

Insulation Advocate

January and February 2014 *Insulation Advocate*:

Triumph on Capitol Hill

January and February were full of unexpected surprises, with record-breaking cold temperatures and unusually substantial snowfall causing business and government shutdowns. In spite of Mother Nature's antics, the National Insulation Association (NIA) has managed to have breakthroughs on several initiatives, and it is shaping up to be a very exciting time for our industry.

Farm Bill Passes!

I am happy to share some wonderful news: on February 7, 2014 President Obama signed the Farm Bill into law! As you may remember from previous issues of *Insulation Advocate*, we had been working with our legislative partners to include provisions relating to mechanical insulation in the bill. Our amendments made it into the final version, and the Farm Bill now requires the Secretary of



Agriculture to submit a report on energy use and energy-efficiency projects at its Washington, D.C. headquarters and other major regional facilities. The bill also requires the submittal of a list of energy-saving projects that could be achieved by upgrading mechanical insulation at these facilities, and by enacting a proper mechanical insulation maintenance program.

The fact that mechanical insulation was included in this legislation is an important recognition for our industry, and it also offers the potential to provide a significant amount of evidence to support the numerous benefits of mechanical insulation. This evidence can help us demonstrate the value of mechanical insulation to stakeholders in other industries.

CWCC Update

In the October 2013 *Insulation Advocate*, I shared that I had been invited to join the Commercial Workforce Credentialing Council's (CWCC's) Board of Advisors. At my first meeting, we discussed establishing 5 key occupations in order to improve the quality and consistency of the commercial building workforce. After deciding upon the positions as Energy Auditor, Commissioning Authority, Building/Stationary Engineer, Facilities Manager, and Energy Manager, the next step was to decide exactly what the job task analysis (JTA) should be for each position. To facilitate this process, the CWCC

had to choose subject matter experts (SMEs) to create the JTAs for the specified positions. The goal was to select 12 SMEs to create the JTA for each position. Approximately 200 people applied for these openings, and NIA put forth our expert consultant, Chris Crall, to represent NIA and the mechanical insulation industry, and he was selected. These guidelines will help offer updated training programs that are high-quality, third-party accredited, industry endorsed, and recognized by the Department of Energy (DOE) and the General Services Administration (GSA). The overall aim of this process is to clarify standards, lower costs, and create better credentials, more qualified workers, and ultimately, better buildings.

Building Compliance Coalition

NIA recently joined a coalition consisting of the Institute for Market Transformation, U.S. Green Building Council, American Society of Heating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, National Association of State Energy Officials, Building Codes Assistance Project, and the International Code Council, and sent a letter to the Secretary of Energy urging him to support funding for groups seeking greater energy efficiency through building energy code compliance. The Institute for Market Transformation estimates the lifetime energy savings from bringing just 5 years' worth of new residential and commercial construction up to full energy code compliance would reach \$37.1 billion, and provide more resilient structures, create jobs, and improve indoor air quality and conditions.

Mechanical Insulation Jobs on the Rise

A recent Bureau of Labor report detailed the jobs that are projected to grow the most quickly in the coming decade. Mechanical insulation workers were among the top 5 fastest growing occupations, and are projected to grow by 46.5% by 2022. It is our responsibility to help pass down the knowledge and facilitate the skill development our growing industry needs. NIA will continue to pursue opportunities to ensure that the future of the mechanical insulation industry is bright, and we hope to see all of our members actively taking part.

Best Regards,
Michele M. Jones
NIA EVP/CEO