

# INDUSTRY MESSAGE

## Seeking Visibility



My father said, “The best insulators are invisible.” He felt that an insulator should arrive on time, perform top-notch work on schedule without attracting attention, and then leave the job properly insulated and clean, without getting in anyone’s way. He said that a job well done is when the customer says, “When did *that* happen?” That worked well for him and his crews for 40 years, and for the most part, this is still the way we try to do things today at our company. We keep our heads down and insulate.

At a recent regional meeting, I heard speaker Scott Sinclair comment that insulation “does its job day after day without complaining.” I thought this was an original way to say what we already know: Very few products perform as reliably as mechanical insulation—as soon as it goes on, it starts working miracles (saving energy; facilitating process control; preventing mold and condensation; and, yes, saving the planet). And if we leave properly specified and installed mechanical insulation alone, it will continue to work hard without calling much attention to itself—without complaining.

Insulators are usually among the last workers to appear on a project. And although the reality of this can be frustrating, it is also part of what we bring to the table—our value. Our work is often what is left visible in mechanical rooms, on rooftops, and throughout buildings. In fact, although the best insulators may be invisible, quality mechanical insulation work is anything but.

Insulators are slow to change; after all, we have been installing mechanical insulation in essentially the same manner for a hundred years. Many insulation contracting companies are family businesses that have found success by embracing a certain way of doing things and sticking with it, generation after generation. At my company, we still quote my dad and emphasize invisibility to our crews. But as an industry and as an association, we should strive to call attention to the wonders of mechanical insulation, to be *more visible*.

NIA’s Insulation Energy Appraisal Program™ is one effective way to document the positive impacts of mechanical insulation. Insulation’s return on investment is easily measurable; and as an industry, we should educate our employees, customers, and leaders—and anyone else who will listen—on the benefits of a well-insulated world.

Mechanical insulation has been around a long time, doing good work without complaining. I will continue to value the practice of installing mechanical insulation without much fanfare, just as my father taught me. But let’s not hesitate to celebrate the immense value of our trade and its positive impact on the world, and to work toward bringing more visibility to what we do.

Let’s be **Better Together**,

Laura Dover  
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