

Electrical Marketing®

The Electrical Industry Newsletter

January 23, 2015 • Volume 40, Number 2

Van Meter Buys Iowa's Miller Electric

Van Meter Inc., Cedar Rapids, Iowa, agreed to purchase Miller Electric Supply Inc., an electrical distributor with locations in Dubuque and Clinton, Iowa. The transaction is expected to close by the end of the first quarter of 2015, the companies said.

Miller Electric Supply was founded in 1963 and provides electrical and automation supplies and services to industrial, commercial and contractor customers. Van Meter and Miller Electric both are members of buying group Affiliated Distributors as well as a number of associations, and both are authorized Rockwell Automation distributors, making for a neatly aligned acquisition in its home state for Van Meter.

The deal with larger, employee-owned Van Meter also opens up opportunities for Miller Electric's people, said Kevin Oyen, president of Miller Electric. "This is an opportunity to join our great, local company with a larger, best-in-class distributor — a 100% employee-owned company with similar values, a progressive culture and a grand vision for the future," said Oyen in a release. "Our industry faces new challenges and opportunities each day and I have every confidence that becoming part of Van Meter will position us for continued success."

The acquisition of Miller Electric will expand Van Meter's presence in Iowa to 14 locations. Van Meter has branches in Iowa City, Waterloo, Davenport, Muscatine, Burlington, Keokuk, Ottumwa, Urbandale, Des Moines, Carroll and Sioux City, as well as its Cedar Rapids headquarters.

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Kaman Industrial Tech Acquires New Jersey Schneider Distributor G.C. Fabrication

Kaman Industrial Technologies, Bloomfield, Conn., executed a definitive agreement to acquire the operating assets of G.C. Fabrication, Inc. (GCF) of Northvale, N.J. The acquisition, expected to close later this month, will expand Kaman's Automation, Control & Energy platform into the New York metro market.

GCF, founded in 1982, is a premier Schneider Electric/Square D distributor and carries a variety of electrical power, automation, process controls, specialized HVAC, water and wastewater systems, communication and networking devices from a number of global manufacturers. GCF had 2014 sales of approximately \$20 million and employs 30 people.

"We are pleased to expand our strategic relationship with Schneider through the acquisition of GCF," Steve Smidler, president of Kaman said. "The GCF team has an excellent reputation as an engineering

services firm with both its suppliers and customers, and a track record of strong financial performance. Its presence in the New York market complements our acquisitions of Minarik, Target Electronic Supply and Zeller and will allow us to continue to execute our strategies in this market."

GCF principals Joseph Abbatiello and David Plaut will join Kaman. They are quoted in a release saying, "We are thrilled to be joining up with the Kaman team. The combination offers tremendous growth and expansion opportunities for GCF and our people. Further, our product and market knowledge match well with Kaman's strategy of engineered value-added solutions and technical excellence."

Kaman scored Schneider Electric's franchise nationwide in 2012 after acquiring Zeller Corp., Rochester, N.Y. Zeller was part of Schneider Electric's ACE (automa-

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Cree Pursues Claims Against Feit Electric Over Energy Star and Advertising Claims

Cree, Inc., Durham, N.C., filed intellectual property and false-advertising complaints against Feit Electric Co., Pico Rivera, Calif., and its Taiwanese supplier, Unity Opto Technology Co., Ltd. The complaints alleged that competing LED lighting manufacturer Feit engaged in "false and misleading advertising claims," specifically that they say their products meet specifications required by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star program, and that the defendants infringed 10 of Cree's lighting-related patents.

Calls to Feit Electric executives were not returned by press time.

The complaint, filed with the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) and the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin, where Cree has had a substantial presence since its acquisition of Ruud Lighting in 2011, ask the ITC and

the court to order the offending companies to ban specified products from entry into the United States and to issue a cease and desist order to stop selling the LED bulbs in the U.S. The complaint further asserts that this infringing advertising gives the offending companies an unfair advantage and discourages development of new products.

"Cree fully supports competition, but it should be fair competition," said Chuck Swoboda, Cree chairman and CEO, in a press release announcing the complaints. "We have invested nearly \$1 billion in R&D over the past 10 years to create fundamental technology that has enabled the LED lighting revolution. With more than 4,000 issued patents, we have an obligation to act to protect our shareholders and our licensing partners."

Cree says that it was the first to develop omnidirectional optics to inexpensively

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A Penton publication.
Publishers of *Electrical/Wholesaling* and *EC&M* magazines.

Kaman Industrial Technologies Adds GC Fabricators for Access to NYC Market

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tion and control excellence) distributor program and had already set itself apart with a staff of engineers offering technical support to industrial customers.

The focus on offering engineering ser-

vices is a key part of Kaman's strategy in the industrial automation and control market since its acquisition of Minarik in 2010, which added depth in high-tech electrical motion control and automation to what was

already a substantial position in mechanical bearing and power transmission products, industrial hydraulics and pneumatics and industrial maintenance, repair and operating (MRO) supplies.

Van Meter Buys Miller

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"A key part of our growth strategy is to expand into new markets," said Kevin Powell, president and CEO of Van Meter. "The addition of Dubuque and Clinton locations really rounds out our service territory and will create new opportunities for us in eastern Iowa as well as parts of Illinois and Wisconsin."

"We have a long-standing relationship as peers in the electrical wholesale industry," said Powell. "There is a mutual respect and common commitment to distribution that will ensure a smooth transition for both companies. We're honored to play a part in Miller Electric's succession plan."

Van Meter is #27 among electrical distributors in the United States by sales volume, according to *Electrical Wholesaling's* annual Top 200 list, with over \$235 million in 2013 sales and 390 people at the time of the survey working in 13 locations in Iowa and Illinois. The company made the transition to employee ownership in 2005.

Cree Challenges Feit

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replicate an incandescent bulb's output and appearance. According to Cree, this technology enabled the company to introduce the first sub-\$10 LED light bulb in the United States. Omnidirectional light distribution is part of the Energy Star requirements for general-purpose LED lamps, and it's this criterion that Cree alleges Feit Electric's lamps fail to meet.

The complaint is based on a series of product tests conducted by Cree, in which the company says it found that certain Feit LED bulbs that carry the Energy Star label allegedly fail critical performance requirements including omnidirectional light distribution. "Therefore, consumers are buying LED bulbs with the Energy Star label, that do not perform as promised."

Cree points out that its licensing program, which currently has more than 20 licensing partners, allows other companies to use its proprietary technology.

NAHB Expects More Growth in Multi-Family Market with Strong Demand from Older Buyers

The multi-family market has had strong demand in recent years and is set to remain that way in 2015 despite certain headwinds that could affect the industry, said panelists during a press conference at the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) International Builders' Show (IBS) in Las Vegas.

The number of multi-family apartments forecast to be built is likely to reach a sustainable level that is higher than the levels of production in the past. As the industry reaches that new plateau, the pace of construction is likely to level off in 2015 and into 2016.

"The multi-family industry is strong and producing more units than in previous cycles," said NAHB Chief Economist David Crowe in a press release. "The industry has shown dramatic increases in construction since the recession, but the level of increase will moderate as we approach equilibrium. We are forecasting that 358,000 units will be developed in 2015 and 361,000 units in 2016. One of the indicators for our forecast is NAHB's Multi-family Production Index, which is a survey of our members' attitudes toward the market. They have been telling us that the market is very strong and is expected to stay that way for the foreseeable future."

NAHB said two segments within the multi-family housing market driving much of this growth are housing for homebuyers aged 55 and over and affordable housing. "There are many families in America that have a great need for affordable housing," said Mike Costa, president and CEO of Highridge Costa Housing Partners LLC in Gardena, Calif., in the release. "We have a long waiting list for our apartments at all of our communities. There is a need for us to be building more."

Paul Emrath, NAHB's vice president of survey and housing policy research, said in a separate press release that the 55+ housing market has been one of the healthiest segments of the overall housing market and is

likely to remain that way over the next several years. "When you look at age-restricted single-family starts, there were as many in the first half of 2014 as in all of 2012," he said. "And going forward, the steady rise in the 55-and-over population will signal an increased need for housing to accommodate that group."

Emrath also noted that builder confidence has steadily increased over the past several years. "NAHB's 55+ Housing Market Index (HMI), a survey of members that measures builder and developer confidence for that market, has regularly posted year-over-year gains," he said.

Builders and developers say they have seen an increase in not only in the number of people who are generally interested in 55+ housing, but also in the number of people who are actually making the move to purchase a new home. "We are seeing more consumers actually make the decision to buy a new home as they are able to sell their current home at an acceptable price," said Steve Bomberger, chairman of NAHB's 50+ Housing Council and president of Benchmark Builders Inc. in Wilmington, Del. "We are busier now than ever before. And I don't think it's going to slow down anytime soon."

NAHB panelists at the Builders Show also discussed the current design trends they now see in the industry. "Green and energy-efficient features and building practices continue to be popular, including high-efficiency appliances and mechanical systems, green roofs, locally sourced building materials and the recycling of construction waste," said Sanford Steinberg, principal of Steinberg Design Collaborative LLP in Houston. "On the market-rate side, apartment and condo buildings are also including unique features and services like bike storage rooms with equipment for bike maintenance, dog washing and grooming areas, larger bathrooms with separate shower and tub, open floor plans and high end finishes similar to custom homes."

Around the Industry

OneSource/Sonepar expands in Hawaii with Rasko/Rasco deal

OneSource Distributors, Oceanside, Calif., announced that Rasko Supply, Honolulu, Hawaii, and Rasco Supply, Kaua'i, Hawaii, have joined the OneSource team.

Rasko Supply was established in Hono-

lulu in 1994 to serve the electrical construction market for the island of Oahu. Rasco Supply in Kaua'i and has been in business since 1983.

"With the addition of these two Rasco/Rasko companies to our existing Honolulu location, we are expanding our footprint

and strengthening our market position to better serve our customers on the Hawaiian Islands," said Mike Smith, president and CEO of OneSource.

Rockwell adds distributor in India

Rockwell Automation, Milwaukee, Wis., has entered into a new distributor relationship with PIMA Controls Pvt. Ltd., a newly formed full-line industrial automation distributor in Rajasthan, India. As part of the Rockwell Automation limited distribution strategy, this relationship will help to better serve customers in Rajasthan, India.

CFL shipments lag, but T12 grow

NEMA's shipment index for T12 lamps beat the previous two quarters by advancing 8.6% from the second quarter to the third. In contrast, shipments of T5 and T8 lamps decreased by 6.6% and 11.1%, respectively. All three indices are in negative territory on a year-over-year basis for 2014 through the third quarter. T12 lamps secured an increase in market share for the quarter posting a gain of 3.2 percentage points to reach a share of 22.2%.

Compact fluorescent lamp shipments, meanwhile, continued to slide, posting a year-over-year decline of 14.5% in the third quarter of 2014 despite a modest quarterly increase of 1.5%.

The shipments index for incandescent A-line lamps posted a decline of 62.9% for the quarter. In contrast, shipments of LED A-line and halogen A-line lamps continued to grow, showing quarterly gains of 53.8% and 37.7%, respectively.

Gexpro introduces ordering app

Gexpro Supply, Shelton, Conn., released a new app to allow customers to order paperlessly from a smart phone or tablet. Gexpro QuickPix allows users to order anything anytime from an iPad or Windows tablet using graphical selection tools indexed for a particular job and grouped by function. Customer preferences and part numbers can be saved for future use.

The Hite Co. named one of the "Best Places to Work" in Pa.

The Hite Co. has been named one of the Best Places to Work in Pennsylvania for 2014, ranked #21 in the Large Company category and was recognized at an awards banquet in December.

Heard at the NAED Western Conference

Lots of the industry chatter in the halls of the Hilton Bayside in sunny San Diego at this week's NAED Western was about the slow start distributors and reps in the nation's oil markets have seen because of declining oil prices, and the decision by Mayer Electric Supply, Birmingham, Ala., to leave the Affiliated Distributors buying/marketing group to join the IMARK buying/group. Mayer Electric, a charter AD member and the 12th largest electrical distributor on *Electrical Wholesaling's* Top 200 listing, bring some significant buying power to IMARK, as the company's 2013 sales were \$672 million.

The NAED Western was the first of the regional conferences for IDEA's Paul Molitor as CEO and president of the association, and he was busy meeting and

greeting distributors and manufacturers. Molitor is a familiar face in electrical circles due to his time as a senior executive for the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA). Another man on the move is Sean Leahy, a long-time industry executive who will be joining Sonepar North America in a senior executive post in 1Q 2015. Leahy is best known in the electrical business for his stints with Vantage and Vanguard National Alliance (VNA) in national accounts, with Ideal Industries, and as author of *The Sales Shot*, a sales training book.

The meeting had a good buzz about it and NAED staffers were pleased with attendance figures. Next year's NAED Western Conference will be in Phoenix, Jan. 18-20.

Daintree Networks Partners with UC Davis' CLTC to Develop Lighting Controls

Smart building control and management system maker Daintree Networks, Los Altos, Calif., has formed an affiliate partnership with UC Davis' California Lighting Technology Center (CLTC) with the goal of advancing lighting controls. Daintree and CLTC will collaborate on efforts to raise awareness about the benefits of networked lighting controls.

The company said its partnership with CLTC will demonstrate how open standards-based communication and control can simplify the integration process for commercial buildings to meet California's building energy efficiency goals.

"The adoption of lighting control technology is the first step to creating smart buildings, which goes beyond lighting and includes thermostats, electrical plugs, etc.," said Daintree Networks CEO Danny Yu, in a release. "Daintree is providing the ControlScope wireless networked, open standards-based energy management and monitoring solution for lighting control.

This will allow the CLTC to demonstrate the ease of system integration and illustrate energy efficiency gains through intelligent data analytics. We look forward to collaborating with the CLTC team to advance awareness of technology that helps California, and the rest of the world, to simply and effectively comply with as well as exceed regional energy regulations."

Daintree's ControlScope is an open standards-driven control, monitoring, and optimization solution for building operators. Daintree's Enterprise Internet of Things (E-IoT) approach to controls uses sensors to also monitor other conditions such as air quality, humidity, building security and more that comprise the networked ecosystem of an organization.

CLTC is a not-for-profit research, development and demonstration facility dedicated to accelerating the development and commercialization of next-generation, energy-efficient lighting and daylighting technologies.

Industry Events

January 27-29

NAW Annual Conference

Washington, D.C.; National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors, 202-872-0885, www.naw.org

January 28-31

NEMRA Annual Conference

San Diego; National Electrical Manufacturers Representatives Association, 914-524-8650, www.nemra.org

February 8-10

Unilog CIMM2 User Group Meeting

Orlando; Unilog Corp.
barbara.andrew@UnilogCorp.com

February 17-19

NAED South Central Conference

San Antonio; NAED, www.naed.org

February 22-26

BICSI Winter Conference

Orlando; BICSI, www.bicsi.org

February 24-26

Strategies in Light

Las Vegas; PennWell,
www.strategiesinlight.com

March 5-6

LEDucation 9

New York; Designers Lighting Forum of New York, www.leducation.org

April 21-23

NAAUD Annual Meeting

Austin, Texas; North American Association of Utility Distributors,
www.naaud.org

April 26-29

NAILD 2015 Conference

Denver; National Association of Independent Lighting Distributors,
www.naild.org

May 5-7

Lightfair International 2015

New York; Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) and International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD)
www.lightfair.com

Total U.S. Housing Starts End 2014 On a High Note and Top 1 Million Mark

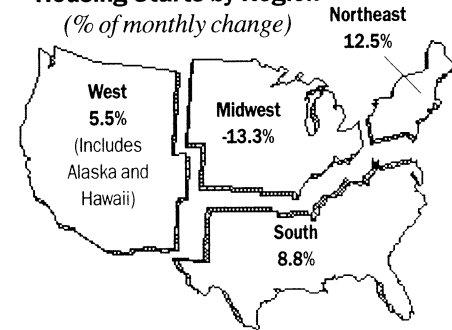
The Department of Census said privately owned housing starts in December were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.089 million, 4.4% above the revised November estimate of 1.043 million and 5.3% above the Dec. 2013 rate of 1.034 million. Single-family housing starts in December were at a rate of 728,000, 7.2% above the revised November figure of 679,000. The December rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 339,000. An estimated 1.005 million housing units were started in 2014, 8.8% above the 2013 figure of 924,900.

"With overall starts ending the year

above 1 million units for the first time since 2007, we expect this momentum to carry forward in 2015," said David Crowe, NAHB chief economist, in a press release.

Housing Starts by Region

(% of monthly change)



New Privately Owned Housing Units Started

(Thousands of units, seasonally adjusted annual rate)

Period	Total	1 Unit	5 Units or more	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Dec. 2014 ¹	1,089	728	339	126	163	508	292
Nov. 2014 ²	1,043	679	354	112	188	467	276
Oct. 2014 ³	1,092	716	359	99	165	606	222
Sept. 2014	1,028	663	353	109	173	503	243
Aug. 2014	963	641	305	109	177	475	202
July 2014	1,098	652	430	140	163	528	267
June 2014	909	593	294	95	196	392	226

1-Preliminary; 2-Revised; Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Electrical Prices Slide Again In December

EM's Electrical Price Index (EPI) was down a half point in December and ended the year up 0.3% over Dec. 2014. Not surprisingly, Building Wire & Cable led all categories with a -2.3% decline from November and a -5.4% decline from Dec. 2013. Power Wire & Cable was down -0.5% month-over month but up 2.2% YOY. Switchgear was also down big from Dec. 2013 with a -2.2% drop.

Note: All EPI series represent Global Insight aggregates of Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) producer price indices (PPIs). The revised data partly reflect redefinitions of specific PPIs by the BLS, but mostly reflect the rebenchmarking of all EPI price series to a 1997 base year. The four following EPI series have been affected by BLS redefinitions: boxes, conduit (fittings), nonmetallic conduit, and generators. Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Global Insight

Electrical Price Index — December 2014

1997=100	Dec. 2014	Nov. 2013	Dec. 2013	% Change 1 Mo.	% Change 1 Yr.
Building Wire & Cable	185.3	189.6	195.9	-2.3	-5.4
Power Wire & Cable	209	210.1	204.6	-0.5	2.2
Telephone	184.7	185.8	184.9	-0.6	-0.1
Hand & Power Tools	129.7	129.6	128.6	0	0.8
Elec. Heating Equip.	133.1	133.1	131	0	1.6
Residential Lighting	129.3	129.2	127.9	0.1	1.1
Industrial Fixtures	123.6	123.6	123.5	0	0.1
Fans & Blowers	148.5	148.1	143.2	0.3	3.7
Wiring Devices & Connectors	135.9	136	135.7	-0.1	0.1
Pole Line Hardware	151.8	153.8	152.1	-1.3	-0.2
Boxes	160.2	162.3	160.5	-1.3	-0.2
Conduit Fittings	146.2	147.5	144.3	-0.9	1.3
Metal Conduit	177.2	178.1	176.2	-0.5	0.6
Nonmetallic Conduit	149.7	151.4	148.5	-1.1	0.9
Motors	152.1	152.1	150	0.1	1.5
Generators	146.6	146.4	144.4	0.1	1.5
Ballasts	137.7	137.7	136.8	0	0.7
Elect. Meas. & Integ. Inst.	130.9	130.9	126.5	0	3.5
Transformers	129.5	129.5	128.3	0	1.0
Panelboards & Switches	160.3	160.2	158.2	0.1	1.4
Circuit Breakers	167.5	167.4	165.3	0.1	1.4
Switchgear	158.2	158.2	161.7	0	-2.2
Fuses	149.6	149.6	150.3	0	-0.4
Industrial Controls	153	152.9	150.9	0.1	1.4
Lamps	135.8	135.8	132.4	0	2.6
Appliances	109.1	108.7	109.7	0.3	-0.6
Air Conditioners	131.3	129.9	126.7	1.1	3.7
Fasteners	143.4	142.6	141.2	0.6	1.6
Total Index	146.4	147	146	-0.5	0.3

Leading Indicators for the Electrical Economy

Building permits slide in December. Privately-owned housing units authorized by building permits in December were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.032 million, 1.9% below the revised November rate of 1.052 million, but 1% above the Dec. 2013 estimate of 1.022 million. Single-family authorizations in December were at a rate of 667,000, 4.5% above the revised November figure of 638,000. Authorizations of units in buildings with five units or more were at a rate of 338,000 in December. An estimated 1.032 million units were authorized by building permits in 2014, 4.2% above the 2013 figure of 990,800.

Architecture Billings Index ends 2014 with solid increase.

With ten out of twelve months of increasing demand for design services in 2014, the Architecture Billings Index (ABI) points to a healthy outlook for the nonresidential construction industry. Published by the American Institute of Architects (AIA), Washington, D.C., as a leading economic indicator of construction activity, the ABI reflects the approximate nine- to twelve-month lead time between architecture billings and construction spending. AIA reported the December ABI score was 52.2 points, up from a mark of 50.9 points in November. This score reflects an increase in design activity (any score above 50 indicates an increase in billings):

“Business conditions continue to be the strongest at architecture firms in the South and the Western regions,” said AIA Chief Economist Kermit Baker. “Particularly encouraging is the continued solid upturn in design activity at institutional firms, since public sector facilities were the last nonresidential building project type to recover from the downturn.”

Leading Economic Index still strong. The Conference Board Leading Economic Index (LEI) for the U.S. increased 0.6% in November to 105.5 (2004 = 100), following a 0.6% increase in October,

and a 0.8% increase in September. “The increase in the LEI signals continued moderate growth through the winter season,” said Ken Goldstein, an economist at The Conference Board. “The

biggest challenge has been, and remains, more income growth. However, with labor market conditions tightening, we are seeing the first signs of wage growth starting to pick up.”

The Marketplace : Key Figures

	Month	Latest month	Previous month	Month-over-month % change	Year ago	Year-over-year % change	2013 annual
CONSTRUCTION							
New Construction Put in Place (billions of dollars, SAAR) ²							
Total	Nov	974.98	977.70	-0.3	952.53	2.4	899.58
Offices	Nov	38.85	39.67	-2.1	33.06	17.5	30.64
Industrial	Nov	58.99	58.91	0.1	48.71	21.1	48.56
Housing Starts (Thousands of units, SAAR) ²							
Total	Dec	1089	1043	4.4	1034	5.3	930
Single-Unit	Dec	728	679	7.2	675	7.9	621
Mobile Home Shipments ³							
(thousands of units, SAAR)	Nov	66	66	0.0	62	6.5	60
Employment, Construction Workers (thousands) ⁴	Dec	6069	6226	-2.5	5774	5.1	5827
Employment, Electrical Contractors (thousands) ⁴	Nov	784.0	783.1	0.1	774.6	1.2	758.9
Hourly Wage, Electrical Contractors ⁴	Nov	27.21	27.46	-0.9	26.94	1.0	26.83
PRODUCTION							
Industrial Production Index (1967=100) ⁵	Dec	106.5	106.6	-0.1	101.6	4.9	99.9
Construction Supplies Production Index ⁵							
(1977=100-SA)	Dec	88.1	86.8	1.4	82.6	6.6	81.4
Employment in Electrical Equipment & Supplies Mfg.							
Production workers (Thousands) ⁴	Nov	146.2	145.9	0.2	143.8	1.7	144.1
Weekly hours	Nov	45.2	44.7	1.1	43.8	3.2	43.5
Hourly wage	Nov	17.99	18.10	-0.6	18.00	-0.1	18.20
Electric Power Output Index (1967=100) ⁵	Dec	97.8	105.3	-7.1	102.0	-4.1	99.6
Machine Tool Orders* (millions of dollars) ⁶	Nov	369.83	434.36	-14.9	433.75	-14.7	397.41
Industrial Capacity Utilization (percent, SA) ¹	Dec	78.43	78.35	0.1	76.39	2.7	76.07
TRADE							
Electrical Mfrs' Shipments	Nov	3,480	3,452	0.8	3,381	2.9	3,351
Electrical Mfrs' Inventories (millions of dollars, SA) ²	Nov	4,803	4,816	-0.3	4,822	-0.4	4,873
Electrical Mfrs' Inventory-to-Shipments Ratio	Nov	1,380	1,395	-1.1	1,426	-3.2	1,454
Electrical Mfrs' New Orders							
(millions of dollars, SA) ²	Nov	3,500	3,624	-3.4	3,255	7.5	3,387
Electrical Mfrs' Unfilled Orders							
(millions of dollars, SA) ²	Nov	12,654	12,462	1.5	11,439	10.6	11,308
Exports, Electrical Machinery							
(f.a.s. value in millions of dollars) ²	Nov	6,645	7,270	-8.6	6,594	0.8	78,382
U.S. Dollar vs. Other Major Currencies (1973=100) ⁵	Dec	110.42	107.78	2.4	101.82	8.5	101.12
PRICES & INTEREST RATES							
Industrial Commodities Wholesale Price Index							
(Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1967=100)	Dec	195.7	199.2	-1.8	202.0	-3.1	203.0
Electrical Price Index							
(Electrical Marketing, 1997=100)	Dec	146.4	147.0	-0.5	146.0	0.3	146.1
Construction Materials Wholesale Price Index							
(Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1982=100)	Dec	228.3	228.5	-0.1	223.1	2.3	222.7
Copper Prices (Metals Week, cents per pound)	Dec	289.71	301.47	-3.9	334.51	-13.4	334.10
Prime Rate ⁵	Dec	3.25	3.25	0.0	3.25	0.0	3.25
Federal Funds Rate ⁵	Dec	0.12	0.09	33.3	0.09	33.3	0.11
Mortgage Rate ⁷	Dec	3.86	4.00	-3.5	4.46	-13.5	3.98

*Several series related to employment are now being reported on a NAICS basis. Because of this change, some numbers are not directly comparable to previously reported data, but are consistent in year-over-year comparisons and comparisons shown in the table.

Sources: ¹McGraw-Hill Construction/Dodge; ²Dept. of Commerce; ³Manufactured Housing Institute; ⁴Dept. of Labor; ⁵Federal Reserve Board; ⁶The Association for Manufacturing Technology; ⁷Federal Home Loan Bank Board.
 Note: Some figures shown—prime rate, for example—are averaged for month. NYA—not yet available
 SA—seasonally adjusted. SAAR—seasonally adjusted annual rate. Source for chart: Global Insight.
 For further information about construction starts, please contact Dodge Analytics at 1-800-591-4462

People

Crescent Electric Supply Co. (East Dubuque, Ill.): **Darrin Anderson** joins the company as senior V.P. and COO and will have P&L responsibility for company operations and provide leadership and general management for daily operations and selling efforts. Anderson comes to Crescent after having served as V.P. Southeast Region for HD Supply's Waterworks Division for the past eight years. Prior experiences include sales and operational roles with Kraft Foods, Alliant Foodservice and Sirva (a relocation and logistics firm). He is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point where he played baseball for Army and later served as a tank platoon leader during Operation Desert Storm, receiving a Bronze Star for meritorious service. He also holds an MBA degree from Lake Forest Graduate School of Management.

In other news at Crescent, **Tyson Cremeens** was hired as digital marketing manager. In his new role, Tyson will lead the development and implementation of the company's digital marketing strategy and manage Crescent's online marketing presence. He will lead a broad set of initiatives across all digital marketing mediums, including the company's corporate websites (Crescent, BA Supply, Stoneway and IES) and social media channels. Prior to joining Crescent, Cremeens was an electronic channels specialist at Heartland Financial USA.

IMARK Group (Bowie, Md.): Industry veteran **Roger Vaught** has joined the buying-marketing group as V.P., Member Development. A long-time supporter of IMARK Group and the organization's member-owned business model, Vaught has been involved with the North American electrical industry for more than 30 years. From 1982 through 2014, he retained several key management roles with B-Line Systems, Thomas & Betts Corp. and The Stanley Works, and for the last 11 years he held various positions with Atkore International; his last being V.P. of North America Electrical Sales.

Vaught also served as chairman of the NAED Manufacturers Council; received the 2013 NAED Associate Merit Award given to an individual who has consistently promoted and supported the tenets and goals of NAED; and recently served on the NEMRA Board of Directors. He will focus primarily on recruiting new

members to IMARK Group and act as a resource for current members. In his new role Vaught will report directly to **Jerry Knight**.

Engineered Products Company (EPCO) (Minn.): **Timothy Lecher**, a 26-year veteran in electrical manufacturing sales and management, has joined the company as Eastern Region sales manager. He will be working with sales agencies along the East Coast (Maine to the Gulf Coast area) and east of the Mississippi. Prior to joining EPCO, Lecher was Southeast Regional sales manager for NSI Industries for the past 11 years, where he consistently exceeded sales forecast and built the Southeast Region into one of the company's top-performing U.S. territories. He was previously regional sales manager for Gardner Bender/Actuant, where he managed an 11-state territory of 13 manufacturer representative agencies and more than 50 field sales personnel.

Halco Lighting Technologies (Norcross, Ga.): **Ed Mackiewicz** comes to Halco as product manager, commercial fixtures, with over 30 years in lighting design and product management experience. He will report to **David Nelkin**, V.P. of product and supply chain operations, and will manage the company's commercial fixture product line. Before joining Halco, Mackiewicz spent five years with Acuity Brands Lighting as senior design engineer for LED lamps, recessed down lighting and track lighting. He developed several new products for the DIY market. Prior to Acuity, Mackiewicz was design engineer and program manager for other lighting companies like Illuminating Solutions, Cooper Lighting and Kenall Lighting. Mackiewicz holds an associate of science in electronic technology from DeVry Institute of Technology.

Allied Wire and Cable (Collegeville, Pa.): **Jessica Weiss** is now a sales rep for the company and is the first of several new hires the company plans for 2015. She will be based in the company's Pennsylvania location and has experience in sales and customer service. Weiss is a graduate of Montgomery County Community College. The company said in a press release that its recent growth created the need for sales team expansion and that many of its locations will be adding new sales reps this year.

Distributor Wire & Cable (DWC) (Au-

rora, Colo.): **Dave Coy** joined the company late last year as COO and is overseeing personnel development, marketing, digital innovation, sales and logistics. Before joining DWC, Coy worked for Newmont Gold as director of global continuous improvement and helped the company run Lean initiatives and eliminate waste. He also spent three years in the U.S. Army, serving three years in the Caribbean and Pakistan.

Rep News

Calpipe Industries, Rancho Dominguez, Calif., appointed two new rep agencies in Canada. **Jebco Agencies**, with offices in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Saskatoon and Regina, Saskatchewan, will now represent Calbrite, Calbond, and Calconduit in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Western Ontario.

Northwinds Corp., Mississauga, Ontario, in addition to representing Calbrite Stainless Steel, will now represent Calbond PVC coated conduit in Ontario markets.

Electrical Marketing

Telephone: (913) 967-1951

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Subscriptions: (866) 505-7173

Subscription rates:

Online: \$595 for one subscription; \$1,095 for 2-10 subscriptions; \$1,895 for 11-20 subscriptions; \$4,895 for 21-50; \$7,285 for 51-99; \$9,675 for 100 or more subscriptions. Print edition: \$695 a year anywhere in the world, payable in U.S. dollars. Single copies: \$30 each. To order single copies, call (866) 505-7173 (U.S.) or (847) 763-9504 (Outside U.S.).

Electrical Marketing is published twice a month by PENTON MEDIA INC., 9800 Metcalf Ave., Overland Park, KS 66212. For subscriber services, write to Electrical Marketing, 7300 N. Linder, Skokie, IL 60077 USA; call (866) 505-7173 (US) or (847) 763-9504 (Outside US).

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Thomas Preston, 1927-1991

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