

Case Study: Effects of COVID-19 on a Mid-Size San Francisco Commercial General Construction Company

Methodology

The project was completed through an analysis of collecting qualitative data of a construction General Contractor. The company of interest is based in San Francisco, California. The Company has a prominent role in construction in the region with multiple job sites affected by the 2020 Covid-19 Pandemic, making them a good candidate for the study of how the construction industry was impacted by the unprecedented event. The development of project data was compiled through surveys of company employees which were asked questions on how the company approached the scenario presented by the pandemic, covering Covid-19 related problems, innovative hazard mitigation strategies, and methods to keep the company successful from a business perspective.

Andrew Maxwell

California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, California

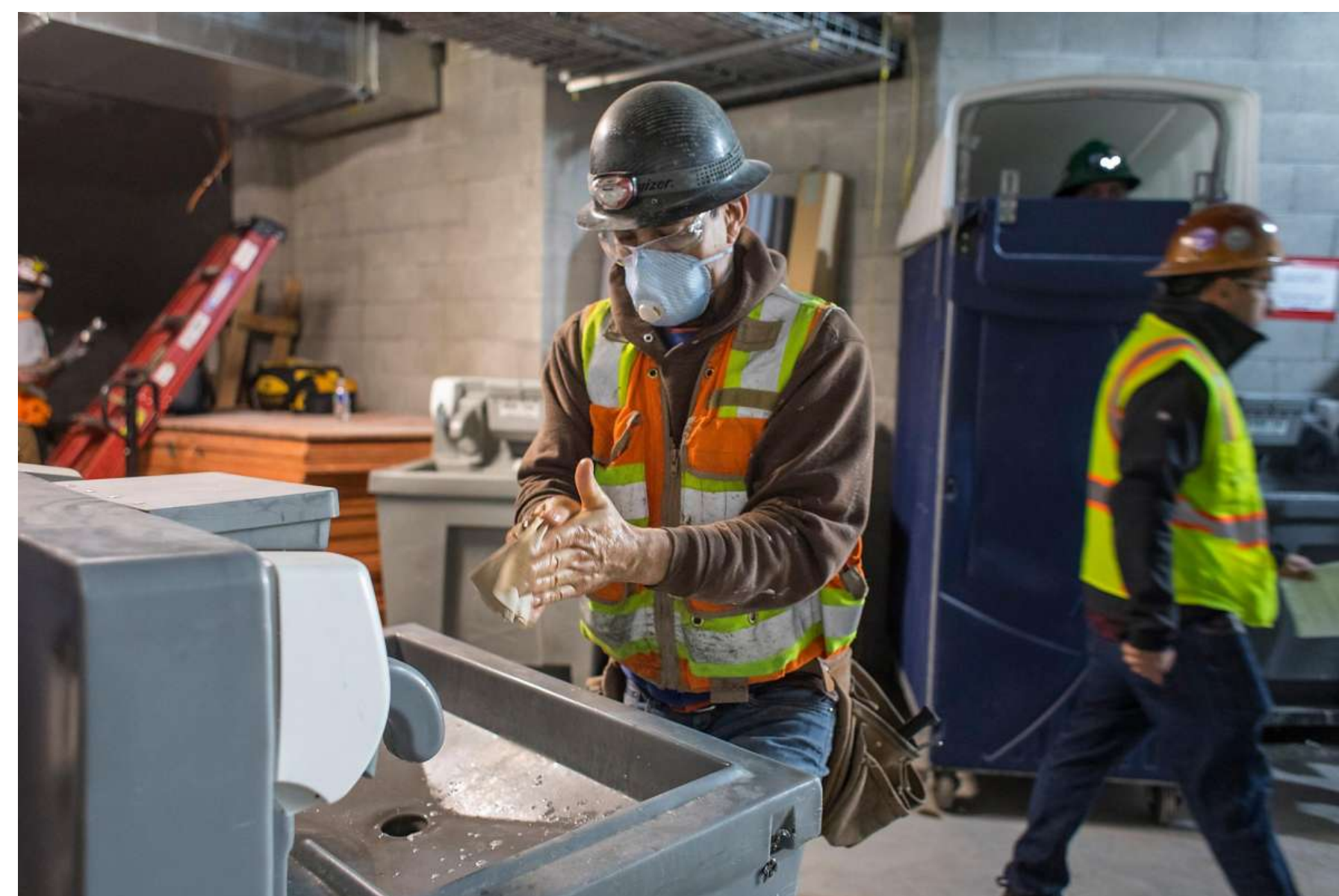
The Covid-19 pandemic has had an adverse effect on the commercial construction industry. New safety procedures and regulations set by local government and health officials have made it difficult for construction to proceed at the efficiency level it had prior to the pandemic. The San Francisco Bay Area was subject to strict protocols starting in March of 2020 that vastly limited the capability of construction companies to perform work. This case study investigates the ways in which a mid sized commercial general construction contractor from the San Francisco Bay Area was impacted by Covid-19 and the methods they used to handle the associated challenges. While initially being closed completely from a statewide shelter in place order, the company eventually was permitted to return to work, and was tasked with developing ways to mitigate the transmission of the virus on their job sites to keep employees safe and projects open. Additionally, the company had to adjust from a business standpoint to keep themselves profitable in the present and the future. The company's position in a region heavily impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic make them a good candidate for conducting a study in this area.

Results

Covid-19 had an adverse effect on the Company's ability to function versus prior to the Pandemic. While an entire company shut down was prompted by a shelter in place order issued by Bay Area counties at the end of March 2020, project teams were able to go back to work in May after being deemed an essential business by local government officials. With the main office remaining shut down to aid in curtailing the virus, about 95% of office staff has been asked to work from home. On their sites, the company developed methods for contact tracing, requiring each site entrant to provide contact information and in addition to a daily temperature check and review of potential symptoms. Moving forward the company plans to pursue work that has a stable financial backing from the owner. In anticipation of a market downturn caused by Covid-19, the company has excelled their bidding efforts to a higher than typical level. The company is pursuing more public work projects, as private developers are withholding funds to commence previously awarded projects, in fear their investment will not pay off. Because of the company's ability to remain busy with current work, layoffs have been minimal, and employee pay, and benefits have remained at the pre Covid-19 levels.



(Mark, 2020)



(Feulner, 2020)



(Keeler, 2020)



(Chinn, 2020)