

## **Help for Small Businesses Bidding on Federal Projects: The Federal Contractors' Forum**

Construction employs more than 350,000 workers for Florida's economy, and provides a livelihood for thousands of workers in other industries by purchasing tens of billions of dollars of materials, equipment and supplies. It is no surprise that contractors have been hard hit in these tough economic times, but with new construction at a standstill and existing construction not selling, who has the money to hire contractors? The Federal Government, who spent over \$119,000,000,000 on construction projects last year.

However, contracting with an Agency of the Federal Government is not the same as contracting with a private entity. It is fraught with innumerable laws, rules and regulations, and the paperwork is intensive. Fortunately, help is here in the form of a series of free seminars on Federal Contracting, the "Federal Contractors' Forum." These forums examine both general topics and specific details regarding contracting for the Federal construction Agencies, and are brought to you by the Associated General Contractors of Greater Florida and the National Contract Management Association. These two-hour forums meet from 7-9 AM for an informal breakfast gathering once a month. Each month has a quick update on the latest news in Federal Contract matters, then an intensive review of a particular Federal contract topic. Only Contractors are invited to these seminars to ensure that they may ask questions freely.

The Federal Contractors' Forum is conducted by James Krause, an attorney who practices primarily in the area of federal contracts. Mr. Krause is a licensed general contractor who quit contracting to practice construction law, and now primarily represents contractors performing Federal contracts. Mr. Krause also spent 5 years in Washington, D.C. representing contractors' interests to the Federal Agencies involved in construction. Guest speakers at the Forum include other Federal consultants and experts as well as representatives from the Small Business Development Center at the University of North Florida, a valuable and free resource to area small business contractors.

If you have considered contracting with the Federal government, or are looking for a new marketplace to sell your services, stop in for an informative breakfast and meet other contractors involved in or interested in performing Federal contracts. For additional information on attending, go to [www.krauselaw.net](http://www.krauselaw.net) and click on "Fedcon".