



SPRING 2020 | VOLUME 1

# ESICA REVIEW

Eastern States Insulation Contractors Association Of America ////////////////

[www.esica.org](http://www.esica.org)

## HIGHLIGHTS OF FALL 2019 CONFERENCE

Ritz Carlton, Naples, Florida



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Insight: Technology & Innovation
- Spotlight on Scott Grant
- Project Highlights: Martin Luther King Memorial Library
- New Opportunities: The Era of Digitilization



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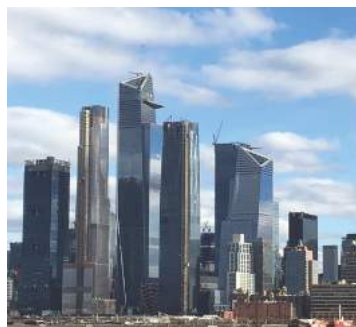
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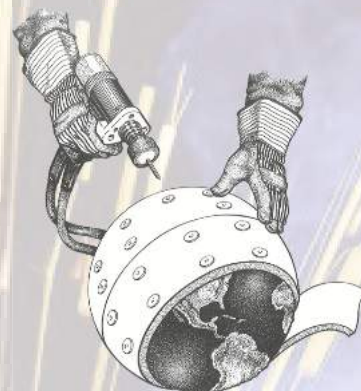
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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



On behalf of the Board of Directors and myself, I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year as we usher in a new decade!

I look forward to a year and decade of growth for our association with some great upcoming conferences with an emphasis on speakers and education pertaining to our Industry.

We will be starting 2020 off with our Spring Conference in one of our most well attended locations, Baltimore, Maryland! Bob Dunlevey from Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP will be joining us to discuss Improving Competitiveness through More Effective Collective Bargaining and Consolidation of Union Locals. We will also be joined by two Baltimore County Police Officers, Corporal John Haddaway and Sergeant Brandon Echevarria, as they present the department's Avoid Deny Defend™, which will train attendees on how to handle an active shooter situation. Both presentations should prove to be very informative for all! After the presentations, we have two great activities planned for everyone: a tour and cocktail making class at Sagamore Spirit Distillery and an afternoon Baltimore Orioles baseball game at Oriole Park at Camden Yards.

I would like to strongly encourage all members to attend at least one conference this year! Each conference is a great opportunity to network with peers and gain new information and education in our industry. If you are unable to attend, you can always send someone from your company in your place! This year, we are really putting a focus on "Young Professionals" and getting those who are new to the industry yet all-stars at their company, involved with ESICA! It is time for upcoming generations who are key employees to experience the value of being a part of this association, so let's invest in our future!

Please visit our website, [www.esica.org](http://www.esica.org), to mark your calendar for our other upcoming events!

Kind Regards,

Scott Grant  
ESICA President

# 2020 ESICA SPRING CONFERENCE

## Join Us for Three Unforgettable Days of Discovery & Adventure!

**When: April 29 – May 1st**

**Where: Four Seasons Hotel  
Baltimore, Maryland**



Powerful seminars ... fun-filled activities ... great networking opportunities... all this and so much more await you at our annual Spring Conference in Baltimore!

We've chosen the elegant Four Seasons Hotel to host our spring event. Nestled at the edge of Baltimore's Harbor East waterfront, this luxury hotel offers world-class service and commanding water views of the historic Inner Harbor – all within easy reach of city landmarks and top award-winning restaurants.

In true ESICA tradition, the action begins with our Associates Cocktail Reception, sponsored by Owens Corning, where you'll meet and greet new and long-term friends and associates. Then you're on your own, free to enjoy whatever you wish -- be it dinner at one of Baltimore's many great restaurants, or a relaxing evening at the hotel.



*Robert T. Dunleavy Jr*

We're especially excited to tell you about two very special seminars we've planned. Our keynote speaker, Robert T. Dunleavy, Jr., is a Senior Consultant with Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP. He is an Ohio State Bar Association Board Certified Specialist in Labor and Employment Law and has consistently received the highest peer rating in Martindale-Hubbell. As a member of the ABA's Forum Committee on Construction Law, Bob has prepared a dynamic presentation, **"Improving Competitiveness through More Effective Collective Bargaining and Consolidation of Union Locals"**. He will focus on these key topics: Assessing the Bargaining Relationship, Understanding the Non-Union Competition, Enhancing

Competitiveness Through New Bargaining Strategies, Tactics and Clauses to Adopt and Avoid. This keynote presentation is sponsored by Distribution International.







Corporal John Haddaway



Sergeant Brandon Echevarria

Immediately following the keynote speech, Corporal John Haddaway, a US Army veteran and a 19-year member of the Baltimore County Police Department, along with Sergeant Brandon Echevarria, will present the department's **'Avoid Deny Defend'... Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events**. This program will tell us how to handle an active shooter situation or other public act of violence as a business owner, an employee, or just as a member of the community. It's a presentation you will not want to miss!

In addition to these two great seminars, we've planned some fun and games for your enjoyment. For our avid baseball fans, we scheduled an afternoon at Camden Yards where you can cheer on the Baltimore Orioles as they play the Kansas City Royals. And - best of all - you can watch the action in style and comfort in an exclusive suite we've secured just for you!

For those of you into the fine art of bartending, consider a tour of the Sagamore Spirit Distillery, where you will learn how to craft your own cocktails. During the tour you will receive a hands-on lesson on how to create two fantastic thirst quenching drinks you can impress your friends with back home! Lunch will take place prior to the tour at Rye Street Tavern, adjacent to the distillery, and a destination for food with true American spirit.

All this and more coming up soon at the ESICA Spring Conference. Don't miss these great opportunities to network... learn... and have a blast with friends and associates.

See you in Baltimore!

Visit [www.esica.org](http://www.esica.org) to register!



Sagamore Spirit Distillery



Camden Yards Stadium

# ESICA 2019 FALL CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Our Fall Conference was held in the beautiful seaside city, Naples, at the Ritz Carlton!

## • ASSOCIATES COCKTAIL RECEPTION:

The more than 130 ESICA and CSIA members and their guests in attendance were welcomed at our associates cocktail reception. The beautiful venue catered to an evening of networking and catching up with old friends. We held our Annual Mesothelioma Raffle, where \$1,560 was raised for mesothelioma research at the Fox Chase Cancer Center.

## • PRESENTATIONS:

### Keynote: Managing in an Uncertain Economy

Connor Lokar, Program Economist at ITR Economics, floored attendees with the quality and strength of his presentation! Attendees walked away with a clear vision for the future of the US economy, consumer and construction markets.

### NIA Update

Michele M. Jones, Executive Vice President/CEO and Dana Vlk, President, joined us at the conference. Michele spoke about Thermal Insulation Inspectors and how they are a new and important part of the mechanical insulation industry landscape. Dana presented on how members can get the most out of the National Insulation Association.

### Associate Breakout: Creating Intentional and Amazing Customer Journeys

Joanna Pineda, CEO of Matrix Group International, Inc. discussed how to deliver an exceptional customer experience for every person you interact with. Attendees gained insight on identifying customer journeys and the unique needs of each customer type.

### Contractor Breakout: Cyber Security & Revenue Recognition

Carl Oliveri, CPA, CCIFP, CFE, MBA, Partner, Construction Practice Leader, NYC Office Market Leader Grassi & Co., discussed the proper way you should now be recognizing revenue within your company and transitional tips to ensure you are compliant with the new issuance. He also discussed the consequences for not protecting your business against cyber threats and why it is important to be prepared for a breach.

## • ACTIVITIES:

### Poolside Cabana Experience

Attendees enjoyed a luxurious afternoon in the sun! This was a great opportunity to relax and network, all while taking advantage of the beautiful conference location.

### Golf Tournament

Golfers spent the afternoon at the Tiburón Golf Club with courses designed by winner of the Open Championship and formerly top-ranked player in the world, Greg Norman.

## Tournament Winners:

- **1st Place** – Richard Budinich, Atlantic Contracting Specialties, LLC, Jarrod Evans, Distribution International & J D Lile, Vimasco Corporation
- **2nd Place** – Mike Fought, Johns Manville, Andrew Hiatt, Jeff-Co Sales & Marketing, William Lucas, RPR Products, Inc. & Mike Mann, Edward R Hart
- **3rd Place** – Anthony Harris, Armacell LLC, Mike Horvat, Distribution International & John Stevens, Thermal Solutions-Ohio, Inc.
- **Closest to the Pin** – Rudy Latzlsberger, Rudco Sales
- **Longest Drive** – Mike Mann, Edward R Hart

## • DINNER PERFORMANCE:

Down to Earth Aerials created the wow factor at dinner, with their stunning aerial performance. They even invited volunteers to try out the intricate aerial act!

## • CONFERENCE SPONSORS:

Our Fall Conference was another great success that could not have been accomplished without the support of our sponsors! A special thank you to our mobile app sponsors, Owens Corning and Owens Corning Foamglas!

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# Connor Lokar ‘Wows’ the Crowd at the Fall Conference!



Connor Lokar at the podium

Few economists present their knowledge and insights on the world of economics with the authority, accuracy, and humor that our keynote speaker, Connor Lokar, brought to his audience in Naples.

Connor delighted attendees with a whole new perspective on the economy. His presentation, “Managing in an Uncertain Economy” was praised by many as one of the best keynotes they have heard - anywhere.

When it comes to the economy, Connor Lokar knows his stuff. As a Program Economist at ITR Economics, a leading economic research and consulting firm specializing in the Construction Industry, Connor’s insight and forecasting expertise continues to play a key role in ITR Economics’ 94..7% forecast accuracy.

Connor not only knows his stuff, he delivers it with a passion and excitement that captured the attention of every attendee. From the General Economic Outlook to US Economic Cycles, Leading Indicators, Industry Drivers, Hiring Issues and so much more, Connor captured the attention of everyone who attended.

“He knows his audience and just how to reach us,” commented Brad Power of Owens Corning. “It was obvious from beginning to end. Not a soul left while he spoke. I walked away with a solid sense of where our market will be in a couple of years. Connor managed to speak to us all - business owners, sales people, and contractors -- on what to look for on the horizon and how best to prepare for the future.”

For Louis Walton of Proto Corp, Connor’s presentation was a game changer. “Once he started speaking, I put my phone down and realized I would gain tremendous knowledge and new information that would be invaluable in my everyday decision making at Proto,” said Louis. “Given the opportunity, I would attend annually! The overall end game was a better understanding of the marketplace and how it relates to all of us.”

*On behalf of all who attended this incredible seminar, ESICA extends a big Thank You to Connor Lokar and ITR Economics for helping us gain a deeper understanding of the economy and formulate a viable plan for the future.*



Connor delivers his keynote speech, “Managing in an Uncertain Economy”



Connor with Michele M. Jones, Executive VP/CEO, National Insulation Association



















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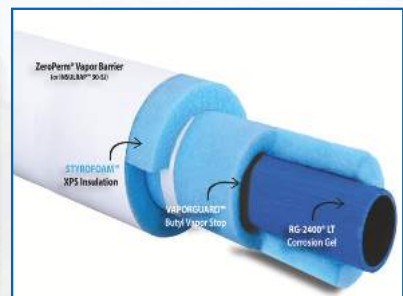
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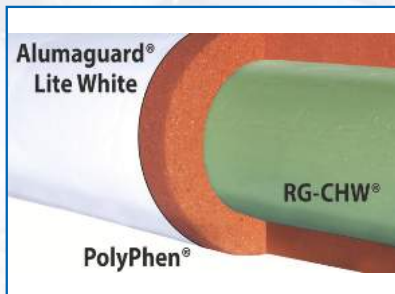
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# UPCOMING CONFERENCES



## 2020

### **ESICA SPRING CONFERENCE**

**April 29 – May 1, 2020**

Four Seasons Hotel Baltimore, Baltimore, MD



### **ESICA CSIA FALL CONFERENCE**

**September 2 – 4, 2020**

Renaissance Boston Waterfront Hotel, Boston, MA



## 2021

### **ESICA SPRING CONFERENCE**

**May 5 – 7, 2021**

Myrtle Beach Marriott Resort at Grande Dunes  
Myrtle Beach, SC



### **ESICA CSIA FALL CONFERENCE**

**September 9 – 11, 2021**

The Ritz Carlton, Amelia Island  
Amelia Island, FL



# Thank you for **40 years of partnership.**

Since 1980, Proto Corporation has been working hard to earn the trust of our customers, manufacture the highest quality products and deliver the industry's best service. Thank you for your continued support.



# PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



**Rooftop pipe from building to cooling towers**  
Pipe insulated with Foamglas & Metal Jacketing with Victaulic PVC Fitting Covers.



**C Level Mechanical Room AHU Pipe Hookup**  
Pipe insulated with Foamglas with ASJ Jacketing.

## Insul-Tech Inc. Meets the Challenges of a Washington DC Treasure

The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library in Washington, DC -- designated a historic landmark in 2001-- is undergoing a three-year major modernization designed to create a world-class library that truly transforms lives.

In January of 2018 Insul-Tech was called upon to insulate all indoor and outdoor HVAC pipe and ductwork as well as the plumbing pipe for the Library's renovation project. The fast-paced time-frame and environmental conditions of this multi-year project presented Insul-Tech with a series of unique challenges:

"Managing the schedule and building conditions with our mechanical contractor was challenging," reports Matt Stillitano, VP of Insul-Tech. "Since the building was not dried in we were constantly moving around to different areas for install so our insulation would not be damaged by the weather. I credit good communications and the expertise of our onsite management team for limiting our risks and exposure to costly mishaps."

All products on the MLK project were supplied by Specialty Products & Insulation (SPI), a valued Insul-Tech partner and an instrumental part of the project's success. Products used included Pittsburgh Corning Cellular Glass. Owens Corning products included: FG ASJ Max Pipe Covering, SOFTR Duct Wrap, and FG Pipe & Tank Wrap. Additional products included Armaflex Black LapSeal Rubber Tubing and ITW Metal Jacketing.

*(continued on page 21)*

Side View

Top View

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# PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

(continued from page 19)



## **A Level Main Mechanical Room**

*Pipe insulated with Foamglas with ASJ Jacketing.*

## **Cooling Tower Pipe**

*Pipe insulated with Foamglas & Metal Jacketing with Victaulic PVC Fitting Covers.*



Despite the challenges that came with this project, Insul-Tech pushed forward and completed a quality project in November of 2019. “I have always challenged Insul-Tech Inc. to take on difficult projects,” says Matt. “Not all contractors are willing to take on the same level of risk but if you can effectively manage a challenging project and complete the job on time and under budget, you will solidify your reputation as a reliable contractor for future work.”

The new Martin Luther King Jr. library is expected to open in the fall of 2020 and will become the center of activity for the already vibrant downtown D.C. area. The flagship building will house a spectacular auditorium and conference center, creative spaces for fabrication, music production and art creation, a newly designed special collections space for research enthusiasts, and a rooftop event space with a reading terrace.

## **A Level Main Mechanical Room AHU Pipe Hookup**

*Pipe insulated with Foamglas with ASJ Jacketing.*





# SPOTLIGHT ON...

## SCOTT GRANT

### ESICA'S NEW PRESIDENT SCOTT GRANT SHARES HIS THOUGHTS ON FAMILY, WORK AND LEISURE

**City of Residence:** Frederick, Maryland

**Company and position:** CEO of Insul-Tech

**What I like best about my work:** I enjoy working with good employees and good customers and achieving positive results when I am faced with difficult tasks.

**Greatest challenge at work:** Being a third tier contractor does not always allow us to be in control of communications with our end user and offer advice or alternatives to achieve the best and most efficient product.

**I am happiest when:** My family is together and I am spending time with my grandchildren.

**I'm proudest of:** My daughters and their families for their values and morals and raising their children in a Christian environment.

**Best advice I ever received:** Be patient and conservative as a business owner... nurture and respect relationships... and always consider the other person's perspective in a situation.

**What I want everyone to know about me:** I am a craftsman at heart and enjoy working with my hands; if anyone needs help, I like to be there for whatever I can provide; my church and missions are important to me.

**My greatest inspiration:** My wife, for her support and always offering a different perspective. She encourages me and makes me want to be better.



*Celebrating the holidays with family*

**My main goals as President of ESICA:**

Continuing growth in membership;  
encouraging more participation  
among current members; and  
keeping the association tightly  
knit and working for the best  
interests of our industry.

**Key benefits of ESICA membership:**

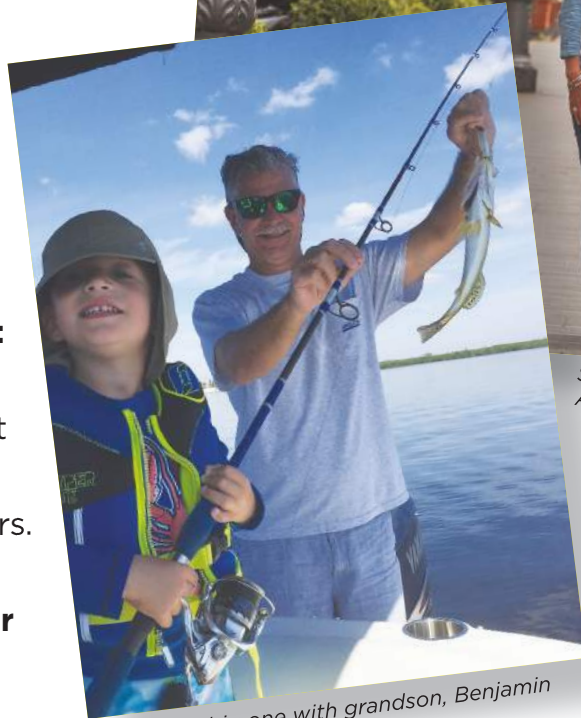
The advantage of networking with  
so many industry people throughout  
a wide geographical area and  
discussing our industry with my peers.

**Most notable changes in ESICA over  
the years:**

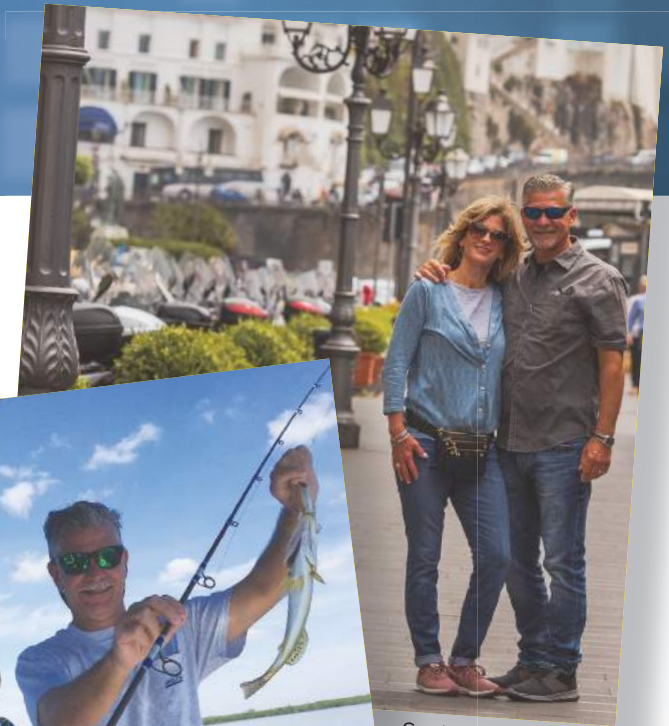
More involvement and  
emphasis on our industry from  
associate members ... and those  
new members who voice fresh ideas  
and perspectives that are making our  
association evolve.

**Bucket list for the near and distant future:**

Turning over the business operations to  
my kids... spending more time in Florida...  
and mostly, having a positive influence  
on my grandchildren!



*Catching a big one with grandson, Benjamin*



*Scott and wife Lisa in  
Amalfi, Italy*



*A giant hug with grandkids Benjamin and Claire*



## ESICA Members Share Insights on the Key Technologies Impacting Their Companies

Technology is changing at the speed of light. While there are still many exciting new innovations yet to come, they may not be as far away as we think.

From robotics and machine learning to advanced software systems and digital technologies, ESICA manufacturers and contractors are improving safety performance, enhancing quality, streamlining operations, and creating greater efficiencies.

### Robotic Technologies Improve Manufacturing Processes at Johns Manville

***“As a company that has been in business for over a century, we believe that evolving with the times by incorporating innovative, new technologies is critical. This focus on innovation is one reason why Johns Manville has been so successful in the markets we serve.”***

***Brennan Hall, HVAC Sr. Product Manager, Johns Manville***

At JM, we have been in business for more than 160 years, and as a result, we understand that investing in technology is absolutely crucial to evolving and growing with our markets. Most recently, this focus has included using many of the advancements in robotic technology to adapt, evolve, and improve our manufacturing processes.

For example, we recently invested millions of dollars into a new, automated packaging machine at our Cleburne, Texas fiberglass manufacturing facility. This technology has allowed us to change our manual packaging process into an automated one, which, among other benefits, has reduced the amount of labor involved in packaging our products. In an era where labor is becoming increasingly more difficult to source, automated technology like this is more and more important for manufacturing facilities.

Automating our packaging process produced a myriad of improvements at our Cleburne facility, and perhaps the most noticeable improvement was the quality of the end-product packaging. On facing page 25 on the left side is an image of our product packaging prior to automation, using the manual process. The image on the right side is of our product packaging using the new, automated process.

Improving our packaging consistency allowed us to improve our labeling by making our labels clearer, more consistent, and more visible for our customers. Additionally, the consistency of our packages creates substantially easier and safer stacking at the warehouse because the pieces fit together much more seamlessly (akin to stacking boxes).

Notably, improved safety is one of the major benefits of our automated packaging technology. This is particularly evident in our small, mechanical board packaging process. Prior to the automated technology, our small board packaging was particularly labor-intensive. This created risks for repetitive-use injuries as well as potential pinch-points in surrounding machinery. At JM, safety is one of our top priorities, and we continuously look for ways to capitalize on new technology to make our plants safer for our employees. We want each JM employee to return home in the same condition in which she/he came to work, and automating tasks like product packaging helps us to do that.

As we made this investment and developed the specifications of the project, we were careful to consider not only our needs at the plant, but also the needs of our customers. We utilized customer site visits and focus groups to better understand how our plant process improvements could benefit both our plant and our customers. In the end, our automated packaging technology has allowed us to produce a product that could help better position our customers for success in their businesses.

In addition to improving the way our materials are packaged, we also adapted our pallets to make it easier to load and unload a truck. This helps improve our customers' efficiency on jobsites and at distribution warehouses.

The Cleburne, Texas automated packaging technology is just one example in our plants where we are implementing new, advanced technologies. In Edison, New Jersey, we recently invested in a new extruder for our PVC jacketing plant, and in Defiance, Ohio, we will launch our new fiberglass pipe plant expansion around the end of Q1 2020.

As a company that has been in business for over a century, we believe that evolving with the times by incorporating innovative, new technologies is critical. This focus on innovation is one reason why Johns Manville has been so successful in the markets we serve.



**BEFORE**



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



**AFTER**





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# INSIGHT: TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

(continued from page 25)



## Owens Corning Uses Big Data Technology to Improve Global Safety Performance\*

*"We knew our safety performance was good, even notably so, but we looked to big data tools to distill fresh insights from the abundance of data in our safety database, and to generate useful information that would translate to further improvements in safety performance."*

**Geoff Walter, Corporate Director of Enterprise Safety for Owens Corning**

When Owens Corning sought to reach its year-over-year targets in safety performance, we turned to big data technology -- tools that the tech industry had developed, proven, and trusted. A driving force behind our move to big data tools has been a desire to continue improving our safety culture and performance even though we have attained industry-leading low incident rates.

### What is Big Data Technology?

Big Data Technology can be defined as a Software-Utility that is designed to analyze, process and extract the information from extremely complex and large data sets which the traditional data processing software could never deal with.

The integrity and worth of any big data strategy extends no further than the accuracy, completeness and validity of its underlying data. Fortunately, the careful data collection incorporated into the Owens Corning safety program formed the foundation of our big data strategy. To get started, all we had to do was export that information from our database for analysis.

We executed the techniques and analyses detailed in this case study using software specifically developed for Owens Corning from a series of well-tested machine learning and natural language algorithms, developed by major universities. We used a statistical programming language to conduct these analyses, to reshape the Owens Corning database output, to operate the machine learning and natural language processing algorithms and to generate our analyses, graphics, and interactive reports.

(continued on page 29)



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# INSIGHT: TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

(continued from page 27)

## **Strategies Focused on Incident-Type Risk Profile and Site Risk Profile**

We used these powerful analytical tools on their existing safety information to generate a Global Safety Strategy for Owens Corning CSB. The Global Safety Strategy is composed of two parts, an Incident-Type Risk Profile and a Site Risk Profile.

The Incident-Type Risk Profile represents a distillation and classification of all previous incident reports and associated safety documents into a set of Incident Types exclusive to Owens Corning CSB. These custom Incident Types were then ranked from highest to lowest impact based upon recordable incident and lost work day counts. The Incident Types are very detailed and are also linked to many of our actual incident reports, which facilitates the design of specific countermeasures.

The Site Risk Profile contains estimates of site safety performance. This site ranking guides our strategy and helps us to allocate our safety resources where they will make the most effective and efficient improvements.

## **A Program Designed to Reduce Risks Worldwide**

Although still in the early stages of implementation, we are gleaning unique, valuable insights from our big data tools. Through converting our vast stores of data into useful information, we have gained confidence that we are identifying the biggest risks, and not getting distracted by the outliers, or those few incidents that might have otherwise stolen our time, attention, and efforts. At Owens Corning, we believe that all accidents are preventable, safety is everyone's responsibility and that working safely is a condition of employment. With a clearly defined and well-conceived data analytics strategy, we are confident that we are focusing on the right areas.

The data-driven Global Safety Strategy helps set the agenda and frees our safety team to do what they do best – develop countermeasures, engage employees at all levels of the organization, influence behavior and build a stronger safety culture for a better workplace.

*\*Source: From 'A Big Data Case Study' written by Geoff Walter, Corporate Director of Enterprise Safety for Owens Corning and Keith Bowers, Bowers Management Analytics for the Campbell Institute. The Campbell Institute at the National Safety Council is the center of environmental, health and safety excellence.*

(continued on page 30)



# INSIGHT: TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

(continued from page 29)

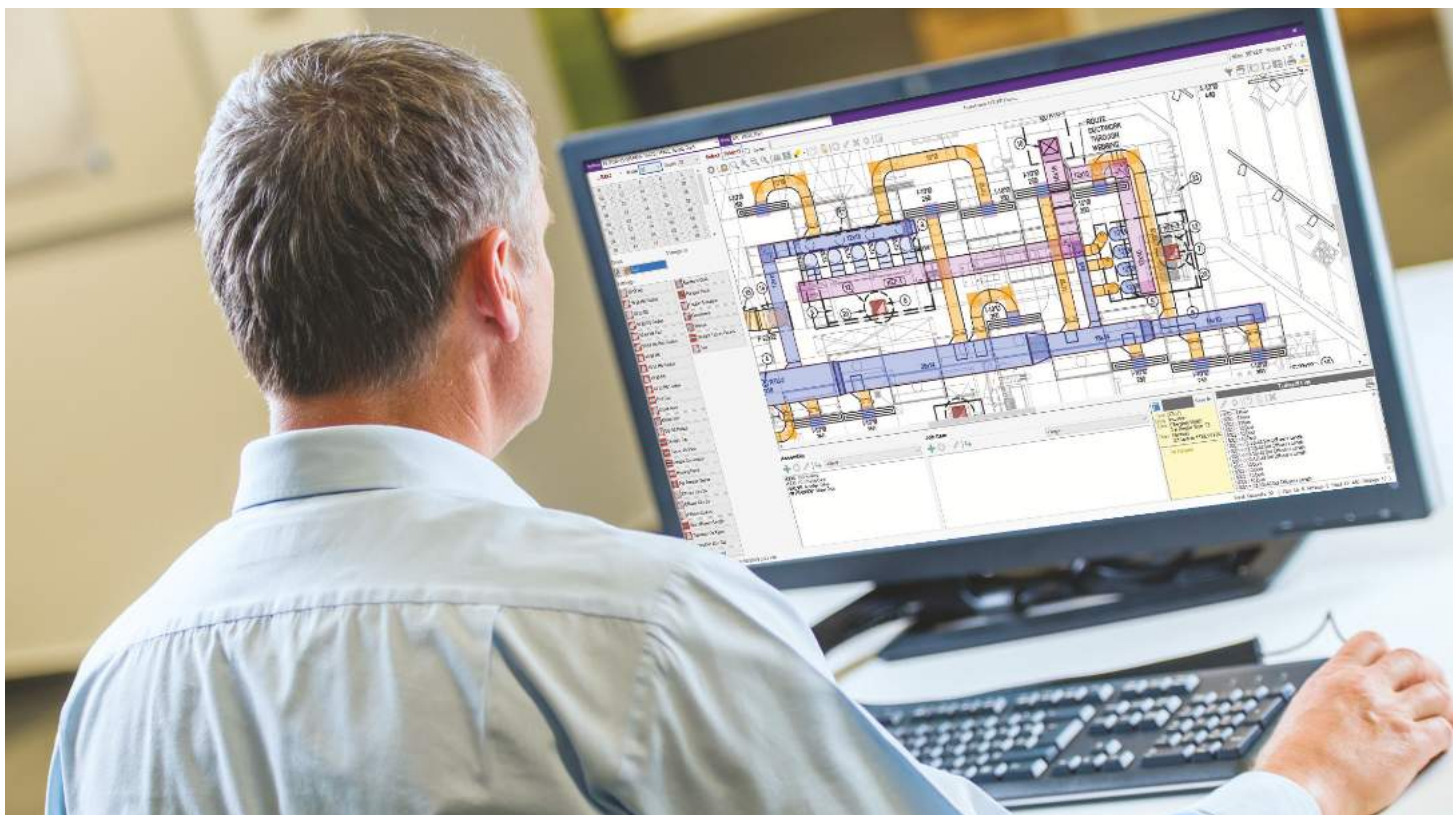
## Fastest Stays Ahead of the Curve in Software Technology

***“The process of bidding mechanical insulation jobs with the use of estimating software wasn’t always a viable option. Estimating software programs really only began to come into the marketplace in the past decade or two, and this includes the award-winning FastWRAP™ Estimating Software.”***

***Mike Postigione, President, FastEST Inc.***

Before estimating software, many mechanical estimators had to bid jobs “the old-fashioned way,” meaning take a paper set of plans, their ruler, and a scratch pad, and take time to arduously measure the piping and ductwork quantities across an entire project. After getting these quantities, they would then have to take them to another either manual sheet or perhaps a custom-build spreadsheet, where they had their material costs and labor hours listed for installation. The calculations were then extrapolated accordingly, and marked up to include supplemental costs, overhead and profit, to get to their bottom-line sell price on a project estimate.

If that entire process sounds time-consuming and even a bit tedious, that’s because it was! Now, with estimating software available to contractors across numerous construction industries, including the mechanical insulation trade, it streamlines the entire estimating process.



Manual counting and takeoffs are now easily done right on your computer screen, with quick and easy highlighting of piping and ductwork, with no accuracy sacrificed, perhaps accuracy even improved. An integrated database of material costs and labor hours means no longer any need for an extra step to take your final quantity counts, and then transpose them to a separate pricing/labor sheet. In FastWRAP, it's as simple as the click of the Recalculate Reports button, and in a few seconds, you have a full quantified material cost and labor hour total for any given bid! Then, send it to the final spreadsheet to quickly add any other costs, and tack on the necessary markup on the estimate. It's as simple as that.

As Microsoft continues to develop new operating systems, FastEST Inc. continues to stay ahead of the curve, testing and adapting to new versions of Windows within their FastWRAP™ program. And, as graphic technology advances -- like the release of UHD and 4K monitors -- FastEST makes sure that our intuitive on-screen takeoff remains adaptable to these new, cutting-edge displays.

Our FastWRAP™ program database has always been a proprietary, in-house format that we developed over two decades ago. It is not SQL-based, which results in much-improved performance as compared to other competing estimating products. Especially as contractor companies continue to move towards networked and cloud-based environments, our fast and easy catalog format yields excellent performance over these shared environments.

As always, one of FastWRAP™'s most beneficial tools is the ability to directly import digital project plans right into the program, for fast and easy on-screen takeoffs. We continue to fine-tune and improve on all of on-screen related takeoff tools, including the ability to import a wide variety of file formats (including PDF, TIF, JPEG, and BMP, among others), easy revised plan replacement, plan overlay for comparisons, and much more.

## **Midwest Fasteners Credits Digital Technologies for Greater Speed & Efficiency in Sales Management**

"As a Sales Manager, I need data, and I need that data quickly," emphasizes Steve Grushetsky of Midwest Fasteners. "In order to keep our extensive sales force current and "up to speed" on market behaviors, relevant information is a must.

At Midwest Fasteners, we are continually investing in hardware and software that delivers sales information quickly and efficiently to management, in real time. Informed decisions can be made, and market trends can be studied almost as they happen. In my 25 years in the business, this speed of information is the most noticeable difference in our decision making process. That speed has increased exponentially.

From a Sales standpoint, Cloud based storage has improved communication between management and our sales force. The cloud has taken the place of hand reporting -- email, and information dissemination.

*(continued on page 32)*



## Digital Tools Facilitate Collaboration and Information Management For Contractors Insul-Tech Inc. & Hart Insulation Inc.

*“In the contracting world, I feel we are in a place that will remain fairly unchanged for awhile. The technical products that we use are still somewhat in their infancy and mostly tied to management and estimating. At the end of the day, we still have to have humans on a jobsite insulating systems with human skills and making decisions.”*

**Scott Grant, President of Insul-Tech**

Over the last several years, Insul-Tech Inc. has adopted the digital world and implemented it into its day-to-day jobsite operations. “By utilizing tools such as dropbox we are able to have information instantly funneled to our supervisors and foreman on the jobsites,” says Scott. “They are able to access digital job folders with all the information required to be fully informed and up to date with what is needed to start and run a job and see the progression of the job.”

“Our employees are able to have information such as a detailed scope of the job, the specifications, submittals, schedules and marked up drawings of our take off at their fingertips. They are also able to track changes to see what has been submitted and what has been approved. They can add things to the job folder for our information such as field directed changes and site conditions for us to consider and track. There are additional costs to apply this technology, but if it is used correctly it will pay for itself with efficiency.”

Over the past 10 years, much has changed at Hart Insulation Inc. According to Tim Hartnett, President of Hart Insulation, “When I submitted a product in the past, I had to send 8-10 sets of data- now it’s one PDF attached to an email. Blueprints are digital, estimates are digital as well as cost analysis, and project management. I haven’t touched a paper blueprint in years.”

“I started this transition about seven years ago and it was a two-year process. Just from a time management point of view, it’s much more efficient. If my super walks onto a job and he needs a plan, I just forward it to his tablet.”

With all of this amazing technology at our fingertips, why isn’t everyone in our industry taking advantage and bringing their companies into the 21st century?

“Costs, fear of the unknown, and implementation, to name just a few reasons,” says Scott Grant. “There is a great deal of time investment and monetary considerations to change what has worked for many years. The truth is, a company can implement and want these changes, but all employees have to buy into it and use it for technology to be effective.”

Tim Hartnett agrees. “In addition to your employees, there are a lot of different levels of specialties on our projects, from architects and general contractors to engineers, and all different levels of sub-contractors. It takes a lot of time and effort to get everyone on the same page and moving forward in the same direction.”

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# NEW OPPORTUNITIES

## How Digital Technology is Changing the Construction Industry\*

Since its emergence, digital technology has affected a great number of industries across the globe. While it's more visible in certain areas, such as agriculture, manufacturing, and retail, it's the construction industry that's taking the biggest advantage of it now. The era of digitalization has finally reached contractors and their businesses, and it's about time.

Contractors need to review their long-standing methods and recognize that the development of such old measures will soon be replaced by more digitized solutions. It's not a now-or-never situation, rather the-sooner-the-better one. Digital technology is the answer to global trends and here are some trends that are particularly driving the change:

### **Urbanization**

One of the biggest catalysts for change is urbanization. The population of the world's urban areas is constantly growing. One research conducted by the World Economic Forum in 2016 examined the situation and estimated that around 200,000 people are moving from rural to urban areas every day! This means a higher demand for construction not only to build more houses but also hospitals, schools, roads, power and water plants, etc.

### **Labor shortage**

Nowadays, construction companies are struggling to find a solution to increase productivity even by 1%. One of the main reasons is the labor shortage. What is more, we are facing a serious lack of talents in this industry. It's becoming more and more difficult to find professionals to hold high positions and the risk of a labor shortage is higher than ever.

### **Resources shortage and waste production**

Recycling has been a thing for years, but it's more needed now than ever. Extraction of materials used in the construction industry has increased and new solutions have to emerge in order to stop this environmental exploitation. As a result, there's more waste being produced causing tremendous problems. Digital technology could alleviate this issue.

### **Climate change**

It's no surprise that the more people settle down in urban areas, the more pollution is produced. Carbon is changing the climate across the globe and it's driving the construction industry to change their old methods to reduce its emission. It is estimated that the problem will become more severe over the next decades. A lower ecological footprint is a must, and what's better than implementing digital solutions.

## **Digital technologies and the construction industry**

There are various other reasons why construction companies have to become more digitized. Safety in the workspace is actually a priority to minimize the number of accidents on the site. Cost reduction is another factor for the change, not to mention efficiency. The shift from physical to digital is already taking place and here's how:

### **Mobile technology and software**

Today, it's possible for contractors and project managers to monitor the work progress from their office without having to travel to remote construction sites. This solution is extremely time-efficient. Employees can use their smartphones to contact each other and update on the progress, as well as send digital pictures for verification and inspection. Special apps can also help schedule work, manage and report it back to the main

office. It improves productivity significantly. Most of this software is cloud-based enabling everyone to access real-time data. It is estimated that this solution can save hundreds of hours every year.

IT companies create other various software such as clash detection software which helps prevent accidents ensuring work safety. Moreover, ordinary people also experience technological advancement in modern houses. Smart buildings are becoming more and more popular, and everything starts with a construction company, indeed.

### **Personnel management**

Digital technology can support personnel management and all areas of operation. We have a very common GPS tracking that helps contractors monitor delivery times, tool-tracking software that prevents companies from big losses as the equipment is usually worth thousands of dollars if not more, or digital access software that tells managers who entered the construction site, when and for how long. Construction management software also ensures transparency as all the stages of a project are recorded and streamed across various sectors. Digital collaboration platforms help contractors to track the progress and control its performance.

### **Building Information Modeling**

Since its first emergence, BIM has improved work drastically. It allows a digital representation of buildings in a 3D form, not on traditional blueprints. This solution is actually shaping the future of the construction industry. It uses historical data and predictions in order to improve projects and plan the entire process in the most efficient way.

3D models are much better and depict the reality in a way it never did before. Moreover, all the changes in the model can be done in real-time and employees responsible for the project can access it and communicate with each other in order to discuss the progress. A common practice is combining virtual reality and augmented reality with BIM to achieve greater results and efficiency.

### **Augmented and virtual reality**

What can go wrong on the construction site? Absolutely everything, that's why strategic planning is crucial. Nowadays, it can be done with the use of VR and AR. Virtual reality is commonly used to train workers and augmented reality helps prevent possible hazards. Such simulators are of great importance for contractors, but very few make use of it.

### **Analytics**

Analytics can help contractors analyze their material cost, timelines, and further steps into a project with very little risk of failure. Such data is extremely useful to improve productivity and efficiency. Having a plan of execution mapped out provides insights into potential problems and allows contractors to adjust projects in order to avoid them.

But analytics can be used to increase the number of projects as well. Every company has a website where they advertise their service. The construction industry should also take advantage of SEO to target more customers and escalate income.

### **Artificial intelligence and machine learning**

AI and machine learning proved their usefulness in the construction industry. It turns years of collected data into predictions and allows contractors to stand out and be more competitive. Intelligent mobile apps, sensors on the site as well as robots help to increase productivity and safety. They are able to create reports that tell you how much work has been done and predict the estimated time of completion. Algorithms used by AI reports all errors occurring on the construction site as it is able to recognize different building by their shape, size, and location. Most technologies are integrated with each other to allow a better understanding of the process. Smart equipment such as drones and vehicles send digital pictures to your AI, which are then compared with BIM, 3D models, etc. It helps avoid any shortcomings in your project.

***\*Source: 'LetsBuild', a construction management software organization dedicated to helping construction firms digitize and become "Connected Construction." [www.letsbuild.com](http://www.letsbuild.com)***



## Johns Manville Announces Acquisition of ITW Insulation Systems

Johns Manville announced it has signed an agreement to acquire ITW Insulation Systems, a business owned by Illinois Tool Works Inc. that is well known in the industrial industry for its premium, low-temperature polyisocyanurate foam insulations and metal jacketing solutions. The deal was expected to close in early December.

“JM’s Industrial Insulation business is a market leader, producing the broadest product portfolio of any manufacturer in the industrial insulation industry. The acquisition of ITW Insulation Systems represents an important strategic opportunity to offer expanded insulation solutions to the industrial market,” said JM President and CEO Mary Rhinehart. “This will give us greater versatility and allow JM’s Insulation Systems business to continue to offer a robust and well-rounded portfolio of insulation solutions.”

ITW Insulation Systems has 100 employees who work at four manufacturing plants in the U.S. and Canada (Houston, Texas; La Porte, Texas; Edmonton, Alberta; and Mississauga, Ontario). ITW Insulation Systems’ primary markets include refining, petrochemical, power, LNG, food & beverage, oil sands and other energy applications.

“There is substantial growth occurring in the cold and cryogenic markets,” said Bob Wamboldt, President of JM’s Insulation Systems business. “We wanted to participate more actively in this space and the product portfolio offered by ITW Insulation Systems allows us to do exactly that.”

JM plans to integrate ITW Insulation Systems as a key part of its industrial insulation portfolio without making significant changes to the existing operations at ITW Insulation Systems.

“JM’s Industrial Insulation business is a market leader, producing the broadest product portfolio of any manufacturer in the industrial insulation industry,” said Dave Skelly, General Manager of Performance Materials at JM. “Historically, this has included high-temperature calcium silicate, expanded perlite, mineral wool, microporous blankets and silica aerogel, and now, with the addition of ITW Insulation Systems, our portfolio includes both low-temperature polyisocyanurate foams and metal jacketing. These additions make our industrial insulation portfolio incredibly robust and allow us to be a single source for our customers’ insulation and jacketing needs.”

## Three Out Of Four Construction Firms Plan To Add Workers To Meet Strong Demand For Projects In 2020, But Worries Grow About Labor Supply And Quality

Contractors Expect Demand to Expand in Every Market Segment Next Year despite Signs of a Slowing Economy As They Increase Compensation and Adopt Productivity-Boosting Technologies to Cope with Worker Shortages

Despite signs the overall economy may be slowing, most construction firms expect demand for their services and hiring will expand in 2020, yet even more firms are worried about their ability to find qualified workers to hire, according to survey results released today by the Associated General Contractors of America and Sage Construction and Real Estate. The findings are detailed in Strong Demand for Work Amid Stronger Demand for Workers: The 2020 Construction Hiring and Business Outlook Report.

“Contractors are very optimistic about demand for construction in 2020,” said Stephen E. Sandherr, the association’s chief executive officer. “At the same time, many construction executives are troubled by labor shortages and the impacts those shortages are having on operations, training and safety programs, and bottom lines.”

The percentage of respondents who expect a market segment to expand exceeds the percentage who expect it to contract for all 13 categories of projects included in the survey. For every segment, between 27 and 36 percent of respondents expect an increase compared to 2019 in the dollar value of projects they compete for. Meanwhile, between 11 and 21 percent of respondents foresee less work available in 2020. The difference between the positive and negative responses – the net reading – was between 8 and 25 percent for every category.

Water & sewer construction scored the highest net positive reading of 25 percent. Four other segments had a 20 percent net positive: bridge & highway, K-12 school, hospital construction, and transportation (transit, rail & airport). Power projects and federal construction projects had a net positive reading of 17 percent. Higher education construction had a net positive reading of 16 percent.

Five categories had slightly less positive net readings: multifamily residential construction (11 percent); manufacturing construction (11 percent); public building construction (10 percent); retail, warehouse & lodging construction (10 percent). The lowest net positive reading was for private office construction, at 8 percent. Overall, respondents were more optimistic than a year ago regarding institutional and most public categories but less optimistic about private-sector nonresidential segments.

Most contractors plan to add staff in 2020 to keep pace with growing demand. Seventy-five percent of firms plan to increase headcount this year, similar to the 77 percent with this expectation at the start of 2019 and 75 percent at the start of 2018. However, just over half of firms (52 percent) report their expansion plans will only increase the size of their firm by 10 percent or less. About one-fifth (19 percent) of respondents plan to increase headcount by 11 to 25 percent. Only 5 percent of respondents plan to increase employment by more than 25 percent.

Despite firms’ plans to expand headcount, 81 percent report they are having a hard time filling salaried and hourly craft positions. That share is up slightly from 78 percent at the start of 2019. In addition, 43 percent expect it will continue to be hard to hire in the next 12 months and 22 percent expect that it will become harder to hire in 2020.





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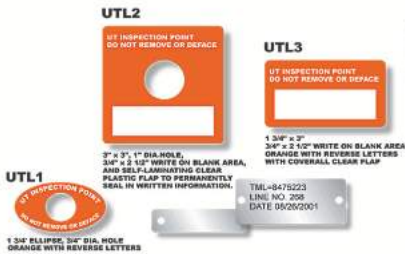
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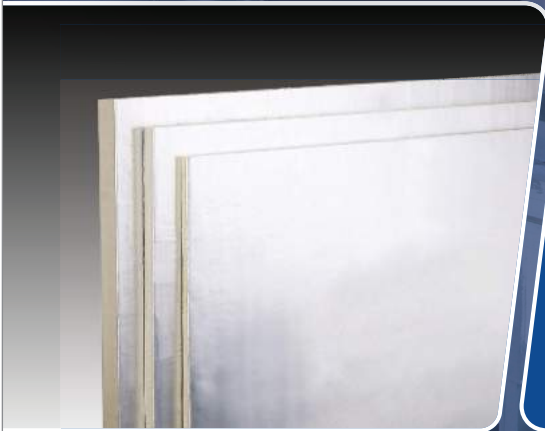
# IN THE NEWS

Labor shortages are having an impact on construction costs and project schedules, association officials noted. Forty-four percent of respondents report that staffing challenges drove costs higher than anticipated. In reaction, 41 percent of firms are putting higher prices into new bids and contracts. Similarly, 40 percent report projects have taken longer than they anticipated and 23 percent report putting longer completion times into their bids or contracts.

Firms continue to raise pay and provide bonuses and benefits in response to labor shortages. Fifty-four percent of firms report they increased base pay rates more in 2019 than in 2018. Twenty-three percent provided incentives and/or bonuses. Fourteen percent of firms increased contributions or improved employee benefits to cope with workforce shortages.

Construction firms are also investing more in training programs for current and new workers, association officials added. Two out of five (42 percent) of firms report they revamped initiatives to recruit labor last year. Thirty-two percent of firms report they have increased funding for technical education programs and 29 percent have restructured or changed programming for current skilled labor recruits.

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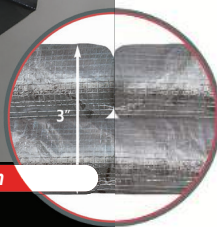
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*(continued on page 43)*



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**Contact: To learn more visit [www.jm.com](http://www.jm.com)**



# PRODUCT SHOWCASE



## **Insul-Mate Cut & Clip Banding from RPR Products Inc.**

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***Contact: [www.ipseals.com](http://www.ipseals.com)***  
***225-622-6183***



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(continued on page 46)

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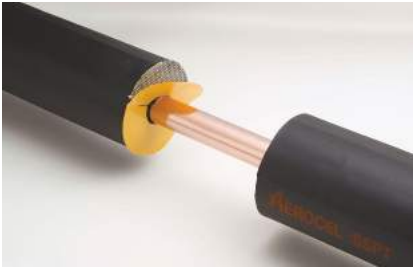


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2. If you are a contractor, please indicate: Union Local Number \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. Corporate Structure (check one)

\_\_\_ Corporation \_\_\_ Partnership \_\_\_ Individual

4. Date of Incorporation \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Incorporation: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Is the company or affiliate engaged in any other type of business? (Please list)

\_\_\_\_\_

Geographic Area where most work is performed: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_ I have read the ESICA Association Bylaws and agree to abide by them.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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