



Exploring More Roads to Sustainability

NIA has long promoted the value of mechanical insulation as a vital tool for reducing carbon emissions and achieving sustainability objectives. Previous issues of *Insulation Outlook* have covered different aspects of our industry's inherent "green" status—from offering calculations comparing the amount of CO₂ offset by planting trees to that from insulating 1 foot of 350° pipe (you would need to plant **46 trees annually** to achieve the same reduction in CO₂ as you would from insulating **1 linear foot one time**) to columns from NIA members describing how they reduce waste, save energy, and decarbonize their operations (using recycled materials to create their products, for example). This month, we explore another aspect of sustainability: Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs). EPDs detail the environmental impacts of a product throughout its life cycle, providing information about the resources (power, water, materials, other) used at each step in the product's creation, use, and eventual disposal. EPDs are trusted because they are independently verified by a third-party laboratory, outside the product's manufacture chain, and their certification must be updated every 5 years. In the construction industry, EPDs are used to help calculate a project or building's environmental impact, which is becoming increasingly important as government and industry move toward lower carbon footprint goals.

As Paul Trombitas and Paul Giovannoni point out in their article "Why Contractors Need to Understand Embodied Carbon" (page 8), the rapidly growing decarbonization economy makes being able to quantify and reduce embodied carbon not only good for the environment, but also good for business. Read their article to learn what you can do *now* to start mitigating carbon emissions in your projects, rather than playing catch up later, when laws and regulations hit. Thomas MacKinnon takes the discussion a step further, detailing how EPDs benefit everyone involved in the building decision-making chain—including how they can give you a competitive advantage (see page 18). Brent Tracy and Jonathan Vickers describes how EPDs are developed (page 26), and Dave Cox offers insight into how to read them (page 22). Finally, NIA invited all Manufacturer member companies to share information on their EPDs. The responses from Aeroflex USA, Armacell, and Knauf, beginning on page 28, offer a view into the types of EPDs available for products in our industry, how they are developed, and what applications are relevant to their use. Future manufacturers that submit their products with EPDs will be featured on www.insulationoutlook.com.

As I near the end of my tenure as NIA President, I am gratified to see that our industry and our association truly embody my theme of *Progress through Unity*; and as the articles in this issue show, we are working together not only to advance our own interests, but to benefit the entire planet. That is something to be proud of... and continue.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Leo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "L".

Joe Leo
President