

NIA | News

THE OFFICIAL NEWS PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL INSULATION ASSOCIATION® (NIA)
REPRESENTING THE MECHANICAL AND SPECIALTY INSULATION INDUSTRY

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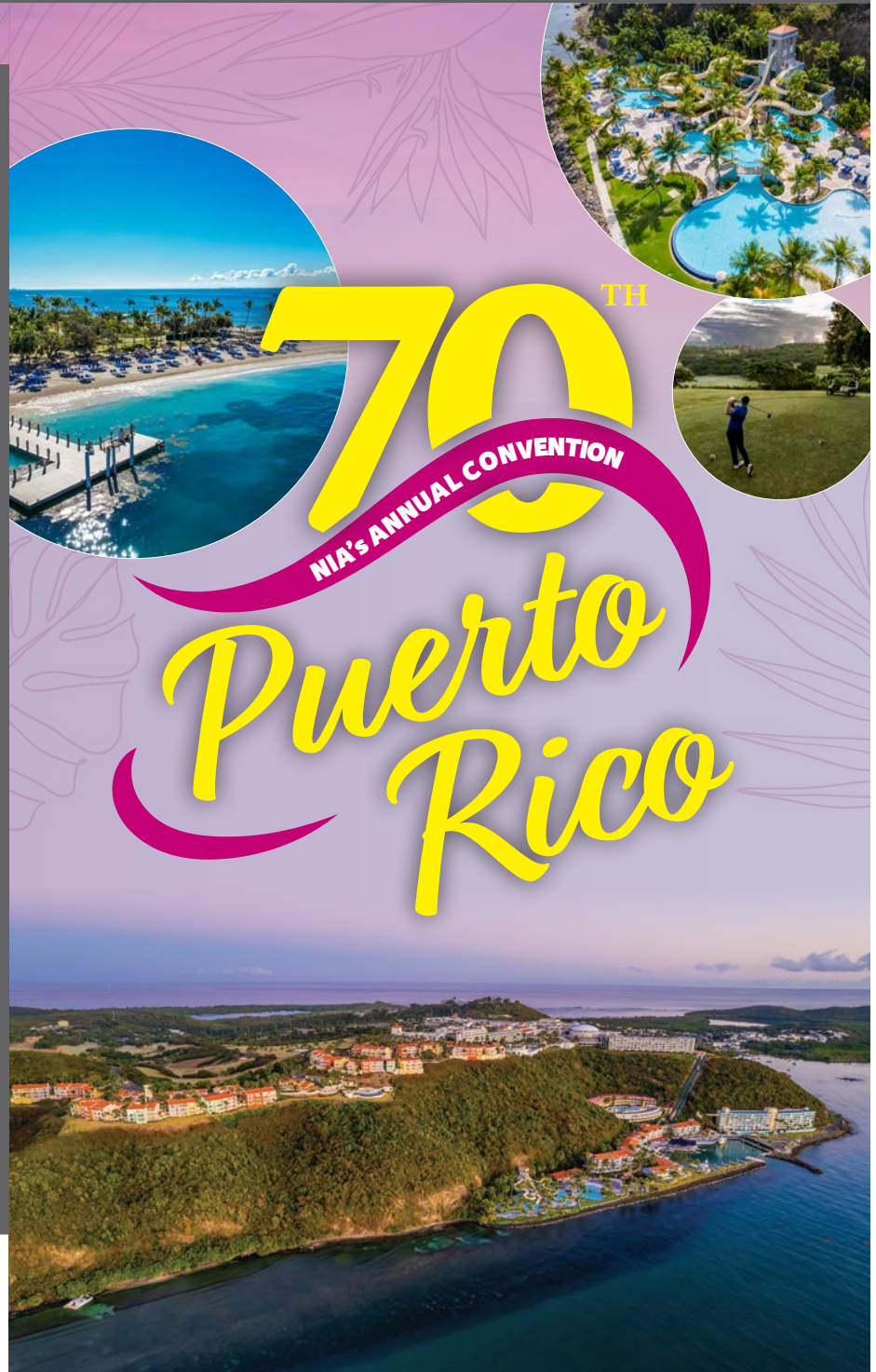
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EVP/CEO MESSAGE

Countdown to Convention in Puerto Rico



With 2026 in full swing, I'm excited to invite you to join your national network for our upcoming 70th Annual Convention, March 24–26, 2026, at the El Conquistador Resort in Puerto Rico. This milestone event, embracing NIA President Rick Sutphin's **Association Strong—70 Years** theme, celebrates the insulation professionals, companies, and friends who have strengthened NIA over seven decades. Haven't registered yet? There is still time to secure your spot! Advanced registration ends on February 26, and pre-event registration closes on March 9. The hotel room block is selling out quickly, so don't wait! Turn to [page 7](#) to check out the latest education, training, and networking events we have in store for you. This Convention is sure to be a memorable event, and it won't be the same without you!

Speaking of our network and the value of staying connected, Kristin DiDomenico and I recently had the opportunity to connect with Owens Corning at their training facility (see [page 5](#)). If you are interested in hosting NIA for a facility tour, please reach out to me at mjones@insulation.org.

For those of you who might not be aware, we have formally convened our first four Standards Working Groups, which we cover on [page 14](#). There is also news from the Foundation on [page 16](#), where we share some of the recent partnership collaborations and presentations, as well as content development from NIA's Education Center.

Also included in this issue is an update from NIA Legal Counsel Gary Auman on [page 18](#), with the latest developments from OSHA.

I want to extend a warm welcome to our new members and thank all of you for your continued engagement with NIA. Your involvement, whether through Convention, education, standards development, or safety initiatives, helps ensure that our association remains strong for generations to come. I look forward to seeing many of you in Puerto Rico as we celebrate 70 years of NIA together!

Michele M. Jones

Executive Vice President/Chief Executive Officer

NIA LEADERSHIP

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Thomas MacKinnon, *Armacell*

Getting to Know Your NIA Team

You may have met some of our NIA team members at events, or seen their names on our website, but we thought you'd enjoy getting to know the people behind the services you rely on. As we have done in the last few issues of *NIA News*, we'll introduce you to the staff members who make NIA work for you.

NIA'S MEETINGS AND EDUCATION TEAM

Ashley Bartley, Events and Education Specialist



Ashley plays a key role in supporting the association's professional development initiatives and educational certification courses. She is actively involved in coordinating and supporting training efforts, developing new courses, and assisting with

NIA events. She also serves as NIA's staff liaison to the National Center for Construction Education and Research.

Ashley brings a strong background in both education and events, having spent 3 years teaching and working in event management roles prior to joining the NIA team in 2023. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Marketing from Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas.

Outside of work, Ashley enjoys time with her husband, who is a construction superintendent, along with her two rescue dogs. She also enjoys reading, traveling, and being on the boat in the lake during the summer.

Ashley is passionate about creating organized, accessible, and impactful learning experiences that support professional growth and strengthen the industry as a whole. She is especially excited about the continued growth of NIA's Education Center and the role it plays in supporting professional growth within the industry. To connect with Ashley, you can reach her via email at abartley@insulation.org, or by phone at 703-464-6422, ext. 118.

Erin Penberthy, Vice President, Events and Education



Erin has spent nearly 11 years at NIA, and her main responsibilities include overseeing and growing all of NIA's events and educational programs. On the events side of Erin's job, she handles the strategy and execution for NIA's Annual Convention and Fall Summit. Her goal is always to create a space where members can network, share ideas, and move the industry forward through engaging content.

On the education side, Erin has been a leader in working with industry experts to develop and create new educational programs for NIA members and the mechanical insulation industry. She helped launch NIA's Education Center in 2022 and oversees the creation of 15 to 20 new courses for the on-demand platform each year.

Erin is a Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) and graduated from Michigan State University with a B.A. in Hospitality Business. Outside the office, Erin loves traveling and exploring new places, enjoying good wine, and spending as much time as possible outdoors. Most of all, she enjoys life at home with her husband, Brett, and their two children, Evelyn (6) and Desmond (3).

Erin's goal is to ensure NIA members have the right tools and connections to stay competitive in the ever-changing industry. To connect with Erin, you can reach her via email at epenberthy@insulation.org, or by phone at 703-464-6422, ext. 114.



Fall Summit 
EDUCATE | ENGAGE | ELEVATE

Mark your calendar!

**Fall Summit 2026
October 28-29, 2026**

MGM National Harbor  National Harbor, Maryland

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

In this issue, we are excited to welcome the following new companies. We encourage you to read the information each company has submitted and see if they are potential new business partners for your company. To view new NIA member companies, visit www.insulation.org/newmembers.



November 2025

EcoEnergy Conservation Group

Contractor

\$0 –1 Million

Attn: Fernando Ormeno

2822 Clear Creek Dr.

Rockwall, TX 75032-9247

(214) 771-3597

www.ecoenergycg.com

Specialties: Building Envelope, Removable Insulation

About EcoEnergy Conservation Group

EcoEnergy Conservation Group provides contracting services for Texas energy efficiency programs and the Weatherization Assistance Program, specializing in energy efficiency. They address air leaks, inadequate insulation, and moisture issues.

Why did you join NIA?

EcoEnergy Conservation Group is interested in attending the annual meetings to interact with other companies and expand our business contacts, as well as participating in technical training classes for our employees.



December 2025

ProntoTech LLC

Contractor

\$0–1 Million

Attn: Brian Putos

120 Harmony Rd.

Wexford, PA 15090-7453

(412) 694-2000

www.prontotechllc.com

Specialties: HVAC Insulation

About ProntoTech LLC

ProntoTech specializes in the installation and service of heating, air conditioning, indoor air quality and ventilation systems, as well as electrical, refrigeration, temperature, and humidity controls.

Why did you join NIA?

ProntoTech joined NIA to receive access to educational opportunities.

Do you know of a company that could benefit from becoming a member of NIA?

For more information or to refer a potential member, please call Rianna Gleeson at (703) 464-6422, ext. 113, or email membership@insulation.org.

PEOPLE & PLACES

In the News

Johns Manville Announces Leadership Transition in Insulation Systems

Johns Manville (JM), a manufacturer of building and specialty products, recently announced a significant leadership transition within its Insulation Systems business. Greg Clarke, President of Insulation Systems, retired in late January after an accomplished career spanning decades with JM. “Greg has played a key role in JM’s success, consistently strengthening relationships with our customers and providing thoughtful leadership across the organization,” said Bob Wamboldt, JM President and CEO. Patrick Kivits succeeded Clarke as President of Insulation Systems. Patrick has more than 30 years of experience in the manufacturing industry. Most recently, he served as CEO of Sealed Air, and previously held senior leadership positions at WestRock. He earned a master’s degree in Mechanical Engineering from Eindhoven University of Technology in the Netherlands and is fluent in Dutch, German, and English. “We are excited to welcome Patrick to JM,” Wamboldt added. “His extensive experience and proven leadership will be invaluable as we continue to deliver innovative solutions and exceptional service to our customers.”

JM is based in Denver, Colorado, and has been a member of NIA since 1958.

Knauf Insulation Named 2025 Outstanding Large Employer by Texas Workforce Solutions

Knauf Insulation, Inc., a family-owned global manufacturer of building materials, recently announced that its McGregor, Texas, manufacturing facility has been named the 2025 Outstanding Large Employer by Workforce Solutions for the Heart of Texas. The award recognizes employers in McLennan County who partner with Workforce Solutions to create jobs, drive economic growth, and strengthen workforce skills through innovative strategies. This marks the second consecutive year Knauf McGregor has been honored for its commitment to workforce and economic development in the Heart of Texas. In 2025, Knauf advanced into a larger category, underscoring its growing impact and leadership in the region. “At Knauf, we believe that building world-class products starts with building world-class teams,” said CEO Matt Parrish. “This recognition reflects our commitment to investing in people, fostering opportunity, and creating a culture where innovation and community go hand in hand. We are proud to call Central Texas home and look forward to shaping its future together.” Knauf McGregor team representatives received the award during the 2026 Annual Awards of Excellence Banquet on January 15, 2026.

A member of NIA since 1978, Knauf Insulation, Inc. is based in Shelbyville, Indiana.

Industry Outreach with the NIA Team

Owens Corning Insulation Training Center Hosts NIA for a Tour of Pasadena Facility

NIA EVP/CEO Michele M. Jones and VP Kristin V. DiDomenico recently toured the Owens Corning Insulation Training Center in Pasadena, Texas. “What a wonderful facility that focuses on education. They truly have thought of everything that one would need to excel in learning,” noted Michele M. Jones. We always welcome the opportunity for hands-on experiences in the insulation industry. If your company is interested in hosting NIA for a facility tour, please reach out to Michele at mjones@insulation.org.



Industry Outreach, continued

NIA Meets with Bechtel for a Mechanical Insulation Overview

Bechtel recently invited representatives from NIA to provide an overview of mechanical insulation to a group of engineers, program managers, and procurement managers at its headquarters in Reston, Virginia. The NIA team offered Bechtel leaders insights into best practices, specification considerations, and the critical impact insulation has on safety, sustainability, and long-term asset performance. Participants included Michele M. Jones, NIA EVP/CEO; Kenny Freeman, NIA Past President/Consultant; Brad Kalyan, JT THORPE; Scott Sinclair, Johns Manville/NIA Subject Matter Expert/Instructor; and John Stevens, JT THORPE/ NIA President-Elect.



Advocating for NIA Members at the State Level

In early February, NIA joined fellow members of the Insulation Industry Association Council in urging members with business ties to Missouri to contact state legislators in opposition to House Bill 2384. The proposed legislation would roll back local energy codes statewide to the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) for residential, commercial, and industrial buildings. Such a rollback would negatively impact Missouri residents, the state's energy goals, and businesses that manufacture or install energy-efficient products, including mechanical insulation. To track the bill, visit <https://tinyurl.com/5b3atyam>.

Connect with NIA on
SOCIAL MEDIA!

Stay up to date with all our programs and events! Visit:



[X.com/NIAinfo](https://x.com/NIAinfo)



[LinkedIn.com/company/NIAinfo](https://www.linkedin.com/company/NIAinfo)



www.YouTube/NIAinfo

#NIAMeets is our event hashtag—please use it when sharing event photos and updates. Scan the QR code to connect with NIA on X, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

NIA | National Insulation Association®

Make Your Association Strong: Celebrating 70 Years of Our NIA Network

Over the last 70 years, NIA's Annual Convention has been the place for peers to gather, build relationships, exchange ideas, and shape the future of the mechanical insulation industry. President Rick Sutphin's theme for this year's event, *Association Strong—70 Years*, celebrates the people, companies, and volunteers who have strengthened NIA. "Seventy years of NIA Conventions prove that when we invest in others, we invest in the future," said Rick.

The 70th Annual Convention is your opportunity to step away from daily demands and reconnect with your national network while investing in your professional growth. Whether this is your first NIA Convention or you're returning for another year of connection, the schedule is designed to help you maximize your time on site with meaningful education, committee collaboration, and dedicated networking opportunities.

NIA's 70th Annual Convention

March 24–26, 2026

**El Conquistador
 Resort, Puerto Rico**

Key Dates and Deadlines

February 26, 2026: Advanced
 Registration, Hotel Reservation,
 and Golf Tournament Deadlines

March 9, 2026: Standard
 Registration Closes



Have you considered bringing your family, spouse, or guests? Typically, about 40% of attendees bring someone to Convention. Alongside activities designed specifically for guests, the schedule of events on NIA's website indicates which events are family friendly and the events spouses and guests are encouraged to attend. All attendees must be registered.

Register at www.insulation.org/convention2026 to join your colleagues at this once-a-year national industry celebration.

PLAN YOUR DAYS: BUILT-IN OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT

From the Welcome and Appreciation evening to daily networking breakfasts and evening receptions, every touchpoint is an opportunity to strengthen your professional network. Open time is also built into the schedule so you can meet with clients, explore the host city, or continue conversations sparked during sessions. Notable networking opportunities include:

- Start off the gathering in paradise under the palm trees at the **Welcome and Appreciation Evening**. The Tuesday night outdoor event begins at 6:30 p.m. and is family-friendly, with a full dinner and open bar. Make sure to stop by the live mural honoring NIA's 70th Convention and add your contribution to this memorial art piece. Suggested attire is resort casual.
- This year's **Golf Tournament at the Golf Course of El Conquistador Resort** will take place at 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, the first day of the Convention. Designed by world-renowned golf architect Arthur Hills, the resort course features an 18-hole, par-72 layout on rolling hills with breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean and El Yunque Rain Forest.
- The Convention schedule has a specific time for networking breakfasts and breaks on Wednesday and Thursday morning to ensure you can connect with your peers and grab a cup of coffee in between sessions.
- Don't miss the finale of NIA's Convention—the **Farewell Reception and Dinner**, for a full meal, open bar, and the last opportunity to network and celebrate NIA President Rick Sutphin as his presidency comes to an end.
- To close out the last night of Convention, participating Associate (Manufacturer) member companies will tempt you with sweets and drinks in the **Hosted Dessert Hospitality Suites**. Attendees will also have the opportunity to win a special raffle prize by visiting each hosted suite and completing the dessert bingo raffle card!

Plus, two dedicated, invitation-only events are designed just for first-time attendees:

- **New and first-time members** are invited to attend a dedicated orientation on Tuesday at 5:15 p.m. to explore the benefits of NIA membership. From NIA mentorship to how to get the most out of Convention, attendees will gain a better understanding of how NIA serves its members and the mechanical insulation industry.
- If this is your first NIA Convention, be sure to RSVP to the **Convention First-Timers Happy Hour**, on Tuesday at 6:00 p.m., for the opportunity to network with NIA leaders and enjoy getting to know fellow members.



Final Deadlines— Don't Miss Your Chance to Attend

If you're planning to join us in Puerto Rico this March, now is the time to lock in your spot. Key deadlines are approaching quickly, including registration and hotel reservation cutoffs. NIA's room block is limited and historically sells out—the NIA team has already had to reserve more rooms for our block! Securing your hotel early ensures you can stay on the property and take full advantage of networking opportunities before and after sessions.

Registering now also allows you to plan your schedule in advance, coordinate meetings with clients and colleagues, and ensure you don't miss the sessions most relevant to your role and your company. Visit [NIA's Annual Convention website](#) for the most up-to-date deadlines, rates, and schedule details.



LEARN FROM COMMITTEE LEADERS AND INDUSTRY EXPERTS

Committee and industry sessions are designed to deliver insights you can take back to your company—whether you're focused on workforce challenges, safety, market trends, technology, or operational best practices.

Navigating Data Center Projects

Data centers are mission-critical projects where every component—especially insulation—is essential for their success. This session explores the true day to day realities our members experience as they navigate the ever-changing landscape of data center projects. We will share a tactical list of challenges and best practices, what's changed, what's harder than expected, and what actually works.

SPEAKERS:



Steve Gorman
Regional Sales Leader,
Owens Corning



Auston Shaw
Vice President of Business
Development Southeast
Region, Chaparral
Insulation Co., Inc.



Matthew Stillitano
Vice President,
Insul-Tech, Inc.



Matt Vogt
Director of Sales
National Accounts,
Distribution
International, Inc.



**Moderated by:
Louis Walton**
Senior Vice President,
Proto Corporation

Upskilling Workforce Performance with Role-Specific Roadmaps for Success

SPEAKER: Stephen Hunt, Director, Corporate Talent Development, Jacobsen Construction

The construction industry is facing a hiring and retention crisis, and traditional recruiting tactics aren't enough to solve it. This session will explore how intentional career development pathing can become a powerful tool for attracting and keeping top talent. Examine the measurable ROI of workforce roadmaps and explore how to put these strategies into action today.



- Keynote: The Power of Significant Moments: Elevating Relationships & Performance**
SPEAKER: Jon Petz, Performance & Engagement Expert, Author, and Magician
- Keynote: Building Thriving Teams Ready for the Future of Work**
SPEAKER: Eric Termuende, Future of Work Expert, Author
- Health and Safety Session: Elevating Safety: Best Practices and Culture**
SPEAKER: Mike Hill, CHST, SMP, Vice President, National Safety, Performance Contracting, Inc.
- Merit Contractors Session: Innovative Talent Strategies and Trends**
SPEAKER: Brett Addis, Director, Human Capital Advisory, Baker Tilly
- Union Contractors Subcommittee: Roundtable Discussion**
SPEAKER: Chris Grando, Chief Operating Officer, International Asbestos Removal, Inc. and President, National Union Insulation Contractors Alliance
- Young Professional Advisory Committee (YPAC): Leadership Impact: Developing Yourself and Your Team**
SPEAKER: Stephen Hunt, Director of Corporate Talent Development, Jacobsen Construction

More sessions and educational topics will be added. Stay updated by visiting www.insulation.org/convention2026, for all the latest information, or email events@insulation.org.



Carve out some time to relax with your guests at the resort's Vita Spa. Registered guests can receive a 10% discount upon booking. Call (787) 863-1000 (ext. 7575), or add a note to your online reservation to inquire about the discount.



Want more insider tips about the iconic El Conquistador Resort from NIA's EVP/CEO Michele M. Jones and Vice President of Events and Education Erin Penberthy? Scan the QR code to read their top tips.

ATTENTION ACTIVE MEMBERS: NIA'S BUSINESS SESSION

NIA's active members (Contractors, Distributors, Fabricators, and Laminators) should plan to attend NIA's Business Session on the morning of Wednesday, March 25, to vote on the new members of the Board of Directors.

Thank You to Our 2026 Convention Sponsors!



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INSULATION INC.
SPECIALTY CONTRACTING THROUGHOUT THE SOUTHEAST



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Johns Manville
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JTTHORPE

KNAUF



PCI
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polyguard



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ROCKWOOL

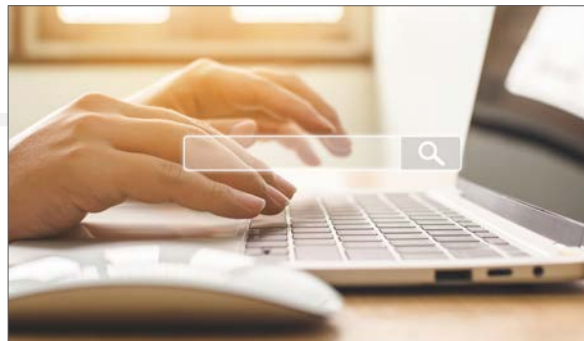
spi

Partner with NIA and promote your company by becoming a sponsor of the 70th Annual Convention! Learn more by reaching out to Erin Penberthy at events@insulation.org.



Advance Your Professional Development in the Insulation Industry with Targeted Training

This year, expand your mechanical insulation knowledge and skill set through NIA's intermediate and certification-level courses.



Find Certified Inspectors and Appraisers through NIA's Network

To find NIA Certified Thermal Insulation Inspectors, visit www.insulationinspectors.com.

To find NIA Certified Insulation Energy Appraisers, visit www.insulationappraisers.com.

Inspectors and Appraisers listed under a company name denoted in green are current NIA members.

For more information, please visit www.insulation.org/training-tools.

NIA | Understanding MECHANICAL INSULATION

Understanding Mechanical Insulation On Demand

Training Level: Intermediate

Course Length: 2 days

One of NIA's most popular intermediate-level courses is now available in an on-demand format! The course is part of NIA's Thermal Insulation Inspector Certification™ pathway and is designed for professionals with some industry experience. This course builds a deeper understanding of mechanical insulation systems, products, and best practices. It's also excellent training for new employees looking to gain an overview of the mechanical insulation industry and products. Individuals and companies can register and start training anytime, all at their own pace. In addition, companies can purchase bulk registration codes at a discounted rate, making it easy and cost-effective to assign training to multiple employees throughout 2026. Start your team's year off strong with career-enhancing education!

For questions or to inquire about bulk registration options, email training@insulation.org.

SPRING CERTIFICATION-LEVEL COURSE DEADLINES

As demand grows for specialized expertise in mechanical insulation, certification-level training is an important investment for personal career development and business growth. NIA's spring courses offer focused, practical instruction in a virtual setting, providing information that individuals can apply right away in the field. Be sure to register early, as spring session deadlines are fast approaching, and space is limited.



Thermal Insulation Inspector Certification™

Spring Course Dates: May 13–14

Registration Deadline: April 22

Training Level: Certification Level

Course Length: 2 days (virtual course)

This certification-level course is designed for experienced insulation professionals ready to learn a new specialty, and for companies ready to add insulation system inspection as part of their services. Participants may have responsibility for contracts, maintenance, business development, quality assurance/quality control, project oversight, safety, inspections, estimating, management, product development, mechanical insulation system design, and specification development. Prior to the virtual course, all participants will complete the Understanding Mechanical Insulation on-demand course.



Insulation Energy Appraisal Program™

Spring Course Dates: April 22–23

Registration Deadline: April 1

Training Level: Certification Level

Course Length: 2 days (virtual course)

This certification-level course teaches students how to determine the optimal insulation thickness and corresponding energy and dollar savings for a project. Learn how to conduct a facility walkthrough, use the 3E Plus® software, utilize infrared cameras during inspections, understand steam efficiencies, analyze and complete an appraisal spreadsheet, and present your customer with a final report that outlines the potential savings and emission reductions mechanical insulation can provide.

If you can't make it to our spring courses, both courses will be offered in the fall.

Thermal Insulation Inspector Certification: December 8–9 (Registration Deadline: November 17)

Insulation Energy Appraisal Program: November 4–5 (Registration Deadline: October 9)

NIA's Education Center

NIA's Education Center has developed training and education tools for professionals in the insulation industry to assist in both business and personal growth. With the help of our subject matter experts, NIA develops easily accessible, on-demand, targeted trainings throughout the year to consistently bring new material to subscribers.

New Courses Coming Later this Spring:

- Contractor Employment Law: Top Mistakes and Solutions
- Scaffold Safety Essentials
- Understanding and Reading Subcontracts
- Writing Emails People Want to Read
- Value of Distribution



Watch NIA's Education Center Demo video at <https://tinyurl.com/2wbwnv4r> to learn more about how to navigate the platform, track your courses, and download certificates. For more information, or to become a Premier Training Subscriber, visit www.insulation.org/training-tools/niaeducationcenter, or email training@insulation.org.

Host an Inspector or Appraisal Course for Your Team

You can host a course for your employees, members, or clients. This is a cost-effective way to bring NIA's courses to your location. Hosted courses can be held anywhere within the United States or Canada, or virtually.

Interested in learning more?

Erin Penberthy can help you match your needs to NIA's training resources. Email training@insulation.org, or call (703) 464-6422, ext. 114.



stock.adobe.com/917623730

NIA Insulation Installation Standard Practice/Guideline Update

NIA has formally convened its first four Standards Working Groups, with Document Project Managers (DPMs) selected and kickoff meetings underway. Working groups are tasked with developing insulation installation standard practices and guidelines that address some of the most persistent and costly failure points in mechanical insulation systems.

The first four working groups are focused on issues that repeatedly compromise system performance across industrial, commercial, and institutional facilities.

1. **Damaged Insulation Working Group:** Addressing recurring physical damage on rooftops, pipe racks, and within production areas.
2. **Flanges Working Group:** Addressing insulation design, removal, reinstallation, and maintenance at flanged connections.
3. **Pipe Supports Working Group:** Addressing incorrectly designed or inadequately insulated pipe supports.
4. **Vapor Retarders and Vapor Stops Working Group:** Addressing moisture control failures in below-ambient systems.

NIA is in the process of identifying additional recognized “pain points” that continue to challenge insulation system design, installation, and maintenance across the industry. Once identified, additional working groups will be formed to address the challenge and develop a best-practice installation standard draft.

When NIA’s Working Groups complete their insulation installation standards drafts, and they are approved by the NIA Board of Directors, each document will be submitted to the Association for Materials Protection and Performance (AMPP) and balloted through the joint AMPP/NIA Standards Committee (SC) 27, Mechanical Insulation. AMPP provides a proven framework for standards development, including a rigorous technical review and approval process that supports consistency, clarity, and technical credibility. This collaboration allows insulation installation standards to be released individually as they are completed, rather than waiting for an entire body of work to be finalized—significantly accelerating their availability to the industry.

Structure of the AMPP/NIA Mechanical Insulation Installation Standards and Guidelines

Each standard developed through this process will follow a consistent structure designed to improve usability and technical clarity:

1. Foreword—Purpose of the Standard

Clearly defines the specific issue or condition being addressed. The intent is to remove ambiguity and ensure the reader understands exactly what the standard covers.

2. Rationale—Why the Standard Is Needed

Explains the technical and operational reasons for the standard, including common failure modes and risks the standard is intended to mitigate.

3. Scope—Application Requirements

Provides step-by-step guidance for correct application. The focus is on clear, practical instructions that can be

readily applied in design, installation, and maintenance activities.

4. Considerations—Environmental and Site Conditions

Addresses factors such as operating environment, exposure conditions, and surrounding systems. These considerations may influence system design or material selection based on location-specific risks.

5. Material-Neutral Design

The standards are intentionally material neutral. Rather than prescribing specific products, they provide the technical criteria and performance considerations needed for owners and engineers to make informed material selections appropriate to their applications.

Availability and Implementation

A key advantage of working within the AMPP standards framework is that once a standard completes the approval process, it becomes immediately available to end users. This approach allows the industry to begin applying improved practices without waiting years for a complete suite of standards to be published.

Through this phased release process, NIA aims to deliver actionable, technically sound guidance that supports better insulation system performance, reduced lifecycle costs, and improved asset reliability—one standard at a time.

The next meeting of the AMPP/NIA SC 27 will be held Monday, March 16, 2026, during the 2026 AMPP Annual Conference and Expo in Houston, Texas. In-person registration is required, and virtual attendance options are available.

- **SC 27 Chair:** Jeff DeGraaf, NIA Consultant
- **SC 27 Vice Chair:** Scott Sinclair, Johns Manville
- **SC 27 Secretary:** Michael Pardo, S&B Engineers and Constructors

Interested in getting involved? Please use the following link:

<https://forms.gle/bg7x5b8SmvRZJgQU6>

Contact NIA Consultant Jeff DeGraaf, jdegraaf@insulation.org,
or NIA Vice President and Managing Director Kristin V. DiDomenico, kdidomenico@insulation.org.

From the Foundation Board of Directors

Update on the Foundation for Mechanical Insulation Education, Training, and Industry Advancement



Mechanical Insulation
EDUCATION TRAINING ADVANCEMENT

2026 is off to a great start! Following is a recap of the initiatives supported by the Foundation.

Strategic Partners and Presentations

Bechtel

On January 29, representatives from NIA and the Foundation presented to a group of engineers, program managers, and procurement managers at the Bechtel headquarters in Reston, Virginia. This informative and educational presentation covered subjects on NIA, mechanical insulation system design and design criteria, benefits of mechanical insulation, lessons learned from past Bechtel jobs, and design for power generation plants.

Participants included Michele M. Jones, NIA EVP/CEO; Kenny Freeman, NIA Past President/Consultant; Brad Kalyan, JT THORPE; Scott Sinclair, Johns Manville/NIA Subject Matter Expert/Instructor; and John Stevens, JT THORPE/ NIA President-Elect.

National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO)

On February 5, the Foundation supported NIA as part of a panel presentation during the Industrial Working Group at the NASEO Energy Policy Outlook Conference in Washington, DC. Scott Sinclair, Johns Manville, represented NIA and provided the mechanical insulation perspective on the Producing Results: Industrial Energy Efficiency and Energy Management panel presentation.

Content Development for NIA's Education Center

With nearly 90 courses for every experience level, NIA's Education Center is the go-to national resource for mechanical insulation information and training tools.

New Microlearning Courses for 2026

Released January 2026

- Creating an AI Adoption Strategy for Businesses
- Generative AI Approaches to Business Challenges

- Generative AI Prompt Writing for Beginners
- Track: AI Business 101
- Using AI to Build a Strategic Mindset
- NIA's Understanding Specifications
(now included for Premier Training Subscribers)

Coming in Early 2026

- Contractor Employment Law: Top Mistakes and Solutions
- How to Use NIA's Mastics and Coatings for Insulation Systems Specification Chart
- How to Use NIA's Types of Sealants for Thermal Insulation Specification Chart
- Scaffold Safety Essentials
- Value of Distribution
- Writing Emails People Want to Read

Mechanical Insulation Installation Standards Development

The Foundation is proud to support the development of mechanical insulation installation standards (see [page 13](#) for more information).

Working groups have formed and there are four Insulation Installation Standards in progress:

- 1. Damaged Insulation, Document Project Manager (DPM):**
Scott Sinclair, Johns Manville
- 2. Flanges, Document Project Manager (DPM):**
Lee Stuckenschmidt, Systems Undercover
- 3. Pipe Supports, Document Project Manager (DPM):**
Darrell Peil, Knauf Insulation, Inc.
- 4. Vapor Retarders and Vapor Stops, Document Project Manager (DPM):** Charlie Petty, Lamtec Corporation

Foundation Contributors

As a 501(c)(3) organization, the Foundation operates entirely on contributions from industry supporters, who share in the vision of advancing mechanical insulation education, training, and standards. These investments directly support critical resources that benefit the entire industry. The Foundation thanks its current contributors!



The Foundation's Board of Directors would like to thank all of the following contributors, who make the work of the Foundation for Mechanical Insulation Education, Training, and Industry Advancement possible.

2025 CONTRIBUTORS

FOUNDING ORGANIZATION CONTRIBUTOR: National Insulation Association—\$40,000

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ROCKWOOL Technical Insulation
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Annual Contribution of \$1,000

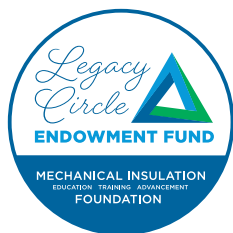
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To learn more about becoming a Foundation contributor, please see a staff member, visit www.insulation.org/foundation, or email foundation@insulation.org.

Legacy Circle Endowment Fund Contributors



In addition to the current annual business funding contribution levels, including Platinum (\$30,000), Gold Elite (\$15,000), Gold (\$5,000), Silver (\$3,000), and Bronze (\$1,000), the Foundation's Board of Directors created the Legacy Circle Endowment Fund as a way for

those in the industry to leave a personal legacy donation.

The Legacy Circle Endowment Fund allows donors to specify funding for individual programs or make a contribution to the general fund. Donors will be part of a unique group who want to give back to the industry and provide a permanent way to honor their individual industry contributions and service. All contributions, including Legacy Circle donations, are fully tax-deductible donations. (Minimum contribution is \$2,000.)

Inaugural donors include:

- David* and Susan Andrew
- The Raymond M. Burows Education Fund (DKB, Inc.)
- David J.* and Trudy Cox (Foundation Past President)
- The Dover Family (Laura Dover*)
- J. Kenneth* (Kenny) and Mary Ann Freeman
- Glenn* and Judy Frye
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- Joseph P.* and Dorothy Leo (Former At-Large Foundation Board Member)
- Steve* and Elaine Luse
- Owens Corning Foundation
- Charles* (Chuck) and Debbie Schattgen

* Indicates NIA Past President

To learn more about or contribute to the Foundation or Legacy Circle Endowment Fund and the programs they support, please contact Kristin V. DiDomenico or Michele M. Jones at foundation@insulation.org. The Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) and is managed by the NIA professional staff.



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Safety Corner

Update on OSHA Enforcement Initiatives

By Gary Auman

Since the full federal government shutdown ended in mid-November 2025, OSHA seems to have been playing catch-up. My firm has pending cases, for which we filed notices of contest to protect the company's rights, which are just now moving forward before the Review Commission. In most of these cases, the local area OSHA office is actively pursuing settlement. The shutdown also delayed some OSHA inspections following up on employee complaints. In some cases, these inspections are just now taking place. Similarly, several Department of Labor rules, which have been challenged in court, are beginning to move toward resolution.

The OSHA Walkaround Rule is in effect while legal challenges are pending. Meanwhile, employees (with any level of safety expertise) may act as the company's representative during an OSHA inspection.

The heat illness prevention standard is still in the rulemaking process. There was a virtual public hearing on the proposed rule in the summer of 2025. Following that hearing, OSHA reopened the comment period until October 30, 2025, to secure additional feedback on the proposed rule. OSHA's rulemaking process has seven steps. Currently, OSHA seems to be stuck at the third step: publishing

the proposed rule for heat illness prevention. OSHA has gathered information, but the agency has not yet completed developing and analyzing the rulemaking record, which is the fourth step in the process. So, employers are still governed by the General Duty Clause as they strive to protect their employees from ill effects from working in a high heat index environment.

This delay is unfortunate, at best, for several reasons. First, employers are not provided with any specific guidelines for compliance to protect their employees from heat-related injuries and illnesses. Therefore, employers are burdened with the responsibility of doing what they think is best for their employees. Unfortunately, what the employer believes is best for its employees does not always meet OSHA's expectations.

Over the past several years, as part of the NIA safety analysis program, I have had the opportunity to review a number of heat illness and injury prevention programs. In only a small percentage of cases did I feel that the company's approach to this responsibility would either adequately protect its employees or meet OSHA's expectations.

After having reviewed a variety of heat illness prevention materials, I believe the best approach includes the five steps that the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health suggested many years ago. These steps include:

1. Acclimatization,
2. Developing a work/rest regimen dependent on the heat index,
3. Developing a program to ensure employees are adequately hydrated and that cool water and electrolyte drinks are available to them,
4. Establishing cooling-off areas in close proximity to the jobsite, and
5. Providing adequate training to employees.

Of course, be sure to add recordkeeping to your program so you have the documentation to memorialize what you were, in fact, doing.

The second concern I have with employers being judged under the General Duty Clause instead of a specific standard arises because of the enforcement process employed by OSHA when an employer is found to be in violation of a specific safety standard versus the General Duty Clause. When a citation is issued alleging a violation of a specific standard, the employer is in a position to negotiate with OSHA to resolve the citation. The citation can be reclassified from a Serious violation to a violation classified as Other Than Serious. For many contractors and subcontractors in the construction industry,

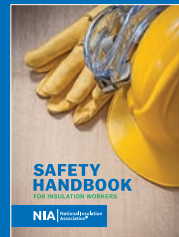
the classification of a citation is often more important than the penalty. Unfortunately, when an employer is cited under the General Duty Clause, OSHA has taken the position that such a violation will begin as a Serious violation. The unfortunate part of this is that OSHA has also taken the position that it will not negotiate reclassification of a citation issued under the General Duty Clause down from Serious to an Other Than Serious classification. This leaves the employer with no choice but to either accept the citation as it was issued (while perhaps negotiating a lower penalty) or to litigate the citation to seek to have it vacated.

Beyond these changes, OSHA apparently continues to be aggressive in its enforcement of safety and health standards. Remember, if your company is in a state plan state, be sure you comply with the state's specific safety and health standards in all areas, as they may be more strict than federal OSHA standards and/or require additional recordkeeping by employers.



GARY AUMAN (www.amfdayton.com) is a Partner in the law firm of Auman, Mahan & Furry in Dayton, Ohio. His practice focuses on counseling and defending employers in safety and health matters. He frequently works with employers and OSHA to find workable solutions to OSHA enforcement actions. He represents four national and regional trade associations in the construction industry and can be reached at gwa@amfdayton.com.

NIA Safety Handbooks



To review all of NIA's Resources, visit our online bookstore at www.insulation.org/products

Safety Handbook for Insulation Workers

This pocket-sized handbook, produced by NIA, offers practical tips for insulation workers looking to maintain a safe working environment. The handbook contains both English and Spanish versions of the text. New sections include heat-illness prevention, fall protection, and distracted driving. An employee acknowledgement form makes it appropriate for use in a company safety program.

Members: \$5.00

Non-members: \$9.00

Safety Handbook for Distributors and Fabricators

This pocket-sized handbook, produced by NIA, offers practical tips for maintaining a safe environment for distributor and fabricator workers. This handbook contains both English and Spanish versions of the text. Topics include general safety rules, compressed gases, hand and power tools, lockout/tag-out, tarpot safety, and much more. An employee acknowledgement form makes it appropriate for use in a company safety program.

Members: \$5.00

Non-members: \$9.00

EVENT CALENDAR



(703) 464-6422

www.insulation.org/events/calendar
events@insulation.org

NIA MEETINGS

NIA's 70th Annual Convention

March 24–26, 2026
El Conquistador Resort
Puerto Rico

July Board of Directors Meeting (closed meeting)

July 8–9, 2026
Omni Grove Park Inn
Asheville, North Carolina

Fall Summit 2026

October 28–29, 2026
MGM National Harbor
National Harbor, Maryland
(just outside of Washington, DC)

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For information about education programs and training opportunities, please visit www.insulation.org/training-tools

REGIONAL INSULATION MEETINGS

www.insulation.org/events/regionalcalendar
events@insulation.org

Central States Insulation Association (CSIA)

Contact: Rachel Pinkus
(937) 278-0308, www.csiaonline.org

CSIA Spring Labor Conference

April 27–29, 2026
Dream Nashville
Nashville, Tennessee

Eastern States Insulation Contractors Association (ESICA)

Contact: John F. DeLillo
(516) 922-7855, www.esica.org

2026 ESICA Spring Conference

May 6–8, 2026
The Belgrove
West Palm Beach, Florida

Midwest Insulation Contractors Association (MICA)

Contact: Rachel Pinkus
(937) 278-0308, www.micainsulation.org

MICA 69th Annual Conference

June 15–19, 2026
The Everline Resort and Spa,
a Destination by Hyatt Hotel
Olympic Valley, California

Southeastern Insulation Contractors Association (SEICA)

Contact: Erin Penberthy
(571) 266-3129, www.seica.org

SEICA 2026 Spring Conference

June 21–23, 2026
The Breakers
Palm Beach, Florida

Southwest Insulation Contractors Association (SWICA)

Contact: Catie Duhon
(832) 971-5989, www.swicaonline.org

SWICA Annual Conference

June 7–9, 2026
Cheyenne Mountain Resort
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Thermal Insulation Association of Canada (TIAC)

Contact: Tristan Bertram
(613) 724-4834, www.tiac.ca

2026 TIAC Conference

August 19–22, 2026
Hilton Québec
Québec City, Québec

Western Insulation Contractors Association (WICA)

Contact: Robert Bergman
(801) 364-0050, www.wica1.com

WICA Annual Convention

September 13–15, 2026
The Ritz-Carlton
Santa Barbara, California

NIA'S ONLINE RESOURCES

www.insulation.org
www.insulationoutlook.com
www.niaeducationcenter.org
www.insulatemetalbuildings.org
www.linkedin.com/company/NIAinfo
www.X.com/NIAinfo
www.youtube.com/NIAinfo

Instructions on how to use NIA's membership
and educational portals are available at:

www.insulation.org/about-nia/makingthemostofyourmembership