

## Special Legislative and Business Resource Edition

The November elections will, in part, shape the future of your business and manufacturing in 2005. Do you know who represents you, your business and your interests? Now is the time to get involved. President Bush begins his second term of office with a healthy economy and an ambitious economic-policy agenda. Homeland security and the war on terror will again be a primary focus for the Administration, but the President is also determined to enact major domestic-policy initiatives that will strengthen our economy for the long term.

The nation's economy grew in the first three quarters of 2004 at an estimated 4.0 percent, with the manufacturing sector rebounding from a long downturn to grow 5.8 percent. It was the first time in five years that manufacturing growth has outpaced the overall economy. The President's first-term tax cuts helped abbreviate the recession he inherited and helped fuel the economic recovery. Inflation and interest rates remain low, U.S. exports are rising, home ownership is at record levels and the overall outlook for 2005 is positive.

But competition in today's global economy is fierce, and "only the strong survive" is more than just a cliché – it's a business reality. U.S. manufacturers get up each morning facing a 22 percent cost disadvantage relative to the nine major trading partners in the form of non-labor costs such as taxes, litigation, regulatory excess and rising health and energy costs. Passing on the higher costs to customers is rarely an option, because of the global competition.

These economic challenges, if left unaddressed, threaten Americans' prospects for long-term prosperity, and jeopardize the future of the manufacturing base, which has long been the bedrock of the American economy. Manufacturing accounts for two-thirds of R&D and two-thirds of U.S. exports, and employs 14.5 million workers at wages well above the national average.

Action items include reducing the non-labor costs that are imposed on U.S. businesses. Lawsuit abuse is rampant, and no other nation spends as large a share of its economy litigating meritless cases. Health costs are rising at rates that jeopardize the ability of small and large manufacturers alike to offer the health benefits upon which their workers and their families depend. The tax code needs to be simplified and the tax cuts adopted over the past four years need to become permanent. And an energy strategy is long overdue.

For 2005, make a resolution to learn more about the legislative issues affecting your business, take action by communicating to your legislators and take advantage of local government resources to grow and strengthen your business.

*Information provided by the National Association of Manufacturers.*

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# Government and Business Resources

## County Web Sites

### Links to County Councils, government services and resources

Berkeley - [www.co.berkeley.sc.us](http://www.co.berkeley.sc.us)

Charleston - [www.charlestoncounty.org](http://www.charlestoncounty.org)

Dorchester - [www.dorchestercounty.net](http://www.dorchestercounty.net)

Council of Governments - [www.bcdco.gov](http://www.bcdco.gov)

## South Carolina Government

Dept. of Commerce - [www.teamsc.com](http://www.teamsc.com)

S.C. Legislature - [www.scstatehouse.net](http://www.scstatehouse.net)

S.C. Governor - [www.scgovernor.com](http://www.scgovernor.com)

## United States Government

[www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)

[www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)

## State Election Commission

[www.state.sc.us/scsec](http://www.state.sc.us/scsec)

[www.scvotes.org](http://www.scvotes.org)

## Manufacturing Organizations

S.C. Mfrs. Alliance - [www.myscma.org](http://www.myscma.org)

Nat'l Assoc. of Mfrs. (NAM) - [www.nam.org](http://www.nam.org)



**Tax credits, industrial financing, exemptions, expansion incentives, worker training and government assistance** – Are you taking advantage of these? If you aren't sure, contact your local economic development resources to learn what they can do for you.



\* Learn about a possible tax credit per employee; taxes you may not have to pay; exemptions you are allowed; incentives for growth, expansion and new equipment

\* Learn how economic development works towards creating employment opportunities, increasing the local tax base and promoting regional growth

\* Get assistance with problems related to infrastructure, workforce, training and government services

\* Identify the many beneficial services in areas such as tax credits, financing, technical assistance, grants and international trade offered by local government

\* Find out about other projects and new companies in your area



## ROUNDTABLE IN REVIEW

*Find out what you missed at recent roundtable dinners*

**Tuesday, October 26, 2004**  
**Health/Safety/Environmental**  
**OSHA Hot Buttons**

OSHA will come on site:

1. If there is a death
2. If there is a complaint
3. If the SIC code is targeted

Current hot buttons for OSHA:

1. Lock Out Tag Out/Electrical Safe Work Practices
2. Hazard Communication
3. Machine Guarding

Fines and penalties:

- If OSHA gives you a fine or penalty, it is negotiable.
- Attend all hearings and phone conferences as recommended.
- Respond quickly to any outstanding corrective action.
- Communicate frequently with OSHA during the corrective action to assure cooperation.
- Suggest that, in lieu of a fine, the money be used for corrective action.

Vivian Harper, S.C. Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Technical Specialist

O: (803) 252-6976, ext. 229

C: (803) 315-3864

## Berkeley County

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Sandi Padgett, Assistant Director  
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Lonnie Hamilton III, Public  
Services Building  
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North Charleston, SC 29405  
(843) 958-4505 (Fax)

## Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce

Philip Owens, Vice President  
Business Development  
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(843) 805-3116  
(843) 723-4853 Fax  
[powers@charlestonchamber.org](mailto:powers@charlestonchamber.org)  
[www.charlestonchamber.net](http://www.charlestonchamber.net)



P.O. Box 975  
 Charleston, SC 29402-0975  
 www.lmcsc.org

**Serving Manufacturers in the Lowcountry and throughout South Carolina**

**Calendar of Events** *RSVP to Jennifer DeWitt at [jdewitt@charlestonchamber.org](mailto:jdewitt@charlestonchamber.org) or 843-805-3010*

**Tuesday, January 25, 2005 - 6:00 p.m.**

Cut Your Utility Costs and Conserve Energy  
*Tom Hanzlik, SCANA*  
 North Towne Grill & Seafood  
 2093 Eagle Landing Blvd., N. Charleston

**Tuesday, February 16, 2005 - 8:00 a.m.**

"Best Practice" Plant Tour at Charleston  
 Marine Containers Inc.

**Tuesday, March 8, 2005 - 7:05 p.m.**

Charleston Stingrays host "Industry Appreciation Night" at Charleston  
 Coliseum

**Tuesday, March 29, 2005 - 6:00 p.m.**

Lean Manufacturing Presentation & BBQ Dinner at AstenJohnson

**April 2005 - 1:00 p.m.**

LMC Member Appreciation Golf Tournament  
 Contact Jennifer DeWitt at 843-805-3010 for details.

**Tuesday, April 26, 2005 - 6:00 p.m.**

Tax Incentives & Economic Development Opportunities  
*Tri-County Representatives*  
 North Towne Grill & Seafood, 2093 Eagle Landing Blvd., N. Charleston

**Tuesday, May 25, 2005 - 8:30 a.m.**

"Best Practice" Plant Tour at Coastal Glass Distributors

**Tuesday, June 28, 2005 - 6:00 p.m.**

Increase Sales and Learn How to Market Your Business  
*John Carroll, Unlimited Performance*  
 North Towne Grill & Seafood, 2093 Eagle Landing Blvd., N. Charleston

**Tuesday, July 26, 2005 - 6:00 p.m.**

Developing Your Export Markets & International Sales  
*Phil Minard, Chs. Export Assistance Center*  
 North Towne Grill & Seafood, 2093 Eagle Landing Blvd., N. Charleston

Lowcountry Manufacturers Council  
 2004-2005 Board of Directors

- Cody Baker**, CMCI
- Marv Ervin**, Coburg Dairy
- Kerry Farmer**, Alcoa Mt. Holly
- Bill Finn**, AstenJohnson
- Ladd Hall**, Nucor Steel
- Joel Fletcher**, Coastal Glass Distributors
- John Irion**, SCMEP
- Don Kassing**, JW Aluminum
- Mike Leatherwood**, Leatherwood Electronics
- Sean McLernon**, STEALTH Concealment Solutions
- Ron Paquette**, Hubner Manufacturing
- Mark Richards**, The Richards Group
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- Pete Taylor**, Cummins Mercruiser Diesel
- Patrick Townes**, LATI USA
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- Rebecca Ufkes**, UEC Electronics/Automation