

Insulation Advocate

NIA's Insulation Advocate: Update on March's Activities DOE Agrees to Conduct Insulation Study

In this issue of *Insulation Advocate*, I am excited to share that the Department of Energy (DOE) has agreed to conduct a report on the impact that insulation has when examining water and energy use within federal buildings and facilities! Convincing the DOE to conduct this study has been one of NIA's ongoing goals; we had a breakthrough in November when Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Chairwoman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and Senator Maria Cantwell, (D-WA), the Committee's ranking member, sent a bipartisan letter to Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz requesting that the DOE conduct this study immediately. The DOE has responded to this letter and has stated that it will begin working on this study and finalize it by the end of 2016.

We are continuing to meet with officials on Capitol Hill to educate them on these efforts and look forward to sharing the results of the study with elected officials throughout the country and also from the commercial and industrial sectors in the United States. The results from a study of this size could play a tremendous part in proving the value of insulation and lead to its use in more federal and private facilities.

March also brought significant developments with some of NIA's strategic partners. NIA joined the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) and dozens of other organizations in signing a joint Industry Statement on Resilience. This statement recognizes the reality that natural and manmade hazards represent a threat to the public and the strength of the nation. In answer to these challenges, the signing organizations committed to resilience, defined as "the ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to adverse events." A large part of preparedness is recognizing the role that updated planning, building materials, and modern design, construction, and operational techniques play in making communities more prepared to face any potential challenges. It is important for NIA to take this step and join other organizations in affirming our commitment to promote and advocate for sustainable technologies, including insulation.

NIA also added its name to the International Energy Conservation Code's (IECC's) proposed change to the 2018 IECC: an Outcome-Based Pathway for Energy Use. Current code departments may struggle to meet community goals for energy-efficient buildings due to limited staff and funds. The proposed change will allow building owners or facility managers to use all potential pathways to save energy; this approach may lead to more efficient systems, since current codes rely solely on inspections and accurate construction to achieve a theoretical energy performance that may not actually manifest once the project is finished. Building owners who choose the outcome-based pathway to meet energy efficiency requirements will have to provide 12 months of data that proves they are meeting target within 2 years. Given insulation's quick return on

investment (ROI) in terms of both energy and financial savings, we hope more buildings owners will choose to properly insulate their systems as they work to meet energy efficiency goals.

Additionally, NIA recently attended a Southeastern Construction Owners and Associates Roundtable (SCOAR) meeting. SCOAR is a not-for-profit organization that provides a forum for its members to share information, views, and practices related to industrial construction. This meeting included a panel discussion on mechanical insulation with industry representatives, facility owners, and engineers. Panel topics included the role of mechanical insulation in energy conservation and environment initiatives, personnel protection, prescriptive and holistic code development, and strategic initiatives related to mechanical insulation. NIA was glad to have this opportunity to discuss the benefits of insulation—these types of discussions can help convince more parties of the importance of using mechanical insulation and exactly how it can benefit their projects.

The building and construction communities are incredibly focused on energy efficiency and on efficient building strategies and materials. The data that we will get from the DOE study—in addition to our current knowledge—will provide excellent tools for NIA to promote insulation and make more facility owners and builders aware of our energy and money-saving technology.

Best Regards,
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NIA is a not-for-profit trade association representing both merit (open shop) and union contractors, distributors, laminators, fabricators, and manufacturers that provide thermal insulation, insulation accessories, and components to the commercial, mechanical, and industrial markets throughout the nation. Since 1953, the northern Virginia-based association has been the voice of the insulation industry and is dedicated to keeping the commercial and industrial insulation industry up to date on the latest industry trends and technologies. For more information, visit www.Insulation.org.

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