



R. BAKER & Son

OUTRIGGER

Rigging, Dismantling & Demolition News from R. BAKER & SON

Zero Interruptions: How R. Baker & Son Renovated a Working Hospital

Hospital demolition is a different animal. Working inside an operating healthcare facility takes extreme coordination, and the first step in any hospital renovation starts long before demo begins: planning, investigating, tracing, marking, and testing. R. Baker & Son took on exactly that challenge with a large-scale renovation, tackling the project area by area and system by system.

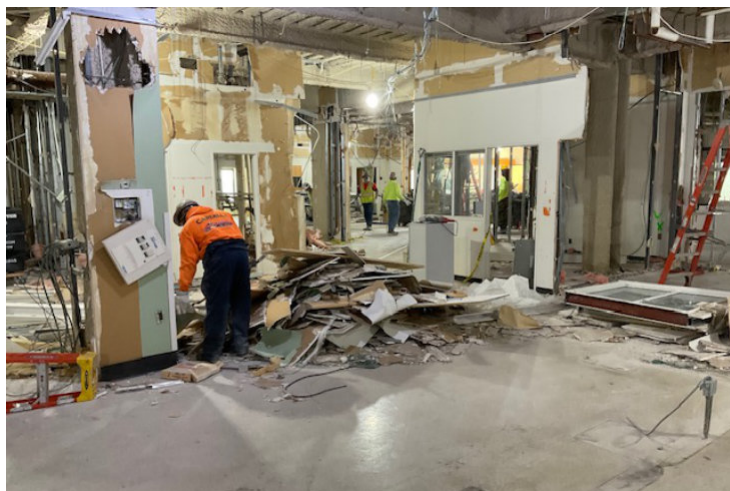
When you've done hospital renovations before, you know downtime isn't an option. You need complete separation between construction and demolition zones and a clean, functioning hospital on the other side of the barrier, maintained through ICRA barriers throughout.

Case in point: a large hospital in Newark, New Jersey, brought in R. Baker & Son for one of the more difficult jobs in the business, renovating the facility area by area, sometimes several areas at once. "It was a huge team effort," says Steve Kirka, Foreman for R. Baker & Son. Marking an area for demolition is the easy part. The harder work is identifying which MEP systems can come out, which need to stay in service, and which require a shutdown and workaround to make room for the new. Color-coded markings and ribbons kept it all straight: what could be removed, what stayed, and what needed relocation.

The scope covered exterior façade and brick removal along with extensive interior work: patient rooms, emergency areas, CAT scan and X-ray suites, waiting areas, nurse stations, and more.

As each area of the hospital was turned over for renovation, R. Baker & Son moved fast to isolate it with ICRA barriers, proper signage, debris buggy cleaning stations, and sticky mats to control foot traffic.

MEP crews shut down, locked out, and air-gapped systems for quick removal, while other crews worked in parallel planning off-hour relocations to keep the hospital running without interruption. Areas under renovation kept exhaust systems operational to maintain negative air pressure. R. Baker & Son stripped everything down



R. Baker & Son holds the distinction of being the oldest and largest Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) Rigging, Dismantling & Demolition Contractor in North America





and cleared everything out, including VCT tile removed with ride-on scrapers. Debris removal was scheduled at varying times, early morning or second shift, to minimize disruption, while mechanical and electrical systems were carefully dismantled and hauled out.

Safety and cleanliness with zero interruptions were non-negotiable. Daily 7:30 a.m. huddles with the hospital facility team and other trades kept everyone aligned and made coordination far smoother, benefiting all involved.

The result: every area handed back on time, done safely, with minimal disruption to hospital operations, ready for the long-awaited new construction to begin.

Five Minutes Now, Fewer Injuries Later

Construction work wears on the body. Lifting, bending, carrying, and repetitive motion add up over time, and musculoskeletal injuries like strains and sprains are consistently among the top reasons workers end up off the job. The Bureau of Labor Statistics recorded nearly 273,000 cases in a single year, and the trades account for a disproportionate share of them. Backs, shoulders, and knees tend to take the brunt of it, especially on jobs involving repetitive lifting or awkward positions held for long stretches.



Do It Right

One simple fix: stretch before the workday starts. Experts are split on whether stretching prevents injuries outright, but most agree it won't hurt and often helps. Benefits include better flexibility, improved range of motion, less back pain, and lower injury risk on physical tasks. A few minutes spent loosening up before the first lift of the day can make the difference between a normal shift and one that ends with a strain.

R. Baker Recommends

- Hands on hips, twist side to side
- Reach both arms overhead, hold 15 to 30 seconds
- Bend forward and reach toward your toes
- Shrug shoulders up and down with slow breaths
- Roll shoulders forward and back

Repeat these on breaks, especially after heavy lifts or demanding tasks. A 15 to 30 minute rest during strenuous work gives your body time to recover and cuts the risk of overexertion later in the shift. A few minutes of prep now means a healthier body on the job for the long haul, and fewer days lost to injuries that a little movement could have helped prevent.

Quality Award Winner

Congratulations to **Steve Kirka**, this quarter's recipient of the R. Baker & Son Quality Award. This program was established to recognize individuals for their outstanding achievements in safety, project execution, and customer satisfaction, and for their continuing dedication to R. Baker & Son's growth and success.

Thank You, Steve Kirka for a job well done!



Note: The story above reflects the awe we at R. Baker & Son feel toward extraordinary engineering feats—whether in historical operations like Azorian or in the complex, near-impossible tasks our clients entrust to us today. Our role is to translate daunting objectives into safe, successful completions through meticulous planning, disciplined execution, and unwavering collaboration.