

THE
PLUG 





A Word from the Training Director

Hello everyone,

The holidays have arrived quickly, and with them comes the end of the 2025 fall semester. Whether you're in a 5-year apprenticeship or a 3-year residential program, it may feel like a long journey—but graduation will be here before you know it, just like the holidays! Take advantage of your time here to grow and improve every day.

Local 332 needs more skilled and motivated electricians than ever before. Work is ramping up, and the demand is not only for qualified electricians, but also for strong leaders in our industry. We encourage all apprentices to set their sights high—on becoming foremen, general foremen, superintendents, general superintendents, and even signatory contractors. The foundation for all of these roles begins with becoming a competent, professional journeyman wireman.

Recently, I had the honor of attending the Western States Competition in Kennewick, Washington. Representing ETASV, Local 332, and the NECA Santa Clara Valley Chapter was apprentice **Tyler Lerma**. Tyler truly embodies the mission of these three organizations. His hard work, dedication, and focus demonstrate that opportunities in this trade are limitless.

I'm proud to share that Tyler earned **2nd place overall**—the highest ranking ever achieved by Local 332 in the competition's history! His commitment and craftsmanship made us all proud, representing our school, our local, and our contractors with excellence. Tyler is already looking ahead, eager to mentor the next competitor we'll send to the **2026 Western States Competition in Los Angeles, Local 11**. His goal: to help our next apprentice take the final step toward **1st place overall** and the title of *best school and local in District 9!*

Be sure to check out the feature we've published highlighting Tyler's experience and the competition in Kennewick, Washington (Local 112).

-Albert Lancaster

ETASV Mission Statement

"At the Electrical Training alliance of Silicon Valley, our mission is to provide first-class training and shape individuals to become competent, professional, and hardworking experts in the electrical construction industry. We are dedicated to serving the IBEW Local 332, and NECA Santa Clara Valley Chapter by instilling the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to excel in this field."

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A Word From The Apprentice Coordinator

I would like to start out by extending a big CONGRATULATIONS to Tyler Lerma for his performance in the Western States competition, please check out our full write up in this month's issue.

This past month's Trunk or Treat event was a heartwarming reminder of the strong sense of community and family that defines our union. Apprentices, Journeymen, extended staff, and families came together not just to celebrate the season, but to strengthen the bonds that make our trade more than just a career—it's a Brotherhood and Sisterhood. From the creative trunk setups to the laughter of kids in costume, the event showcased the spirit of togetherness that powers our work both on and off the job site. These moments of connection are what make our Union resilient and supportive, especially as we head into the holiday season.

It's in these shared experiences—where mentorship meets celebration and tradition blends with innovation—that we see the true strength of our union. Events like Trunk or Treat remind us that our work is not only about building some of the world's greatest infrastructure, but about building relationships, fostering pride, and creating a legacy that future generations of tradespeople can carry forward. Every handshake, every smile, and every moment of support contributes to a culture where everyone feels seen, valued, and empowered.

As we look ahead to Thanksgiving and the end-of-year holidays, let's carry forward that same energy of generosity, gratitude, and unity. Whether you're just starting your apprenticeship or nearing completion, remember that you're part of a larger family that's here to support you through every challenge and celebrate every success. Let's continue to show up for one another—not just in times of celebration, but in the everyday moments that define our work and our values.

Stay safe, stay connected, and let's keep building a future we can all be proud of—
together.

-Robert Bledsoe



SPARKY Spotlight

What motivated you to pursue the IBEW apprenticeship?

I worked as a non-union electrician for about eight years while studying for my C-10 license. One day, I had a conversation with my wife's good friend's father, who is a Local 332 member. He explained all the benefits of the union, and it really got me interested because it sounded like the path to building the life I want for myself and my family. Growing up, my father was a member of the Painters and Tapers Union, and he always wanted me to become a union electrician. I remember him saying, "Son, try to become an electrician. I see them on jobsites — they're not getting as dirty as other trades and they're making the most money. That would give you the best opportunity in life."

What is the most challenging thing about being an Apprentice at the ETASV?

The most challenging part of the apprenticeship for me is balancing work and home life. I recently got married, and we want to start a family soon. My personality is such that when I commit to something, I go all in. I've been picking up every overtime opportunity and volunteering at ETASV and 332 events. I also sign up for every journeyman upgrade class I can. I'm just thankful my wife understands that all this hard work will pay off and better our lives in the long run.

What part of the trade do you find most challenging, and how are you working to improve in that area?

Hospital work has been the most challenging for me. You really have to sit down and read all the spec sheets and submittals — you can't just go build a rack or run some conduit. You have to make sure you're using the approved materials, the right coatings, and that everything meets spec. To improve, I ask a ton of questions and do research on my own time. Hospital work is a niche, and I feel that if you get good at it, it opens a lot of opportunities.



Evun Gonzales

1st Yr Inside

What advice would you give to a new apprentice just starting out?

My best advice is to soak it all in. You've been blessed with this opportunity, so take full advantage of it. There will be times when you're tired or want to have fun on the weekend instead of taking a class or working, but in the end, the grind is worth it. I barely got into the apprenticeship in March, and during the summer and now, I've taken every journeyman upgrade class I could. I've completed 76 hours of journeyman classes so far. Yeah, it's tiring, but it's also opened up opportunities at work that might not have come if I hadn't put in that effort.

What has been the most valuable skill or lesson you've learned so far?

The most valuable lesson I've learned is that you'll never know everything. It doesn't matter if you've been in the trade for 30 years — there's always something new to learn. That excites me because the more I learn, the more valuable I can become.

Outside of work, what hobbies or interests do you enjoy?

Outside of work, I love spending time with my friends and family — going camping, boating, shooting, watching movies, and playing Xbox with the boys.

What's your favorite brand of work shoes and why?

Thorogood — union made and made in America.

SUPERINTENDENT **CHRIS ZOCOLI** **23 YEAR IBEW MEMBER**

WHAT WERE SOME OF THE EXPERIENCES THAT LED YOU TO YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

Having a solid foundation to build from is huge. Starting out in the 332 apprenticeship gave me that base — learning the trade, understanding the work from the ground up, and developing the discipline it takes to do things right. Moving up to crew foreman came with more responsibility and a bigger picture of how projects come together. When I stepped into the General Foreman role, that's what really prepared me for the next level. At that point, it's all on you — you're managing large projects, coordinating multiple GFs, leading 10–15 foremen, and supporting hundreds of team members who depend on you every day. That level of responsibility and leadership is the perfect segue into becoming a Superintendent.

WHAT SKILLS MAKE A SUCCESSFUL SUPERINTENDENT & WHAT SUGGESTIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN THAT ROLE?

First and foremost, you've got to know the trade and be willing to adapt to the constant changes that come with the industry. Even after 23 years, I'm still learning. Staying humble and open to new ideas goes a long way in this line of work. Common sense, clear communication, and the ability to stay calm under pressure are key skills for any superintendent. To be a successful leader, people need to trust and believe in you. Build strong relationships, listen to your team, and don't be afraid to lean on your peers and other supers. Continued growth comes from staying engaged — keep learning, stay current with new technologies, codes, and safety standards, and never lose sight of the fact that leadership is about setting the example every day.

WHAT ARE SOME TRAINING/COURSES YOU FEEL ARE MOST VALUABLE TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND ADVANCEMENT?

OSHA 30 is always a great one to have — it builds a strong foundation for understanding jobsite safety and regulatory requirements. NFPA 70E is another important course that every wireman should take to stay sharp on electrical safety and arc flash awareness. I'd also recommend taking foreman or management classes. Learning how to effectively deal with people is a huge part of being successful in this trade. Technical knowledge is important, but leadership and communication skills make all the difference. And don't overlook Bluebeam — it's a powerful tool that goes far beyond handling drawings. Once you really learn its capabilities, it can significantly improve efficiency, coordination, and communication across your projects.



WHAT DOES A SUPERINTENDENT'S AVERAGE WORK DAY LOOK LIKE? WHAT ARE OFTEN YOUR BIGGEST PRIORITIES & CHALLENGES?

My day usually starts with a phone call before my feet even hit the floor — as a superintendent, you're never really off the clock. Once the day gets going, I'm working with project managers and executives on budgets, labor rates, and estimating upcoming jobs. Out in the field, I'm checking in with my general foremen, making sure they have the right manpower, materials, and support to keep the work moving safely and efficiently. The biggest priorities are keeping projects on schedule, maintaining safety and quality standards, and making sure communication stays strong between the field and the office. The challenges often come from managing multiple moving parts — balancing manpower, client expectations, and unforeseen changes — but that's also what makes the role rewarding.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE STRONGEST CHARACTERISTICS A SUCCESSFUL LEADER SHOULD HAVE?

I believe in being firm but fair. I'm straight up with my team — when it's business, it's business. But when someone's doing a great job, I make sure they know it. Over the years, I've learned that leadership is about respect. If you lead through intimidation or ego, people will only give you the bare minimum. But when you treat your people right, show them respect, and hold them accountable the right way, they'll give you everything they've got. That's what builds strong crews and successful projects.

HOW DOES NECA AND THE IBEW WORK TOGETHER? WHAT IMPORTANT ROLES DO EACH ORGANIZATION PERFORM?

NECA and the IBEW work together through a strong labor-management partnership that keeps the electrical construction industry balanced and successful. Their collaboration ensures we continue to deliver high-quality work while upholding fair labor standards and safe working conditions. Together, they negotiate collective bargaining agreements that establish wages, benefits, and work rules for electricians — creating consistency and mutual respect across the trade. Personally, I walk that line every day. I'm still an IBEW member with a ticket in my pocket, but I also make daily decisions in the best interest of Redwood Electric. That balance is what makes our industry — and partnerships like NECA and IBEW — work so well.

SAFETY CORNER

Environmental Hazards in Construction



Construction sites present more than just physical safety risks — they also introduce environmental hazards that can seriously affect worker health and surrounding ecosystems. Electricians often encounter these hazards while cutting, drilling, trenching, or working in older buildings. Understanding them is key to preventing long-term health problems and keeping jobsites safe and compliant. We are going to bring awareness to Silica, Asbestos, Lead & Soil Contamination.

Silica Dust

Silica is found in concrete, masonry, and stone materials. When these materials are cut, drilled, or ground, respirable crystalline silica dust is released into the air.

Health Effects: Silicosis, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and kidney disease.

Exposure Limits (Cal/OSHA §1532.3):

Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL): 50 micrograms per cubic meter ($50 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) averaged over an 8-hour shift.

Action Level: $25 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ averaged over 8 hours (requires exposure monitoring and control measures).

When Respiratory Protection Is Required:

Whenever wet cutting, dust collection, or ventilation controls cannot maintain silica below the PEL. During high-dust activities such as jackhammering, chipping, grinding, or dry sweeping.

Respirator Requirements:

Use a NIOSH-approved N95 or higher-rated respirator.

Employees must be medically cleared and fit-tested annually before wearing any N95 or other respirator, as required under Cal/OSHA §5144 (Respiratory Protection).

Respirator use must follow the company's written Respiratory Protection Program.

Best Practices:

Use wet methods or HEPA vacuum systems for cutting and drilling. Avoid dry sweeping — use wet clean-up or vacuums. Train all affected workers on silica hazards, symptoms, and control procedures.

Asbestos

Many older buildings still contain asbestos in pipe insulation, flooring, roofing, and wall materials. When disturbed, asbestos fibers become airborne and may cause **asbestosis, lung cancer, and mesothelioma decades after exposure.** **Key Rule:** Never disturb suspect material. Notify supervision immediately. Only certified asbestos professionals may test or remove asbestos-containing materials.

Lead

Structures built **before 1978** may have **lead-based paint or coatings.** Activities like scraping, sanding, or torch-cutting can release lead dust and fumes.

Health Risks: Neurological damage, kidney problems, and developmental effects (especially for pregnant workers).

Work Practice Tips:

- Use containment, wet methods, and HEPA vacuums.
- Wash hands and face before eating or drinking.
- Follow **Cal/OSHA §1532.1 (Lead in Construction)** requirements.

Soil Contamination

Excavation or trenching can expose contaminated soils from past industrial activity, chemical spills, or fuel leaks.

Risks: Skin contact, inhalation of toxic dust, or contamination of groundwater.

Actions: If you notice **discolored soil, strong odors, or oily sheens**, stop work and report it to supervision until environmental testing confirms it's safe.

SAFETY CORNER



Environmental Hazards in Construction

PROTECTION & PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Addressing environmental hazards in construction is vital for protecting human health and the environment. By implementing effective management strategies and adhering to regulatory requirements, construction professionals can mitigate these risks and promote sustainable practices in the industry. Managing environmental hazards requires planning, training, and the right controls. Construction workers play a key role by recognizing warning signs, using PPE correctly, and following safe work practices every day.

1. Engineering and Administrative Controls

- Use wet-cutting tools or vacuum attachments for silica control.
- Set up regulated areas for asbestos or lead work.
- Maintain ventilation systems in enclosed areas.
- Rotate crews and plan breaks to reduce exposure duration.
- Keep dust-generating operations isolated from occupied areas.

2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- **Respirators:**
- Required when airborne dust or fumes exceed exposure limits.
- Medical clearance and annual fit testing are mandatory for anyone wearing an N95, half-mask, or full-face respirator.
- Workers must be trained in proper use, care, and storage.
- **Protective clothing:** Disposable coveralls, gloves, and boot covers prevent contamination spread.
- **Eye and face protection:** Use goggles or face shields when grinding, cutting, or mixing materials.

THE PLUG 

3. Environmental Protection Practices

- **Dust Control:** Apply water mist or use dust-collection systems during cutting and drilling.
- **Runoff Management:** Install silt fences or drain covers; clean up spills immediately.
- **Waste Handling:** Separate hazardous waste such as paints, solvents, and batteries; store in labeled containers.
- **Spill Prevention:** Inspect fuel storage daily and use secondary containment.



4. Training & Communication

- Review the Safety Data Sheets (**SDS**) for all materials before use.
- Complete Safety Task Analyses (**STAs**) or Job Hazard Analyses (**JHAs**) at the start of each task.
- Report unsafe conditions, leaks, or spills immediately.
- Participate in toolbox talks on silica, lead, and hazardous materials.

Key Takeaway

Protecting the environment is part of protecting yourself and your crew. By controlling dust, managing materials responsibly, and using proper PPE, you reduce both environmental impact and health risks.

Trunk or Treat

TRUNK WINNERS



1st Place



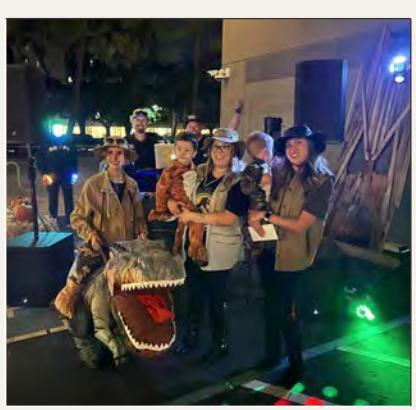
Brian and Arielle Cox
Pirate Ship



Joyce Brown and Family
Toy Story



2nd Place



Karina Bernal and Family
Jurassic Park



3rd Place



ETASV

TRUNK OR TREAT

PIE EATING CONTEST



ETASV

TRUNK OR TREAT

KIDS PIE EATING CONTEST









WESTERN STATES ELECTRICAL CONTEST 2025



On October 25th the ETASV had the pleasure of attending the 2025 Western States Competition hosted by the Columbian Basin Electrical Training Alliance in Kennewick, WA. A competition that has been running annually for over 60 years.

The ETASV was represented by 2025 Residential Apprenticeship graduate and current 3rd year Inside Apprentice **Tyler Lerma**. Hosting our own in house competition "The Rodeo" to determine who would represent us at Western States, **Tyler** had to overcome great adversity and many challenges facing off against 20 of our own top apprentices to earn the spot.

The Western States Competition is a challenging day for many reasons, mostly being the depth of knowledge one must have to truly compete. The day consists of seven events including **Residential Wiring**, **General Trade Knowledge**, **Motor Controls Written**, **Motor Controls Practical**, **Material Identification**, **½" EMT Conduit Bending**, and **¾" EMT Conduit Bending**. Residential Wiring kicked off outside at 830AM and was met with a constant drizzle while competitors continued to work without hesitation. New events brought new challenges, but **Tyler** remained vigilante and attacked every obstacle in his way. **Tyler** was ready to bring on the competition. He has spent countless hours in the months leading up to the competition here at the ETASV training for this day. As the day progressed into the conduit bending event watching each competitor showcase their absolute best work left everyone biting their nail in suspense.

Following the competition, we had a short break and returned for the awards ceremony. As events were called off and winners announced we were thrilled to learn that Tyler took first place in the Motor Controls Written event. He also was in a three-way tie for first place in ½" EMT Conduit Bending, his completion time was slightly slower than his competitor with the win going to another local, but full points awarded. Finally the time came for the overall winners to be announced. **Tyler** brought great pride and excitement to all of us with his **second-place overall win for the day!** It was special to see all his hard work come to fruition, especially with his parents and girlfriend in attendance.

Tyler competed against 20 of the best electricians we are putting out in the workforce and took **second place overall**. If you see him around the school or job site, be sure to give him warm congratulations. This is the best Local 332 has ever done in the history of the competition, we should all be proud of how he represented us.





MOTOR CONTROLS HANDS ON





RESIDENTIAL WIRING











WIKE

WOMEN'S INCLUSIVITY,
RESOURCES &
EMPOWERMENT



FIRST-EVER FEMALE APPRENTICE COMMITTEE MEETING!

**Friday, 11/14/25
5:30 – 7:30PM**

OUR MISSION:

To create environments and dialogues for women that enhance personal growth, health and wellness, and career success.

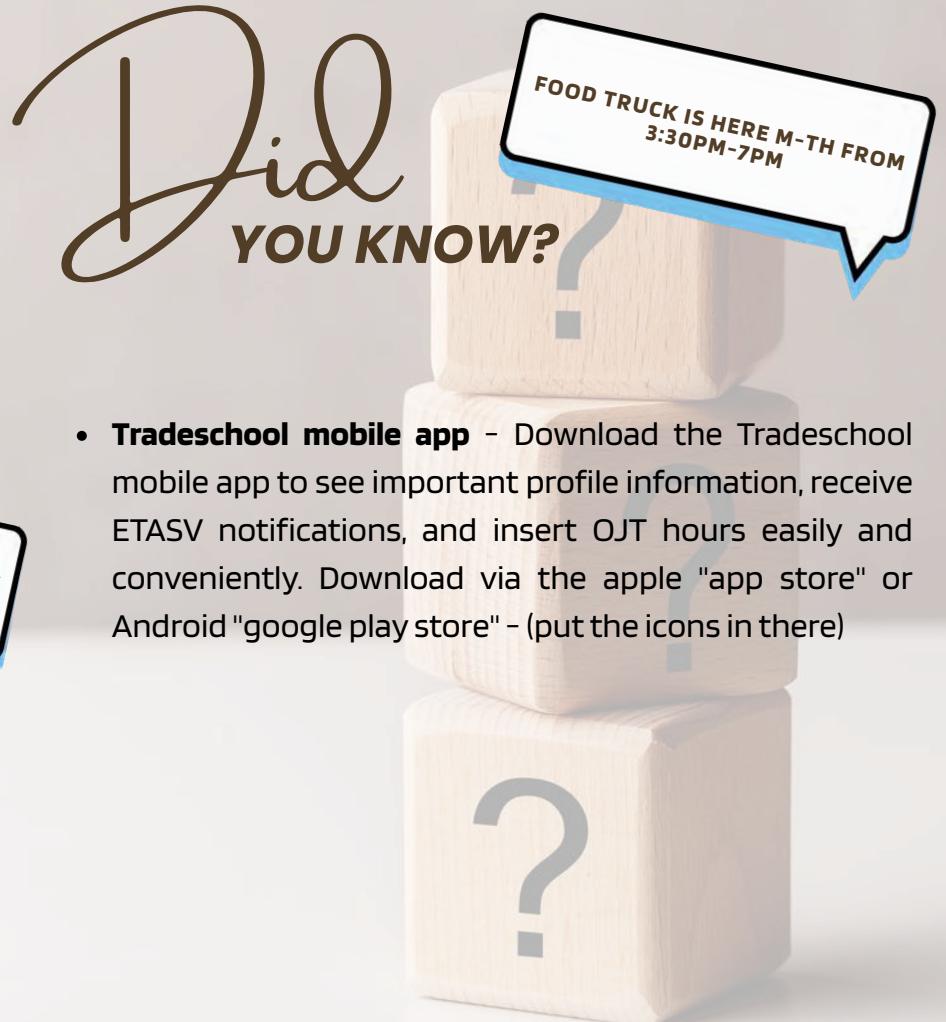
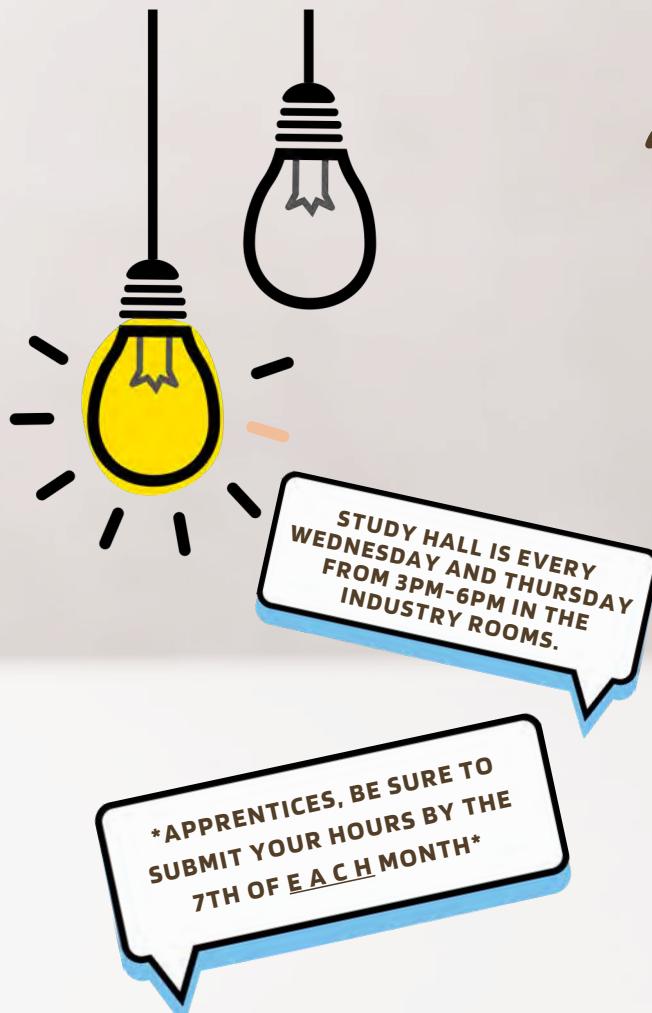
**DINNER! RAFFLE PRIZES!
ALL FRIENDS AND FAMILY
WELCOMED!
KIDS ACTIVITIES!**

Scan to RSVP

Scan to →



Scan RSVP



- **Tradeschool mobile app** - Download the Tradeschool mobile app to see important profile information, receive ETASV notifications, and insert OJT hours easily and conveniently. Download via the apple "app store" or Android "google play store" - (put the icons in there)

ELIGIBLE FOR A RAISE?

1. YOU MUST HAVE COMPLETED THE SEMESTER
2. REQUIRED HOURS NEED TO BE SUBMITTED AND APPROVED
3. CPR/FIRST AID AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION NEED TO BE UP TO DATE
4. EMAIL - ADVANCEMENTREQUEST@ETASV.ORG



Ment 2 Help Corner

Holiday Anxiety: “Taking Care of Your Mental Health This Season”

With the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays fast approaching, The ETASV wanted to discuss holiday mental health – a very real anxiety challenge that affects many people during this time of year. While the holidays can be filled with joy, connection, and celebration, they can also bring stress, financial pressure, fatigue, and emotional strain. Balancing work, school, family obligations, and expectations can feel overwhelming. Recognizing and addressing these feelings is an important part of maintaining both mental health and jobsite focus during the busy winter season.

What Causes Holiday Anxiety?

- **Financial pressure:** Gift-giving, travel, and extra expenses can create stress for individuals and families.
- **Time demands:** Balancing work, training schedules, and personal commitments can feel overwhelming.
- **Family expectations:** Conflicts, unresolved tension, or feelings of obligation can make gatherings stressful.
- **Loneliness or loss:** Some may struggle with missing loved ones or feeling isolated during the holidays.
- **Fatigue and overstimulation:** Busy schedules, lack of rest, and constant activity can heighten anxiety and irritability.

Common Causes of Holiday Anxiety

- Feeling tense, restless, or irritable
- Difficulty sleeping or changes in appetite
- Trouble concentrating or staying motivated
- Headaches, fatigue, or stomach issues
- Avoiding social events or responsibilities
- Feeling “on edge” or emotionally drained

Why It Matters

Stress and anxiety can impact more than your mood — they affect focus, safety, and performance both in class and on the jobsite. Recognizing these signs early helps protect your mental well-being and maintain the professionalism and reliability expected of every ETASV apprentice.

Ment 2 Help Corner

Holiday Anxiety: “Managing Holiday Stress & Staying Balanced”

Tips for Managing Holiday Anxiety

1. Maintain Realistic Expectations

Don’t pressure yourself to make everything perfect. Focus on what truly matters – connecting with others, taking time to rest, and celebrating progress, not perfection.

2. Keep a Healthy Routine

Eat regularly and drink plenty of water.

Get enough sleep – aim for 7-8 hours when possible.

Stay active with walks, stretching, or workouts to release stress.

Avoid excess caffeine, alcohol, or energy drinks, which can worsen anxiety.

3. Set Boundaries

It’s okay to say “no” to extra commitments if you’re feeling stretched too thin. Setting healthy limits on your time and energy helps prevent burnout.

4. Manage Finances Wisely

Stick to a realistic budget for gifts and events. Remember – thoughtful gestures and quality time often mean more than expensive items.

5. Stay Connected

Reach out to classmates, instructors, or coworkers if you’re struggling. Sometimes a quick conversation or check-in can make all the difference.

If you know someone who seems withdrawn or stressed, take the time to ask how they’re doing. A simple conversation can help more than you realize.

6. Take Breaks and Breathe

If you feel anxious, step away for a few minutes. Practice deep breathing:

Inhale for 4 seconds – Hold for 4 – Exhale for 4.

Simple breathing exercises or mindfulness moments can quickly reduce tension.

7. Seek Support When Needed

If anxiety becomes overwhelming or persistent, it’s important to reach out for help. Talk with: a trusted instructor or ETASV staff member, your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) if available, and/or a mental health professional/counselor

Final Thought: The holidays should be a time of connection, reflection, and gratitude—not stress or exhaustion. Take care of yourself, look out for your classmates, and coworkers, and remember that asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

ASKING FOR HELP IS OK



FIND HELP

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LINE

CALL or TEXT 988 or 988LIFELIN.org

VETERANS CRISIS LINE

DIAL 988 (PRESS 1) TEXT 838255

DISASTER DISTRESS HELPLINE

CALL or TEXT 1-800-985-5990

FOR MENTAL HEALTH
AND SUBSTANCE USE

SAMHSA'S NATIONAL HELPLINE

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

FindTreatment.gov

FindSupport.gov

samhsa.gov/find-help

RESOURCES

- Your medical insurance provides mental health benefits.
- All Apprentices are students at Foothill College. Here is a link to their Mental Health Resources:
<https://foothill.edu/mentalhealthwellness/mentalhealth.html>
- For Inside Wiremen, we have an “Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that provides free services to those with substance and alcohol abuse, addiction and dependency problems: <https://www.beatiteap.com/>

- Better Help is not directly covered under our health plans, but it can be paid with using our UAS HRA Card. The site matches you with a licensed therapist based on your criteria (gender, faith, age, race). Your therapy sessions can be via phone or video. You will qualify for a discount code to reduce the cost of your sessions and your licensed therapist who will review your case and contact you. Weekly sessions are 30-45 minutes long. If you find that you are not compatible with the therapist, you are assigned you can request a different therapist. Sessions are \$90/week you will qualify for a discount and the payments are covered by our HSA card.
<https://www.betterhelp.com/>

Disclaimer: The information contained in this newsletter is provided for general educational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any health condition. Please consult a qualified health care professional to diagnose your health condition and prevent self-diagnosis. We do not dispense medical advice or prescribe or diagnose illness.

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