

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: Evidence of Worker Exploitation Stops Work at 110 Job Sites

07/12/2023

NJDOL Releases County-by-County Data on 4th Anniversary of Expanded Powers to Issue Stop-Work Orders

TRENTON – In the four years since Governor Murphy expanded the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development’s (NJDOL) powers in 2019 (https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://t.e2ma.net/click/fd9tqj/nrddit/rihhy4__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!Nltm4ujFbzBpn8rgTxQTe9d0fLcDo3l0ftBfqIsvTue6FN5iqJTfuL6MG1TjMo_kvhg), halt work on job sites when there is strong evidence of worker exploitation, over 110 stop-work orders have been issued and more than \$2.7 million in back wages owed to affected workers, liquidated damages, and penalties have been assessed.

In 2021 (https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://t.e2ma.net/click/fd9tqj/nrddit/7aihy4__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!Nltm4ujFbzBpn8rgTxQTe9d0fLcDo3l0ftBfqIsvTue6FN5iqJTfuL6MG1TjMo_kvhg) Governor Murphy further boosted these powers, permitting stop-work orders to be applied to all work sites of an employer found to be in violation of the law.

“Since the beginning of our Administration, we have been dedicated to respecting, defending, and upholding the rights of all New Jersey workers, who are the lifeblood of our economy,” said **Governor Murphy**. “These expanded powers have led to over a hundred stop-work orders in just the past few years, advancing our commitment to stronger and fairer worker protections.”

“Having the authority to shut down work as soon as wrongdoing is identified has exponentially strengthened the department’s effectiveness at enforcing our state’s wage and hour laws and protecting workers and law-abiding employers,” said **Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo**. “We’ve made it clear: If we find you are cheating workers, we will halt your business operations, and in many cases, you will be told to leave the job by the general contractor or contracting authority.”

“A vast majority of New Jersey employers follow the law and do right by their workers, but NJDOL wants to ensure all businesses are following the law and treating workers fairly,” **Asaro-Angelo added**. “It’s not just about stopping the violations in progress. There is also an educational component to prevent these issues from happening in the first place.”

NJDOL’s Division of Wage and Hour and Contract Compliance has the authority to immediately halt work at any public or private worksite – both construction and non-construction – when an investigation finds evidence an employer has violated state wage, benefit or tax laws. Examples include: misclassifying employees (https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://t.e2ma.net/click/fd9tqj/nrddit/n3ihy4__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!Nltm4ujFbzBpn8rgTxQTe9d0fLcDo3l0ftBfqIsvTue6FN5iqJTfuL6MG1TjMo_kvhg) independent contractors; not having appropriate workers’ compensation insurance; failing to pay prevailing wage (https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://t.e2ma.net/click/fd9tqj/nrddit/3vjhy4__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!Nltm4ujFbzBpn8rgTxQTe9d0fLcDo3l0ftBfqIsvTue6FN5iqJTfuL6MG1TjMo_kvhg) overtime; or paying workers partially, late, or off the books.

“Our hat is off to the New Jersey Department of Labor for using the strongest weapon in its arsenal to crack down on bad actors who cheat the system in the construction industry,” said **Bill Mullen, president of the New Jersey Building and Construction Trades Council**. “Stop-work orders are a powerful tool needed to ensure that construction workers are protected from contractors who exploit them and cheat them out of wages and benefits they have legally earned. We want to see more leaders in Trenton taking firmer stances like this that the State of New Jersey will not tolerate abuses to workers or the law.”

“ACCNJ commends the New Jersey Department of Labor for continuing to level the playing field for New Jersey’s construction industry by enforcing wage and hour laws,” said **Jack Kocsis, CEO of the Associated Construction Contractors of New Jersey**. “When employers exploit their workers the State loses millions in tax revenue, reputable contractors lose out on opportunities to bid, and the workers themselves are left without the protection of healthcare coverage, workers’ comp, retirement plans, and other important benefits,” Kocsis continued. “The structure in place ensures a level playing field by increasing enforcement, improving interagency communication, and educating employers and workers to stand against tactics that hurt workers and the citizens of New Jersey. We are always happy to work with our State’s leadership to continue to raise the standards of construction in New Jersey.”

Stop-work order investigations have resulted in the assessment of nearly \$3 million in administrative fees and penalties across all employers involved.

Of the 110 stop-work orders issued since 2019, 87 involved construction jobs, with 44 being public works projects. Stop-work order investigations have so far led to 11 contractors being debarred from engaging in future public works jobs.

In addition to responding to worker complaints, NJDOL last year added Strategic Enforcement (https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://t.e2ma.net/click/fd9tqj/nrddit/jokhy4__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!Nltm4ujFbzBpn8rgTxQTe9d0fLcDo3l0ftBfqIsvTue6FN5iqJTfuL6MG1TjMo_kvhg) its toolbox, focusing on industries with a history of non-compliance and whose employees are less likely to file complaints. The department has increased outreach efforts (https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://t.e2ma.net/click/fd9tqj/nrddit/zglhy4__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!Nltm4ujFbzBpn8rgTxQTe9d0fLcDo3l0ftBfqIsvTue6FN5iqJTfuL6MG1TjMo_kvhg) connect with workers and employers as part of its Strategic Enforcement initiatives. A recent Strategic Enforcement effort concentrating on the drywall industry resulted in the issuance of 10 stop-work orders (https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://t.e2ma.net/click/fd9tqj/nrddit/f9lhy4__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!Nltm4ujFbzBpn8rgTxQTe9d0fLcDo3l0ftBfqIsvTue6FN5iqJTfuL6MG1TjMo_kvhg fGcC\$) at one Raritan construction site.

For an enhanced graphic of each employer issued a stop-work order, as well as the job site location where the order was issued, click here (https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://t.e2ma.net/click/fd9tqj/nrddit/v1mhy4__!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!Nltm4ujFbzBpn8rgTxQTe9d0fLcDo3l0ftBfqIsvTue6FN5iqJTfuL6MG1TjMo_kvhg)

Below is a list of the number of stop-work orders issued per county:

Number of Stop-Work Orders Per County* July 2019 – July 2023

*Counties not listed had no stop-work orders issued during this timeframe

County	# Stop-Work Orders	County	# Stop-Work Orders
Atlantic	1	Mercer	8
Bergen	7	Middlesex	10



County	# Stop-Work Orders	County	# Stop-Work Orders
Burlington	3	Monmouth	12
Camden	7	Morris	3
Cumberland	3	Ocean	9
Essex	9	Passaic	2
Gloucester	2	Salem	2
Hudson	12	Somerset	11
Hunterdon	3	Union	6
		Total:	110

Below is a full list of Stop-Work Orders issued by NJDOL and the cities where the violation(s) took place:

ATLANTIC

Vegans Are Us, LLC: Atlantic City

BERGEN

Reliant IT: East Rutherford (2)
 Zenith Construction: Mahwah
 Gorilla Netting, LLC: Mahwah
 Premier Building & Construction Management: Paramus
 Little Purse, LLC t/a Shumi Japanese Restaurant: Ridgewood
 Urban City Creations, LLC: Ridgewood

BURLINGTON

Edgewood Company: Columbus, Edgewater Park, Pemberton (3)

CAMDEN

Mid Day Medical Associates, LLC: Blackwood
 Low Bid, Inc: Cherry Hill
 Premier Steel, Inc: Cherry Hill
 AAJ Construction, Inc: Cherry Hill
 Euro Construction: Cherry Hill
 Landmark Hospitality Renovations, LLC: Cherry Hill
 AD Energy, LLC: West Berlin

CUMBERLAND

New Bridge Contracting, Inc: Millville
 Alebrijes: Vineland
 GSM Planet, Inc: Vineland

ESSEX

HESP Solar: Belleville
 Patriot Iron Works: Belleville
 Jersey Pizza, Inc: East Orange
 United Demo: Newark
 Dimension Contractors, LLC: Newark
 Townhouse Builders, Inc: Newark
 Summit Assets: Newark
 Bella Luce/GLO Group, LLC: Nutley
 Practical, LLC: Nutley

GLOUCESTER

Malaga Diner: Malaga
 G&Lg Erectors, Inc: Swedesboro

HUDSON

Three Sons Restoration, LLC: Bayonne
 Physician Wellness Consultants, LLC: Bayonne
 Donald Drywall LLC: Harrison
 REB Construction: Jersey City
 Osorio J. Painting, LLC: Jersey City
 Drywall Builders Corp: Jersey City
 The Kadex Ceiling Team, Inc: Jersey City
 Blue Star Drywall, Corp: Jersey City
 Concrete Rising, LLC: Jersey City
 Signatura Laboris, Inc: Jersey City
 Bodytopia: West New York
 Ostreicher Floor Covering: North Bergen

HUNTERDON

All Set Construction Corp: Annandale
 Grade Construction: Annandale
 Jahnke & Sons Construction, Inc: Annandale

MERCER

Latz Inc: Ewing
 Westwood Construction of NJ, LLC: Ewing Benchmark Site Development, LLC: Ewing
 D.S. Rodrigues Construction, LLC: Princeton Tricon Enterprises, Inc: Trenton
 Saint Joseph Trim & Cabinet Co: Trenton
 Three Sons Restoration, LLC: West Windsor Cunha's Construction Inc: Robbinsville; All locations company-wide (1)

MIDDLESEX

Concrete Solutions NJ, LLC: Dunellen
 Bismark Construction Corp: Dunellen
 Modern Technology, Inc: Edison
 The Kemmerer Group, Inc: Edison
 Best Hernandez Construction, LLC: Monroe
 Carol Concrete, LLC: Monroe
 Elite Pro Rebar: Monroe
 5 Star Reinforcement GA, LLC: Monroe
 Kico Construction, LLC: Monroe
 A&D Welding, Inc: Piscataway

MONMOUTH

Eagle Associates of Cazenovia LLC: Freehold
 JH Williams Enterprises, Inc: Freehold
 Maya's Concrete, LLC: Freehold
 Galo: Keansburg
 Taj Mahal: Manasquan
 Quality Steel Erectors, Inc: Manasquan
 Alliance 360 Group, Inc: Manasquan
 H&S Construction & Mechanical, Inc: Manasquan Luigi's Pizza of Ocean, LLC: Ocean (2)
 Louies AM Kitchen, LLC: Spring Lake
 D&J Towing and Recovery Inc: Wall Twp
 Luigi's Famous Pizza/Rocco B Pizzeria LLC: Wanamassa

MORRIS

Public House Partners, LLC: Chester
 Argo Fuel LLC: Rockaway
 Ultimate Framing, LLC: Parsippany

OCEAN

Reliant IT: Lakewood (4)
 Zafir Construction Corp: Toms River
 Silva Brothers Construction Carpentry, Inc: Toms River
 Connected General Construction, LLC: Toms River Luis RC Construction, LLC: Toms River
 Bragton Construction, Inc: Waretown

PASSAIC

E&M Bindery, Inc: Clifton
 M&M Construction Technology, Inc: Paterson

SALEM

Pennsville Restaurant Assn., LLC t/a Chobani's Restaurant: Pennsville (2)

SOMERSET

LV Drywall, Inc: Raritan
 SamPaul Contracting, Inc: Raritan (2)
 Blue Contractor Corp: Raritan
 JMR Construction: Raritan
 Ariel Drywall Corp: Raritan
 Drywall Express, LLC: Raritan
 Soft Contractor Corp: Raritan
 Maximum Contractor Corp: Raritan
 Green Master Contractor Corp: Raritan
 ALM Drywall, Inc: Raritan

UNION

M&M Construction Technology, Inc: Elizabeth Marcal Construction: Rahway (2)
 NJ Masonry & Concrete, LLC: Summit
 Z.J's Enterprise Corp: Union
 WPOP Internet Radio, LLC: Union

For more information on New Jersey's wage laws, visit myworkrights.nj.gov

(https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/fd9tqj/nrddit/bunhy4___!!J30X0ZrnC1oQtbA!Nltm4ujFbzBpn8rgTxQTe9d0fLcDo3lOftBfqIsvTue6FN5iqJTfuL6MG1TjMo_kvhl)

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