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Winter is over... back to business as usual, finally!

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It hasn't been an easy winter for anyone, and that includes the construction industry. Beyond the obvious challenges - such as the troubles workers have had commuting into Boston or getting to job sites - we've heard reports of projects being pushed back; of subcontractors not being able to access electrical equipment on roofs buried under snow; and frozen ground that won't allow for critical site work to commence. Like many other organizations, ASM had to postpone some of its planned events - some several times!

But as true New Englanders, we wait patiently for spring, when we can proceed with our work unfettered by the elements. Of course, at ASM, we've been putting all the indoors time to good use by actively planning our event calendar, which now includes a rescheduled event on managing cash flow; breakfast conversations with executives from leading construction companies; and seminars on contract negotiation and the new Sick Leave Law. We'll cap it all off with the 20th anniversary of our annual Golf Tournament, to be held July 13 at the beautiful and prestigious International Golf Club in Bolton. We invite our friends in the A/E/C community to join us for this special celebratory event.

We're also gearing up for a busy legislative session, where we expect to go up against dozens of bills that would negatively impact our industry. At the same time, we'll be making a concerted effort to advance our legislation to reform unfair practices around indemnification and insurance. And like all business employers, we await more clarity on the commonwealth's new "Sick Leave Law," which poses significant administrative challenges in an industry where many workers move between employers and have frequent breaks in service.

For any organization, it's important to listen what your customers are saying. At ASM, we've recently surveyed our members on a variety of topics, and their feedback is very interesting. What they want most from ASM - aside from effective advocacy and good information - is opportunities to meet and network with general contractors, architects, and engineers - and building owners, too.

That's not surprising. Subcontractors want to associate with people who (1) provide them with business opportunities; (2) collaborate with them on projects, and (3) are industry leaders with valuable insight to share. In that respect, subcontractors are like every other business. It's all about business development, and building relationships.

We will use the information we glean from this survey to shape ASM's priorities in the coming months, and deliver what's important to all of our members - whether subcontractors, professional service providers or material suppliers. In the meantime, we'll keep waiting patiently for spring to arrive and put the challenges of winter behind us, once and for all!

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