption relatively flat. For the last 10 years, the state's share of fuel tax receipts never fell below \$379 million but never grew above \$430 million.

When the economy is booming, roads and bridges receive a tremendous bonus from the general fund - income and sales taxes - which nearly matched the fuel tax, adding \$1.3 billion to the transportation budget from 2005 to 2007.

However, just hours after Gov. Ritter signed the vehicle fee hike into law, every Democrat in the state senate voted to sever this general fund lifeline to transportation.

If it sounds like Democrats are talking out of both sides of their mouths, it's because they are - at least, so far. One day, they say our roads and bridges are

unsafe and demand more money from Colorado drivers. The next day, they take a hatchet to transportation funding.

Any sane person can be excused for wondering what they're drinking or smoking at the state capitol.

Sadly this is nothing new. Dating back to former Gov. Roy Romer, Democrats' favorite tactic has been to grow social welfare spending and leave transportation with scraps. Romer's approach was to tell voters that if they wanted more money for transportation, they should vote for higher taxes.

In 1997, Romer and Republicans reached a compromise that guaranteed the aforementioned bonus source of highway funding and limited general fund spending increases to no more than six percent per year.

Republican Gov. Bill Owens staunchly defended that compromise and worked out a similar agreement with Democrats in 2002.

Now that Democrats hold a monopoly at the state capitol, they seem intent upon smashing those agreements in order to boost social welfare spending.

Senate Bill 228 would eviscerate the limit on general fund spending, end a vital source of transportation funding, and allow rapid expansion of entitlements. Even Gov. Romer didn't suggest repealing this limit without the required public vote, but today's Democrats are above consulting lowly taxpayers.

The bill's sponsor, Sen. John Morse, nearly stepped in it recently when, reacting to opposition from Denver chamber of commerce, he declared, "Let's let the people's elected representatives decide that - not the chamber."

Better yet, Sen. Morse, let's let **the people** decide for themselves, as the constitution - which you pledged to uphold - requires.

Ironically, proponents suggest that eliminating a spending limit to facilitate more spending on social welfare will help Colorado "get out of a recession."

That's an argument with rife with economic illiteracy. If all spending limits disappeared tomorrow, state government still couldn't spend an extra dime. In a recession, it's the economy that limits spending. Moreover, Colorado's government doesn't fund the economy; the economy funds government.

If Democrats want to expand social welfare spending, they should be honest about it. If they believe transportation needs more money, they should first protect every existing resource. And if they want to repeal state spending limits, they should follow the constitution by asking the voters.

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From a Mrs. Cook to Ed Griffin of www.freedom-force.org/

My husband and I just listened to a CD of Ed Griffin) explaining the formation of the Federal Reserve. It's shocking how much manipulation and deception of which we are the victims, under the banner of Democracy. Having this perspective now, I understand why you say that the labels--Socialism, Fascism, Republican, Democrat, etc. just don't matter.

We do have a question: Who is going to bail out the US when we citizens no longer have the money to pay? If the goal is to reduce the citizens of the US to poor "peasants" like other 3rd World countries, then the time is coming when we peasants won't have the money to pay the interest OR the principal on loans. Does not the whole fraudulent system then collapse? Where then is their power? Won't those in power eventually be shooting themselves in the foot?

Mrs. Cook, 2009 Feb 28

Hello Mrs. Cook.

This concept deserves thoughtful analysis covering many aspects of the drama but, in my view, it all boils down to this: The elitists do not expect the common man to pay for this current debt in terms of money. In the face of crisis, people now are exchanging their personal freedom for security, or at least promises of security. At the end of that process, money as we have known it disappears and becomes merely digital impulses in accounts assigned to each person. Those digits will be used to acquire the necessities of life. The quantity people receive will depend on their service to the state and their willingness to cooperate. Those who obey will be told where to live and what work to do. Those who dissent will be cut off and will starve or beg. The elitists' power will lie in total control over the economic lives of their subjects. Common people will support the government, not with taxes, but with human effort. They will be slaves to the system. Money is not a significant factor under slavery. Masters do not collect money from their slaves. Instead, they possess the output of their labor.

Ed Griffin

Jim

jjmcahoon@comcast.net

"Every child in America should be acquainted with his own country. He should read books that furnish him with ideas that will be useful to him in life and practice. As soon as he opens his lips, he should rehearse the history of his own country."

--Noah Webster, On the Education of Youth in America, 1788

Closer Look at Obama's Budget by Brian Riedl



As we dig into the President's budget, more emerges:

1) Remember the President stating his budget "identified \$2 trillion in savings over the next decade?" It actually increases spending by \$1 trillion. But he classifies as "savings" \$1.4 trillion in tax increases (apparently savings for the government, not for you) and \$1.5 trillion "saved" in Iraq relative to a fantasy baseline that otherwise assumes current spending levels forever. The Iraq gimmick is the equivalent of a family deciding to "save" \$10,000 by first assuming an expensive vacation and then not taking it.

2) Real federal spending per household - \$24,000 before the recession - would reach \$33,000 per household by 2019. Between 2008 and 2013, the \$5.7 trillion in new debt will come to \$48,000 per household.

3) It is easy to "cut the deficit in half" after you've quadrupled it. Furthermore, three upcoming developments - the end of the recession, troop pullout in Iraq, and phase-out of the supposedly-temporary "stimulus" spending - would, by themselves, cut the 2013 budget deficit in half. President Bush was slammed for averaging \$300 billion budget deficits while funding a war. President Obama will be praised for running \$500 billion deficits in 2013 at a time of (assumed) peace and prosperity.

4) The President's budget proposes a new PAYGO law - and then violates it by \$3.4 trillion.

5) The tax increases are staggering. The President would raise taxes by \$1 trillion on the top 2.5 million tax filers. That comes to \$400,000 per tax filer over ten years. And despite these harsh tax hikes (and a \$646 billion cap-and-trade tax hike), the President's rosy budget assumes a much faster economic recovery than CBO or the Blue Chip Consensus.

Source- Brian Riedl is Grover M. Hermann Fellow in Federal Budgetary Affairs in the Thomas A. Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies at the Heritage Foundation.

Here's Star Parker's weekly column. Hope you can take the time to read it.

Back on Uncle Sam's Plantation

The legacy of American socialism is our blighted inner cities, dysfunctional inner city schools, and broken black families

Star Parker, founder and president of CURE

Six years ago I wrote a book called "Uncle Sam's Plantation." I wrote the book to tell my own story of what I saw living inside the welfare state and my own transformation out of it.

I said in that book that indeed there are two Americas. A poor America on socialism and a wealthy America on capitalism.

I talked about government programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS), Emergency Assistance to Needy Families with Children (EANF), Section 8 Housing, and Food Stamps.

A vast sea of perhaps well intentioned government programs, all initially set into motion in the 1960's, that were going to lift the nation's poor out of poverty.

A benevolent Uncle Sam welcomed mostly poor black Americans onto the government plantation. Those who accepted the invitation switched mindsets from "How do I take care of myself?" to "What do I have to do to stay on the plantation?"

Instead of solving economic problems, government welfare socialism created monstrous moral and spiritual problems. The kind of problems that are inevitable when individuals turn responsibility for their lives over to others.

The legacy of American socialism is our blighted inner cities, dysfunctional inner city schools, and broken black families.

Through God's grace, I found my way out. It was then that I understood what freedom meant and how great this country is.

I had the privilege of working on welfare reform in 1996, passed by a Republican congress and signed into law by a Democrat president. A few years after enactment, welfare roles were down fifty percent.

I thought we were on the road to moving socialism out of our poor black communities and replacing it with wealth producing American capitalism.

But, incredibly, we are going in the opposite direction.

Instead of poor America on socialism becoming more like rich American on capitalism, rich America on capitalism is becoming like poor America on socialism.

Uncle Sam has welcomed our banks onto the plantation and they have said, "Thank you, Suh."

Now, instead of thinking about what creative things need to be done to serve customers, they are thinking about what they have to tell Massah in order to get their cash.

There is some kind of irony that this is all happening under our first black president on the 200th anniversary of the birthday of Abraham Lincoln.

Worse, socialism seems to be the element of our new young president. And maybe even more troubling, our corporate executives seem happy to move onto the plantation.

In an op-ed on the opinion page of the Washington Post, Mr. Obama is clear that the goal of his trillion dollar spending plan is much more than short term economic stimulus.

"This plan is more than a prescription for short-term spending-it's a strategy for America's long-term growth and opportunity in areas such as renewable energy, health care, and education."

Perhaps more incredibly, Obama seems to think that government taking over an economy is a new idea. Or that massive growth in government can take place "with unprecedented transparency and accountability."

Yes, sir, we heard it from Jimmy Carter when he created the Department of Energy, the Synfuels Corporation, and the Department of Education.

Or how about the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 -- The War on Poverty -- which President Johnson said "...does not merely expand old programs or improve what is already being done. It charts a new course. It strikes at the causes, not just the consequences of poverty."

Trillions of dollars later, black poverty is the same. But black families are not, with triple the incidence of single parent homes and out of wedlock births.

It's not complicated. Americans can accept Barack Obama's invitation to move onto the plantation. Or they can choose personal responsibility and freedom.

Does anyone really need to think about what the choice should be?

Survey of High School Students Reveals Careers in the Skilled Trades Are at Bottom of the List

RIDGID — *Wednesday, February 04, 2009*

A RIDGID Survey Reveals Top and Bottom Career Paths

ELYRIA, Ohio--Feb. 4, 2009 (via BUSINESS WIRE)--A recent survey by RIDGID, a leading supplier of professional grade tools, reveals that a scant six percent of high school students hope to have a future career in the skilled trades—defined as plumbers, carpenters, electricians, heating, ventilation or air conditioning installers, or repair people.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, by 2014 the U.S. will need 29 percent more HVACR and 21 percent more plumbing technicians, a total of more than 100,000 skilled workers in the job pool. Among the 500,000 plumbers in the United States alone, the demand is expected to grow 10 percent by 2016, however, due to an aging generation of skilled professionals, more than a third of all plumbers – or approximately 167,000 workers – will be exiting the workforce.

“The economy hit construction hard, no doubt,” says Fred Pond, President, of RIDGID. “However, the realities of an aging infrastructure, urbanization and a mature workforce all remain. When this turns around, and it will, demand for skilled labor will be significant.”

“There is definitely a shortage of skilled plumbers,” said Brian Shields, owner of Brian Shields Plumbing Inc. “I’ve been a plumber for 20 years and there are no skilled plumbers in my area that I feel comfortable employing. I had to travel to another state to find someone who was willing to learn the trade. I’m one of a dying breed.”

“On-site labor is one thing that can not be outsourced,” says Wyatt Kilmartin, director, RIDGID branding. “Young people need to know that historically there is a high demand and great future potential – including the opportunity to own and operate your own business – that comes with a career in the skilled trades.”

The survey was conducted by KeyStat Marketing and Greenfield Online to ensure statistical integrity. The nationwide sample was divided between 80 percent males and 20 percent females, for a total sample size of 1,023. All respondents were high school students’ age 14 to 18 years who were currently enrolled in 9th through 12th grade.

From the pool of 94 percent of students who are not interested in pursuing a career in the trades, respondents revealed multiple factors that may be hindering them, such as a lack of knowledge about the industry, and the overall perception of the skilled trades.

Why Students Are Not Interested in the Skilled Trades:

- * 53 percent of students say working in the trades just doesn’t interest them.
- * 25 percent of students cite they are not interested in working in the skilled trades because they are not mechanically inclined, while 24 percent say they are not good at fixing things.
- * 21 percent of students who would not consider a career in the skilled trades say it’s because they don’t know enough about it.
- * 15 percent of students would not consider a career in the skilled trades because they don’t believe there is a lot of opportunity in the skilled trades.
- * 11 percent of students were not interested because they don’t think the trades are cool.
- * 10 percent of students say skilled trades were not high tech enough.

In addition, all students who were surveyed revealed their impressions of jobs in the skilled trades.

- * 54 percent of young people believe there is a better future working in computers than working in skilled trades.
- * 37 percent of young people believe working in an office is more respected than working with your hands.
- * 25 percent of young people believe skilled trades jobs are old-fashioned.

Where Young People Want To Work:

So, what’s the number one field of interest for graduating seniors? RIDGID’s survey results show 25 percent of students hope to work in a career with computers or the Internet. The next most popular fields of interest include business (16 percent), engineering (15 percent), healthcare, defined as doctors, nurses, assistants, technicians (15 percent) and the entertainment/arts field, defined as actor, musician, TV anchor, reporter, producer (15 percent).

“The problem with kids not pursuing a career in the skilled trades is largely because they are not introduced to it,” said Mark Yochim, licensed Plumbing Contractor and owner of Mark A. Yochim and Associates. “When I was in school 40 years ago, you could pick up a class in industrial arts and get a feel for working with tools. Today, kids don’t have that opportunity.”

Based on RIDGID’s survey results, there appears to be an opportunity to draw a new audience into the skilled trades, but education is key. Whether or not their high school offers vocational classes and if the student knows someone working in the skilled profession affects students’ interest in the trades.

Perceptions of the skilled trades after students were educated:

- * Students who have taken skilled trades vocational classes in high school are more apt to hope to have a future career in the skilled trades. Compared to students in general (14 percent compared to 6 percent).
- * An overwhelming 77 percent of students who have taken skilled trades vocational classes in high school say they would consider a career in the skilled trades, nearly twice the percentage of students in general (39 percent).

* 60 percent of students say they are more interested in working in the trades knowing that skilled trades people can work for someone else and still earn up to \$90,000 or more per year.

* The majority of students are more interested in working in the trades knowing that skilled trades people can have flexible hours (55 percent), free job training is sometimes available (54 percent) and that skilled trades people can have good work benefits (54 percent).

* Those who know either a relative or friend working in the skilled trades are more likely to consider a career in the skilled trades (50 percent) than those who don't know anyone working in the field (39 percent).

Industry leaders are working hard to help bolster the image of the industry by educating students about the benefits of a career in the skilled trades. RIDGID created the PROFuture program to help educate students about the skilled trades. "PROFuture started in response to the lack of young people entering the trades and filling jobs," said Kilmartin. "It is designed to reinforce the decision of those joining the trades and educate those people yet to make a decision. We are going to need them."

RIDGID is a subsidiary of Emerson (NYSE: EMR), based in St. Louis, Missouri (USA), is a global leader in bringing technology and engineering together to create innovative solutions for customers through its network power, process management, industrial automation, climate technologies, and appliance and tools businesses. Sales in fiscal 2008 were \$24.8 billion. For more information, visit www.Emerson.com.

Subject: FW: MESSAGE TO EMPLOYEES FROM SECRETARY NAPOLITANO: SWINE FLU PREVENTION METHODS

From: FEMA-Employee-Communications

To: ALL FEMA EMPLOYEES P-Z; ALL FEMA EMPLOYEES H-O; ALL FEMA EMPLOYEES A-G; ALL FEMA CONTRACTORS M-Z; ALL FEMA CONTRACTORS A-L

Subject: MESSAGE TO EMPLOYEES FROM SECRETARY NAPOLITANO: SWINE FLU PREVENTION METHODS

To all DHS employees:

You have all no doubt seen press reports of the swine flu outbreak in Mexico. Here in the U.S., there have been eight cases reported in California and Texas. Thankfully, all the victims have recovered.

I want you to know that I am monitoring this situation and we are working in coordination with local, state and international public health agencies to gather information and keep lines of communication open. Public health officials have increased monitoring and surveillance efforts both here in the U.S. and in Mexico. They are encouraging people to contact their public health offices and their physicians if they think they may have been exposed.

The Centers for Disease Control are posting all the latest information about what is happening here in the U.S. and Mexico with the swine flu, and you can log on to their website at www.cdc.gov/flu/swine.

There are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- If you live in San Diego County or Imperial County, California or Guadalupe County, Texas and become ill with influenza-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, or vomiting or diarrhea, you may want to contact your health care provider, particularly if you are worried about your symptoms. Your health care provider will determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed.
- If you get sick with influenza, CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

We will send out additional information to our employees who work along the Southwest border and in Mexico, as well as regular updates to all DHS employees until they are no longer needed.

Sincerely,

Janet Napolitano
Secretary

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