

75th Annual Concrete Conference

January 15, 2026
University of St. Thomas



ST. THOMAS
School of Engineering

link.stthomas.edu/concrete

7:00 AM

Registration Opens

Coffee provided.

8:00 AM

Welcoming Remarks

Mary Vancura, Minnesota Concrete Conference Planning Committee Chair
Don Weinkauff, Dean, University of St. Thomas School of Engineering

8:10 AM

Presentation 1 - Construction of the St. Thomas Strong Wall

Nick Fernstrom, Project Executive, McGough Construction
Mike Martin, Strategic Initiatives Lead, McGough Construction

McGough will present on the construction engineering and process of building the new strong wall in the new Iversen High Bay within the recently finished Schoenecker Center at the University of St. Thomas. The facility will be used for large-scale structural and material research.

6.5 PDHs are awarded to those attending all sessions. Registration fee is all-inclusive and includes lunch, snacks, and free parking.

9:00 AM

Presentation 2 - Updates to the 318-25 Concrete Code

Gregory Zeisler, PE, Senior Engineer, American Concrete Institute

The updates to ACI 318-25 include:

- New sustainability appendix for carbon-reduction goals
- Guidance on performance-based wind design
- Revised post-installed reinforcing bar requirements
- Equations for breakout capacity of reinforcing bar groups
- Clarifications on deep foundation shear calculations
- Enhanced shear friction parameters

9:45 - 10:15

Networking Break

10:15 AM

Presentation 3 - Current Status and Future Paths for UHPC Bridges in the US Market

George Morcoux, PhD, PE, FPCI, Professor at University of Nebraska - Lincoln and PCI UHPC Subcommittee Chair

This presentation will provide an overview of the state of the practice on UHPC in the U.S. and future paths that could be pursued in coming years.

11:00 AM

Presentation 4 - Will the US Construction Thrive or Dive the Rest of 2026

Ken Simonson, Chief Economist, The Associated General Contractors of America

Ken will summarize current and forecasted construction spending in multiple sectors, identify how tariffs are impacting construction, and show statistics regarding construction-related workforce demographics.

12:00 PM

Lunch

Buffet Lunch Provided

1:00 PM

Presentation 5 - Spec Wars: Fighting the Battle Between Design Intent and Construction Reality

Alf Gardiner PE, Director of Concrete Science and Principal Engineer, Braun Intertec Corporation

Through real-world examples and practical strategies, attendees will gain insight into how to preserve design integrity while navigating the realities of construction.

1:45 PM

Presentation 6 - Admixtures and Cement: Efficiency and Changes

Mark Niemuth, PhD, Director of Technical Support, Cemex USA

This presentation will discuss the different types of admixtures that are currently used in concrete including their influence on the properties of concrete made with different types of cementitious materials and aggregates.

2:30 - 3:00 PM

Networking Break

3:00 PM

Presentation 7 - Going Underground: Concrete Performance in Minneapolis Central City Tunnel

Craig Eckdahl PE, Senior Engineer, TKDA

Joe Klejwa, PE, Professional Engineer, City of Minneapolis

Nap Scott, Specialty Infrastructure Team Manager, PCI Roads

Justin Lashley, Engineering Services Manager, Cemstone

This presentation by the tunnel's engineers, owner, general contractor, and concrete producer will inform about the project's purpose, challenges, collaboration, and role of concrete delivery in its success.

3:45 - 4:30 PM

Presentation 8 - The Fine Print of Going Green: Legal Lessons in Sustainable Construction

Presented by Jeff Coleman, Coleman and Erickson, LLC.

This presentation will explore the potential legal risks and responsibilities associated with sustainable construction projects.

4:30 PM

Optional Tour and Reception

Tour of the new strong wall/strong floor sponsored by the University of St. Thomas School of Engineering's civil engineering department. Post-conference reception sponsored by the Minnesota Concrete Council and PCI Midwest.