

UCANE Member of the Month

J. F. White Contracting Company Approaches its 100th Anniversary



Since its founding in 1924, J. F. White Contracting Company has served both the public construction market and private owners and developers with a multi-disciplined approach to general contracting. The history of the company is a legacy of simple beginnings, hard work, strong family values, and integrity. Private owners, construction managers, design engineers, and specialty project consultants have benefitted from the professionalism of J. F. White's project teams and the company's ability to participate as stakeholders in the success of the project, for nearly 100 years.

Company Beginnings

It did not take long for the company's founder, Joseph F. White, Sr., to gain recognition within the Boston heavy/civil construction market as a bold competitor with a strong work ethic and business savvy. Early projects focused mostly on roadwork in the downtown Boston area, but it didn't take Joe White long to see there was also demand in the city for contractors that could perform excavation for deep and complex building foundations. The company soon found itself working with large private owners constructing the foundations to some of Boston's most well-known buildings including the Statler Hotel and Office Building, the Sears Building, and Harvard Business School. By the late 1920s business was booming and Joe White's billings and his equipment fleet, were growing at a rapid pace.

The early company success was nearly turned into disaster when the Great Depression hit in 1929. Suddenly banks were calling in loans, credit was almost unheard of, and new buildings and new projects were being postponed or scrapped. In order to keep the business going and his employees working, Joe

White again showed his business skills by putting his personal money back into the J. F. White Co. and at the same time creating another business called White Fuel Corporation, where he began hauling coal and fuel oils in the Boston area. Joe's quick reaction allowed both companies to survive what would turn out to be a 10-year recession.

By 1939 the recession had ended, J. F. White Contracting Company was restoring some momentum, and Joe had three sons about to join the business. Things were finally looking up again for the first-generation family business. But alas, World War II became America's problem on December 7, 1941 and Joe's three sons went to war. It would not be until 1945 that the boys returned to give Joe some much-needed help and to transition the company into the second generation.

The Second Generation: Tom, Joe, Jr., and John White

In the postwar economy, public agencies and municipalities emerged as key players providing con-

continued on page 39

J. F. White Contracting Co.

continued from page 38

struction opportunities. Principal among these at the time was the (Massachusetts) Metropolitan District Commission, or MDC, the umbrella organization that awarded construction contracts for improvements to the state's water and sewer systems, roads, and recreational facilities.

Starting with a modest job cutting ski trails and building a new ski tow at the MDC Blue Hills Reservation, J. F. White's success with MDC projects continued. In 1950, the company was low bidder on what is today known as Storrow Drive. In the 60s, with the Interstate Highway System a national funding priority, J. F. White was ready and able. When the Clean Water Act brought treatment plants and interceptor pipeline projects to New England in the 70s and 80's, White was in the forefront building multiple sewer treatment plants and installing sewer lines and river crossings across the region with some of the largest excavators in New England.

But it may have been the Charles River Dam project in 1980 that transformed J. F. White from a New England road builder and excavating contractor, to a competent and well-recognized heavy/civil contractor. Multiple bridges and ever-larger projects followed in waves: The Ted Williams Tunnel (1992-95); the Deer Island Wastewater Treatment Facility (1995-99) – a vital component of the cleanup of Boston Harbor – and finally several major segments of the \$14 billion Central Artery Project (1995-2004) that depressed I-93 below the City of Boston.

Along the way, the J. F. White second generation continued to impress engineers, owners, agencies, and fellow contractors alike by taking on rail projects, design-build projects, more complex foundation and underground parking garage jobs in the city, joint venturing on major infrastructure projects in New York, and even serving as General Contractor for the first home of the New England Patriots, Shaeffer Stadium. The company had become one of the most recognized contractors in the New England area and its then President Tom White was one of the most prolific charitable donors in Boston History.



Kevin Lampron, President
J. F. White Contracting Co.

Third Generation and Beyond

In 1997, Peter White assumed the leadership of the family business. Surrounded by some of the best talent in the business Peter and the company continued performing complex and high-profile work throughout New England and New York. The company formed its own in-house Electrical and Mechanical Divisions. By the early 2000s joint ventures and Design Build jobs pushed the company to annual revenues approaching \$100 million.

The J. F. White name continued to be seen on landmark projects in the area including the Springfield Viaduct, the Cambridge sitework package for Novartis Pharmaceutical, multiple MBTA station up-

continued on page 41



Boston/Cambridge - Longfellow Bridge

Planning for the future of your business and your family.



Privately held and family owned businesses often face unique issues and challenges. Hinckley Allen attorneys have been advising such businesses for decades and have accumulated deep expertise.

We understand that the issues faced by a privately held or family owned business often reverberate through the broader family dynamic, and that a clearly defined strategy for running and transitioning the business is essential for both corporate and familial harmony.

Our attorneys can assist with a variety of legal issues: including succession and tax planning issues, employment-related issues, retaining quality outside directors and advisors, and managing exit transactions.

Learn more about our offering at www.hinckleyallen.com



Jennifer V. Doran
Chair, Privately Held &
Family Owned Businesses
617-378-4128
jdoran@hinckleyallen.com



Providing Value.
Delivering Results.

ALBANY | BOSTON | CHICAGO | HARTFORD | MANCHESTER | NEW YORK | PROVIDENCE

© 2022 Hinckley, Allen & Snyder LLP. All rights reserved. Attorney Advertising.

J. F. White Contracting Co.

continued from page 39

grades, Electrical and Mechanical upgrades at many Boston area colleges and hospitals, the "Fast 14" Bridge project for MassDOT, as well as the restoration of Boston's iconic Longfellow Bridge.

In 2014, Dragados USA purchased the J. F. White Contracting Company. With 35 year employee Kevin Lampron, Jr. serving as President, the company is reaching new heights in both revenues and reputation. Their fleet of equipment has never been larger. They remain one of the most versatile and dependable heavy civil contractors in New England, working in both public and private sectors. Their Electrical and Mechanical Divisions compete for work at the highest and most complex levels.

Today's J. F. White leadership team brings engineered solutions to challenging construction projects

of all sizes. They also bring superior management and skilled craftsmen to every job. They seek to provide a collaborative working environment in which all parties share equally in the success of the project. Safety, quality, and schedule are bedrock elements of the planning and execution of their work, all of which are directly proportional to ultimate profitability.

A Dedicated UCANE Member

J. F. White Contracting Company joined the Utility Contractors Association of New England (UCANE) in 1978 and has been an active and supporting member of UCANE for 45 years. The White family and various officers of their company have had a presence on the Board of Directors in many of those years. The tradition continues with JFW's Justin Goodheart (General Superintendent) being elected to the UCANE Board by his industry peers in 2023.



Deep foundation support at Novartis Campus, Cambridge, MA



I-93 and Massachusetts Avenue Interchange, Boston, MA

We are extremely proud to count J. F. White Contracting Company as a UCANE member. Being associated with such a well-respected firm and generous family has helped to elevate the stature of UCANE. We thank the White family for their many contributions to both UCANE and to our industry at-large. We wish the firm continued success as it approaches it's 100 year milestone and adds more "Landmark" projects to its already impressive resume. ■





JULY | 2023

CONSTRUCTION

OUTLOOK

A PUBLICATION OF THE UTILITY CONTRACTORS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.