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Construction in 2002

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weather the slowdown in not only construction, but in business in general.

"About five years ago when people started looking at the new starts and it started to wane, I think the smart guys went out and started to retool their marketing efforts toward renovations and helping superintendents and looking at the small projects that typically five years before that they wouldn't have even considered because there was such a demand for them to do full-scale golf courses," he said.

Both now and in coming months, Hetrick said builders face difficulty in finding af-

'Everybody is entitled to make a profit ... it really hurts the industry when it gets so competitive that people start buying jobs.'

— Lee Hetrick

fordable insurance and bonding for projects. He said the problem could get worse before it gets any better.

"If there's one issue that we have that's most difficult for builders to face today it's the bonding issue and insuring the project," he said. "That's the one that's going to be the biggest hurdle to get through. It's been described to me that we still haven't seen the bottom of the barrel in the bonding market from 9/11. You have to figure out how you can go out there and maintain a level of expertise and not have everything crater in on you."

What makes construction a particularly tenuous industry is dependence its on profits "trickling down" from developers to builders, Hetrick said.

"Everybody is entitled to make a profit," he said. "It really hurts the industry when it gets so competitive that people start buying jobs."

"Some jobs you have to let go by," he added. "The balance is extremely keen right now."

While it is difficult at the moment, Hetrick said the golf industry as a whole should begin to see an upturn in the near future.

"There are projects out there and they're finding funding. Everybody seems to be getting the work and maintaining some level of security for their employees," he said. "We all seem to be busy. Everybody seems to be getting the work and maintaining some level of security for their employees, so we're cautiously optimistic." ■

We want to hear from you!

Letters to the editor are an integral part of GCN, so let your voice be heard. Send all correspondence to:

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